



PERC NEWSLETTER

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HIGHER EDUCATION CONNECTING,
COLLABORATING, AND TAKING ACTION

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Brightside Report!



GREEN MARITIME CORRIDOR

As the first zero-emission passage between the two continents, a new electric ferry between Spain and Morocco will open in 2027.



EPA'S COMMITMENT TO FISH IN THE DELEWARE RIVER

To address increasing dissolved oxygen and ammonia levels, the EPA announced the development of new water quality standards for the Delaware river.



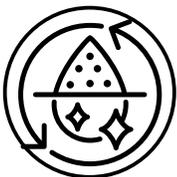
IMPROVED FEDERAL PLASTIC REGULATIONS

In 2024, a new plan including the standardization of microplastics, a \$500 million grant program, and a mandate preventing federal agency purchasing of single-use plastics was set.



REWILDING EFFORTS TAKE OFF AROUND THE WORLD

From Argentina to Indonesia, species like zebra sharks and seed finches are seeing a re-emergence in their original ecosystems!



INCREASING WATER WITH DECREASED DESALINATION COSTS

Using carbon cloth electrodes to remove boron, researchers have discovered a water desalination process that cuts 15% off of current costs.



NGO REACHES 95% OF US NEIGHBORHOODS

Since 2022, the Arbor Day Foundation has reached more than 76,000 neighborhoods with tree-planting programs, and looks to plant 500 million trees by 2027!

ALLEGHENY COLLEGE

CARBON-NEUTRAL CAMPUS

With over 200 years of experience in the higher education space, Allegheny College has fostered its fair share of innovation on its campus. From establishing one of the original environmental science departments in the nation to being one of seven participating institutions in President Obama's Better Building Challenge, Allegheny's cutting-edge sustainability work is well known. Yet, one of their most impressive achievements came about in 2020. That year, the college became the first institution in Pennsylvania and the 8th in the country to achieve carbon-neutral status, as verified by Second Nature. How did they achieve it?

In 2007, Allegheny College became a signatory of the Presidential Climate Commitment (American College & University Presidents' Climate Commitment) and, thus, agreed to work towards eliminating all campus-generated greenhouse gas emissions by 2020. Soon after, in 2010, Allegheny formally pledged to achieve carbon neutrality within the decade. With a student population of 1,200 and a campus area equal to 566 acres, Allegheny's administration had to think strategically, yet creatively about how to achieve this goal.

Beginning with what could be done directly on-site, Allegheny College implemented key changes in the built environment. Ranging

from retrofits to sustainable construction, these efforts increased the college's energy efficiency by almost 20% over the ten years. Moving to examine their energy portfolio, they decreased their footprint via on-campus solar arrays, geothermal building temperature regulation systems, and wind-generated electricity purchases.

Like many carbon-neutral locations, the last piece of the puzzle for Allegheny came in the form of carbon offsets. In taking a holistic approach to carbon offsets, Allegheny made intentional selections for the offset projects. Specifically, the college chose projects that had some relation to research topics currently underway on campus, such as methane-capture electricity and grassland carbon sequestration. As Allegheny College continues to reduce campus emissions and maintain its carbon-neutral status, they serve as an example for all Pennsylvania institutions engaged in the campus emissions space.



ONE OF SEVEN RAINGARDENS
TO REDUCE CAMPUS RUNOFF

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. (Dense week)

| Policy or Action | Effective | Implication | Source |
|---|-----------|--|---------|
| Executive Order 14260: Protecting American Energy from State Overreach | 4/8/2025 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires the Attorney General to review and report on laws, regulations, and policies at the state or local level that are considered to be “burdening” domestic energy resources and projects. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ If found, directed to work towards ending enforcement • Specific language regarding the review of laws includes those discussing “climate change or environmental, social, and governance initiatives, environmental justices, carbon or greenhouse gas emissions and... carbon penalties or taxes” • Anticipated targets: Climate Super Fund laws, some state Cap-and-Trade programs, and local laws | 1, 2 |
| Executive Order 14270: Zero-based Regulatory Budgeting to Unleash American Energy | 4/9/2025 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orders all agencies with regulations listed in the EO to establish a “sunset rule” effective no later than Sept. 30, 2025 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ “Sunset” regulations cease to be effective ◦ Final “sunset date”: 1 year from ruling ◦ Open to public comment for potential extension based on use/need • Calls for “sunset” regulations to be removed from the code of federal regulations • Requires any new regulation to have a conditional “sunset date” no more than 5 years after implementation, including amendments • Impacts 9 federal agencies and the Army Corp of Engineers via 22 regulations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Ex: Energy Independence and Security Act (2007), Endangered Species Act (1973) | 3, 4, 5 |
| Department of Education Anti-DEI Certification (K-12) | 4/13/2025 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires K-12 schools receiving federal funds to certify they are following civil rights laws and eliminating DEI practices to continue receiving funds • Enforceable under the False Claims Act • Anticipated targets: Title I Funding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Potential for implementation in HEIs | 6 |

