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ARIPPA PERIODIC MEDIA NEWS – 2-1-20

(News clips from the previous month)

LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY ISSUES: FEDERAL

[Legislators seek funding to reclaim abandoned mine lands](#) - Standing before a huge culm bank at the Harry E. Colliery, U.S. Rep. Matt Cartwright on Thursday said Congress must reauthorize the Abandoned Mine Land Trust Fund, which allows states to collect small fees from active coal mine operators in order to pay for abandoned mine reclamation.

[PA lawmakers push to clean up abandoned mines](#) - Old coal mining sites may be cleaned up, thanks to a new bill introduced in the House.

[Lawmakers tout bill to clean up mine-scarred land](#) - Borough Mayor Chris Concert said he never thought he'd ever see any progress in eliminating a mountainous eyesore — the Harry E. culm bank along Main Street.

[Bipartisan Call For Continued Federal Funding For Abandoned Mine Clean-Up Funding By Cong. Cartwright, Meuser, State, Local Officials](#) - On January 23, Congressman Matt Cartwright (D-PA), U.S. Rep. Dan Meuser (R-PA), and state and local elected officials welcomed recent progress on legislation in the U.S. House to provide Northeastern Pennsylvania with long-term federal funding for the clean-up of the more than 100 remaining unreclaimed abandoned mine land (AML) sites in the region.

[Fighting to Fund Mine Reclamation Projects](#) - Evidence of the days when coal was king linger throughout Northeastern Pennsylvania in the form of culm banks. The job to rid those piles of waste is in dire need of funding. Now, two local lawmakers in Washington aim to keep the work on track.

[Bipartisan support grows for extending mine cleanup fee](#) - Two Pennsylvania representatives pushed for passage yesterday of legislation uniting rural communities in the Keystone State and beyond to save the federal program for old coal mine cleanups.

[FERC's backlog of rehearing requests and the legal 'purgatory' of opposition to the PJM MOPR order](#) - Language in the Federal Power Act prevents stakeholders from litigating a FERC order until regulators rule on rehearing requests, a decision that can face lengthy delays.

[EPA and Army Deliver on President Trump's Promise to Issue the Navigable Waters Protection Rule – A New Definition of WOTUS](#) - Today, at an event at the National Association of Home Builders International Builders' Show in Las Vegas, EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler and Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works R.D. James will announce a new, clear definition for "waters of the United States."

[EPA Chief of Staff Ryan Jackson heads for the exit](#) - Ryan Jackson, one of the Trump EPA's most powerful players behind the scenes, is joining a prominent mining trade group.

[EPA defends its 'good work' in protecting watershed](#) - EPA sent a letter to lawmakers yesterday touting its efforts to protect the Chesapeake Bay and blasting threats of litigation over cleanup plans.

[FERC's McNamee not seeking 2nd term as commissioner](#) - Federal Energy Regulatory Commissioner Bernard McNamee announced on Thursday he will not seek another term on the commission.

[Appeals court won't rethink its EPA permitting decision](#) - Judges for a federal appeals court today declined to reconsider their decision to uphold a controversial change to a Clinton-era air permitting regime.

[FERC MOPR order may have 'paradoxically unintended consequences': PJM](#) - Several stakeholders are pushing back on the controversial federal proposal to raise the floor price for new state-subsidized resources in the PJM Interconnection, including the grid operator.

[Judges grill EPA in cross-state case as N.Y. starts new suit](#) - Judges for the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit questioned how EPA could refuse to help Maryland and Delaware protect themselves against upwind pollution after the same court faulted a directly relevant part of the agency's Cross-State Air Pollution Rule.

[New details on Republican climate plan show emphasis on trees](#) - House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy (R-Calif.) teased new details about Republicans' forthcoming climate plan Tuesday, highlighting the legislation's focus on trees as a method for capturing carbon pollution.

[Coal's clout could rise after Murkowski committee exit](#) - Coal may be on the ropes, but coal-state senators may be on the rise next year.

[Democrats use climate bill to push new coal ash rules](#) - House Democrats plan to use their forthcoming climate bill to propose tougher standards for coal ash, dusting off a long-standing Capitol Hill feud over waste left behind at coal-fired power plants.

