

**To:** Maciel, Martha[mmaciel@blm.gov]; Michael Sintetos[msintetos@blm.gov]  
**From:** Perez, Jerome  
**Sent:** 2017-09-18T11:27:18-04:00  
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Article 3 may be of interest. JP

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**From:** **Morning Consult** <[reply@e.morningconsult.com](mailto:reply@e.morningconsult.com)>  
**Date:** Mon, Sep 18, 2017 at 5:21 AM  
**Subject:** Morning Consult Energy, Presented by the International Copper Association: White House Denies Reports That U.S. Is Rethinking Paris Withdrawal  
**To:** [jperez@blm.gov](mailto:jperez@blm.gov)

By Iulia Gheorghiu

## Government Brief

- Three months after President Donald Trump said the United States would withdraw from the Paris climate accord without more favorable terms, the Trump administration is said to be considering remaining in the agreement. ([The Wall Street Journal](#)) National security adviser H.R. McMaster denied that Trump is reconsidering his decision to pull out of the international accord, while noting that the door remains open for a better deal down the road. ( [The Washington Post](#) )
- Interior Department officials are seeking to change a 1980s regulation by allowing seismic studies within the 19.6 million acres of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, laying the groundwork for oil and gas drilling in the region, where energy exploration has not been allowed in more than 30 years. State politicians and Republicans have called for policies that would allow fossil fuels to be extracted from the refuge's coastal

plain. ([The Washington Post](#))

- Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke is recommending size reductions for six of the 27 national monuments under review, and he's proposing changes to several others, according to a leaked memo from Zinke to the president. The recommendations target Utah's Bears Ears and Grand Staircase Escalante monuments, Nevada's Gold Butte, Oregon's Cascade Siskiyou and two marine monuments in the Pacific. ([The Associated Press](#))

## Business Brief

- Russian oil company Rosneft and the Kurdistan Regional Government agreed to fund a natural gas pipeline in Iraq's Kurdistan, and sources said the company will invest more than \$1 billion in the deal. Inhabitants of the region, which has exported oil independently from the Iraqi government since 2014, will vote for its independence on Sept. 25 after years of disputes regarding shared oil exports and budget revenues. ([Reuters](#))
- Attorneys for Coal company Massey Energy's former Chief Executive Officer Don Blankenship asked the U.S. Supreme Court to hear his criminal appeal and throw out his conviction connected to a 2010 mine explosion in West Virginia. The lawyers told the justices they should hear the case so that other corporate executives aren't subject to related workplace violations. ([The Charleston Gazette Mail](#))
- Reductions in battery costs for electric vehicles have extended the ranges of vehicles, leading to lower costs per mile, according to the International Energy Agency. However, the average price of electric vehicles increased globally last year. ([Ars Technica](#))

## Chart Review

**Big Oil Becomes Greener With Cuts to Greenhouse Gas Pollution**  
**Bloomberg**

## Events Calendar (All Times Local)

### MONDAY

National Rural Water Associations WaterPro Conference	7 a.m.
Becker Friedman Institute cocktails and conversation event	5 p.m.

### TUESDAY

2017 Southwestern Tribal Climate Change Summit	7 a.m.
National Rural Water Associations WaterPro Conference	7 a.m.
National Hydropower Association Alaska Regional Meeting	8 a.m.
Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee vote on DOE, FERC, Interior Department nominees	9:30 a.m.
IEA presentation on World Energy Investment 2017 report	10 a.m.
Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee hearing on land management requirements for electricity assets	10 a.m.

### WEDNESDAY

National Rural Water Associations WaterPro Conference	8 a.m.
2017 Southwestern Tribal Climate Change Summit	8:30 a.m.
Senate Environment and Public Works Committee confirmation hearing for EPA, NRC nominees	10 a.m.
EPA tools and resources webinar	3 p.m.
Institute of World Politics event on energy security	4 p.m.

**THURSDAY**

2017 Southwestern Tribal Climate Change Summit

8:30 a.m.

**FRIDAY**

No events scheduled

**SPONSORED BY THE INTERNATIONAL COPPER ASSOCIATION****Think Copper for an Innovative Energy Future**

This week CEOs and Heads of State meet in New York to discuss the global response to climate change. Copper is essential to the innovations needed to combat environmental challenges, including climate change. As a sponsor of Climate Week NYC 2017, the International Copper Association (ICA) is proud to help lead the conversation.

