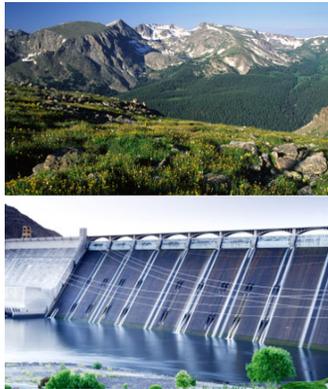




Top Stories

11/22/16 – President-elect Donald Trump [announced Doug Domenech](#) to lead the transition at the Department of Interior (DOI). Domenech leads the Fueling Freedom Project of the Texas Public Policy Foundation. He previously served as the Secretary of Natural Resources for the Commonwealth of Virginia from 2010 - 2014.

11/15/16 – The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) [announced the Methane and Waste Prevention Rule](#), aimed at reducing the “waste” of natural gas from flaring, venting, as well as leaks from oil and gas production operations on federal and tribal lands. The rule updates 30-year old regulations and will, according to BLM, reduce methane emissions by as much as 35 percent, and increase federal royalty revenues.



11/14/16 – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) will continue to hold work on the Dakota Access Pipeline on or under USACE land bordering or under Lake Oahe, as they have [determined](#) that additional discussion with the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe and analysis are warranted.

11/2/16 – The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) [proposed](#) requirements that would apply to state, local and tribal air agencies for implementing the 2015 National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for ground-level ozone. The final rule, reducing ozone NAAQS from 75 parts per billion (ppb) to 70 ppb was met with litigation, Murray Energy Corporation, et al v. EPA, Docket No: 15- 1385. A three-judge panel of the D.C.

Circuit Court of Appeals has scheduled oral arguments for Feb. 16. For more information, please see [NCSL's info alert](#).

From Congress

11/17/16 – House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy (Calif.), was [joined](#) by all Republican committee chairmen in a letter to leaders of federal agencies, cautioning them against finalizing pending rules or regulations in the administration's last days.



This follows a Congressional Research Service [report](#) which notes that the 116th Congress and the new administration may be able to undo agency final rules the current administration issued after late May 2016 as part of the Congressional Review Act.

11/17/16 – The House Natural Resources Committee advanced [H.R. 4366](#), which would direct DOI to implement the agreement between the U.S. and the Westland's Water District to settle litigation not only concerning the U.S. duty to provide drainage service, but also the agreement among the U.S., the San Luis Water District, the Panoche Water District and the Pacheco Water District.

11/8/16 – A bipartisan group of 88 lawmakers [filed](#) an amicus brief in the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals, urging the court to vacate the Waters of the United States (WOTUS) Rule, stating that the EPA and the Army Corps of Engineers overstepped the bounds set by Congress in the Clean Water Act. Additionally, 31 states and industry petitioners [filed](#) separate briefs to the 6th Circuit Court of Appeals, arguing that WOTUS violates the Clean

Water Act, Administrative Procedure Act, Natural Environmental Policy Act, and the Constitution.

11/3/16 – A bipartisan coalition of over 50 lawmakers [urged](#) the committees negotiating the final Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) to keep five proposals tied to the restoration of nationally significant water bodies and ecosystems in the final bill. This includes the Lake Tahoe Restoration Act, the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Act, the Delaware River Basin Conservation Act, the Long Island Sound Restoration and Stewardship Act, and the Columbia River Basin Restoration Act.

From the Administration

11/16/16 – The White House [released](#) a plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) by 80 percent from 2005 levels by 2050, building upon previous pledges to reduce carbon emissions between 26 and 28 percent by 2025.

11/17/16 – The Yellowstone Ecosystem Subcommittee, part of the [Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee](#) (IGBC), [approved](#) a grizzly bear conservation strategy—the final step before the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) rules on removing the bear from the federal endangered species list.

11/14/16 – FWS [published](#) a proposed rule revising regulations covering oil and gas activities on National Wildlife Refuge system lands, establishing a uniform process for operators obtaining a permit and enforcing performance standards.

11/2/16 – The USACE [released](#) guidance to aid regulators in determining whether wetlands and streams on property being developed fall under the jurisdiction of the federal government in light of the decision in *Army Corps of Engineers v. Hawkes Co. Inc.*, which found that approved jurisdictional determinations were “final agency actions” and thus subject to court challenges.

11/1/16 – United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Secretary Tom Vilsack [announced](#) that the agency is investing \$331 million in [85 projects](#) to improve water and wastewater infrastructure in 39 states and American Samoa.

10/31/16 – The White House Council on Climate Preparedness and Resilience [released](#) a report titled, “Opportunities to Enhance the Nation’s Resilience to Climate Change.” The report describes key administration accomplishments and highlights the opportunity for federal agencies and stakeholders to work together on a shared climate resilience agenda.

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, registration closes Dec. 2.](#)