

TUWaterWays

Water News and More from the Tulane Institute on Water Resources Law and Policy
December 15, 2017

A [Rising Sea Lifts All Boats](#) – But What if You’re Not [on a Boat](#)?

Climate change gets stuff done. Like what? Like melting ice in the Arctic and Antarctica. What’s that do? Glad you asked! [Villages in northern Alaska](#) where “[everything is melting](#)” are moving away from eroding lands, but it’s a slow and expensive process. And all that ice is so great that it exerts a measurable gravitational force. As the ice melts and moves away, so, too, will the amount of liquid water that is now kept nearby through that gravitational [attraction](#), resulting in differing impacts [depending on where](#) the ice melt occurs. But as we’re learning more and more about what’s under that ice in places like Greenland, we’re [learning more and more](#) about where that melt will go. Perhaps, it turns out that the surface of Greenland is not smooth with water sheeting off of it like [fresh New Orleans asphalt](#), but varied and porous like [months-old New Orleans asphalt](#). So maybe melting ice won’t move away from poles quite as quickly as we have feared. Gotta be grateful for any time we’re given to rise to these challenges, eh?

This ice melt and the warming seas themselves have impacts of their own. Like what? Like rising sea levels. What are the ramifications of those rising sea levels? Glad you asked! They’re many and varied. For instance, a [recent study](#) found that more than [13,000](#) archaeological and historic sites are in danger of going under water in the Eastern United States alone, and over [2,500 of those are in Louisiana](#). Of course, [human history](#) isn’t alone in slipping under the seas – so is much of humanity’s present!

If stuff that’s important is slipping away, what’s being done about it? Glad you asked! On a smallish scale, [universities](#) along coasts are feeling out ways to keep their campuses and communities whole. Louisiana has a plan that involves dozens of [projects](#), and though some are [questioning the cost](#) of these projects, the real question in these situations is “what is the cost of [doing nothing](#)?”

The [world’s biggest asset manager](#), BlackRock Inc. (if only it was [Black Rock Coalition](#) controlling \$6 trillion in assets!) is urging companies to [report on the climate risk](#) they are exposed to. Does this mean they’re headed towards encouraging companies to join the fight against climate change or they’ll stop at encouraging companies to just attempt to limit their exposure to climate risk? Only time will tell ([keeping cynicism away!](#)). Of course, not all business interests are ready to reckon with climate change. The American Legislative Exchange Council (a Koch-backed anti-regulation group) seems to be [splintering](#) over its unwillingness to acknowledge climate risk, and many investors are still going gaga over [South Florida real estate](#).

Some kids (yeah, [kids!](#)) are taking the matter to court and [pressing the US government](#) to fulfill/extend its duty under the public trust

The **Tulane Institute on Water Resources Law and Policy** is a program of the Tulane University Law School.

The Institute is dedicated to fostering a greater appreciation and understanding of the vital role that water plays in our society and of the importance of the legal and policy framework that shapes the uses and stewardship of water.

Coming up:

March 1-2, 2018
[Coastal Law in Louisiana](#)
New Orleans, LA

March 9-10, 2018
[23rd Annual Environmental Law and Policy Summit](#)
Tulane Law School
New Orleans

Water jobs:

[Vice President, National Advocacy Center](#)
National Wildlife Federation
Washington DC

[Intern for Water Policy](#)
Northeast-Midwest Institute
Washington, DC

[Senior Manager, Investor Engagement, Water Program](#)
Ceres
Boston, MA

[Senior Water Security Specialist](#)
Oxford Policy Management
Oxford, UK

[Research Associate](#)
The Pacific Institute
Oakland, CA

Tulane Institute
on Water Resources Law & Policy

6325 Freret Street, 1st Floor
New Orleans, LA 70118
504-865-5982

tulanewater.org

TWITTER: [@TulaneWaterLaw](https://twitter.com/TulaneWaterLaw)

doctrine and manage the atmosphere and the climate on behalf of its younger citizens. The case is moving forward to the US Court of Appeals this winter.

Some elected leaders, such as in the [UK](#) and [France](#), are full-solar-and-wind-created-and-certainly-not-coal-created-steam ahead in the fight against climate change, but the current administration in the US is still [reading the wrong blogs](#) and continues to [dismantle](#) bodies and programs that could help cope with climate shocks and natural disasters.

Climate shocks? What are those and what can we do about it? Glad you asked. Climate shocks are the individual events expected to occur more frequently and with more strength than they would without climate change. Like this year's wicked [Atlantic storm season](#) and the way those storms had [such wide-ranging impacts](#).

Of course, it's not all shocks, many places now simply have to worry about [high tides from month to month](#). Even when [the tide is high](#), they're holding on, but it's making it difficult to [be by your side](#).

Thank goodness the "[Elon Musk of carbon capture](#)" is on his way to Yale (eventually).

But What's the Real Answer to Our Long Global Nightmare?

[Water Lawyers!](#) Demands are increasing. Supply is finite and increasingly erratic. Market value is starting to enter a wobbly orbit around actual value. Water is where it's at! So you better find yourself a water lawyer, [friend](#). When you're ready to get with the program, give us a holler. We know some people.