

**To:** Jackson, Ryan[jackson.ryan@epa.gov]  
**From:** POLITICO Pro Energy  
**Sent:** Mon 6/26/2017 9:44:09 AM  
**Subject:** Morning Energy, presented by Exelon: Put your hands in the air for Energy Week! — Pruitt's got a posse — The trade dispute that could ruin solar

By Eric Wolff | 06/26/2017 05:41 AM EDT

*With help from Esther Whieldon, Andrew Restuccia, and Ben Lefebvre*

**WELCOME TO ENERGY WEEK! WHATEVER THAT MEANS!** President Donald Trump aims to make this week Energy Week. You may recall theme weeks from such prior weeks as Tech Week, Workforce Development Week, and Infrastructure Week. The fact that these weeks seem not to have drawn much attention has more to do with the steady drumbeat of news on the Senate health care bill and the ever-widening, ever-deepening Russia scandal, as POLITICO's Andrew Restuccia and Josh Dawsey report in a story going live this morning.

Of course, part of the problem is Trump himself, who can't seem to stay focused. The White House tried to fill his schedule with wonky policy events to create a counter-narrative, but they haven't succeeded in keeping the president on topic. Asked about other theme weeks that may be coming in the future, a senior Trump aide told Andrew and Josh, "Whatever he tweets."

Here's the Energy Week itinerary:

**Today** Trump will discuss energy with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi. India is the third largest coal consumer, and it's appetite is growing, so Trump could take the opportunity to press the case for the U.S. coal industry to get into the market there. But then, Modi has said he is still committed to the Paris climate accord, and his ambitious plans to develop solar power there could alter the course in the power-starved country.

**On Wednesday** Trump will host Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker, Maine Governor Paul LePage, and Nebraska Gov. Pete Ricketts along with other local and tribal leaders for a discussion regarding local and state energy.

**On Thursday** Trump, will give a speech on "Energy Dominance" after meeting with EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt, Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke, and Energy Secretary Rick Perry, who will host the American Energy Dominance Panel at DOE with labor and industry groups.

**Not happening:** A long-hoped for visit by Trump to an LNG export terminal in Louisiana this week has been scratched. The reasons? Sources tell ME that last week's Tropical Storm Cindy (complete with floating squads of fire ants), the need to be in D.C. to twist arms for the Senate health care bill, and the lack of advance planning made organizing the trip too difficult.

**JUST ANOTHER MANIC MONDAY!** I'm your fill-in host Eric Wolff, and I want you to know that every week is Energy Week at ME, as we provide you with the latest news with a spring in our step and a song in our hearts. It's been fun pitching in for a couple of days of ME glory, but Ben Lefebvre will take over tomorrow, so while you can send me your comments at

[ewolff@politico.com](mailto:ewolff@politico.com), you should send your ME tips to [blefebvre@politico.com](mailto:blefebvre@politico.com). Anthony will be back Wednesday, along with trivia answers, so you can find him at [aadragna@politico.com](mailto:aadragna@politico.com), or follow us on Twitter [@ericwolff](https://twitter.com/ericwolff), [@aadragna](https://twitter.com/aadragna), [@bjlefebvre](https://twitter.com/bjlefebvre), [@Morning\\_Energy](https://twitter.com/Morning_Energy), and [@POLITICOPro](https://twitter.com/POLITICOPro).

**PRUITT'S POSSE:** EPA's Pruitt is relying on a skeleton crew of loyalists with little experience in environmental regulations, augmented by former industry lobbyists, as he pursues an ambitious agenda of seeking to undo the agency's Obama-era rules, your morning host reports. Trump's molasses-slow pace in announcing nominations has left Pruitt running an agency out of the Office of the Administrator, with senior advisers keeping tabs on key policy making offices from the Office of Policy. In filling these jobs he has drawn from his time as Oklahoma Attorney General, bringing in former campaign staff, the former head of both the Republican Attorneys General Association and the Rule of Law Defense Fund, and a gaggle of Sen. Jim Inhofe's ex-aides. Both supporters and opponents question whether the team he's assembled is up to the task.

