

# PERC NEWSLETTER

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Welcome to the latest edition of the Pennsylvania Environmental Resource Consortium's bimonthly newsletter! Members can use this newsletter to stay informed on member institutions' efforts, PERC's upcoming events, and fluctuating federal and state policies while gaining positive sustainability news and recommendations!

**HIGHER EDUCATION  
CONNECTING, COLLABORATING,  
AND TAKING ACTION**

## IN THIS ISSUE

**BRIGHTSIDE REPORT!**

**SUSTAINABILITY  
CAMPUS SPOTLIGHT:  
LVC'S SOLAR ARRAYS**

**POLICY RADAR**

**MEDIA  
RECOMMENDATION  
ROUNDUP**

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

**RESOURCES**

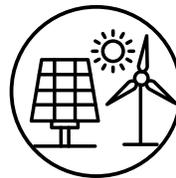
**LEBANON  
VALLEY'S SOLAR  
ARRAYS FOR  
CARBON  
COMMITMENTS**

# Brightside Report!



## FINLAND GOES COAL-FREE

As of April 1<sup>st</sup>, Finland no longer relies on energy created from coal following the closure of the country's last coal-fired power plant.



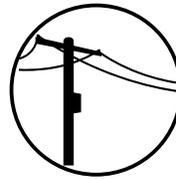
## RENEWABLES' CAPACITY ON THE RISE WORLDWIDE

Reaching a never-before-seen level of growth, the 2024 year saw renewable energy's capacity increase by 15.1%, which is equal to 585 GW.



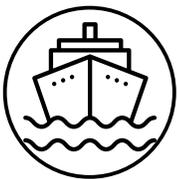
## PIT AIRPORT SOLAR UPDATE

Originally, featured in the third issue, Pittsburgh's international airport is expanding its solar array with 11,216 panels, thus adding 4.7 MW of power by 2027.



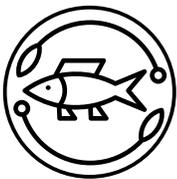
## PJM'S PORTFOLIO SHIFTS

For the first time, the largest regional electricity market, PJM, had a higher contribution from renewables (11,800 MW) than coal, which was attributed primarily to solar.



## INTERNATIONAL MARITIME SHIPPING EMISSIONS RULE

Following ten years of negotiations, the international community has established a rule requiring the transition to cleaner fuels by 2028.



## AQUACULTURE FOR CARBON CAPTURE

New research shows that adding iron ore to fish farms' waters transforms toxic H<sub>2</sub>S to FeS, thus increasing water's ability to store higher amounts of CO<sub>2</sub>.

LEBANON VALLEY COLLEGE

# SOLAR ARRAYS FOR CARBON COMMITMENTS

As the spring semester draws to a close, Lebanon Valley College's campus will soon fall quiet as summer sets in. Yet, while students are on vacation, Lebanon Valley administration and staff will be working hard on a new and exciting project. As Lebanon Valley continues to uphold its pledge to the American College and University President's Climate Commitment (ACUPCC), the campus's Facilities Management team has begun planning for an on-campus solar array!

Currently, Lebanon Valley spends \$1.625 million each year to cover utilities for the campus. Taking a closer look at that figure, approximately half of that budget is dedicated solely to electricity—a figure that varies year-to-year due to energy market price fluctuations. Pairing the college's desire for cost certainty with its commitment to decreasing campus emissions, the Lebanon Valley team proposed to redistribute the utility budget's current energy allotment to take on this project.

The array, located on a 10-acre plot of farmland owned by the college, is anticipated to generate up to 58% of the campus's current energy requirements. As a result, the college will be able to

decrease its reliance on natural gas, which is currently responsible for approximately 33% of the campus's electricity. Simultaneously, the array will create a "positive cash flow deal" according to Mike Mumper, the Executive Director of Facilities Management at Lebanon Valley.