[James Danly Nomination for FERC Commissioner Returned to White House for Renomination](#) - On January 3, 2020, James Danly's nomination for Commissioner of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) was returned to the White House for renomination, due to the Senate's failure to confirm or reject the nomination during its first annual session.

[FERC clears PJM's second try at price-responsive demand program updates](#) - PJM Interconnection's second attempt at power market rule changes that would update its price-responsive demand program to conform to requirements imposed on capacity performance resources has received the nod from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

[Five environmental fights to watch in 2020](#) - 2020 is shaping up to be a busy year on the energy and environmental front.

[White House update of key environmental law would exclude climate change](#) - The Trump administration will instruct federal agencies to no longer take climate change into account when measuring the impact of major infrastructure projects, according to two senior administration officials — a sweeping overhaul of one of the nation's most consequential environmental laws.

LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY ISSUES: STATE

[DEP to Unveil Draft Regulations to Cap CO2 Emissions Using RGGI Model](#) - On Thursday, February 13, the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) will unveil preliminary draft regulations to allow Pennsylvania to participate in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI).

[As state reps head for the exit, Pennsylvania lawmakers jostle for control](#) - The abrupt announcement by the speaker of the Pennsylvania House last week that he would not run for another term in the Legislature made him the 15th state representative to head for the exits.

[DEP Citizens Advisory Council Recommends DEP Move Forward With Final Air Quality Permit Fee Increases](#) - On January 21, DEP's Citizens Advisory Council recommended DEP move forward with the final Air Quality Permit Fee Increase regulation.

[James Introduces Legislation to Encourage Remediation of PA's Toxic Waste Areas](#) - To encourage clean-up of toxic waste areas that pollute local waterways, Rep. Lee James (R-Venango/Butler) introduced legislation to add a member of the coal refuse energy and reclamation industry to the Mining Reclamation and Advisory Board (MRAB).

[Rep. Metcalfe Warns Top Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative Officials "Rogue Governor" Doesn't Have The Authority To Join RGGI](#) - On January 16, Rep. Daryl Metcalfe (R-Butler), Majority Chair, House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee, sent a letter to the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative Executive Committee saying Pennsylvania has a "rogue Governor" who lacks the authority to make Pennsylvania part of the RGGI initiative without legislative approval.

[Pennsylvania Lawmakers Move to Block Governor's RGGI Plan](#) - Legislators in Pennsylvania are trying to block Governor Tom Wolf's plan to have the state join the Northeast Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative.

[Md. governor directs his AG to 'commence litigation' against Pa., EPA](#) - Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan directed Attorney General Brian Frosh on Wednesday to pursue legal actions against Pennsylvania and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in order to protect Chesapeake Bay restoration efforts.

[Five-year report assesses impacts under 25-year-old mining law](#) - Mining company purchases of undermined and subsided surface properties in southwestern Pennsylvania have increased and that could adversely alter rural coalfield communities, according to a new analysis of the state's 25-year-old mining law, Act 54.

[Gov. Wolf's Green Government Initiatives Boost Energy Efficiency By 3%, Saving \\$6.8 Million In First Year](#) - On January 9, Gov. Tom Wolf announced a 3 percent reduction in state government electricity, natural gas and steam use for Commonwealth facilities on the first anniversary of his executive order setting a statewide goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

CFB, COAL REFUSE, ENERGY INDUSTRY

[Coal plants increasingly operate as cyclical, load-following power, leading to inefficiencies, costs: NARUC](#) - Coal plants are increasingly operating as cyclical or load-following generation units, as the power market becomes more saturated with intermittent resources, according to a Jan. 24 whitepaper from the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC).

[Report: 24 US mining deaths in 2019, the lowest number ever](#) - Two dozen people died in mining accidents in the U.S. last year, the lowest nationwide total ever recorded, according to the Department of Labor.

[Trout Unlimited: Federal Bill To Fund Abandoned Mine Cleanup Moving Forward](#) - Much-needed legislation to continue funding abandoned mine cleanup is moving forward in Congress. [The federal fee supporting the program is set to expire in 2021.]

