

Monthly Review: February 2013

The American Geosciences Institute's monthly review of geosciences and policy goes out to the leadership of AGI's member societies, members of the AGI Geoscience Policy Committee, and others as part of a continuing effort to improve communications about the role of geoscience in policy. The current monthly review and archived monthly reviews are all available online.

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1. AGI Conducting Assessment of the Sequester's Impact on the Geosciences

On March 1, the Federal Government's discretionary spending accounts were cut by \$85 billion through the rest of the fiscal year. These across-the-board spending reductions, known as the sequester, were first proposed in 2011 as a penalty so severe they would

force Congress to work together to solve the nation's deficit woes. Unfortunately, no agreement on a package of replacement cuts or additional revenue was made in time to avoid the sequester. To assess the sequester's impact on the geosciences, AGI will be administering weekly surveys gauging individuals' experiences with the sequester as it relates to their professional situations. We greatly appreciate your participation, as your responses will provide us with valuable insights and real-life reports about how the sequester is, or, alternatively, is not affecting geoscientists' ability to address our nation's critical needs.

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2. Congressional Visits Day in September – Join Us in DC

Geoscientists are invited to join organized groups of scientists and engineers for workshops and visits with congressional members and committees at this year's Geoscience Congressional Visits Day (GEO-CVD) on September 17-18, 2013.

Decision makers need to hear from geoscientists. Become a citizen geoscientist and join many of your colleagues for a workshop followed by a day of conducting visits with members of Congress or congressional staff on Capitol Hill to speak about the importance of geoscience research, development, and education.

Please send an email to bonner at agiweb.org for more information or to sign up.

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3. AGI's 2013 AIPG/AGI Summer Internship Applications Due March 15

The American Geosciences Institute's Geoscience Policy program offers summer and semester internship opportunities for geoscience students (undergraduate students and/or Masters students) with an interest in public policy and in how Washington impacts the geoscience community.

Interns gain a first-hand understanding of the legislative process and the operation of executive branch agencies while enhancing their writing, research, and web publishing skills. Deadlines for online submission of applications are March 15 for summer, April 15 for fall, and October 15, 2013 for spring 2014.

The American Geophysical Union, the Soil Science Society of America, the American Institute of Physics, the American Association for the Advancement of Science and the American Chemical Society offer similar internships that may be of interest to geoscience students. Please visit their web sites or contact Wilson Bonner at bonner at agiweb.org for more information.

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4. Obama's State of the Union Highlights Climate Change, Energy, and R&D

Issues of climate change, energy, and research and development (R&D) featured prominently in President Obama's State of the Union address on February 12, 2013.

Regarding climate change, Obama cited the increasing frequency and intensity of storms, droughts, wildfires, and heat waves and advocated for trusting the "overwhelming judgment of science." He called on Congress to develop bipartisan, market-based legislation, but stated that if Congress fails to address climate change, he will exercise executive powers to reduce pollution, prepare for the impacts of climate change, and increase use of renewable energy. He noted the decrease in carbon emissions in the U.S. over the last four years.

Obama discussed the recent significant changes in the U.S. energy market including the increase in oil and natural gas production. He supported reducing red tape and streamlining oil and gas permits while improving research and technology to protect against pollution from natural gas production. He mentioned the doubling of energy generated by renewables and proposed supporting the transition away from using oil in cars and trucks. He challenged people to reduce energy waste in their homes and businesses by 50 percent in 20 years. Overall, Obama advocated for an all-of-the-above energy plan.

Obama also mentioned the importance of investing in R&D and charged Congress with helping create more manufacturing hubs with the Departments of Defense and Energy to generate high-tech jobs. He stated, "Now is not the time to gut...job-creating investments in science and innovation. Now is the time to reach a level of research and development not seen since the height of the Space Race."

