Message

From: Morning Consult [reply@e.morningconsult.com]
Sent: 5/9/2017 12:35:48 PM
To: Bohan, Suzanne [bohan.suzanne@epa.gov]
Subject: Morning Consult Energy: Trump Picks 2 FERC Nominees

By Jack Fitzpatrick and Iulia Gheorghiu

Washington Brief

- President Donald Trump announced that he plans to appoint Senate aide Neil Chatterjee and Pennsylvania regulator Rob Powelson to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. (Politico)
- It appears likely that the Senate will vote this week on a resolution blocking the Obama administration's Bureau of Land Management venting and flaring rule, Sen. Maria Cantwell (D-Wash.) said. (The Hill)
- Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke suspended and is reviewing more than 200 of the department's advisory panels. (The Washington Post)

Business Brief

- The 10 European countries with the highest greenhouse gas emissions from energy use are spending about $6.9 billion a year subsidizing coal. (Reuters)

- Germany may face higher electricity prices as it looks to move away from nuclear power early next decade, according to a German regulator. (Bloomberg News)

- BP announced a "major" gas discovery off the coast of Senegal by its U.S. partner Kosmos Energy, five months after BP agreed to invest $1 billion in a deal for Kosmos to develop resources in the area. (Financial Times)

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Chart Review

OPEC's Not-So-Great Beyond
Bloomberg Gadfly

Events Calendar (All Times Local)

Tuesday

EPA Review Meeting & Webinar of Green Infrastructure	9 a.m.
Murray Energy Corporation v. EPA oral arguments	9:30 a.m.

Atlantic Council panel on the Saudi Aramco IPO	1 p.m.
NOAA Hurricane Awareness Tour	2 p.m.
Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation hearing on marine infrastructure	2:30 p.m.
Senate Environment and Public Works hearing on water resources	2:30 p.m.

Wednesday

Senate Environment and Public Works hearing on the Endangered Species Act	10 a.m.
Senate Energy and Natural Resources hearing on Water Resources Legislation	2:30 p.m.

Thursday

Department of Energy exchange on Home Energy Management Systems	1 p.m.

Friday

No events planned

General

Trump picks 2 for Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
Darius Dixon, Politico

President Donald Trump on Monday announced he planned to appoint Neil Chatterjee and Rob Powelson to fill two of the three vacancies in the FERC leadership, according to an official White House statement. Chatterjee, a senior energy adviser to Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, and Powelson, a Pennsylvania regulator, would take positions that expire in 2021 and 2020, respectively.

Dem senator: Possible methane vote would be 'a huge step backward'
Devin Henry, The Hill

A top Senate Democrat on Monday said members will be forced to choose between "pollution or people" if Republicans bring to the floor a bill undoing an Obama administration methane rule. "It would be a huge step backward if the Senate repealed the [Bureau of Land Management's] methane rule," said Maria Cantwell (D-Wash.), the top Democrat on the Energy and Natural Resources Committee.

EPA dismisses half of key board's scientific advisers; Interior suspends more than 200 advisory panels
Juliet Eilperin and Brady Dennis, The Washington Post

Both the Environmental Protection Agency and the Interior Department are overhauling a slew of outside advisory boards that inform how their agencies assess the science underpinning policies, the first step in a broader effort by Republicans to change the way the federal government evaluates the scientific basis for its regulations. EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt decided to replace half of the members on one of its key scientific review boards, while Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke is "reviewing the charter and charge" of more than 200 advisory boards, committees and other entities both within and outside his department.

Supporters of global coolants deal try to stay below Trump's radar
John Siciliano, Washington Examiner

The Trump administration hasn't painted a bull's-eye yet on a climate change agreement signed in Rwanda last year as it has for the Paris global warming pact, and supporters hope to keep it that way. "We're trying to keep it separate from the Paris discussions because they are two completely different agreements," said Stephen Yurek, president and CEO of the Air-Conditioning, Heating and Refrigeration Institute, representing large industrial manufacturers of heating and cooling equipment.

Interior Turns Down Meetings With 2 Groups Supporting Utah Monuments
Jack Fitzpatrick, Morning Consult

The Department of the Interior turned down meetings this week with at least two groups supporting national monument designations in Utah, spurring complaints that the Trump administration's review of monuments may be one-sided. Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke is in Utah through Wednesday to meet with stakeholders about a review of potential changes to two national monuments in the state.