**General****Interior Secretary Recommends Shrinking 6 National Monuments**  
**The Associated Press**

Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke is recommending that six of 27 national monuments under review by the Trump administration be reduced in size, with changes to several others proposed. A leaked memo from Zinke to President Donald Trump recommends that two Utah monuments – Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante – be reduced, along with Nevada's Gold Butte and Oregon's Cascade Siskiyou.

**Left says Trump EPA heavy on industry, political insiders**  
**Timothy Cama, The Hill**

The Trump administration has filled its politically appointed positions at the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) with officials tied to President Trump's campaign, industries the agency regulates, and many with ties to Administrator Scott Pruitt's past job as Oklahoma's attorney general. In resumes for two dozen political appointees who joined the agency since Inauguration Day, ties to Pruitt and Trump shine, while few employees have

much experience in environmental protection.

**Energy stocks post biggest weekly gain of the year - and could keep rallying**

**Tom DiChristopher, CNBC**

Energy stocks posted their first four week winning streak of 2017, and some portfolio managers believe the sector can keep rallying. The Energy Select Sector SPDR exchange traded fund surged an additional 2.2 percent this week to post the best weekly gain of 2017.

**Oil and Natural Gas**

**Russia's Rosneft clinches gas pipeline deal with Iraq's Kurdistan**

**Dmitry Zhdannikov, Reuters**

Russian oil major Rosneft will invest in gas pipelines in Iraq's Kurdistan, expanding its commitment to the region ahead of its independence vote to help it become a major exporter of gas to Turkey and Europe. Kurdistan has been exporting oil independently from the central government in Baghdad since 2014 and Kremlin controlled Rosneft joined the list of buyers this year, lending the semi autonomous region hundreds of millions of dollars in loans guaranteed by future oil sales.

**Trump administration working toward renewed drilling in Arctic National Wildlife Refuge**

**Juliet Eilperin, The Washington Post**

The Trump administration is quietly moving to allow energy exploration in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge for the first time in more than 30 years, according to documents obtained by The Washington Post, with a draft rule that would lay the groundwork for drilling. The effort represents a twist in a political fight that has raged for decades.

**U.S. oil prices hit \$50 on rising refinery demand, falling rig count**

**Fanny Potkin, Reuters**

U.S. crude oil prices rose above \$50 per barrel on Monday and were near last week's multi month highs as the number of U.S. rigs drilling for new production fell and refineries continued to restart after getting knocked out by Hurricane Harvey. U.S. West Texas Intermediate crude futures CLc1 were trading up 41 cents, or 0.8 percent, at \$50.30 by 0852 GMT, near the three month high of \$50.50 it reached last Thursday.

**IEA Sees Risk of Volatile Oil Prices on Weak Upstream Investment**

**Vivian Nereim, Bloomberg**

A dearth of new investment in oil production is stoking a risk of tighter crude

supply and unstable prices, even as demand growth is expected to slow over the next five years, according to a senior International Energy Agency official. The worldwide cushion of spare production capacity will shrink without further investment in exploration and output, Neil Atkinson, the head of the IEA's oil markets and industry division, said at a conference in Manama, Bahrain.

**Big Oil Becomes Greener With Cuts to Greenhouse Gas Pollution**  
**Anna Hirtenstein, Bloomberg**

Sixty two of the world's 100 largest companies consistently cut their emissions on an annual basis between 2010 and 2015, with an overall 12 percent decline during that period, according to a report from Bloomberg New Energy Finance released ahead of its conference in London on Monday. Now, as European officials say the White House may water down its commitment to Paris instead of scrapping the deal, the BNEF report suggests industry is scaling back the emissions.

**Utilities and Infrastructure**

**After Hurricane Irma: FPL restores power to nearly all of region**  
**Elliott Wenzler, The Palm Beach Post**

While air conditioning has begun to flow and lights are back on in most South Florida homes after Hurricane Irma, some residents are still struggling as they remain without power Sunday. Statewide, FPL said only 7.7 percent of its accounts were without power as of 4 p.m. 375,900 accounts out of 4,904,045.