**A tight inner circle:** Pruitt hasn't made his life easier by his unwillingness — which he has transmitted to his hand-picked subordinates — to trust career staff. "If you are Pruitt, you have a handful of folks around you that you trust and have confidence in," said Stephen Brown, top lobbyist for oil refiner Tesoro. "You head an agency of 15,000, many of whom can be described as 'the resistance.' What would anyone do except hunker down and deal only with those you trust?"

**Golden padlock:** Investigative Reports and Editors, a journalists' association, gave Pruitt its "[golden padlock](#)" award on Friday for requiring a two-year lawsuit to get him to turnover key emails from his time as Oklahoma Attorney general.

**GTM: TRADE DISPUTE COULD CRUSH U.S. SOLAR INDUSTRY:** A report out today by GTM Research finds that if Trump implements the solar import trade tariffs solar panel makers Suniva and SolarWorld Americas are seeking, it could wipe out nearly two-thirds of the solar projects set to be built in the U.S. cumulatively from 2018 through 2022. Between 36.1 gigawatts and 47.5 gigawatts might fall to the wayside if Trump sets tariffs and minimum prices for imported solar panels and cells, the report says. It "could send shockwaves through the U.S. solar industry," GTM said in the report.

**The largest solar plants,** which are in the utility-scale sector, will be hit the hardest because the majority are moving forward under power purchase agreements that may need to be canceled or renegotiated, the report said. Developers are scrambling to pre-order cheap imported modules in case Trump enacts the changes next year. But Cory Honeyman of GTM tells ME that only about 1.3 gigawatts-worth of projects are on track to get modules in time. The U.S. International Trade Commission is slated to rule on the trade complaint by Sept. 22 and send its findings to Trump in mid-November.

**ZINKE GOIN' TO THE COUNTRY (PEACH EATING UNCERTAIN):** Interior's Zinke will head to the resort town of Lake Tahoe, Nev. to make an announcement on the Trump administration's "commitment to rural communities." Zinke will be addressing the Rule of Law Defense Fund (which, of course, ME mentioned above in connection to Pruitt).

Then on Tuesday Zinke heads to Whitefish, Mont. (the most delicious town to spread on a bagel) to address the Western Governors Association. For Zinke, the event is a chance to head back to the town where he grew up and starred on the high school football team (Go Bulldogs!).

**\*\* A message from Exelon:** Innovation always begins with the spirit of discovery—the search for new ideas and answers to our biggest questions. As America's largest clean energy provider, what happens when 34,000 Exelon engineers, analysts, and innovators put their heads together to tackle the energy industry's biggest challenges? Find out here: <http://bit.ly/2szvZN4> \*\*

**CITY MAYORS CLIMATE POWERS, ACTIVATE!** Former New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg will today announce a \$200 million philanthropic effort to help cities fight climate change and to increase their voices at the national level, the New York Times [reports](#). Bloomberg is set to make the announcement as part of a speech at the U.S. Conference of Mayors' annual meeting in Miami Beach, Fla. As part of the effort, cities will be able to apply for six- and seven-figure grants to support policy experimentation.

**Form of: Climate resolutions!** The mayors will also vote today on resolutions to establish a 100 percent renewables by 2035 target, accelerating the electrification of transportation, and "Supporting a Cities-Driven Plan to Reverse Climate Change." Climate warriors look toward cities and states to carry on the carbon reduction work as the federal government under President Trump pulls the federal government out of the carbon reduction business.

**Shape of: G20 demands!** The mayors of 46 "megacities", have put out a statement asking the G20 leaders to aggressively push for carbon reductions when they meet in Bonn, Germany in July. "You have the privilege of leadership at a unique moment in history to help realize the potential of the Paris Agreement," the statement says. "The cities of the world and their citizens have a shared vision for a just and sustainable future... Together with business leaders we have already decided on a climate-safe future of opportunity, optimism and innovation -- there is no alternative."