Perez jabs Trump's 'aggressive stupidity' on environment
Mark Hensch, The Hill

Democratic National Committee (DNC) Chairman Tom Perez on Monday accused President Trump of "aggressive stupidity" on the environment. "There's a name for Donald Trump's environmental policy: aggressive stupidity," Perez said in a statement.

Dollar Advance Saps Commodity Gain; Stocks Rise
Samuel Potter, Bloomberg News

The dollar gained a second day as bets increased for a hike in U.S. borrowing costs next month. That took the shine off a bounce in commodities, though mining stocks still spurred European equities to the highest since 2015.

Oil and Natural Gas

BP and Kosmos strike gas again off Senegal
Andrew Ward, Financial Times

BP has announced another large gas discovery off the coast of Senegal by its US partner Kosmos Energy, highlighting the west African country's emergence as an important part of the UK group's efforts to replenish its reserves. The "major" gas find comes five months after BP agreed to invest $1bn in an alliance with Kosmos to develop resources spanning the maritime border of Senegal and Mauritania.

Utilities and Infrastructure

Pipeline spill by Dakota Access company could have a 'deadly effect'
Steven Mufson, The Washington Post

The director of the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency on Monday blasted the pipeline company Energy Transfer Partners for a "pattern" of 18 spills of drilling materials and said that the size of the biggest spill could reach 5 million gallons, more than double original estimates. Craig Butler, the Ohio EPA director, said that his agency has imposed about $400,000 in fines on Energy Transfer Partners, the same company that was recently embroiled in controversy over its Dakota Access crude oil pipeline.

NextEra Energy Seeks New Hearing on Oncor Takeover
Peg Brickley, The Wall Street Journal

NextEra Energy Inc. has asked Texas energy regulators to reconsider their decision to reject its takeover of Oncor, one of the country's largest electricity transmissions businesses. In a Monday filing with the Public Utility Commission of Texas, the Florida power company took aim at what it says was an error-riddled series of findings that killed the deal.

Conservatives defend plans to cap UK energy bills
Jim Pickard and Nathalie Thomas, Financial Times

Greg Clark, the UK business secretary, has rejected claims of hypocrisy after setting out plans to cap the energy bills of 17m households to curb what he called "abusive" behaviour by the "big six" power companies. The energy cap will be a key "retail offer" in the Conservative election manifesto, to be published next week.

Renewables

Trump's agriculture secretary, Sonny Perdue, declares that 'ethanol is here to stay'
Philip Wegmann, Washington Examiner

For a few moments, President Trump seemed like he might back away from the country's costly ethanol mandate. First, Trump tapped an ethanol opponent to head up the Environmental Protection Agency. Then in February the president plugged market deregulation for the renewable fuel industry instead of government subsidization.

Is Pakistan's solar power poised to take off amid energy crisis?
Reena Saeed Khan, Reuters

Solar energy production in Pakistan is poised to take off - just as the South Asian country is ramping up coal production to help plug a crippling power crisis, energy experts say. New high quality solar maps - essential to securing financing for major solar projects - show Pakistan is one of the world's best countries for producing solar energy because of its arid climate and latitude.

McAuliffe signs 11 solar, other renewable energy bills
Fauqier Times

Virginia Gov. Terry McAuliffe on Monday signed 11 bipartisan bills passed by the General Assembly earlier this year that promote the use of solar and other renewable energy options and aim to reduce energy consumption across the commonwealth. One of the bills was introduced by 18th District Delegate Michael J. Webert, who represents part of Fauquier County.

Coal

Europe's $6.9 billion coal subsidies 'better spent on technologies of the future'
Alex Whiting, Reuters

The 10 European countries with the highest rates of climate-changing emissions from energy use are spending around 6.3 billion euros ($6.89 billion) year on coal subsidies, money that could instead be invested in energy technologies of the future, researchers said on Monday. Those countries - from Britain to Spain - produce 84 percent of the European Union's energy-related greenhouse gas emissions, with Germany and Poland the largest emitters.

EU countries have brought in $1bn of coal subsidies since Paris
Megan Darby, Climate Home

EU countries are using the low carbon transition to justify new subsidies to the coal industry, instead of investing in clean alternatives, say analysts. Six member states have introduced support totaling ???875 million a year ($960m) since 2015, according to a report by the Overseas Development Institute (ODI).

Glencore and Tohoku agree Australian coal price
Neil Hume, Financial Times

One of the most important contracts in the commodities industry has finally been signed with a big Japanese utility company agreeing to pay almost $10 a tonne more than the market price to secure supplies of high-grade Australian coal. The annual negotiations between Tohoku Electric Power and Glencore, the Swiss-based miner

and commodity trader, are closely followed by the industry because they are used to price supply contacts across the vast Asia market.