In preparing for construction in June of 2026, plans for the site's development, soil erosion impacts, and stormwater management are being developed. Beyond these plans, the team is engaging with the campus's energy supplier, the college's governing board, and Annville township officials. In fact, Lebanon Valley is even working with the township to write and adopt an ordinance for on-site solar construction. As a result, this project will not only create savings and decrease campus emissions but also cement a path to onsite solar for Annville businesses and residents!



SOLAR ARRAY LOCATION PLAN

# Policy Radar



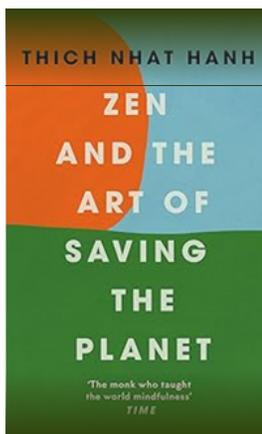
As the federal policy space continues to rapidly unfold, this section provides a brief non-partisan introduction of current key policies, their implementation date, and their implications.

Policy or Action	Effective	Implication	Source
Executive Order 14279: Reforming Accreditation to Strengthen Higher Education	4/23/25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education Secretary is approved to deny, monitor, suspend, or terminate accreditors that call for institutions to engage in DEI initiatives.</li> <li>• Assess whether to suspend or terminate the American Bar Association’s Council, Committee on Medical Education, and the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education due to DEI aspects.</li> <li>• Establish new principles of student-oriented accreditation including accreditors using data on student outcomes without reference to race, ethnicity, or sex.</li> </ul>	1, 2
Executive Order 14283: White House Initiative to Promote Excellence and Innovation at HBCUs	4/23/25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forms the White House Initiative to Historically Black Colleges and Universities.</li> <li>• Establishes ED President’s Board of Advisors on HBCUs.</li> <li>• Revokes Biden’s EO 14041: White House Initiative on Advancing Educational Equity, Excellence and Economic Opportunity through HBCUs.</li> <li>• EPA must terminate the HBCU and Minority Serving Institutions Advisory Council.</li> </ul>	3
Evaluation of Global Change Research Act of 1990	4/28/25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dismissed all on the Global Change Research Program.</li> <li>• Dismissed all 400 workers connected to Congress’s upcoming 6th National Climate Assessment report (due 2028).</li> </ul>	4, 5
Executive Order 14285: Unleashing America’s Offshore Critical Minerals and Resources	4/24/25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Authorizes deep-sea mining in international waters for American companies after leaving international negotiations.</li> <li>• Fast-tracks the permitting process for commercial mining.</li> <li>• Implications: disturbance of deep-sea habitat destruction.</li> </ul>	6

# Media Roundup

THIS WEEK'S SUSTAINABILITY MEDIA RECOMMENDATIONS!

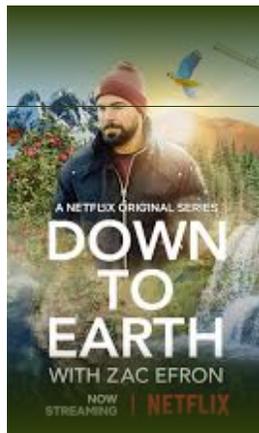
## BOOK



### *Zen and the Art of Saving the Planet* by Thich Nhat Hanh

In his 47<sup>th</sup> published work, Hanh explores climate change through the lens of Buddhism. Focusing on how one can live as an environmental activist, Hanh highlights steps for activists to take while guided by mindful living.

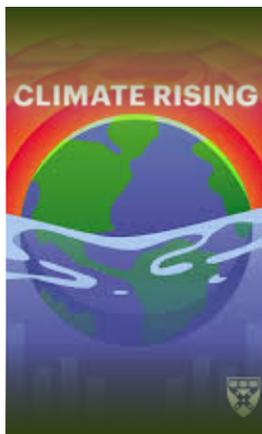
## FILM



### *Down to Earth* by Zac Efron

In this eccentric TV series, travel around the world as Zac Efron explores different means of sustainable living. From Iceland to Peru, investigate topics that are both at the forefront of the field as well as those that are potentially unconventional to your definition of sustainability.

