Message

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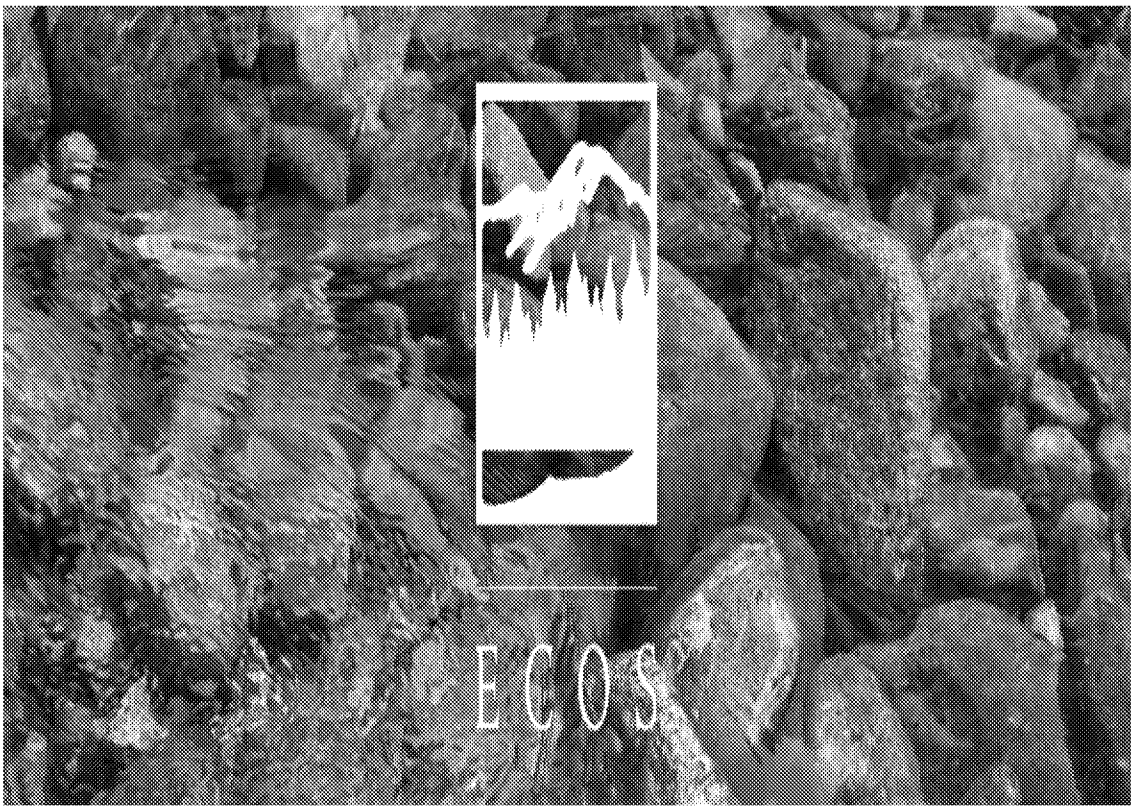
To: Dravis, Samantha [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=ece53f0610054e669d9dffe0b3a842df-Dravis, Sam]
Subject: Pruitt Testifies on Hill and Proposes Science Rule, States Make Strides, & More



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Pruitt Testifies at Two Closely Watched Hearings on Capitol Hill

U.S. EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt testified yesterday at two hearings in the House of Representatives to respond to questions surrounding agency funding and policy as well as personal ethics. Appearing before the Appropriations Interior, Environment, & Related Agencies Subcommittee and the Energy & Commerce Environment Subcommittee on the agency's FY19 budget, Pruitt defended himself against criticism regarding certain management and spending practices. He also touched on policy issues including the new proposed rule to strengthen science used in regulations (see related story) and the suite of FY18 Brownfields Grants announced this week.

In addition, Pruitt addressed actions on the horizon, noting that EPA soon will announce a Waters of the U.S. replacement rule and proposed revisions to EPA's light-duty vehicle greenhouse gas standards. In response to a lawmaker's question about coal combustion residuals, Pruitt noted that few states have filed state coal ash implementation plans pursuant to the new federal policy but that the program is still nascent and EPA is working

with several states to assist in their development of permit program applications.

Pruitt's written testimony included a listing of his top priorities: enhancing drinking water and wastewater infrastructure; accelerating the remediation and revitalization of the most contaminated land; improving air quality through reductions in the number of areas not in attainment with the National Ambient Air Quality Standards; and meeting all the statutory deadlines outlined in the amended Toxic Substances Control Act. In addition, the testimony notes support for flexibility for states to address priorities and for cooperative federalism activities through the multipurpose grants program.