**APPROPRIATION JUNCTION, WHAT'S YOUR FUNCTION?** Congressional appropriators are cramming in hearings and markups like it's the week before finals, which seems about right for late June (Hey, your host is from New York. The school year **lasts** forever). EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt will meet with Sen. Lisa Murkowski and her band of Interior-Environment appropriators on Tuesday, and the heads of the Bureau of Reclamation and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will spend their Wednesday morning with Sen. Lamar Alexander and his subcommittee. Even NASA's budget is getting a hearing on Thursday.

On the House side, the Energy and Water Development appropriation will get a subcommittee markup on the House side on Wednesday.

**MARK 'EM UP, DANNO!** The House Natural Resources Committee will have a markup today on a slew of mostly minor bills, but there are a couple of noteworthy votes. The committee will take up Rep. Hal Rogers RECLAIM Act that would pump \$200 million a year for five years into coal-mine clean up (a program that the Trump budget disappeared), and a bill from Rep. Don

Young to advance the construction of King Cove road, the project long-sought by the Alaska delegation that was stymied by the Obama administration.

**QATAR LOVES EXXON:** Qatari Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani and Exxon Mobil CEO Darren Woods met over the weekend to talk 'continued cooperation' amid increasing tensions in the region, Reuters [reports](#). Exxon has been instrumental in opening up Qatar's natural gas fields, and the tiny country is now the top LNG supplier in the world. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson, Woods' predecessor at Exxon, issued a statement Sunday saying that Qatar has begun a review of the demands from its neighbors Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Egypt, which cut ties with Qatar, accusing the country of supporting extremism. "While some of the elements will be very difficult for Qatar to meet, there are significant areas which provide a basis for ongoing dialogue leading to resolution," Tillerson said.

**CAP'S LIST:** The Center for American Progress is out today with a [website](#) listing the fossil fuel affiliations of political appointees working in the Trump administration. "Across the administration, political staff have close ties to the Koch brothers, Exxon, and coal trade associations, among others -- and many of the people tasked with regulating the industry were getting their paycheck from it just months ago," Erin Auel, a research associate for CAP, said in a statement.

**NUCLEAR WASTE MERGER DECAYS TO STABLE FORM:** Valhi, the parent company of Waste Control Specialists, will not appeal a federal court decision to block a merger with Energy Solutions, a low-level nuclear waste management company. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission on Thursday suspended an application by WCS to build a high-level nuclear waste facility in Texas.

**DRY LAKE: BAD FOR FISHING, GOOD FOR SOLAR:** BLM hopes to sell solar leases in Dry Lake Nevada, the first leases under a new rule, Pro's Esther Whieldon [reports](#). the agency is conducting environmental reviews in advance of the sale in the hopes of streamlining permitting and construction.

**MOVERS, SHAKERS:** Jamie Simler, director of FERC's Office of Energy Market Regulation, has retired. Anna Cochrane, deputy director of the office, has been promoted to director. Jette Gebhart has been named acting deputy director.

Stephen Kittredge will be leaving the Electric Power Supply Association to run government affairs for Owens Corning.

## QUICK HITS

- [Undermined: A local activist fights for the future of coal country](#), New Yorker
- [Texas A&M joins US Department of Energy, India in energy access initiative](#), The Eagle
- [France's Macron to back push for global environment rights pact](#), Reuters

- AEP renewable-energy charge getting scrutiny, The Columbus Dispatch
- How Four Brothers Survived the Gas Bust to Make Family a Billion, WSJ
- How The Next Generation Of West Virginians Are Building A Way Out Of The State's Coal Economy, Fast Company

## **HAPPENING THIS WEEK**

### **Monday**

All Day — FERC conference on software and market efficiency, 888 First St. NE

10 a.m. — NRDC Experts to Discuss New Report About Baseload & Electricity Grid Reliability, NRDC offices, 1152 15<sup>th</sup> Street, NW #300, RSVP eheyd@nrdc.org or to get call-in info

5:30 p.m. — Senate votes on confirmation of Kristine Svinicki to be a member of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission

### **Tuesday**

All Day — FERC conference on software and market efficiency, 888 First St. NE

9 a.m. — Environmental Law Institute conference on chemical safety, feat. Rep. John Shimkus (R-Ill.), Milken Institute School of Public Health, George Washington University, 950 New Hampshire Ave., NW