[Call For Presentations: 2020 PA Abandoned Mine Reclamation Conference June 24-25 In State College](#) - The planning committee for the 2020 PA Abandoned Mine Reclamation Conference is now accepting presentation proposals. The deadline for submissions is March 1.

[Group ends effort to block bailout for nuclear plants](#) - Opponents of Ohio's roughly \$1 billion financial rescue of the state's two nuclear power plants will end their attempt to overturn the bailout.

[Electricity market rule change could hike Pa. consumers' bills, hamper renewables](#) - Pennsylvania electricity regulators and suppliers are grappling with a major rule change that could exclude most new renewable energy projects and other state-subsidized power sources from being paid to be available to feed the nation's largest electrical grid.

[US power generators set for another big year in coal plant closures in 2020](#) - U.S. coal consumption is likely to decline sharply again in 2020, though the current roster of planned and completed coal plant retirements suggests the year may not be quite as rough as the past two.

[Wind + solar expected to add 61 GW over next two years: EIA](#) - Wind and solar will make up the majority of new electric generation capacity in 2020 and 2021, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration's latest short-term energy outlook.

[2020 Outlook: Coal faces headwinds from aging plants, adverse market signals and high remediation costs](#) - New legislative and gubernatorial leadership elected in the 2018 midterm elections brought heightened pressure to the coal industry in 2019 — a pressure that's expected to continue from state legislators, regulators and evolving power markets in 2020, according to stakeholders.

[What would a \\$10 per ton carbon price mean for the Northeast?](#) - Adopting a \$10 per ton price on carbon could affect the manufacturing sector in states that are part of the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), a new report has found — particularly for high-energy industries like cement and aluminum.

[PJM Stakeholders at Odds on Timing for Next Capacity Auction](#) - PJM Interconnection will not run a base residual auction (BRA) until the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) approves recalculated Minimum Offer Price Rule (MOPR) floor prices for new and existing resources as directed by the federal entity's ground-shaking Dec. 19 capacity market order.

[Starwood Energy Terminates Legacy Power Purchase Agreement For Its Waste Coal Plant In West Virginia](#) - Morgantown Energy Associates ("MEA"), a company owned by controlled affiliates of Starwood Energy Group Global, LLC ("Starwood"), a leading private investment firm focused on energy infrastructure, announced today that it has terminated its Electric Energy Purchase Agreement ("EEPA") with Monongahela Power Company ("Mon Power"), a subsidiary of FirstEnergy Corp.

[Reduced coal generation drove power sector greenhouse emissions down 10% in 2019, report says](#) - Rapid coal plant retirements led to a 10% decrease in power sector carbon emissions in 2019, according to preliminary estimates from the Rhodium group released Tuesday.

[PJM Tracker: December power prices were down sharply with tumbling gas prices](#) - PJM Interconnection December power prices sank roughly 29% year on year on plummeting natural gas prices and lower power demand, as forward packages tumbled on lower gas forwards.

[Joe Biden's coal miner comments are insulting: Pennsylvania Coal Alliance executive director](#) - Pennsylvania Coal Alliance executive director Rachel Gleason discusses former Vice President Joe Biden's comments that coal miners should learn coding and the coal industry in her state.

[Report: Renewables overtook coal in power generation once last year](#) - Another bleak data point for coal's place in the energy mix: 2019 had the first month where it was overtaken by renewables in the nation's power generation, although it was only temporary.

[Electric Power Generation: Coal Is Currently a Vital Component](#) - Over the past decade, there has been a significant change in the U.S. system of power generation in the lower 48 states.

[10 Power Sector Insights from the IEA's World Energy Outlook 2019](#) - The International Energy Agency's (IEA's) November 2019-released World Energy Outlook 2019 (WEO2019) is studded with interesting findings about emerging trends in the power sector. Here are 10 from the Paris-based autonomous intergovernmental organization's latest annual report.

[Transformative Coal Power Technologies Take Shape](#) - The coal power industry acknowledges that to play a stable role in future power markets, it needs to modernize, and perhaps even overhaul its long-held status as a "conventional generator." Could new technology give it the reboot it needs?