The testimony also includes an EPA proposal to increase compliance assistance through new voluntary oil and chemical facility compliance assistance fees allowing EPA to conduct walkthroughs and provide recommendations to facilities. It further notes that while EPA's budget request does not include plans to close Regional offices, the agency will continue "to prioritize efforts that save taxpayer dollars through space consolidation…." [McAleer/Graves/Parisien]

Pruitt Signs Proposed Rule to Eliminate 'Secret Science'

U.S. EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt signed Tuesday a proposed rule to eliminate "secret science" used in regulations issued by the agency. According to EPA, the rule seeks to ensure that all regulatory science underlying EPA actions is fully transparent, publicly available, and sufficient for independent validation. EPA says the rule aligns with the scientific community's push for increased data sharing and reproducible research.

The proposed rule has drawn mixed reviews, with opponents arguing that it skirts statutory mandates to use the best available science and address confidential trade secrets. Some express concern as to whether the policy will prevent use of studies that rely on confidential business information (CBI) or limit EPA's access to health studies, which are subject to patient confidentiality requirements. While the rule does not specifically address these points, it states that the agency believes "that concerns about access to confidential

or private information can, in many cases, be addressed through the application of solutions commonly in use across some parts of the [f]ederal government."

EPA soon will accept public comment on a number of the proposed rule's provisions, including authorities to address implementation issues (including CBI) and what criteria the agency should use to justify any exceptions. [Longsworth]

U.S. EPA Announces First WIFIA Loan to King County, Washington

Last week, U.S. EPA issued its first loan under the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA) to King County, Washington.

The loan will help finance the Georgetown Wet Weather Treatment Station, which will collect and treat up to 70 million gallons of wastewater and stormwater per day. During heavy rains the combined sewer pipes spill into the Duwamish River, which drains into Puget Sound. The estimated project cost is $275 million, and the WIFIA loan will finance nearly half of it.

For more information about the WIFIA program and the Georgetown Wet Weather Treatment Station, click here. [Piper]

State News You Can Use

Groundbreaking Ceremony Marks Progress under North Carolina

State Water Plan

Pennsylvania, Federal Agencies Settle with Natural Gas Company over Air Violations

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Texas Hosts Hurricane Prep Workshop

Iowa Introduces Streamlined Public Notice of Air Quality Permits

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Need-to-Know News in Air & Environmental Justice

U.S. EPA Announces Funding to Reduce Emissions from Diesel Engines Nationwide

Area of Focus: *Air*

On April 24, U.S. EPA announced the availability of grant funding to modernize the nation's diesel fleet by retrofitting or replacing vehicles with cleaner, more efficient diesel engines.

EPA anticipates awarding approximately $40 million in Diesel Emission Reduction Program (DERA) grant funding to eligible applicants, subject to the availability of funds.

EPA anticipates awarding between 20 and 80 assistance agreements to projects that significantly reduce diesel emissions and exposure, especially from fleets operating at goods movements facilities in areas designated as having poor air quality. Priority for funding will be given to projects that engage and benefit local communities and applicants that demonstrate their ability to promote and continue efforts to reduce emissions after the project has ended.

Project proposals are due **June 5**. [Poole]

U.S. EPA Environmental Justice FY2017 Progress Report Notes ECOS Publication

Area of Focus: Environmental Justice

On April 19, U.S. EPA issued its Environmental Justice FY2017 Progress Report. Marking the 25th anniversary of the establishment of the Office of Environmental Justice, the FY2017 report highlights EPA's ongoing environmental justice work focused on demonstrating tangible results in minority, low-income, tribal and indigenous communities.

The report focuses on the themes of delivering environmental results; cooperative federalism; rule of law and fair process; and building community capacity and engagement.

Notably, the report cites the ECOS Green Report on State Approaches to Community Engagement and Equity Considerations in Permitting as an example of cooperative federalism and best practices regarding community involvement and equity in state permitting programs. [Poole]

U.S. EPA Launches Mobile App for EJSCREEN

Area of Focus: Environmental Justice

On April 24, U.S. EPA launched its mobile version of EJSCREEN, the agency's nationally

acclaimed environmental justice screening and mapping tool. This new version makes accessing EJSCREEN easier for those working on the ground in communities.

The mobile version offers most of the same key functions and features as the full online version, but does so in a more compact and accessible layout. Some of the features included are the ability to select locations; access reports; and map environmental, demographic and EJ indicators. [Poole]

Career Opportunities

Massachusetts DEP Seeks Deputy Director, Municipal Services

The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection's Bureau of Water Resources seeks applicants for the position of Deputy Director, Municipal Services. The position entails the identification of priority areas for investment of Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Fund financing.

For more information, see here. [Parisien]

Upcoming Events

ECOS Calls

ERIS on Research Needs

In an effort to prioritize states' research needs, ECOS and affiliate Environmental Research Institute of the States is conducting media-specific calls to gather information to inform future planning and contribute to the development of the U.S. EPA Office of Research and Development (ORD) Strategic Research Action Plan.