**Hurricanes present new challenge to Trump's fast-track permit plan**

**Josh Siegel, Washington Examiner**

The Trump administration, wanting to rebuild America's infrastructure as quickly as possible, has issued several executive orders to streamline the permitting and environmental review process for federally funded projects. But environmentalists, legal experts, and some lawmakers are now questioning the wisdom of these measures in the wake of major flooding and destruction caused by Hurricanes Harvey and Irma.

**Garbage From Irma Will Fuel Florida's Power Grid**  
**Eric Roston, Bloomberg**

Florida burns a disproportionate amount of U.S. trash. Ten "waste to energy" plants turned 4.5 million tons of trash into 3.5 million megawatt hours statewide in 2016.

**Renewables**



**Electric vehicle price is rising, but cost-per-mile is falling**  
**Megan Geuss, Ars Technica**

Around the world, the average price of electric vehicles (EVs) rose in 2016, but that's not necessarily cause for alarm according to the International Energy Agency (IEA). When the agency divided the list price of EVs with their range, it found a downward trend in how much bang an EV buyer is getting for their buck.

**China welcomes EU decision on solar panel import prices**  
**Philip Blenkinsop et al., Reuters**

China's Ministry of Commerce said on Monday a European Union move to reduce the minimum price imposed on imported Chinese solar panels as a "positive step" and that it hoped that duties would end as soon as possible. The EU announced on Sept. 16 that it would progressively reduce the minimum prices that Chinese solar panel makers are allowed to sell their products for in Europe.

**The electric vehicle revolution is 'a huge opportunity' for this robotics giant**  
**Nyshka Chandran, CNBC**

ABB, a major player in the realm of robotics, automation and power generation, is fiercely committed to the global shift to electric vehicle transportation. The transformation from traditional cars to electric ones is "a huge opportunity" that will enable ABB to "work with smart cities of the future," Chairman Peter Voser told CNBC on the sidelines of the Singapore Summit over the weekend.

**Coal**

**Blankenship again urges Supreme Court to hear appeal of his conviction**  
**Ken Ward Jr., The Charleston Gazette-Mail**

Attorneys for Don Blankenship made their last pitch this week to the U.S. Supreme Court, telling justices they should hear the former Massey Energy CEO's criminal appeal so that other corporate executives aren't subject to similar prosecutions for workplace safety violations. Blankenship's legal team on Thursday filed a reply to an earlier legal brief in which the Trump administration's Department of Justice defended the conviction of Blankenship and urged the court not to hear his appeal.

**Idaho Power seeks to retire two coal-fired plants**  
**The Associated Press**

Idaho Power wants to retire two coal fired power plants it says won't be able

to produce electricity at competitive prices. The move is part of a 20 year plan to provide energy for Idaho and Oregon that has drawn critics worried about cost, pollution and energy needs.

**\$10M coming to Colstrip in coal plant settlement, but future of facility darkens**

**MTN News**

One of the owners of the Colstrip coal fire power plant has agreed to set aside millions of dollars in recovery for the community and move toward closure of all four units within the next decade, Washington state officials said Friday. Puget Sound Energy will set aside a minimum of \$10 million for economic recovery efforts for Colstrip and sets aside a plan to pay down all debts on the plant by 2027, according to the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission.

**Nuclear**

**Contract extended for management of US nuclear dump**

**Lillian Case, The Associated Press**

The U.S. Department of Energy has extended a contract for the management of the government's only underground nuclear waste repository that will allow the Nuclear Waste Partnership to continue operating the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant in Carlsbad through September 2020. WIPP resumed operations earlier this year following a shutdown that followed a 2014 radiation release caused by inappropriate packaging of waste by workers at Los Alamos National Laboratory.

**Locals celebrate Dunn County property's new ownership by DNR**

**WEAU News**

A Dunn County property that was purchased with intention to build a nuclear power plant, and for years saw misuse by the public. "This area as well as the rest of the ownership had been horribly overrun with ATV traffic, garbage dump sites and things like that," says Jess Carstens of the Wisconsin DNR.