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5. Sally Jewell Nominated for Secretary of the Interior

In February, President Barack Obama nominated Recreational Equipment Inc. (REI) Chief Executive Officer Sally Jewell to serve

as the next Secretary of the Interior. Jewell would replace outgoing Secretary Ken Salazar who served during Obama's first term. As Secretary of the Interior, Jewell would oversee the National Park Service, the Bureau of Land Management, the United States Geological Survey, and several other land management and regulatory agencies. She previously worked as an engineer for Mobil and commercial banker and has experience in conservation. The Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee will hold a hearing to review her nomination on March 7, 2013.

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6. OSTP Issues Open Access Order to Science Agencies

On February 22, 2013, White House science advisor John Holdren released a memo directing those federal agencies that invest over \$100 million in research and development to provide free open access to publications of federally funded research. The memorandum mandates that open access to articles be available one year after publication.

The memo follows a petition to the White House demanding open access that garnered 65,000 signatures. Holdren's announcement has elicited a variety of responses. Some praise the decision while others worry about additional monetary costs to researchers, reduced funding for scientific journals, and problems maintaining the integrity of the peer-review and selective process for publishing in existing journals. The Geological Society of America provides a position statement on open access issues.

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7. Appropriations Update for February 2013

On March 1, 2013, the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB) officially reduced the annual spending amounts of every non-defense discretionary account by approximately 5 percent and defense account by 8 percent. This across-the-board spending reduction, called the sequester or sequestration, was first proposed in 2011 as a penalty so severe it would force Congress to work together to solve the nation's deficit woes. Unfortunately, no agreement on a package of replacement cuts or additional revenue was made in time to avoid the sequester. In early March, House Appropriations Chairman Hal Rogers (R-KY) introduced a spending bill (H.R. 933) to extend the current continuing resolution (CR) through September 2013 and provide appropriations for the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs. The current CR expires March 27, 2013.

Because the sequestration occurred relatively late in the fiscal year, it will have the effect of an approximate 9 percent reduction on each non-defense discretionary account. OMB released a report to Congress providing calculations of the amounts and percentages by which certain accounts are required to be reduced. How exactly each agency or department will be affected by the sequester is still very unclear. The report to Congress includes the statement, "There is no requirement that sequestration be applied equally to each type of budgetary resource within a budget account. Section 256(k)(2) of [the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act (PL 99-177)] requires that sequestration be applied equally at the program, project, and activity level within each budget account." More details about how each department and agency enacts the required reductions will emerge in the coming months.

H.R. 933 would provide \$982 billion across the government. This is the amount appropriated last year minus the \$85 billion in across-the-board sequestration spending cuts that took place on March 1. It makes certain changes in domestic spending programs including about \$600 million more for the Department of the Interior and the Department of Agriculture's wildfire programs. H.R. 933 would direct that \$802 million of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) budget be spent on the Geostationary Operational Environmental Satellite R-system. Congress is scheduled to be on recess when the current CR expires. If they do not change their schedule, they will have to vote on H.R. 933 or another spending bill by March 22 to avoid a government shutdown.

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8. House Proposes Bipartisan Bill to Avoid Helium Shortage

Representatives Doc Hastings (R-WA) and Edward Markey (D-MA) introduced the Responsible Helium Administration and Stewardship Act (H.R. 527) on February 6, 2013.

The bill would keep the Federal Helium Reserve open until nearly all the helium is sold, raise BLM helium prices closer to market value, open the sale of helium to more than just a few companies by implementing a semiannual auction, improve transparency, and prevent supply disruptions. It would require studies of international and domestic helium resources as well as the development of domestic and global helium demand forecasts, domestic helium use accounts, and assessments and research into the extraction and refining of the isotope helium-3 and the viability of creating a facility to separate the isotope helium-3.

On February 14, 2013, the House Committee on Natural Resources held a hearing to receive testimony evaluating domestic helium demand and the role and future of the Federal Helium Reserve in the domestic market, and the proposed H.R. 527. AGI submitted a letter of support for H.R. 527 to the Natural Resource Committee and the Geoscience Policy web site includes a

summary of the hearing.

