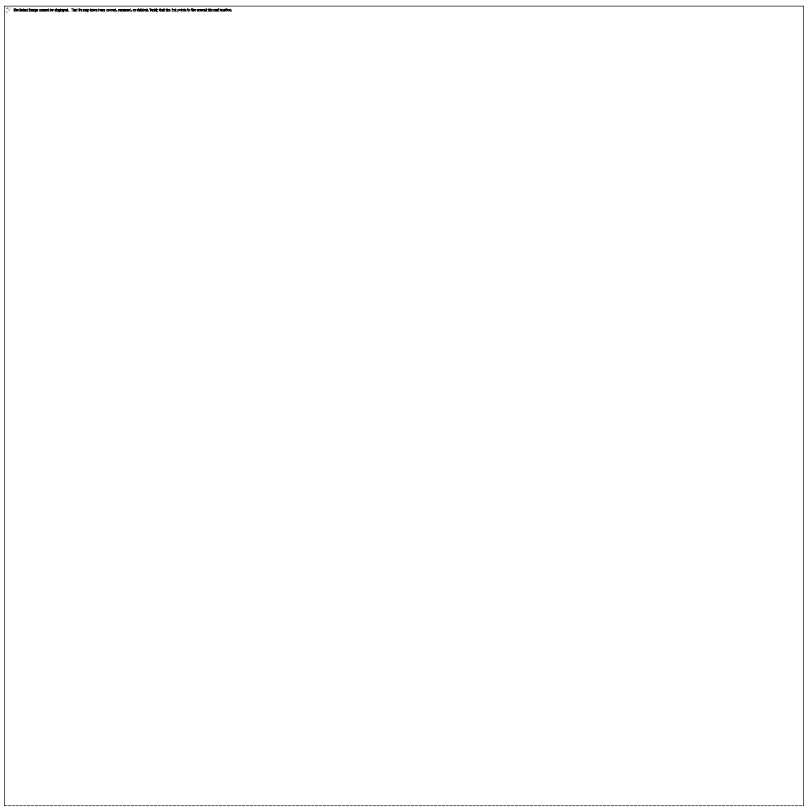
Message

From: Morning Consult [reply@e.morningconsult.com]
Sent: 2/5/2018 1:58:56 PM
To: Duffy, Rick [Duffy.Rick@epa.gov]
Subject: Morning Consult Energy: White House Withdraws Nomination of Climate Change Skeptic



By Sei Chong

Top Stories

- The White House withdrew its nomination of Kathleen Hartnett White as chair of the Council on Environmental Quality, after some Senate Republicans questioned her credentials. Harnett White, who once led the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, had drawn criticism for her assertion that while humans probably contribute to global warming, it was "very uncertain" as to what extent. (The Washington Post)

- Secretary of State Rex Tillerson said the United States is considering imposing sanctions on Venezuela by limiting imports of the country's crude oil and exports of U.S. refined products to Venezuela as a way to pressure President Nicolas Maduro to "return to the constitution." At a news conference in Buenos Aires, he said one of the reasons for considering sanctions is whether such a step would bring an end to Venezuela's economic and political crisis "more rapidly." (Reuters)

- The restructuring plan at the Interior Department will start in Alaska and have the boundaries for the 13 regional hubs in place in the second half of fiscal 2018, according to a seven-page document. The document also says cities in which the regional hubs will be located may be identified over the spring and summer, but no moves are planned in fiscal 2018. (E&E News)