## PODCAST



### *Media's Role in Shaping Climate Action* by Climate Rising

Tune in to learn from CNN's Chief Climate Correspondent, Bill Weir, about the evolution of climate reporting, framing challenges for varied audiences, and an explanation for why people have different options on climate change.



# UPCOMING EVENTS

## PERC EVENTS

- Spring Sustainability Leaders Conference
- May 18<sup>th</sup>, all day
- **Must RSVP by May 13th**
- **Interested but did not receive an invite?** Email [greencolleges@gmail.com](mailto:greencolleges@gmail.com)

## MEMBER SCHOOL EVENTS

- Dickinson College's 2025 Valley & Ridge Faculty Development Workshop
  - May 20th-22nd
  - Dickinson College
  - Must RSVP!

## OTHER EVENTS

- Sustainable Energy Fund's EnergyPath Conference
  - July 16, 2025
  - DeSales University
  - Student scholarships available!
- PennEnvironment's Annual Virtual Climate Lobby Day
  - June 5, 2025
  - Via Zoom
  - Must RSVP!
- Penn State Climate Consortium's Climate Symposium
  - May 19th-20th
  - Penn State Main Campus
  - Must RSVP (free) by May 12th!

**HAVE AN EVENT?**

**EMAIL [GREENCOLLEGES@GMAIL.COM](mailto:GREENCOLLEGES@GMAIL.COM)**



# UPCOMING EVENTS

## Sustainability Leaders Conference

Join PERC on May 18<sup>th</sup> in State College for a one-day conference with:

- The Evolution of Climate Action and Leadership in Higher Education, Keynote Speech, Dr. Tim Carter, Second Nature President
- Sustainability Curriculum: Competencies and Best Practices, presentation, Dr. Krista Bailey, Penn State Sustainability Associate Director for Campus Sustainability
- Sustainability and Equity: A short film featuring student perspectives on equity's place in sustainability
- "Finding the Sweet Spot between Environmental and Financial Sustainability by The Stone House Group Managing Principal, Mr. Larry Eighmy
- Exploring "Fostering a Culture of Sustainability", workshop from PERC
- We are also going to be joined by Dr. Richard Alley, National Medal of Science recipient and Evan Pugh University Professor of Geoscience, in the morning for the welcoming remarks.



# RSVP NOW!

NEED THE CODE? EMAIL  
[GREENCOLLEGES@GMAIL.COM](mailto:GREENCOLLEGES@GMAIL.COM)

# Resources



<b>Reference Number</b>	<b>Link</b>
1	<a href="https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/04/reforming-accreditation-to-strengthen-higher-education/">https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/04/reforming-accreditation-to-strengthen-higher-education/</a>
2	<a href="https://www.cbcfinc.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/Reforming-Accreditation-to-Strengthen-Higher-Education.pdf">https://www.cbcfinc.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/Reforming-Accreditation-to-Strengthen-Higher-Education.pdf</a>
3	<a href="https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/04/white-house-initiative-to-promote-excellence-and-innovation-at-historically-black-colleges-and-universities/">https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/04/white-house-initiative-to-promote-excellence-and-innovation-at-historically-black-colleges-and-universities/</a>
4	<a href="https://www.reuters.com/sustainability/cop/trump-administration-dismisses-all-authors-key-climate-report-email-says-2025-04-28/">https://www.reuters.com/sustainability/cop/trump-administration-dismisses-all-authors-key-climate-report-email-says-2025-04-28/</a>
5	<a href="https://www.nytimes.com/2025/04/28/climate/national-climate-assessment-authors-dismissed.html">https://www.nytimes.com/2025/04/28/climate/national-climate-assessment-authors-dismissed.html</a>
6	<a href="https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/04/unleashing-americas-offshore-critical-minerals-and-resources/">https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/04/unleashing-americas-offshore-critical-minerals-and-resources/</a>
7	<a href="http://wordpress.lvc.edu/wordpress/lavie/2025/04/16/planned-solar-project/">http://wordpress.lvc.edu/wordpress/lavie/2025/04/16/planned-solar-project/</a>