

Climate & Energy Communications Cheat Sheet 12/7/18



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On Wednesday, along with the World Resources Institute (WRI) and the Office of Senator Tina Smith (D-NM), we hosted a briefing on Capitol Hill to unpack the recently released Fourth National Climate Assessment with over 30 attendees from both the House and Senate. As we described in the briefing, this Congressionally-mandated assessment offered a grim perspective of what we are and are not doing to address climate change in the United States and the consequences that lay in that inaction.

In case you don't have time for 1600+ pages of light reading, we've put together a few of the most compelling takeaways from yesterday's briefing and the report below.

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.@ThirdWayEnergy's @LindseyNWalter fact checks Sarah Sanders and the Trump Admin on the #BlackFridayReport. The National #Climate Assessment is data driven and the message is clear: we've got to act now.



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10 Facts from the Report

- Between 1979 and 2013, the number of days with weather conditions conducive to fire has increased globally, including in the United States. At the same time, human activities have expanded into areas off uninhabited forests, shrub lands, and grasslands, exposing these human activities to a greater risk of property and life loss at this wildland-urban interface. (*Chapter 5: Land Cover and Land-Use Change*)
- The more than 60,000 miles of U.S. roads and bridges in coastal floodplains are clearly already vulnerable to extreme storms and hurricanes that cost billions in repairs. Higher sea levels will cause more severe flooding and more damage during coastal storms and hurricanes. (*Chapter 12: Transportation*)

- Disruptions to the transportation network during extreme weather events can disproportionately affect low-income people, older adults, and people with limited English proficiency, and other vulnerable urban populations. These populations have fewer mobility options, reduced access to healthcare, and reduced economic ability to purchase goods and services to prepare for and recover from events. (*Chapter 12: Transportation*)
- Climate change is anticipated to increase the current \$73 billion in temperature-induced railway delay costs by \$25-\$60 billion. (*Chapter 12: Transportation*)
- Under a high emissions scenario, between \$66 and \$106 billion worth of real estate will be below sea level by 2050, increasing to \$238 - \$507 billion by 2100. (*Chapter 8: Coastal Effects*)
- By 2100, there will be 13 million people potentially at risk of needing to migrate if there is a sea level rise of 6 feet. (*Chapter 8: Coastal Effects*)
- By 2050, under the high emissions scenario, 86% of ecosystems will have to contend with combinations of temperature and pH that have never before been experienced by modern species. (*Chapter 7: Ecosystems, Ecosystem Services, and Biodiversity*)
- Climate change threatens the delicately balanced subsistence networks of tribes and indigenous people by, for example, changing the patterns of seasonal timing and availability of culturally important species in traditional hunting, gathering, and fishing areas. (*Chapter 17: Tribes and Indigenous Peoples*)
- Federal and state legal frameworks and regulatory actions can compound physical climate change stressors on Indigenous peoples' subsistence economies and act as a barrier to climate change adaptation. Thereby increasing the need for more community-centered and influenced climate mitigation adaptation policies. (*Chapter 17: Tribes and Indigenous Peoples*)
- The health impacts of climate change are not felt equally, and some populations are at higher risk than others. Low-income communities and some communities of color are often already overburdened with poor environmental conditions and are disproportionately affected by and less resilient to, the health impacts of climate change. (*Chapter 14: Human Health*)

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On Monday, December 3 the United Nations Climate Change Conference of Parties 24 (COP24) began in Katowice, Poland where representatives of over 200 countries are gathering to discuss the global climate problem and one of the major topics on the agenda will be instituting reforms to strengthen and enforce the Paris Climate Agreement. We learned on December 5, from [reporting](#) by Brady Dennis

and Chris Mooney of *The Washington Post* that, “Global emissions of carbon dioxide are reaching the highest levels on record, scientists projected Wednesday, in the latest evidence of the chasm between international goals for combating climate change and what countries are doing.” Representatives of the Trump Administration are expected to hold talks in Katowice during COP24 about their support of coal and fossil fuels while they simultaneously workto loosen environmental rules for coal power plants here at home.

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