

From the Groundhog's Point of View

Ken Briggs | Feb. 1, 2012 NCR Today

If I'm Punxsutawney Phil, I'm worried about my job.

He's the one who's supposed to be the decider, if unwittingly. He sees the shadow, we groan at the prospect of six more weeks of winter. He doesn't, we're home free.

That assumes we're in winter. But this year, and a couple years back, there's been no winter in Pennsylvania. The thermometer has rarely dipped below 25, snow has been virtually non-existent and the ground is squishy.

It looks like Phil is destined to lose his high-profile cameo; displaced by the forces of global warming. Which is technological unemployment when you come right down to it.

Shadow or no, his function may have become, as the British say, redundant. How can you have more or less of anything that doesn't exist? Alice in Wonderland was asked by the Mad Hatter if she wanted more tea. "How can I have more tea when I haven't had any tea?" she replied in more or less those words.

What's a humble groundhog to do?

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