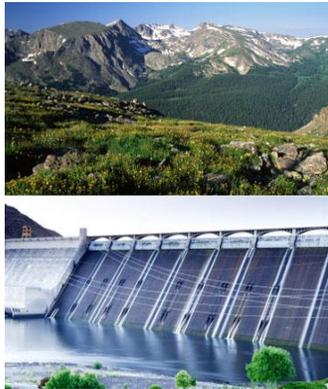




Top Stories

9/20/16 – The Natural Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) [revealed](#) that August was the hottest month since instrumental records began, marking 16 months of record warmth.

9/3/16 – The U.S. and China formally [joined](#) the Paris Agreement. The U.S. accounts for [17.89 percent](#) of global emissions. The agreement aims to limit global warming to below 2°C but does not enter into force until at least 55 countries representing at least 55 percent of global emissions formally join. As of publication, more than 60 countries representing approximately 48 percent of global emission had joined.



9/1/16 – The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) [issued](#) final guidelines to protect the greater sage grouse on public lands in the West. The guidelines are designed to help prevent the bird from being listed under the Endangered Species Act.

8/26/16 – The President expanded one, and created two new National Monuments based upon authority given to the office as part of the Antiquities Act. The ‘Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument,’ was [expanded](#), creating the world’s largest marine protected area surrounding the northwestern Hawaiian Islands. The president also created the ‘Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument’ that [protects](#) over 87,500 acres of donated forests and streams in Central Maine. Additionally, the president [created](#) the first national monument in the Atlantic

Ocean, the Northeast Canyons and Seamounts Marine National Monument, protecting close to 5,000 square miles.

8/24/16 – The Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council (Council) [released](#) a draft updated comprehensive plan to guide the spending of \$5.3 billion in Clean Water Act penalties under the 2012 RESTORE Act, in response to the largest oil spill in U.S. waters following the sinking of the Deepwater Horizon. The revised plan provides additional guidance for the Council as it determines the next round of projects and activities aimed at restoring the Gulf.



From Congress

9/20/16 – The Senate Environment and Public Works (EPW) Committee [released](#) a Majority Committee report on the Environmental Protection Agency’s Waters of the United States rule titled “From Preventing Pollution of Navigable and Interstate Waters to Regulating Farm Fields, Puddles and Dry Land: A Senate Report on the Expansion of Jurisdiction Claimed by the Army Corps of Engineers and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) under the Clean Water Act.” The report aims to highlight the significant expansion of powers that the rule provides to the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers.

9/15/16 – The U.S. Senate passed, 95-3, the [Water Resources Development Act of 2016](#) which authorizes \$10.6 billion for inland water and harbor maintenance projects, safe drinking water and clean water infrastructure, and funding for communities affected by water contamination from lead pipes.

For more information, see NCSL's [info alert](#). The House is expected to pass its version with a conference between the two chambers taking place during the fall.

9/13/16 – The U.S. Senate Agriculture Committee passed the [Emergency Wildfire and Forest Management Act](#) out of Committee, which is aimed at improving forest management activities.

From the Administration

9/23/16 – EPA [released](#) a national scale assessment that examined emissions from a variety of sources in port areas, urged voluntary measures such as replacing older trucks with hybrid or all-electric models and replacing fuel in oceangoing vessels with liquefied natural gas.

9/21/16 – The president [sent](#) a memo to more than 20 federal agencies and offices with climate science, intelligence, and national security responsibilities to create a “Climate Change and National Security Action Plan” within 90 days.

9/21/16 – The White House [released](#) a report outlining the administration’s climate change efforts throughout President Obama’s time in office, titled “Economic Record of the Obama Administration: Addressing Climate Change.”

9/20/16 – EPA [published](#) a memorandum announcing its Office of Inspector General’s (OIG) plans to evaluate EPA oversight of state hazardous waste programs that fall under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act.

9/16/16 – EPA Administrator, Gina McCarthy [signed](#) the final version of the Exceptional Events rule, updating the waiver process for states concerning air pollution violations outside of their own control such as wildfires, and other natural events. For more information, see NCSL’s [info alert](#).

9/16/16 – EPA [released](#) an issue paper on glyphosate, a herbicide used in crop production, proposing that it is not likely to be carcinogenic for humans.

9/14/16 – The Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) [awarded](#) \$44.8 million FY 2016 grants under its Cooperative Endangered

Species Conservation Fund to fund a number of [projects](#) in 20 states.

9/12/16 – The Department of Defense, the General Services Administration and NASA [proposed](#) to require federal contractors to indicate if and where they publically disclose their greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) and GHG reduction goals.

9/7/16 – NOAA [issued](#) a final rule to remove 9 of the 14 different humpback whale population segments from the Endangered Species List. The removal comes after more than 40 years of federal protection.

9/7/16 – EPA [added 10](#)~~ten~~ toxic sites on their list of areas eligible for Superfund dollars. Additionally, it [proposed](#) adding eight sites to the National Priorities List, indicating their greater risk to public health and the environment.

9/7/16 – EPA [issued](#) the final version of the Cross-State Air Pollution Rule. Beginning in May of 2017, the rule aims to decrease summertime nitrogen oxides emissions from power plants in 22 states in the eastern U.S.

8/26/16 – The EPA [announced](#) that it is establishing the Science Advisory Committee on Chemicals, as mandated under the [Frank R. Lautenberg Chemical Safety for the 21st Century Act](#) which amends the [Toxic Substances Control Act](#). The Committee must identify 10 chemicals that will be subject to risk evaluations.

Other

9/27/16 – The Clean Power Plan was heard by the D.C. Circuit Court sitting en banc. Audio of the arguments can be found [here](#); the two sessions total nearly 7 hours. The decision is likely to be issued following the November elections.

NCSL Resources

Register now for the NCSL Capitol Forum, Dec. 6-9, in Washington, D.C., to tackle critical state-federal issues, gain insight from national experts, and work with committees to craft the States’ Agenda. [Registration and housing are now open.](#)