The water and air-focused calls were held this week. The remaining two calls are scheduled as follows:

- **Waste - April 30: 2-3 p.m. Eastern**
  http://epawebconferencing.acms.com/ecoswastecommittee/
- **Cross-Media - May 3: 3-4 p.m. Eastern**
  http://epawebconferencing.acms.com/ecoscrossmediacall/

The call-in number for both calls is (866) 299-3188, with access code (202) 564-6669.

ECOS members and state staff are invited to participate in the calls, and are asked to be prepared to answer the following questions: Are states' priorities the same or different from those identified in the 2016 ERIS survey of state research needs? What emerging issues/challenges should ORD consider in its next Action Plan?

As the calls are held, PowerPoint presentations will be posted on ECOS' website here. States are encouraged to provide comments after the calls to further inform strategic research planning. Please send comments to Sarah Grace Longsworth of ECOS by **May 11**. [Longsworth]

ERIS on State Science Contacts

ERIS will host its bimonthly State Science Contacts call on **May 4 at 11 a.m. Eastern**. The purpose of these calls is to share relevant information on science and research, receive input from states on state science needs, and provide state perspective on various

research activities.

An agenda for the call will be sent next week. If you are interested in participating, email Sarah Grace Longsworth of ECOS. [Longsworth]

Webinars

U.S. EPA on Emerging Sensor Technologies Report

U.S. EPA's Air and Energy National Research Program will host two webinar sessions to update stakeholders on its Emerging Sensor Technologies 2014-2018 Progress Report. The identical sessions will be held on **April 30 at 8:30-11:30 a.m. Eastern and 1:30-4:30 p.m. Eastern**, and will summarize general findings across a broad base of the agency's air sensor research activities over the past several years.

The first two hours of each session will feature presentations by EPA Sensor Performance Evaluation and Application Research team members on topics such as sensor evaluations, data analytics, ammonia detection, citizen science, and detection of select emission sources. The final portion of each session will be a question and answer period.

To register, see here. [Longsworth]

U.S. EPA on Lead Exposure Modeling and Research

U.S. EPA will host its monthly Tools and Resources webinar on **April 30 at 3-4 p.m. Eastern** to discuss multimedia modeling of lead exposure in children and water lead monitoring research to inform public health decisions. Specifically, EPA's Office of Research and Development (ORD) will highlight its innovative exposure-dose modeling approach to better understand the relationship between drinking water lead concentrations and children's blood lead levels considering exposures from water, soil, dust, food, and air. ORD will then discuss the future data needs to apply the approach at state and local

levels, and will report on water lead monitoring research relevant to state priorities.

To register, see here. [Longsworth]

ITRC on Bioavailability of Contaminants in Soil

The Interstate Technology & Regulatory Council (ITRC) will hold an online training course on Bioavailability of Contaminants in Soil: Considerations for Human Health Risk Assessment on **May 3 at 1-3:15 p.m. Eastern**.

The basis for this training course is the ITRC guidance: Bioavailability of Contaminants in Soil: Considerations for Human Health Risk Assessment (BCS-1). This guidance describes the general concepts of the bioavailability of contaminants in soil, reviews the state of the science, and discusses how to incorporate bioavailability into the human health risk assessment process. Training course participants will learn to apply the decision-making process to determine when a site-specific bioavailability assessment may be appropriate; consider factors that affect arsenic, lead, and PAH bioavailability; select appropriate methods to evaluate soil bioavailability; and use tools to develop site-specific soil bioavailability estimates and incorporate them into human health risk assessment

Learn more and register here. [Bodi]

E-Enterprise Facility Integration Project Team on Opportunities for Involvement

The E-Enterprise Facility Integration Team Co-Chairs will host a webinar on **May 8 at 1-2:30 p.m. Eastern** to report on the team's Phase II accomplishments and plans for Phase III, which is about to begin. Co-Chairs Ron Evans and Susan Joan Smiley (U.S. EPA), Joshua Kalfas (Oklahoma), and Ben Way (Wyoming DEQ) will lead webinar presentations and answer any questions related to the Facility work.

The Facility Integration Team is currently seeking states, tribes and local governments to

partner in Phase III. Partnership opportunities will be discussed on the webinar.

Register here and learn more here. [McAleer]

U.S. EPA on Business Innovations in Reducing Food Waste

U.S. EPA will host a webinar on **May 17 at 10-11:30 a.m. Eastern** to highlight business innovations to reduce food loss and waste. Presenters include three Food Loss and Waste 2030 Champions who are leading the way in helping the country reach its 50 percent food loss and waste reduction goal. Speakers from each company will share best practices, tools, and resources to prevent food from going to waste. They will address how shifts in company culture have changed operations as well as the critical role of food waste measurement in achieving their goals.

Register here. [Longsworth]

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