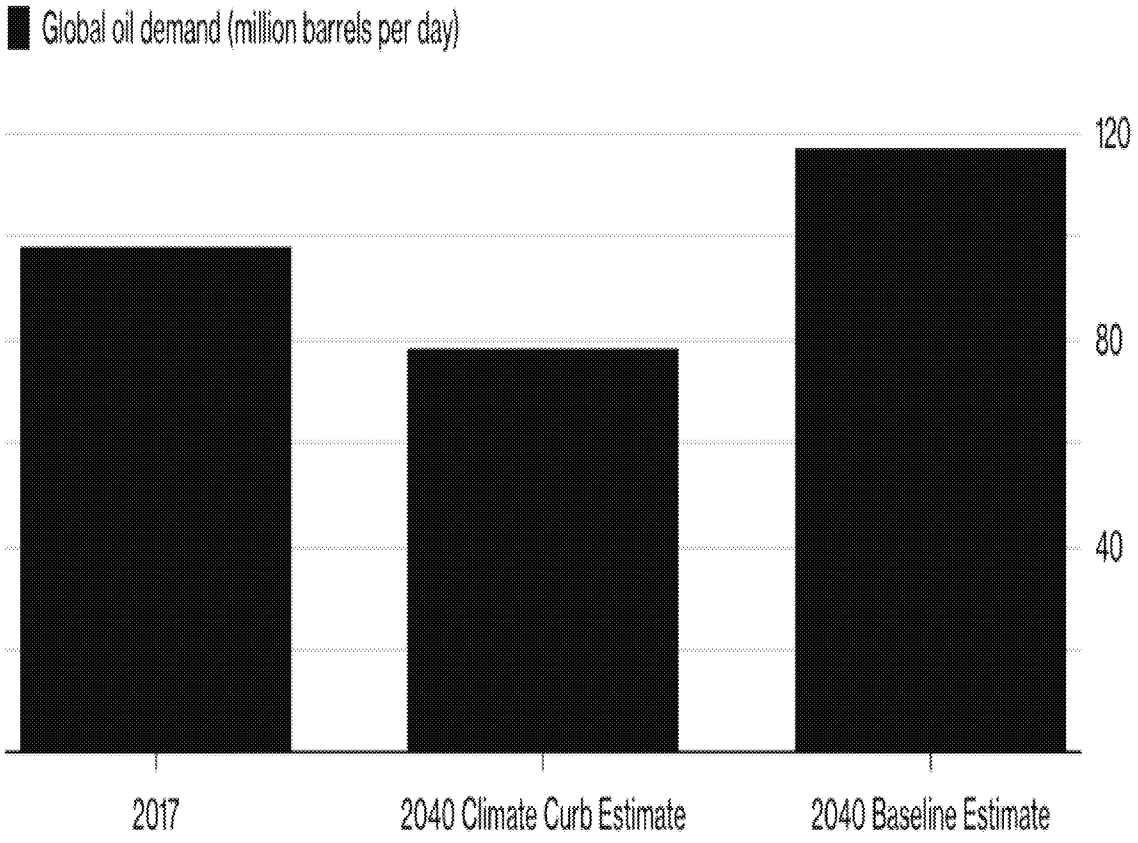
- Tesla Inc. will provide batteries to South Australia as part of the state government's plans to form what it says will be the world's largest virtual power plant, which is designed to power at least 50,000 households. Last year, Tesla built the world's biggest lithium-ion battery system to support South Australia's troubled power grid. (Bloomberg)

Chart Review

Exxon Sees Oil Demand Down 20% in 2040; Or Maybe It'll Be Up
Bloomberg

Guessing Game

Exxon estimates oil demand with and without global temperature increase caps



Events Calendar (All Times Local)

MONDAY

Solar Power Northeast conference	7:30 a.m.
NAPE Summit Week	8 a.m.
Hudson Institute symposium on the future of the Kigali Amendment	9 a.m.

TUESDAY

Infocast's Wind Power Finance & Investment Summit	7:30 a.m.
NAPE Summit Week	8 a.m.
Solar Power Northeast conference	8 a.m.
Northern Virginia Electric Vehicle Demo Day and EV Charging Workshop	9 a.m.
House Energy and Commerce's Energy Subcommittee hearing on nuclear infrastructure	10 a.m.
House Federal Lands Subcommittee hearing on national monument bills	10 a.m.
Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee hearing on various bills	10 a.m.
EIA's Annual Energy Outlook 2018	10 a.m.
House Science, Space and Technology Committee hearing on IARC monograph program and glyphosate review	10 a.m.
National Association of State Energy Officials Energy Policy Outlook Conference	11 a.m.
House Workforce Protections Subcommittee hearing on Mine Safety and Health Administration's policies	1:30 p.m.
House Indian, Insular and Alaska Native Affairs Subcommittee hearing on tribal lands bills	2 p.m.

WEDNESDAY

NAPE Summit Week	7 a.m.
Infocast's Wind Power Finance & Investment Summit	7:30 a.m.

National Association of State Energy Officials Energy Policy Outlook Conference	8 a.m.
Senate Environment and Public Works Committee meeting to consider Andrew Wheeler as EPA deputy administrator	9:30 a.m.
Senate Public Lands, Forests, and Mining Subcommittee hearing on various bills	10 a.m.
Senate Environment and Public Works Committee hearing on regulatory impact on farming and ranching communities	10 a.m.

THURSDAY

NAPE Summit Week	7 a.m.
Infocast's Wind Power Finance & Investment Summit	7:30 a.m.
National Association of State Energy Officials Energy Policy Outlook Conference	8 a.m.
Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee hearing on energy infrastructure	10 a.m.
Women's Council on Energy and the Environment lecture on battery storage	12 p.m.

