

TUWaterWays

Water News and More from the Tulane Institute on Water Resources Law & Policy
October 10, 2018

Chilling News on Warming

12-7-82. The combination to your high school gym locker? No, sorry. The stardate of Crewman Jackson's death on the Starship Enterprise? [No way.](#)

These numbers are way more important—and scarier—and they come from the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the US EPA. According to the latest report from the IPCC, the world only has about [12 years to go before it will exceed its “carbon budget” to keep the warming of the earth’s atmosphere in check.](#)

The other two numbers are just as sobering but are even more disturbing. They come from an EPA and NHTSA [Environmental Impact Statement on fuel economy standards for vehicles](#) and [suggest that by the year 2100 \(just 82 years from now\) the earth will warm by 7 degrees Fahrenheit](#), and that pretty much nothing is going to be done to slow or stop it. Not because climate change is a hoax, but because the incremental steps—like higher fuel economy standards—are not worth the effort.

The implications for water supplies, precipitation, and sea levels are sobering, especially since the projects imply that the only course of action is to adapt to the changes, changes that will play out at the state, local, and private levels, where the options and resources for adaption are scant. One can almost hear the planet [singing now.](#)

Speaking of Budgets

Have you ever wondered how much phosphorus a watershed can handle before it passes it downstream as pollution? Of course you haven't, but that doesn't mean that it is not important. Fortunately, researchers at Universite de Montreal have been doing that wondering for you and their [conclusion, after looking at some 23 watersheds in Quebec, is “not much”.](#) Not only that, it can take years—like, 1000—to be purged from the soils. Which creates a sticky situation. It seems people like to eat and have clean water to drink, but that prevailing production agriculture relies on phosphorus based fertilizers that can contaminate drinking (and fishing) waters. So what are people to do? According to the study's authors, the answer is to develop “novel creative approaches” of management of nutrients. [Roger that.](#)

It's FEMABULOUS!

Facing hurricanes, floods, fires, and a looming climate cliff, one might expect the world's richest (and by logical extension, the smartest – [quiet, nerds](#)) nation to be leaping into action to make sure we are not just responding to bad things but preparing for them. Actually we kind of are, though you would not know it based on the

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:

[Master Plan Project Development Webinar](#)

October 17, 2018

Cameron, LA

[CPRA Board Meeting](#)

October 24, 2018

Cameron, LA

[Summit on the Master Plan and Beyond](#)

November 7, 2018

Baton Rouge, LA

[Restore America's Estuaries Summit](#)

December 8-13, 2018

Long Beach, CA

Water jobs:

[Public Interest Environmental Law Fellow](#)

Environmental Law Institute

Washington, DC

[Senior Program Manager \(Global Resilience Practice – North America\)](#)

100 Resilient Cities

New York, NY

[Program Manager](#)

Waterspirit

Rumson, NJ

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lack of attention it has received in the news and blogosphere. We are talking about the reauthorization of the Federal Emergency Management Agency in [HR 302](#). Passed with strong bipartisan support, the bill provides \$1.68 billion to help respond to Hurricane Florence, and, perhaps even more importantly, revamps FEMA to allow it to try to get ahead of the constantly rising costs of responding to disasters. Most notably, the law allows up to 6% of FEMA's Disaster Relief Fund to be used for competitive community pre-disaster mitigation grants. [This is a significant departure from FEMA's Stafford Act-driven compulsion to react to disasters rather than prepare for them. While 6% may not sound like much, in 2017, it would have amounted to about \\$600,000 million in disaster mitigation grant funds.](#) Couple that with the fact that this is an ongoing authorization, and it could be really something useful. Who says Congress can't get things done? Be [quiet, 81% of America](#).

[Imagine](#) There's No Water, I Wonder if You Can

It's October and a young person's fancy turns to [freaking out at Halloween haunted houses](#) and fright parks. If your kids are getting blasé about those thrills and chills, you might want to try something stronger—like joining with water utilities across the country to be part of "[Imagine a Day Without Water Day](#)". The idea is to get people to value and appreciate their access to safe, potable water by asking them to imagine a day without water for drinking, bathing, car washing, fire-fighting or even [water balloon fights](#). This year (the fourth annual) IDWWD is October 10. Presumptively, if more people appreciate their water, they might conserve it more, pollute it less, and even be willing to pay more for its stewardship. Of course, in [some places](#) it takes less imagination to conceive of a day without water since it is pretty much every day.