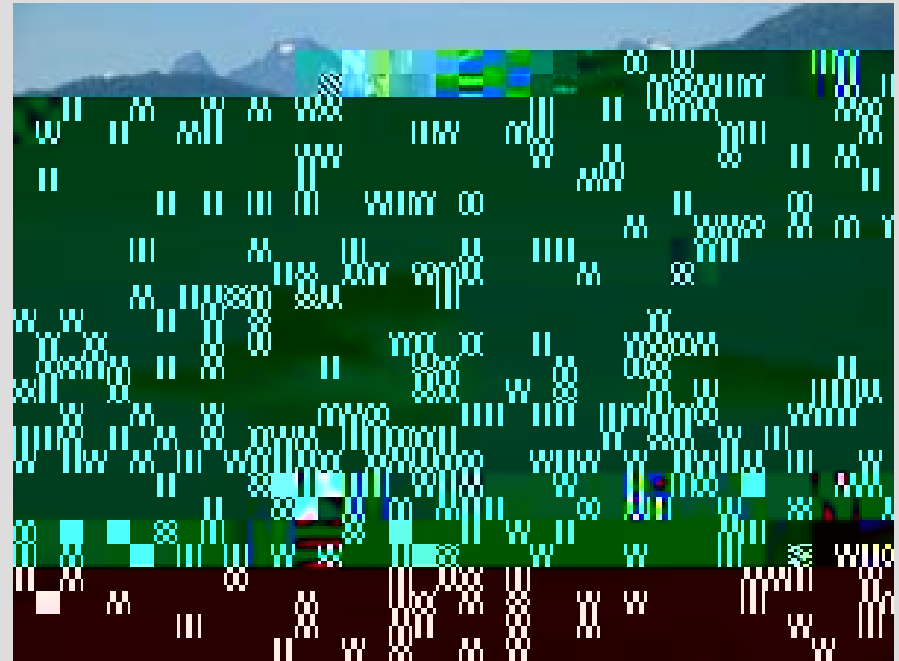


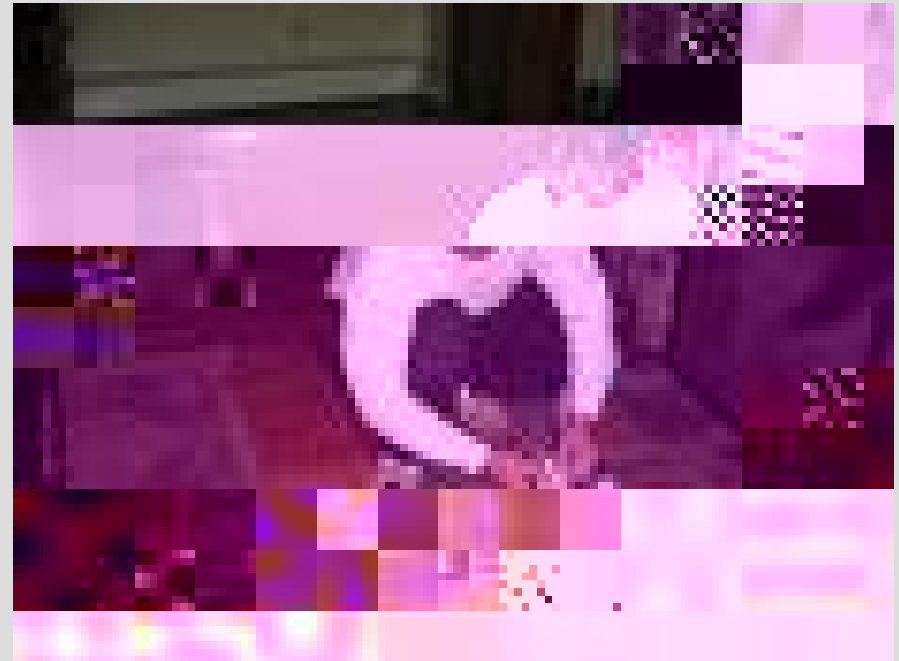
A familiar story for science and environment reporters

Change is forcing
localized extinction
Habitats are
changing rapidly
It's anthropogenic
It's forcing evolution
It's changing what
had been natural
timing (phenology)
And the public isn't
noticing it



The effects can be local

In one week, three science/environment reporters that I know were let go. At right is Bruce Ritchie, formerly of the Tallahassee Democrat. First they changed his beat, minimizing environment. Then they laid him off.



The effects can even be cosmic



Craig Covault, formerly of Aviation Week and Space Technology. Craig is the dean of space writers, having covered the space program for 37 years.

Next to go?



The two Seattle newspapers have some of the most aggressive and best environment writing in the nation. One is likely to die soon. Each paper has not just an environment reporter, but a team. And a science writer.

— December 15, 2008 05:15 PM; Paul Raeburn

Weird Science (Reporting)[The Observatory](#)-CJR

...I switched to CNN and learned about a new source of power that is pollution-free and cheaper than fossil fuels. It's made from water, "a form of salt," and "other common materials."

Poppy Harlow, a business correspondent for CNN, [cheerily recounted](#)

What a difference a year makes

A year ago, I told Columbia Journalism Review that I didn't think science writing was in trouble despite a Harvard report. I pointed to John Noble Wilford, Larry Altman, Robert Boyd, Warren Leary and David Perlman as examples of how science writing was a place where you get better as you age and papers understand that.



What's left for those left around

Coverage of EPA will change. In some ways it will be tougher and easier for reporters. Easier because there will likely be a lot of initiatives and those are easy quick stories. Tougher, because some of the best enterprise stories may not get done for various reason: shrinking reporting staffs, time spent covering breaking news, and some of the stuff to write about (enforcement drop-offs, lack of work on superfund, changing value of human life) may change.

Contact info: If I'm still around
in a year or two, you can find me by