Policy Radar



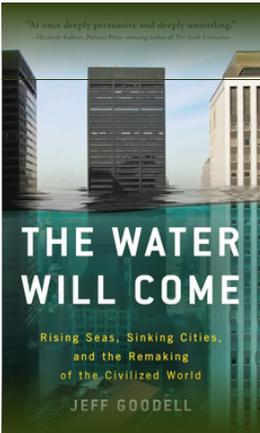
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|--|------------------|---|------------------|
| <p>Executive Order 14261: Reinvigorating America's Beautiful Clean Coal Industry and Amending EO 14241</p> | <p>4/8/2025</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes coal to having “mineral” designation under the National Energy Dominance Council <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Calls for Energy and Interior Secretaries to determine if coal used in steel is a “critical mineral” and include on Critical Materials list • Requests a report identifying coal resources and reserves on Federal lands <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Prioritization of coal leasing on federal lands using emergency authorities • Requires agencies to identify policies, regulations, or programs discouraging coal production <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Revise or rescind such identified actions and financial investments • Terminating Secretary Jewell's Coal Leasing Moratorium • Agencies must notify the CEQ of any exclusions to NEPA that could further coal production • Prioritizing coal tech, especially for AI data centers | <p>7, 8</p> |
| <p>USDA Cancels Partnership for Climate-Smart Commodities Program</p> | <p>4/14/2025</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Biden Administration program provided benefits for American farmers who grew crops that held enhanced carbon emission reduction capabilities. • The program is being re-worked as the “Advancing Markets for Producers Initiative” to be more “cost-conscious” | <p>9, 10</p> |
| <p>EPA court case loss regarding Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (GGRF)</p> | <p>4/15/2025</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate United won their case against the EPA citing the illegal termination of the GGRF's benefits • U.S. District Court judge ruled the EPA must “immediately unfreeze all green bank funds” and “maintain regular access to GGRF's \$20 billion.” • EPA was granted a stay on the 16th | <p>9, 11, 12</p> |

Media Roundup

THIS WEEK'S SUSTAINABILITY MEDIA RECOMMENDATIONS!

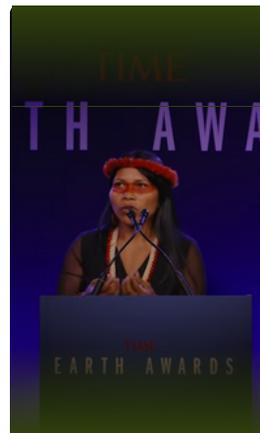
BOOK



The Water Will Come by Jeff Goodell

Transitioning to scientific investigative journalism, this piece reports on the cumulative impact of rising sea-levels around the world. Ranging from innovative solutions to real estate insurance to island nations, this book covers the A to Zs of sea-level rise impacts.

FILM



Mother Earth Is Calling and We All Need to Listen by Nemonte Nenquimo

In light of Earth Day 2025, listen to Nemonte Nenquimo, a Waorani and Environmental Leader, share Mother Nature's call for respect in light of the climate crisis and consumerism.

PODCAST



“Reimagining Funding for Climate Justice: Beyond the IRA” by *The Joy Report*

Holding a magnifying glass to climate funding, Intersectional Environmentalist (IE) dissects the IRA and IJJA, highlights noteworthy gaps, and shares private grant opportunities. After noting issues and rifts, IE introduces the concept of radical imagination for funding structures.



UPCOMING EVENTS

PERC EVENTS

- 2025 Campus Sustainability Champions Celebration
 - April 24th, 7 PM on Zoom
 - Must RSVP!
- Spring Sustainability Leaders Conference
 - May 18th, all day
 - Invitation only for institutions' Directors, Coordinators, and Chief Officers
 - Must RSVP
 - Interested but did not receive an invite? Email oliviadiprinzio@gmail.com

MEMBER SCHOOL EVENTS

- Dickinson College's 2025 Valley & Ridge Faculty Development Workshop
 - May 20th-22nd
 - Dickinson College
 - Must RSVP by March 28th!

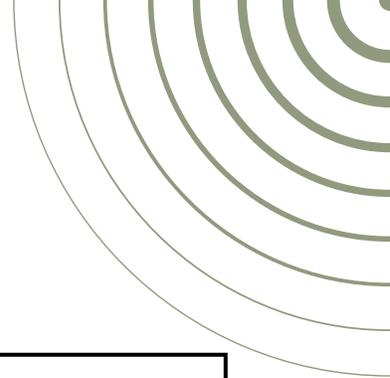
OTHER EVENTS

- Sustainable Energy Fund's EnergyPath Conference
 - July 16, 2025
 - DeSales University
 - Speaker proposals are open!

HAVE AN EVENT?

EMAIL OLIVIADIPRINZIO@GMAIL.COM

Resources



| <u>Reference Number</u> | <u>Link</u> |
|-------------------------|---|
| 1 | https://blogs.law.columbia.edu/climatechange/2025/04/08/new-executive-order-tees-up-challenges-to-state-and-local-climate-laws/ |
| 2 | http://whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/04/protecting-american-energy-from-state-overreach/ |
| 3 | https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2025/04/15/2025-06466/zero-based-regulatory-budgeting-to-unleash-american-energy |
| 4 | https://www.whitehouse.gov/fact-sheets/2025/04/fact-sheet-president-donald-j-trump-pushes-the-reset-button-on-americas-energy-regulations/ |
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<https://allegheny.edu/about/news/allegheny-college-becomes-first-college-in-pennsylvania-eighth-in-nation-to-achieve-carbon-neutrality/>

<https://alleghenycampus.com/18454/science-2/alleghenys-journey-to-carbon-neutrality-offsets/>

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