

TUWaterWays

Water News and More from the Tulane Institute on Water Resources Law & Policy

[February 26, 2021](#)

Climate Change + Floods + Insurance Rates = A Big Ol' Mess

Do you like floods? Probably not. How about having to buy insurance? Probably not. Well, brace for some bad news. Where to begin? How about this: flooding is pretty much everyone's problem; ninety-eight percent of US counties have had floods and they caused [\\$155 billion in damages](#) in the US just in the twentyteens (don't you miss the twentieth century when it was just "seventies, eighties, nineties"?) [and \\$210 billion globally in 2020](#). Also, climate change is [estimated to increase annual loss by 2/3rds](#) over the next thirty years.

So, everyone's gonna wanna get flood insurance, right? Well, that's where it gets less straightforward. First of all, it turns out way too few property owners have flood insurance now, including in [homes with mortgages backed by the Federal Housing Authority](#). Additionally, the rates for flood insurance are fiscally [way, way too low](#) for most properties. Even so, flood insurance just isn't something every property owner can afford, and the lack of coverage is shaping up as [an existential threat to some communities](#). Well, as far as the low rates go, the [Federal Emergency Management Authority and their National Flood Insurance Program are planning](#) on improving flood mapping and increasing rates every year until rates are where the actuarial tables say they should be. If you can afford that potentially ever-increasing rate, well, score one for fiscally sound policy! If you are in the likely to be ever-increasing number that can't afford that ever-increasing rate, well, uh, score one for walking away from a property that you can't put on the market because it costs more to insure than its worth? Here's hoping for some creative policymaking on this front in the next few years!

Have You Checked on Your Macroinvertebrates Lately?

It's hard out there for a freshwater [gastropod](#). How hard? Well, a [recent study](#) in Nottinghamshire and Leicestershire found that freshwater macroinvertebrates in urban rivers there are [more likely to live on trash than on natural materials](#) like, you know, rocks. Rivers around the world are receiving millions of tons of plastic trash every year as natural habitats and substrates are declining, so your friendly neighborhood dragonfly nymph or roundworm is left with just trash to live on. At least the trash doesn't entangle animals or release toxic chemicals into the river. What? It does?!? Ugh. Save us, [cyanobacteria](#), you're our only hope!

Americans, Meet Your New Bottled Water Overlords, One Rock Capital Partners

Perhaps they were tired of catching hell for taking groundwater for free and selling it for hundreds of millions of dollars in this country

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 legal stewardship of water.

Coming up:

[Tulane Environmental Law and Policy Summit](#), February 26 and 27

[Sinews in the Cypress](#), March 2

[Ecological Drought: Impacts on Coastal Ecosystems](#), March 17

[ASBPA Coastal Summit](#); March 23-25

Water jobs:

[New Orleans Policy Manager](#) and [Climate Coordinator](#); Alliance for Affordable Energy; New Orleans, LA

[Manager, Conserving Marine Life in the U.S.](#); Pew Charitable Trusts; Washington, D.C.

[Associate Attorney](#); Earthjustice; Seattle, WA

[Director of Conservation](#); The Nature Conservancy; TX

[Senior Staff Attorney](#); San Francisco Baykeeper; San Francisco, CA

[Water Policy Fellow](#); Berkeley Law Center for Law, Energy & the Environment; Berkeley, CA

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alone (probably not), but Nestlé is no longer the boogeyman in this country for people who find it problematic for a private company to capture a public resource like groundwater and sell it as if it were something they created (never mind [other issues](#) it leads to like expectations for public utilities, public access for clean water, or pollution (“but where else will the macroinvertebrates live?”)). That’s because Nestlé has sold all of its North American bottled water brands so it can concentrate on its luxury European brands (you know, bottled water isn’t Alpine unless it comes from The Alps. Otherwise it’s just dihydrogen oxide). So, if you want your water to have a classier accent, you’ll still need to fill the Nestlé pocket (why the heck not? They’ve already got all your strawberry Nesquik money).

Who’s [the new king of Plastic-Wrapped Water North America](#) (airing on Food Network this summer!)? There’s One Rock Capital Partners, who [seem to buy all sorts of businesses](#), and Metropoulos & Co., who’ve [bought up Hostess and PBR](#) in the past. [The worry for the many](#) who’ve been sparring with Nestle is that any gains won or agreements entered into won’t be honored by the new owners of Poland Springs, Ozarka, Ice Mountain, and others. This world of water bottling was already contentious between community groups and corporate giants; there’s a good chance it’s about to get a lot more so.