The Federal Helium Reserve provides 42 percent of the domestic and 35 percent of the global helium supply. The Helium Preservation Act of 1996 (P.L. 104-273) directed the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to sell the helium supply until the Reserve's debt was paid. The debt is set to be paid in October and the Reserve will close ahead of the predicted closure date with significantly more helium remaining than the target amount.

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9. Sanders and Boxer Unveil Climate Change Bill

Senators Bernie Sanders (I-VT) and Barbara Boxer (D-CA) introduced the Climate Protection Act of 2013 (S. 332) on February 14, 2013 that would price carbon, end the exemption of hydraulic fracturing from the Safe Drinking Water Act, require disclosure of fracturing chemicals, increase investment in energy efficiency and renewable energy technologies, establish a monthly rebate program for legal U.S. residents, and assess a carbon fee on imports from countries without similar carbon pricing standards. Sanders intends to introduce a companion bill that would eliminate fossil fuel subsidies and preserve the renewable energy tax incentive program.

The carbon price proposed of \$20 per ton of carbon emitted with an annual 5.6 percent increase for ten years, is projected to raise \$1.2 trillion in revenue in ten years and decrease greenhouse gas emissions by 20 percent by 2025 from 2005 levels. Investments in efficiency and renewables include weatherizing one million homes every year, tripling the budget for the Advanced Research Projects Agency - Energy, investing \$500 billion in efficiency and renewable technology, and creating a worker training program for the clean energy industry.

Sanders and Boxer hope the momentum initiated by President Obama's call to address climate issues in his State of the Union will help move the bill forward. Environmental groups supporting the bill include 350.org, the Sierra Club, Public Citizen, the National Community Action Foundation, and the Center for American Progress.

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10. Senate Environment Committee Hosts Climate Briefing

Senator Barbara Boxer (D-CA), Chair of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, hosted a briefing on February 13 to address the latest findings in climate science research.

The participants were Donald Wuebbles, professor of Atmospheric Science from the University of Illinois; Marshall Shepherd, president of the American Meteorological Society; John Balbus, senior advisor for Public Health at the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences; and James McCarthy, professor of Biological Oceanography at Harvard University. An archived webcast of the event can be found on the committee's web site.

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11. CRS Report: Oil and Gas Production on Federal and Non-Federal Lands

The Congressional Research Service (CRS) released a report on February 28, 2013 outlining trends of decreasing oil and gas production on federal lands and increasing levels on non-federal lands.

The percentage of oil produced on federal lands decreased by seven points from fiscal years (FY) 2007 to 2012. Within that time frame, production on federal lands surged to a high of 36.5 percent of total U.S. production in FY2010, and then fell below FY2007 levels to 26 percent by FY2012. Historically, oil production on federal lands amounted to less than 20 percent and only rose to 30 percent in the early 2000s. On non-federal lands, modest shifts in production levels between FY2008 and FY2010 were followed by substantial growth between FY2010 and FY2012.

Domestic natural gas production increased 20 percent or four trillion cubic feet since 2007. Non-federal lands witnessed an increase in production by 40 percent, while federal lands witnessed a decrease of 33 percent. The report noted that major shale gas plays are located principally on non-federal lands.

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12. Landsat Data Continuity Mission Launch Successful

On February 11, 2013 the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) launched the Landsat Data Continuity Mission (LDCM), or Landsat 8, from Vandenberg Air Force Base, CA. Landsat 8 is equipped with visible, near-infrared, short-wave infrared, and thermal infrared imaging capabilities and a moderate-resolution of 15 m to 100 m. One hundred days after the

launch, the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) will take control of Landsat 8's operation and data collection and dissemination.

The Landsat program has provided 40 years worth of continuous data and Landsat 8 ensures the continuation of data collection beyond the operation of the aging Landsats 5 and 7. Landsat images assist in tracking, understanding, and managing landscape changes, especially in terms of food, water, and forest resources.

