Policy News & Monthly Review

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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
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

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.