

TUWaterWays

Water News and More from the Tulane Institute on Water Resources Law and Policy
February 14, 2014

EPA IG to Investigate EPA Fracking Role

With the upcoming release of its own internal assessment of how the EPA has responded to the environmental challenges posed by hydrocarbon fracking, one might think that some final answers are imminent. But one would probably be wrong as evidenced by an announcement that EPA's Inspector General has announced his own [investigation](#). Stay tuned for further bulletins.

Back in Ring to Take Another Swing: Las Vegas Appeals Groundwater Decision

Proving again that no water dispute is ever really over, the Southern Nevada Water Authority and the Nevada State Engineer are [taking their fight](#) to gain access to remote groundwaters for the Las Vegas area to the Nevada Supreme Court. (See [TUWaterways December 17, 2013](#) for an earlier item).

Meanwhile, the Center for Biological Diversity and a coalition of Native American tribes and rural interests have [filed suits](#) in federal district court against federal regulators (the Bureau of Land Management and others) for granting right-of-way for the pipeline in the first place.

The Land of Milk and Water? Israel's New Water Surplus

Let's start by saying the term "water surplus" is a relative term that depends on timing, technology, cost and the budgeted uses. That said, reports on [Israel's fresh water surplus](#) is real news. The reason? Desalination (supported by years of conservation measures.) For the time being anyway, Israel has enough fresh water that it can export some to Gaza and Jordan. For a variety of reasons, this surplus and the improvements to desalination have been kept pretty quiet. Now that the cat is out of the bag, can California and Nevada embassies be far behind?

England 2014: When it Rains, it Pours. When it Pours, it can Flood. When it Floods, Who's to Blame?

Everyone knows England can be damp. It is supposed to be damp. But when historically unprecedented rains come with high winds the result is flooding, washed out roads and railways, and frustration. The [floods of 2014](#) are raising questions of about Agency performance, dredging, flood plain development, climate change, [insurability](#), and the price of budget cutting. At the moment, the UK's [Environmental Agency](#) is taking the brunt of criticism for disfavoring dredging and not doing enough to prepare despite scaled back budgets. With more rain and wind

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:

February 21-22, 2014

[Tulane Summit on Environmental Law & Policy](#)
Tulane Law School
New Orleans, LA

March 8, 2014

[Louisiana Water Festival](#)
State Capitol
Baton Rouge, LA

March 12-14, 2014

[Building Resilience Workshop V](#)
Lindy Boggs Conference Center
University of New Orleans

March 18-20, 2014

[State of the Coast 2014](#)
Ernest N. Morial Convention Center
New Orleans, LA

Tulane Institute
on **Water Resources Law & Policy**

6329 Freret Street, Suite 155G
New Orleans, LA 70118
504-865-5982

[http://www.law.tulane.edu/tlscenters/
waterlaw/](http://www.law.tulane.edu/tlscenters/waterlaw/)

on the way, it is probably too early to really rethink their relationship with water (We know, we have been through this, and we deeply sympathize).

The Score: Ground Water 8, Corvettes 0 as Sinkhole Swallows Part of Corvette Museum

A powerful reminder of the clandestine power of water comes from Bowling Green KY, where a forty feet wide, thirty feet deep [sinkhole](#) opened under the National Corvette Museum swallowing 8 very special American sports cars. Sinkholes are caused by ground water scouring the earth beneath the surface until the surface—in this case a museum showroom—falls into the hole. The cause of this particular hole has not been determined, but Bowling Green is very much in cave country where subterranean waters have sculpted massive cave systems.

Water Crises Ranks as Third Greatest Global Risk, According to World Economic Forum

The World Economic Forum (the group that puts on the meeting in Davos every year for the super-rich-and-powerful) has released its [Global Risks 2014](#) paper. The report is intended as “a stimulus for reflection for policy-makers, chief executive officers, senior executives and thought leaders around the world.” Basically, it’s a tarted-up TUWaterWays. The report notes that, in the face of freshwater withdrawals increasing at a rate greater than population growth, “water security is now recognized as a systemic global risk.” Other top ten global risks are directly water-related, as well. Failure of climate change mitigation and adaptation, greater incidence of extreme weather events like floods, storms, and fires, and food crises all rank as global threats. The report calls for a bundling of resources in “information, institutions, and infrastructure” and increased cooperation between water users and public and private institutions alike.

Nonetheless, despite the huge, multi-faceted global threat water crises are, only [one session](#) at Davos featured water this year. Good work, [Matt Damon](#).

Leading US Arms Manufacturer Looks to Make Waves in Sustainable Ocean Energy Production

The aerospace and security conglomerate Lockheed Martin Corp. officially signed on to build what will be the world’s [largest wave energy project](#) just off the coast of southeastern Australia. Once the final phase is completed in 2019, the project will produce 62.5 megawatts, or enough electricity to power 10,000 homes. Developed by Ocean Power Technologies, the project’s PowerBuoy technology creates electricity through the mechanical process of rising and falling with the waves. The electricity is then transferred to homes via an underwater cable. But don’t think Lockheed is a one-trick ocean energy pony. Lockheed is also working with Chinese consumer firm Reignwood Group to develop the biggest energy plant that runs on the [differences in ocean temperature](#). With roughly forty percent of the world’s population living in coastal areas, Lockheed is betting that the motion of the ocean will play a large role in satisfying world energy needs.

Come One, Come All to 19th Annual Tulane Environmental Law and Policy Summit, February 21 and 22.

Once again the students of Tulane’s Environmental and Energy Law Society have come up with a socko event. This year’s summit has a strong thread of water panels and speakers in addition to other fascinating topics, panels and field trips. Keynote speakers include **Dr. Marcus Ericksen**, founder of the 5 Gyres Institute and **Dr. Sylvia Earle**, former head of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and one of the most notable ocean scientists in the world. The summit will be held at Tulane Law School on February 21 and 22. Click [here](#) for more information.