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13. USGS Director Marcia McNutt Resigns

On February 15, 2013, United States Geological Survey (USGS) Director Marcia McNutt resigned her position after serving as the USGS director since October 2009. She left following the successful launch of the new Landsat 8 satellite, also known as the Landsat Data Continuity Mission. Her email to USGS staff announcing her resignation can be found on the Arizona Geology Blog.

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14. 2013 USGS Mineral Commodity Summaries Released

On February 7, 2013, the U.S. Geological Survey announced the release of the Mineral Commodity Summaries for 2013 which details events, trends, and issues related to each mineral commodity. The report contains data on domestic industry structure, government programs, tariffs, 5-year salient statistics, and world production and resources. Over 90 minerals and materials are included as well as information on government stockpiled mineral commodities.

The report indicates that the reopening of Molycorp Inc.'s Mountain Pass mine in California has created a domestic source of rare earth elements (REE), reducing dependence on importing REE's. Exports of raw mineral and scrap amounted to \$21 billion. For the third year in a row, U.S. nonfuel mineral production increased. Almost all metals experienced a decrease in production and prices while other industrial mineral commodities witnessed an increase.

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15. GAO Releases "High Risk" List for 113th Congress

Every Congress, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) releases a list of agencies and program areas that are deemed "high risk" because of their potential for fraud, waste, abuse, and mismanagement. Several science and natural resource issues were included in the list for the 113th Congress including weather satellites, the management of federal oil and gas resources, the National Flood Insurance Program, and the federal government's exposure to climate change.

On the web site, GAO summarizes each "high risk" program, provides recommendations for what can be done to improve the issue, and includes links to previous GAO reports related to the topic.

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16. EPA Draft Climate Adaptation Plan Available for Comment

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) released the draft of their 2013 climate change adaptation plans in February 2013 as required by President Obama's 2009 Executive Order 13514.

The report establishes a framework for supporting and prioritizing the EPA's future actions to adapt their operations with regard to climate change. EPA states that climate change will require them to adjust their operations due to sea-level rise, snowpack reduction, drought, high temperatures, and more extreme weather. These impacts necessitate improved watershed, wetland, and water supply protection; emergency management plans; grant and loan plans; contamination reduction; and understanding of energy efficiency programs. Comments on the draft are due April 9, 2013.

Other federal agencies including the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Department of the Interior (DOI), National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), Department of Energy (DOE), and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) released climate change adaptation plans in 2012.

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17. DOE Defends Decision to Continue Collecting Fees for Nuclear Waste

On January 31, 2013, the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC) filed a motion to reopen a 2011 case against the Department of Energy (DOE) and review its 2010 Secretarial Determination of the Adequacy of the Nuclear Waste Fund Fee. On February 14, DOE responded saying it would not object to reopening the case.

Under the Nuclear Waste Policy Act (24 U.S.C. 10101), nuclear power generators have to pay a fee of one mill per kilowatt hour of nuclear-generated electricity. Revenues generated by the fee are deposited into a Nuclear Waste Fund and available to DOE to pay for the permanent disposal of commercial spent fuel and high-level radioactive waste. NARUC originally opened the lawsuit because of the Obama Administration's decision to terminate the proposed Yucca Mountain geologic repository.

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18. OSMRE Proposes Allowing Use of AML Funds for Non-Coal Cleanup

On February 6, 2013, the Department of the Interior's (DOI) Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSMRE) announced a proposed rule allowing states and tribes that have finished reclaiming all coal-related sites to apply Abandoned Mine Land (AML) funds to non-coal cleanup sites. Such states and tribes would have limited liability protection to voluntarily redirect AML funds to address cleanup of non-coal mines posing a risk to human health, safety, or the environment. Comments on the proposed rule will be accepted until April 8, 2013.