Deadly gas leak kills 18 coal miners in central China
Al Jazeera

A gas leak has killed at least 18 people working in a coal mine in central China, including the manager and others who attempted to save those trapped in the fumes, state media reported on Monday. Another 37 miners were rescued and taken to a hospital for treatment following Sunday's accident at the Jilinqiao mine in Hunan province, according to Xinhua news agency, citing local authorities.

Nuclear

Germans May Face Higher Power Costs on Exit From Nuclear Energy
Brian Parkin, Bloomberg News

Germans already footing the second-highest electricity bills in Europe may face even higher costs from the country's decision to exit nuclear power early next decade. While there's no risk of blackouts, costs could rise if transmission gaps emerge, according to Germany's Bnetza regulator. Europe's biggest power market is closing its last atomic plants in 2022 and is counting on a mix of mothballed lignite plants, wind and solar power expansion and grid stability measures to keep outages down.

Climate

White House advisers postpone Paris climate deal meeting
Andrew Restuccia, Politico

A key meeting of White House advisers to discuss the Paris climate change agreement won't happen Tuesday as planned. A source familiar with the issue told POLITICO late Monday night that the meeting has been postponed.

France sent 42 people to a global climate summit. The Trump administration sent 7
Chris Mooney, The Washington Post

The United States government has sent just seven registered participants to a key United Nations meeting on the Paris climate agreement - a smaller delegation than

Zimbabwe - underscoring the Trump administration's deep ambivalence about the historic agreement. White House officials are expected to huddle on Tuesday to discuss the fate of the agreement - with business leaders and the international community pressing the U.S. to stay in the agreement, and Trump's conservative allies urging an exit.

Climate change erodes thin safety margins at Calif. dam
Jeremy P. Jacobs, E&E News

As catastrophe loomed at Northern California's Oroville Dam in February, Tom Stokely's mind drifted 140 miles north to another troubled behemoth. Stokely watched as nearly 200,000 residents were evacuated below Oroville when the emergency spillway America's tallest dam began to erode, threatening to unleash a 30-foot wall of water.

Opinions, Editorials and Perspectives

EPA Data Show Venting and Flaring Emissions Significantly Declining
Seth Whitehead, Morning Consult

The Senate is poised to vote this week on a resolution that would repeal the Bureau of Land Management's methane venting and flaring rule - an Obama administration regulation that would impose enormous costs on American energy producers. Meanwhile, new data released by the Environmental Protection Agency show just how unnecessary this rule is.

The Business Case for the Paris Climate Accord
George P. Schultz and Ted Halstead, The New York Times

President Trump faces a choice that will echo across his presidency and beyond: whether to remain in the Paris climate agreement. Although most Americans, his own secretaries of state and energy, and heads of state from around the globe are urging the president to stay, he remains undecided.

OPEC's Not-So-Great Beyond
Liam Denning, Bloomberg Gadfly

"Beyond" is a powerful word; the unsurpassed prefix to "compare" and the stirring suffix to "great." Buzz Lightyear even managed to somehow enhance the notion of infinity with it. Seemingly, though, "beyond" loses much of its power when it comes to oil prices.

Research Reports

Carbon dioxide sources from Alaska driven by increasing early winter respiration from Arctic tundra
Róisín Commane, et al., Proceedings of the National Academies of Sciences

High-latitude ecosystems have the capacity to release large amounts of carbon dioxide (CO2) to the atmosphere in response to increasing temperatures, representing a potentially significant positive feedback within the climate system. Here, we combine aircraft and tower observations of atmospheric CO2 with remote sensing data and meteorological products to derive temporally and spatially resolved year-round CO2 fluxes across Alaska during 2012-2014.

Enhanced CO2 uptake at a shallow Arctic Ocean seep field overwhelms the positive warming potential of emitted methane
John W. Pohlman, et al., Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences

Continued warming of the Arctic Ocean in coming decades is projected to trigger the release of teragrams (1 Tg = 106 tons) of methane from thawing subsea permafrost on shallow continental shelves and dissociation of methane hydrate on upper continental slopes. On the shallow shelves (<100 m water depth), methane released from the seafloor may reach the atmosphere and potentially amplify global warming. On the other hand, biological uptake of carbon dioxide (CO2) has the potential to offset the positive warming potential of emitted methane, a process that has not received detailed consideration for these settings.

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