

Policy News & Monthly Review

AGI policy news briefs summarize geoscience policy activities and related events in Washington, D.C. as part of an effort to keep AGI member societies and other audiences informed about relevant federal policy and legislative updates.

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Please note that as of April 2019, the publication of news briefs and the monthly review has been suspended. Policy news from April 2019 back to 2010 is available below; to browse Monthly Reviews from 1996 through 2010, please visit the Monthly Review Archive.

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Federal Register - November 2016

A list of notices from the federal register for November 2016 from agencies including the Department of the Interior, Department of Energy, USGS, NOAA, NASA, and more.



Federal Register - December 2016

A list of notices from the federal register for December 2016 from agencies including the Department of the Interior, Department of Energy, USGS, NOAA, NASA, and more.



Congress passes continuing resolution funding the government through April 2017

Both chambers of Congress passed a continuing resolution (CR) that will fund the federal government through April 28, 2017.



House Natural Resources Subcommittee holds USGS oversight investigation hearing

The House Natural Resources Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations held a hearing on December 6, 2016, to investigate instances of data manipulation at the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS).



Congressional briefing held on outcomes of Marrakech climate summit

The Environmental and Energy Study Institute (EESI) held a briefing on outcomes from the 22nd Session of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP 22) in Marrakech, Morocco, which took place November 7-18, 2016.



Congressman Zinke (R-MT) nominated for Secretary of the Interior

President-elect Donald Trump has nominated Congressman Ryan Zinke (R-MT) for Secretary of the Interior.



President Obama designates new National Monuments in Utah and Nevada

President Obama designated two new National Monuments this December: Bears Ears National Monument in southeastern Utah and Gold Butte National Monument in southern Nevada.



NSF selects William E. Easterling as new Geosciences Directorate lead

The National Science Foundation has chosen former Pennsylvania State College of Earth and Mineral Sciences Department dean, William E. Easterling, to serve as the new head of the NSF Directorate for Geosciences (NSF GEO).



Federal Register - January 2017

A list of notices from the federal register for January 2017 from agencies including the Department of the Interior, Department of Energy, USGS, NOAA, NASA, and more.



January marks the beginning of the 115th Congress

The 115th Congress was sworn in on January 3.



American Innovation and Competitiveness Act becomes law

On January 6, President Obama signed the “American Innovation and Competitiveness Act” (AICA), (S.3084), into law.



House passes Weather Research and Forecasting Innovation Act

The House passed the “Weather Research and Forecasting Innovation Act” (H.R. 353), on January 9.



House passes two bills promoting integration of women in the sciences

On January 10, the House passed two bipartisan bills to increase the number of women in the science workforce.



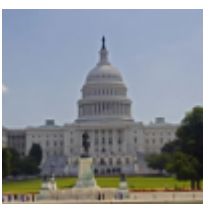
Proposed bill calls for assessment of potential oil spills in Great Lakes

Representatives David Trott (R-MI-11), Debbie Dingell (D-MI-12), and Jack Bergman (R-MI-1) introduced the “Preserve Our Lakes and Keep Our Environment Safe Act” (H.R. 458) on January 11.



Committee on Appropriations announce Republican subcommittee members

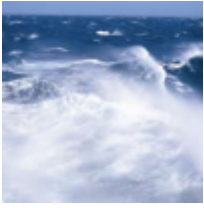
House Committee on Appropriations Republicans announced subcommittee chairs on January 11.



House subcommittees announces Democratic members

This January, House Democrats released the names of new chairs and ranking members on the House Committee on Natural

Resources and House Committee on Energy and Commerce.



Digital Coast Act introduced in the Senate

Sen. Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) introduced the Digital Coast Act (S.110) on January 12.



House passes DOE Research and Development legislation

On January 24 the House passed H.R. 589, the "Department of Energy Research and Innovation Act."



Congress moves to repeal environmental regulations

On January 30, the House passed Joint Resolutions H.J.Res.38 and H.J.Res.36, expressing disapproval of the Stream Protection Rule and a rule regulating natural gas leaks.



Senate questions Secretary of Energy Nominee, Rick Perry

Department of Energy Secretary nominee, former Texas Governor Rick Perry, was questioned in a hearing by the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee on January 19.



Obama Administration releases plan to address potential meteorite strikes

The Obama Administration released the National Near-Earth Object Preparedness Strategy on December 30.



Federal scientists recommend geoengineering research

The National Global Change Research Plan 2012-2021: A Triennial Update was released by the U.S. Global Change Research Program on January 1.



EPA Administrator nominee, Oklahoma Attorney General Scott Pruitt, questioned by Senate

Scott Pruitt, nominee to head the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), was questioned by the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee during a confirmation hearing on January 18.



White House releases America First Energy Plan

Following his inauguration on January 20, President Trump's administration released the America First Energy Plan.



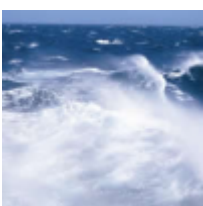
President Trump signs executive order to accelerate infrastructure construction

On January 24, President Trump signed an executive order to advance "high priority infrastructure projects."



Congresswoman Bonamici (D-OR) introduces tsunami bill

Rep. Suzanne Bonamici (D-OR-1) introduced the Tsunami Warning, Education, and Research Act (HR 312) on January 10.



