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For Immediate Release

Icelandic Volcano Made 2015 the Hottest Year on Record

(Jackson, WY, 12/12/15) “2015 is the hottest year since thermometers were invented. Blame it all on Bárðarbunga, an Icelandic volcano.” So declares Dr. Peter Langdon Ward, who worked 27 years with the US Geological Survey studying volcanic eruptions and other geologic hazards worldwide.

Bárðarbunga volcano in central Iceland erupted 33 square miles of lava from August 2014 through February 2015, the largest basaltic eruption in 231 years.

“Chlorine- and bromine-bearing gases emitted from basaltic lavas deplete the ozone layer, which normally absorbs the hottest solar ultraviolet energy reaching the lower stratosphere. When the ozone layer is depleted, more of this energy reaches Earth’s surface, causing global warming.”

Ward will present evidence for the long history of volcanic eruptions controlling Earth’s climate this week at the Fall Meeting of the American Geophysical Union—a gathering of over 24,000 Earth scientists—in San Francisco.

He also describes this extensively in his newly released book, *What Really Causes Global Warming? Greenhouse Gases or Ozone Depletion?*

Ward explains that humans also depleted the ozone layer with chlorofluorocarbon gases (CFCs) used as refrigerants and spray-can propellants, causing the Antarctic Ozone Hole and global warming from 1970 to 1998. Humans stopped this warming by passing the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer mandating cutbacks in CFC production.

“Large, explosive volcanic eruptions, such as the 1991 eruption of Pinatubo in the Philippines, the largest since 1912, also deplete ozone,” Ward points out, “but in addition they eject megatons of gases into the lower stratosphere creating aerosols that reflect and scatter sunlight, causing net cooling.”

While most scientists are convinced that greenhouse gases cause global warming, none has ever shown this effect experimentally in the laboratory. Last month, Ward issued *The Climate Change Challenge*, offering \$10,000 to the first scientist to demonstrate experimentally that greenhouse gases caused more warming than ozone depletion. This week, Ward is highlighting *The Climate Change Challenge* in the Exhibit Hall at the American Geophysical Union meetings.

“Climate change is a serious problem,” says Ward. “Most climate scientists think that greenhouse gases are the culprit, but what if they’re not? It is very important for all living things on Earth that we get this right.

For more information, visit at WhyClimateChanges.com, WhyClimateChanges.com/challenge/, and #WhyClimateChanges.

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