FRIDAY

NAPE Summit Week	7 a.m.
National Association of State Energy Officials Energy Policy Outlook Conference	8:30 a.m.
U.S. Association for Energy Economics presentation on natural gas liquids production and U.S. manufacturing	12 p.m.

A data-driven look at the future of mobility

An exclusive look at new survey research data that explores consumer receptivity to auto industry innovations, including electric and self-driving cars, energy sources, and even auto insurance.

General

White House to withdraw controversial nominee to head Council on Environmental Quality
Juliet Eilperin and Brady Dennis, The Washington Post

The White House will withdraw its controversial nominee to head the Council on Environmental Quality, Kathleen Hartnett White, according to three administration officials briefed on the matter who spoke on the condition of anonymity because the decision has not been announced yet.

Tillerson raises specter of U.S. sanctions on Venezuelan oil
Luc Cohen, Reuters

The United States is considering restricting imports of Venezuelan crude oil and exports of U.S. refined products to Venezuela, U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson said on Sunday, to put pressure on socialist President Nicolas Maduro to "return to the constitution."

Document reveals ambitious reorganization timeline
Kellie Lunney, E&E News

New Interior Department regional boundaries will be in place this year, and the agency's massive reorganization will begin in Alaska, according to a document obtained by E&E News. Todd Wynn, director of Interior's Office of Intergovernmental and External Affairs, sent a list of 39 "frequently asked questions" to state and local stakeholders Jan. 19 about the proposed department restructuring.

Husband of former Trump household aide scores government job
Andrew Restuccia, Politico

A home improvement contractor married to one of Donald and Melania Trump's former household staffers is now working as an official at the Environmental Protection Agency, the latest example of someone with a personal connection to the Trump family finding work in the administration. New Jersey-based Steve Kopec joined EPA's Region 2 office in New York as a special assistant on Dec. 18, according to a memo obtained by POLITICO.

Brent Slips to Lowest in a Month After U.S. Drilling Expands
Alex Longley, Bloomberg

Oil's rally is unraveling on fears over a rise in U.S. production and as a deepening slump in equities undermined market support.

Oil and Natural Gas

Exxon Sees Oil Demand Down 20% in 2040; Or Maybe It'll Be Up
Kevin Crowley, Bloomberg

If climate change curbs live up to their promise, oil demand may fall 20 percent by 2040, Exxon Mobil Corp. says in one forward-looking report.

But a more likely scenario is it will grow by 20 percent, the company says in separate outlook.

BP Faces Down Its Doubters
Sarah Kent, The Wall Street Journal

BP is struggling to convince investors it can regain its top position among the world's elite energy players nearly eight years after the Deepwater Horizon disaster.

Permian Seen Second to Saudis for Spare Oil-Output Capacity
Wael Mahdi, Bloomberg

The U.S.'s Permian Basin is looking like Saudi Arabia, with as much as 1 million barrels of spare oil capacity ready to go into production, according to Nansen Saleri, former head of reservoir management at Saudi Aramco, the world's largest crude exporter.

OSHA standards moot in Quinton rig explosion because of exemption for oil-and-gas industry
Corey Jones, Tulsa World

The natural gas rig that exploded near Quinton and killed five workers is not covered by a comprehensive package of federal safety standards implemented in the early 1990s after several chemical industrial disasters. Oil and natural gas drilling, servicing and production are exempt from OSHA's "Process Safety Management of Highly Hazardous Chemicals" regulations.

Oil group Total to sell 25 percent stake in offshore South African block to Qatar Petroleum
Sudip Kar-Gupta, Reuters

French oil and gas group Total has agreed to sell a 25 percent stake in the Exploration Block 11B/12B, offshore South Africa, to Qatar Petroleum, in a deal which Total said would strengthen its ties with the Qatari group.

Oil group Total buys stakes in offshore Guyana blocks
Sudip Kar-Gupta, Reuters

French oil and energy group Total has bought stakes in some offshore Guyana oil production blocks, boosting its presence in the potentially lucrative Guyana basin.

Utilities and Infrastructure

Tesla Tapped by Australia Anew in Virtual Power Plant Plan
Michael Heath and Perry Williams, Bloomberg

South Australia plans to roll out solar panels and Tesla Inc. batteries to at least 50,000 homes to form what its government says will be the world's largest virtual power plant.

New Jersey DEP rejects PennEast's water permit application - again
Christina Tatu, The Morning Call

The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection again denied a freshwater wetlands permit sought by PennEast Pipeline, throwing another hurdle at the controversial 120-mile natural gas project. PennEast originally submitted its application in April. Later that month, NJDEP said the application lacked a long list of information, including tax maps, historic property information and survey data for water crossings.