AMLs are lands, waters, and watersheds impacted by previous coal, ore, and mineral mining, and are divided into three categories for regulatory purposes: coal, hardrock, and uranium. As required by the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 (P.L. 95-87), AML funds are provided by coal industry reclamation fees and distributed to states and tribes largely through grants. Funds are preferentially directed to AML sites characterized by health and safety hazards. Currently, only Louisiana, Montana, Texas, and Wyoming as well as the Hopi and Crow Tribes and Navajo Nation have completed reclamation and would be eligible to redirect AML funds.

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19. Technical Experts Sought for EPA R&D Advisory Committee

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced on February 5, 2013 a request for nominations of scientists, engineers, and social scientists to serve on a federal advisory committee to the Office of Research and Development (ORD). The committee will provide independent scientific and technical peer review, consultation, advice, and recommendations. Nominations will be accepted until April 1, 2013.

ORD operates six research programs: the Air, Climate, and Energy Research Program; Safe and Sustainable Water Resources Research Program; Sustainable and Healthy Communities Research Program; Chemical Safety for Sustainability Research Program; Human Health Risk Assessment Research Program; and Homeland Security Research Program.

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20. Thousands Rally Against Keystone XL Pipeline in DC

On February 17, 2013, an estimated 35,000 people joined the Forward on Climate Rally on the National Mall and outside the White House. It is considered the largest climate rally in U.S. history.

Marchers urged President Obama to reject the proposed Keystone XL pipeline that would connect Canada's oil sands to refineries on the Gulf Coast, as well as to support the transition to renewable energy sources and the limitation of greenhouse gas emissions. Organizers included the Sierra Club, 350.org, and the Natural Resources Defense Council.

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21. RGGI Proposes Lower Carbon Dioxide Emissions Cap

The Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) announced on February 7, 2013 a proposal, based on a recent program review, to reduce carbon dioxide emissions caps by 45 percent, or from 165 million to 91 million tons, for 2014. The cap will continue to decrease by 2.5 percent annually from 2015 to 2020. The proposal aims to provide another \$2.2 billion in funds for improving efficiency, emission reductions, energy security, and use of renewable energy as well as creating jobs.

RGGI is composed of nine Northeastern and Mid-Atlantic states employing a market-based regulatory system that seeks to lower greenhouse gas emissions from the power sector. The proposal relates to the carbon dioxide budget trading practiced by these states. In addition to lowering the emissions requirement, the unsold 2012 and 2013 emissions allowances will not be offered for sale again. RGGI would also create a cost containment reserve (CCR) to stabilize emissions allowance prices.

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22. Arizona State Senate Bill on Education and Scientific "Controversies" Fails

Arizona State Senator Judy Burges (R-District 4) introduced bill S.B. 1213 to allow teachers to present alternative views on "controversial issues" such as biological evolution, the chemical origins of life, global warming, and human cloning. The bill died on February 22, 2013.

The language mirrored similar legislation (H.B. 0368) in Tennessee in April 2012. Burges indicated that the bill was meant primarily to respond to the teaching of climate change science. The Arizona Education Association objected to the bill as

unnecessary and politically rather than scientifically based. It was referred to as the “antiscience bill” by the National Center for Science.

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23. Key Reports and Publications

*****Government Accountability Office (GAO)*****

Water Quality: EPA Faces Challenges in Addressing Damage Caused by Airborne Pollutants

The GAO examined the extent to which nitrogen oxides (NO_x), sulfur dioxide and mercury in the atmosphere is deposited and detrimental to U.S. water supplies. The report analyzes the challenges the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) faces in addressing contamination from atmospheric pollutants under the Clean Water Act and Clean Air Act. GAO recommends the creation of secondary National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) or other strategies to address the effects of acid rain.

Helium Program: Urgent Issues Facing BLM's Storage and Sale of Helium Reserves

This report is an update to GAO’s testimony given in May 2010 (GAO-10-700T). GAO describes the historical handling of and their previous recommendations and remarks regarding the Federal Helium Reserve and the Helium Privatization Act of 1996. Three issues of immediate concern to the helium program are outlined: program funding sources, pricing BLM helium, and possible uses for federal helium.

