

Scientists link snowpack decline, warming

by UPI

WASHINGTON - Computer modeling suggests the decline in the snowpack in the Western United States is caused by global warming, scientists said Thursday. The scientists compared 50 years of data to what would be predicted by various models, the Washington Post reported. They found that a model based on human-induced warming matched the data the best. "We've known for decades that the hydrology of the West is changing, but for much of that time people said it was because of Mother Nature and that she would return to the old patterns in the future," said Tim Barnett of the University of California at San Diego, the study's lead author. "But we have found very clearly that global warming has done it, that it is the mechanism that explains the change, and that things will be getting worse." Much of the West depends on melting snow pack as a store of water. Less snow and earlier melting mean that dams will be overwhelmed with water in the spring, followed by drought in the summer. The study was published in the journal Science.

Â© 2008 United Press International. All Rights Reserved.

Scientists link snowpack decline, warming by UPI