Renewables

Wind goes 2 different ways in Oklahoma and Texas
Ryan Maye Handy, Houston Chronicle

Texas and Oklahoma lead the nation in wind power, topping the charts in total wind power capacity, capacity added last year and capacity expected to come online in the future. But in terms of political climate and industry incentives, the two states and their entrenched oil and gas cultures could not be more different.

Keith Windle is spearheading Dominion Energy's rapid push into solar development
Robert Zullo, Richmond Times-Dispatch

Just five years ago, Dominion Energy's solar footprint in Virginia was nonexistent. Now, the company, Virginia's biggest utility, has 27 generating facilities sprawling across nearly 4,700 acres that are either built or under development.

The Cost of Crypto Is Turning Miners Towards Green Power
Helena Bedwell et al., Bloomberg

Vakhtang Gogokhia's plan to extract cryptocurrencies from the netherworld of cyberspace relies on a strategy familiar to many old-school manufacturers who use a lot of energy - the cheaper the fuel, the better. That's why Gogokhia, who heads a startup called Golden Fleece, put a cargo container with Chinese-built computers inside a dilapidated Soviet-era tractor factory in Georgia, about 60 miles (100 kilometers) east of the Black Sea.

Coal

Study: Coal job losses to keep hurting Appalachia, beyond
Jim Gaines, Knoxville News Sentinel

Coal isn't back - though it may hold steady near today's level - but the long-term decline of mining in Appalachia will have a ripple effect on related businesses, health, education and regional population, according to a new study.

Nuclear

Trump administration's planned nuclear upgrade is being undermined by cost overruns
Patrick Malone and Peter Cary, The Center for Public Integrity

Millions of dollars in promised savings at Texas, Tennessee nuclear weapons plants have disappeared, and the government is letting a powerful contractor off the hook.

Climate

How Bill Gates aims to clean up the planet
John Vidal, The Guardian

It's a simple idea: strip CO_2 from the air and use it to produce carbon-neutral fuel. But can it work on an industrial scale?

VW seeks delay in U.S. trial after lawyer references monkey testing, Hitler
David Shepardson, Reuters

The U.S. unit of Volkswagen AG on Friday asked a U.S. judge to delay several court trials it is facing over excess emissions because it fears

"inflammatory" comments made by a lawyer representing car owners in a recent TV documentary will prejudice the jury.

Opinions, Editorials and Perspectives

What Will 2018 Look Like for Public Lands Under Secretary Zinke?
Richard Hannan, Morning Consult

As 2018 starts to unfold, it is important to reflect on the state of our public lands after the first year of the Trump administration. Living in the Pacific Northwest and as someone who worked on natural resources in the West for many years, I was hopeful when Montana Rep. Ryan Zinke was named secretary of the interior.

Trump's Deceptive Energy Policy
The Editorial Board, The New York Times

"We have ended the war on American energy," President Trump boasted in his State of the Union address, "and we have ended the war on beautiful, clean coal. We are now, very proudly, an exporter of energy to the world." Those two sentences were about all Mr. Trump devoted to his energy policy in his message.

How Trump Can Keep His Vows on Opioids and Infrastructure
The Editorial Board, The New York Times

President Trump has correctly identified two big challenges that Americans want him to tackle this year - the opioid epidemic and the country's dilapidated and overstretched infrastructure.

Trump's cuts to renewable energy put us on the ropes in the fight against climate change
Bjorn Lomborg, USA Today

News that the Trump administration is poised to ask Congress for deep budget cuts to the Energy Department's renewable energy and energy efficiency programs has thus far generated less outrage than the White House's abandonment of the Paris Climate Treaty, yet has the potential to be far more damaging to efforts to respond to climate change.

Climate Change Could Swamp Your Muni-Bond Portfolio
Jay Newman, The Wall Street Journal

By the end of this century Oakland, Calif., will be experiencing a "100-year flood" every week. At least that's what the Oakland city government argued last year, when it filed a lawsuit against several oil companies for contributing to climate change. The city forecasts that rising water levels in the San Francisco Bay will threaten the sewer system and other property "with a total replacement cost of between $22 billion and $38 billion."

The Great Coal Mining Jobs Boom Has Been Postponed
Justin Fox, Bloomberg View

Propping up such a dirty way of generating power is terrible economic policy.

Research Reports

Missed Opportunities for Efficiency in Virginia
Applied Economics Clinic

Dominion Energy Virginia (DEV or Dominion) is asking state utility regulators to approve billions of dollars in new spending to increase nuclear and natural gas capacity over the next 10 years in order meet its forecast for future energy demand. These costs would be passed on to consumers in the form of substantially higher utility bills.

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