Gulf shores to receive storm resilience boost

The Gulf Islands National Seashore will be the site of the largest coastal sand restoration project in U.S. history.



Congressman Ryan Zinke questioned by Senate for Secretary of the Interior Position

The U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources held a confirmation hearing for Department of the Interior (DOI) Secretary nominee, Representative Ryan Zinke (R-MT) on January 17.



Subcommittee Ranking Members of House Committee on Appropriations announced

Ranking Member Nita Lowey (D-NY-17) of the House Committee on Appropriations announced Subcommittees' Ranking Members and Democratic members on February 1.



Priorities of House Science, Space, and Technology Committee announced

On February 1, the Chairman of the House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, Congressman Lamar Smith (R-TX-21), announced the committee's priorities for the 115th Congress.



Proposed law to investigate ocean acidification

Rep. Salud Carbajal (D-CA-24) introduced the Ocean Acidification Research Partnerships Act (H.R.845) to investigate ocean acidification on February 3.



House passes resolution to recall Bureau of Land Management Planning 2.0 Rule

On January 30, Rep. Liz Cheney (R-WY) introduced a House resolution (H.J.Res.44) to invoke the Congressional Review Act to recall an Obama administration land management planning rule.



Science integrity bill introduced that will mandate agency science integrity policies

On February 7, Sen. Bill Nelson (D-FL) introduced a bill (S.338) to establish scientific integrity policies within all federal research agencies.



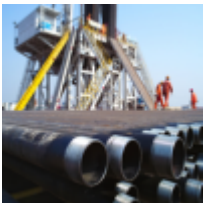
Federal Register - February 2017

A list of notices from the federal register for February 2017 from agencies including the Department of the Interior, Department of Energy, USGS, NOAA, NASA, and more.



Senate bills designate National Wilderness in two New Mexico monuments

Senators Tom Udall (D-NM) and Martin Heinrich (D-NM) introduced bills to designate portions of national monuments in New Mexico as national wilderness areas.



Proposed resolution would change how Bureau of Land Management values fossil fuel extraction

On February 13 Representative Scott Tipton (R-CO-3) introduced a resolution (H.J. Res. 71) to use the Congressional Review Act to remove the Office of Natural Resources Revenue's (ONRR) rule for calculating the value of oil, gas, and coal extracted on public lands.



March for Science to coincide with Earth Day

Organizers announced that the March for Science is scheduled for April 22, or Earth Day.



Lawmakers aim to boost state energy production authority

Sen. Jim Inhofe (R-OK) introduced the Federal Land Freedom Act (S.335) and the Hydraulic Fracturing Regulations are Effective in State Hands Act (S.334) on February 7.



House bill introduced to eliminate Environmental Protection Agency programs

On February 7, Rep. Sam Johnson (R-TX-3) introduced the Wasteful EPA Programs Elimination Act (H.R.958) which will eliminate multiple programs at the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).



House Committee holds hearing on ‘Making the EPA Great Again’

On February 7, the House Science, Space, and Technology Committee held the “Making EPA Great Again” hearing.



Senators introduce bill to recall pesticide regulation near waterways

Senators Mike Crapo (R-ID) and Claire McCaskill (D-MO) introduced the Sensible Environment Protection Act (S.340) on February 7.



House bill to ease regulations for waste-coal plants

Rep. Keith Rothfus (R-PA-12) introduced legislation (H.R.1119) to modify existing regulations applying to coal-refuse-to-energy power plants on February 16.



National Science Foundation hosts Congressional “Arc of Science” event

The National Science Foundation (NSF) and the Coalition for National Science Funding (CNSF) hosted an event on Capitol Hill on February 15 to highlight the national economic benefits of basic research.



Senators introduce Volcano Warning and Monitoring bill

Senators Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), Maria Cantwell (D-WA), and Mazie Hirono (D-HI) introduced a bill to establish a National Volcano Early Warning and Monitoring System (S.346) on February 8.



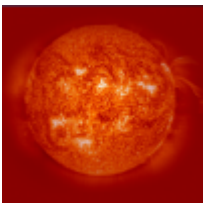
REAL Space Act Introduced

Rep. Bill Posey (R-FL-8) introduced the Reasserting American Leadership in Space Act (H.R.870) on February 3.



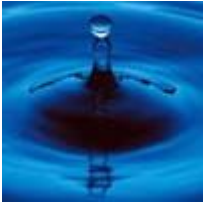
House Committee holds hearing on NASA’s past, present, and future

The House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology held a hearing on the future of NASA on February 16, 2017.



Senate passes NASA Transition Authorization Act

On February 17, the Senate unanimously passed the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Transition Authorization Act (S.442).



House introduces amendments to the Safe Drinking Water Act

On February 15, Congressman Frank Pallone, Jr. (D-NJ-6) introduced an amendment (H.R.1068) to the Safe Drinking Water Act, which was last amended in 1996.



Regulatory Accountability Act Passes House

The House passed the Regulatory Accountability Act of 2017 (H.R.5) on January 11.



President Trump issues executive order requiring two rules to be recalled for every new one

President Trump issued the “Presidential Executive Order on Reducing Regulation and Controlling Regulatory Costs” on January 30.