9:30 a.m. — FY2018 budget request for the Environmental Protection Agency, feat. EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt, Senate Appropriations Committee, Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Subcommittee, Dirksen 124

10 a.m. — Full committee markup, incl. the RECLAIM Act and a bill to advance King Cove Road, House Natural Resources Committee, Longworth 1324

2:45 p.m. — Developing and Deploying Advanced Clean Energy Technologies, Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, Subcommittee on Clean Air and Nuclear Safety, Dirksen 406

### **Wednesday**

All Day — FERC conference on software and market efficiency, 888 First St. NE

10 a.m. — Oversight Hearing "Examining Policy Impacts of Excessive Litigation Against the Department of the Interior", House Natural Resources Committee, Subcommittee on Oversight and investigations, Longworth 1324

11 a.m. — Markup of FY 2018 Energy and Water Appropriations Bill, House Appropriations Committee, Energy and Water Development and Related Agencies Subcommittee, Rayburn 2362-B

2:30 p.m. — FY2018 budget request for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation, feat. Lt. Gen. Todd T. Semonite Commanding General and Chief of Engineers, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Douglas Lamont, Senior Official Performing the Duties of the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works), Alan Mikkelsen Acting Commissioner Bureau of Reclamation, Senate Appropriations Committee, Energy and Water Development Subcommittee, Dirksen 138

### **Thursday**

10 a.m. — FY2018 budget request for NASA, feat. Robert M. Lightfoot Jr., Acting Administrator for NASA, Senate Appropriations Committee, Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Subcommittee, Dirksen 192

10 a.m. — Oversight Hearing on "Examining Access to Oil and Gas Development on Federal Lands", House Natural Resources Committee, Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources, Longworth 1324

### **Friday**

No energy events.

### **THAT'S ALL FOR ME!**

**\*\* A message from Exelon:** Innovation always begins with the spirit of discovery—the search for new ideas and answers to our biggest questions. As Washington, D.C.'s energy provider and America's largest source of clean energy, we're committed to continual investment in innovation. Every day, Exelon's engineers, analysts, and innovators are revolutionizing the way energy is generated, sold, and delivered across the United States and around the world. So, what happens when 34,000 Exelon employees come together at our annual Innovation Expo in Washington, D.C. this week to tackle the energy industry's biggest challenges? Find out here:

<http://bit.ly/2szvZN4> \*\*

*To view online:*

<https://www.politicopro.com/tipsheets/morning-energy/2017/06/put-your-hands-in-the-air-for-energy-week-023468>

### **Stories from POLITICO Pro**

**BLM eyes Nevada Dry Lake Valley for first solar leases under new rule** [Back](#)

By Esther Whieldon | 06/23/2017 05:33 PM EDT

The Interior Department's Bureau of Land Management is eyeing Nevada's Dry Lake Valley for its first solar lease sale under BLM's new competitive leasing rule, according to a BLM official.

The Dry Lake area "really fits within what we're looking for as far as low conflict and is really suitable for a competitive lease process," John Kalish, chief of BLM's office of renewable energy and rights of way, told POLITICO today. In 2014, BLM successfully auctioned off six parcels in the area known as the Dry Lake solar energy zone, which sits near transmission lines that make it attractive to developers who have expressed interest in new developments in the area, Kalish said.

Under the competitive leasing rule BLM issued in November, the agency runs environmental reviews to identify areas where solar projects are unlikely to cause major environmental problems before it auctions off the land for development. Front-loading the process with those reviews is aimed at reducing the time it takes to site new projects.

Kalish said BLM could issue a lease sale notice for the Dry Lake area by early to mid-2018. The agency is also considering new leases under the process in California and Arizona.

BLM wants to "make sure we know fully what all of the potential impacts would be before we make those lands available," Kalish said.

**WHAT'S NEXT:** Before it can hold a lease auction, BLM will need to amend its land-use plan for the area and identify the specific parcels it wants to offer up in 2018, Kalish said.

*To view online [click here](#).*

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