**Climate**

**Trump Administration Seeks to Avoid Withdrawal From Paris**

**Climate Accord**

**Emre Peker, The Wall Street Journal**

The Trump administration is considering staying in the Paris agreement to fight climate change "under the right conditions," offering to re engage in the international deal three months after President Donald Trump said the U.S. would pull out if it didn't find more favorable terms. During a climate change meeting Saturday of more than 30 ministers led by Canada, China and the



European Union, in Montreal, U.S. officials broached revising U.S. climate change goals, two participants said, signaling a compromise that would keep the U.S. at the table even if it meant weakening the international effort.

**McMaster says no redo on Paris climate deal decision**

**Anne Gearan, The Washington Post**

National security adviser H.R. McMaster denied Sunday that President Trump is reconsidering his decision to pull out of the Paris climate change accord but said the door remains open to a better agreement down the road. "That's a false report," McMaster said of published reports over the weekend that the administration might not pull out of the deal after all and might seek new terms instead.

**Trump Administration to Brief Officials on Emissions Goals**

**Emre Peker et al., The Wall Street Journal**

President Donald Trump's top economic adviser is expected to outline the administration's proposals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions while restating that its stance on the Paris climate accord has not changed, White House officials said, following signals over the weekend that the U.S. was exploring ways to remain in the 2015 pact. Mr. Cohn, who is leading the White House's stance toward the 197 party accord, is set to discuss how the U.S. can continue to reduce greenhouse gas emissions without sacrificing its re emergence as a leading energy producer, according to a White House official.

**Neil deGrasse Tyson says it might be 'too late' to recover from climate change**

**Alexandra King, CNN**

Scientist and astrophysicist Neil deGrasse Tyson said Sunday that, in the wake of devastating floods and damage caused by Hurricanes Harvey and Irma, climate change had become so severe that the country "might not be able to recover." In an interview on CNN's "GPS," Tyson got emotional when Fareed Zakaria asked what he made of Homeland Security Adviser Tom Bossert's refusal to say whether climate change had been a factor in Hurricanes Harvey or Irma's strength despite scientific evidence pointing to the fact that it had made the storms more destructive.

**A Message from the International Copper Association:**

The copper industry is committed to sustainable production and conscious of the enormous opportunities offered by a low carbon future. ICA's members who make up 50% of the global copper industry invest more than \$20 billion in improving the environmental performance of their operations each year. [Take a look at how the copper industry contributes to the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.](#)

## Opinions, Editorials and Perspectives

### Using the E.P.A. to Prop Up Big Coal The Editorial Board, The New York Times

Eight months in, the administration has already killed, or is in the process of killing, rules that would prevent the dumping of coal mining wastes in streams, impose a temporary moratorium on new mine leases in the West, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions from coal fired power plants — one of President Barack Obama's most important efforts to resist climate change. All of this to prop up an industry whose workers would be best served not by false promises of new mining jobs, but by aggressive programs to retrain them for a changing economy.

### Enough tiptoeing around. Let's make this clear: coal kills people Tim Hollo, The Guardian

From the mines to the trains to the climate disruption; from black lung to asthma, heat stress to hunger, fires to floods: coal is killing people in Australia and around the world right now. Yet we are once again having what passes for political debate about extending the life of coal fired power stations and, extraordinarily, building new ones.

### Solar Power Death Wish The Editorial Board, The Wall Street Journal

U.S. manufacturers won countervailing and antidumping duties against imports from China and Taiwan in 2012 and in 2015. But now they're resorting to Section 201 of the Trade Act of 1974 because they don't need to show they are victims of dumping or foreign government subsidies.

#### **A Message from the International Copper Association:**

Copper has been pushing the boundaries of innovation since the dawn of civilization. It's already an essential ingredient in powering modern society and enabling innovative technologies such as low carbon tech and electric cars. The copper industry continues to invest in new and improved solutions for electric vehicles, renewable energy and energy efficiency to help limit global warming.

## Research Reports

### Low carbon renewable natural gas production from coalbeds and implications for carbon capture and storage Zaixing Huang et al., Nature Communications

The generation of biogas through biostimulation and bioaugmentation is limited to the bioavailability of coal derived compounds and is considered carbon positive. The results suggest that coalbeds can act as natural

geobioreactors to produce low carbon renewable natural gas, which can be considered carbon neutral, or perhaps even carbon negative depending on the amount of carbon sequestered within the coal.

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