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24. Key Federal Register Notices

DOE – The Department of Energy is announcing a meeting of the National Coal Council on Thursday, March 7, 2013 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. More information can be found in the notice [Friday, February 1, 2013 (Volume 78, Number 22)]

EPA – The Environmental Protection Agency issued a request for nominations for technical experts to serve on its Board of Scientific Counselors which advises the Office of Research and Development. Nominations will be accepted until April 1, 2013. [Tuesday, February 5, 2013 (Volume 78, Number 24)]

DOI – The Department of the Interior announced the approval and availability of the Phase II Early Restoration Plan and Environmental Review which details the second set of projects that will be implemented to continue restoring natural resources and services injured or lost due to the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill. [Tuesday, February 5, 2013 (Volume 78, Number 24)]

DOI – The Department of the Interior announced the renewal of the Ocean Energy Safety Advisory Committee which provides the Secretary of the Interior with recommendations on issues relating to offshore energy safety. [Wednesday, February 6, 2013 (Volume 78, Number 25)]

EPA – The Environmental Protection Agency proposed a rule regulating fuels and fuel additives as part of the 2013 renewable fuel standards. This rule deals with biofuels. [Thursday, February 7, 2013 (Volume 78, Number 26)]

EPA – The Environmental Protection Agency’s National Advisory Council for Environmental Policy and Technology will be hosting a public meeting on March 7, 2013 from 9 am to 5:30 pm and March 8, 2013 from 8:30 am to 2 pm. [Monday, February 11, 2013 (Volume 78, Number 28)]

EPA – The Environmental Protection Agency’s Science Advisory Board will be hosting a public meeting on March 7, 2013 from 10:30 am to 6 pm and March 8, 2013 from 8 am to 1 pm. [Monday, February 11, 2013 (Volume 78, Number 28)]

NASA – The National Aeronautics and Space Administration’s Education and Public Outreach Committee will be having a meeting on March 5, 2013 from 9 am to 5 pm. [Monday, February 11, 2013 (Volume 78, Number 28)]

Navy – The Department of the Navy’s Ocean Research Advisory Panel extended the nomination period for eight new members. Nominations should be submitted before 5 pm on March 15, 2013. [Tuesday, February 12, 2013 (Volume 78, Number 29)]

State – The Department of State and the U.S. Global Change Research Program are requesting expert reviewers for the Second Order Draft of the *2013 Supplement to the 2006 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Guidelines for National Greenhouse Gas Inventories: Wetlands*. Comments must be submitted by March 22, 2013. [Tuesday, February 12, 2013 (Volume 78, Number 29)]

NOAA – The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s National Sea Grant Advisory Board will be holding an open meeting March 4, 2013 from 8 am to 5 pm and March 5, 2013 from 8 am to 5 pm. [Thursday, February 14, 2013 (Volume 78, Number 31)]

DOE – The Department of Energy’s State Energy Advisory Board is holding open meetings on March 12, 2013 from 9 am to 5 pm and March 13, 2013 from 9 am to 5 pm. [Friday, February 15, 2013 (Volume 78, Number 32)]

DOE – The Department of Energy’s Biological and Environmental Research Advisory Committee is hosting an open teleconference on March 7, 2013 from 1 pm to 3 pm. [Thursday, February 21, 2013 (Volume 78, Number 35)]

DOE/NSF – The Department of Energy and National Science Foundation announced the open meeting of the High Energy Physics Advisory Panel on March 11, 2013 from 10 am to 6 pm and March 12, 2013 from 9 am to 6 pm. [Thursday, February 21, 2013 (Volume 78, Number 35)]

DOE/NSF – The Department of Energy and National Science Foundation announced the open meeting of the Nuclear Science Advisory Committee on March 8, 2013 from 9 am to 5 pm and March 9, 2013 from 9 am to 1 pm. [Thursday, February 21, 2013 (Volume 78, Number 35)]

EPA – The Environmental Protection Agency announced a public hearing on the proposed rule “Regulation of Fuels and Fuel Additives: 2013 Renewable Fuel Standards” in Ann Arbor, MI on March 8, 2013 at 9 am. The comment period has been extended until April 7, 2013. [Thursday, February 21, 2013 (Volume 78, Number 35)]

EPA – The Environmental Protection Agency’s National Environmental Education Advisory Council will be hosting public teleconferences February 27, 2013, March 27, 2013, May 22, 2013, June 19, 2013 and July 24, 2013, from 12 pm to 1 pm EST. [Thursday, February 21, 2013 (Volume 78, Number 35)]

DOE – The Department of Energy announced a partially closed meeting of the President’s Council of Advisors on Science and Technology on March 15, 2013 from 9 am to 12:30 pm. The meeting will be broadcast live online and archived. More information on the agenda and registering for the meeting is available in the notice. [Friday, February 22, 2013 (Volume 78, Number 36)]

EPA - The Environmental Protection Agency released the Draft Inventory of U.S. Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Sinks: 1990-2011 and will be accepting comments for 30 days. [Friday, February 22, 2013 (Volume 78, Number 36)]

State – The Department of State and the U.S. Global Change Research Program are requesting expert reviewers for the Second Order Draft of the Working Group III Contribution to the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), Mitigation of Climate Change. Comments must be submitted by March 27, 2013. [Monday, February 25, 2013 (Volume 78, Number 37)]

Army – The Army Department announced an open meeting of the Board on Coastal Engineering Research in Kitty Hawk, NC on March 18, 2013 from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm and March 19, 2013 from 8:30 am to 11:30 am. Advanced notice of attendance required. [Tuesday, February 26, 2013 (Volume 78, Number 38)]

BLM – The Bureau of Land Management announced the availability of the Record of Decision for the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska (NPR-A) Final Integrated Activity Plan. More information is available in the notice. [Tuesday, February 26, 2013 (Volume 78, Number 38)]

NSF – The National Science Foundation’s Advisory Committee for International Science and Engineering is holding open meetings on March 14, 2013 from 9:30 am to 5 pm and March 15, 2013 from 8:30 am to 12:30 pm. [Wednesday, February 27, 2013 (Volume 78, Number 39)]

DOD – The Department of Defense’s (DOD) Defense Acquisition Regulation System is proposing a rule to require DOD to encourage contractor development of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) programs. Comments will be accepted until April 29, 2013. [Thursday, February 28, 2013 (Volume 78, Number 40)]

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25. Key AGI Geoscience Policy Updates

- [Hearing on the Federal Helium Program and H.R. 527 \(2/14/13\)](#)
- [Hearing on American Energy Technology, Market, and Policy Drivers \(2/13/13\)](#)
- [Hearing on Opportunities and Challenges for Natural Gas \(2/12/13\)](#)
- [Hearing on the Role of Research and Development in American Competitiveness \(2/06/13\)](#)
- [Hearing on North America's Energy Resources \(2/05/13\)](#)

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Monthly Review prepared by Wilson Bonner and Kimberley Corwin 2013 AAPG/AGI Spring Intern.

Sources: Associated Press, AAAS, Environment and Energy Daily, Greenwire, National Academies Press, Government

Accountability Office, Open CRS, Thomas, House of Representatives, U.S. Senate, the White House, Department of Energy, Department of the Interior, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, Environmental Protection Agency, National Science Foundation, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Department of Commerce, United Nations, Department of Education, Department of Defense, Department of State, Federal Emergency Management Agency, U.S. Global Change Research Program, Bureau of Land Management, Office of Surface Mining, Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, Arizona State Senate

This monthly review goes out to members of the AGI Geoscience Policy Committee, the leadership of AGI's member societies, and others as part of a continuing effort to improve communications about the role of geoscience in policy.

Compiled March 5, 2013.
