

THE INDUSTRY



Vote tally

Considering potential changes with the new administration

After more than a year of primaries, debates, town hall meetings, and finally a presidential election, Republican candidate Donald J. Trump was elected the next President of the United States of America. Key electoral vote support came from battleground states including Florida, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, Michigan, and North Carolina.

The election also resulted in republicans remaining in control of the U.S. Senate, as well as the U.S. House of Representatives.

Once inaugurated on Jan. 20, 2017, President Trump will officially nominate, for Senate approval, leaders of all federal departments and agencies. This cabinet will include a new U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator, as well as several Assistant administrators, including one for the Office of Water.

Presidential priorities

According to the Dec. 5, 2016, *Washington Post* article, "Here Are the Names of People Whose Names Have Been Floated for Trump's Cabinet," Trump has vowed to "refocus" EPA on its core goal of ensuring clean air and water, rather than more recent efforts to fight climate change

and move toward cleaner energy sources.

Trump also has vowed to fight to prevent drinking water contamination issues such as the situation in Flint, Mich. He called these types of cases "real environmental challenges."

The new EPA administrator also would be responsible for enacting Trump's aggressive deregulatory push. On the campaign trail, Trump pledged to roll back all of President Obama's climate agenda. This includes the Clean Power Plan, which limits carbon dioxide from power plants.

As mentioned, Trump said that the Clean Water Rule – known as the Waters of the United States rule – would be undone and

all existing regulations would be reviewed for potential changes or repeal. However, most recently he met with climate change champion, former Vice President Al Gore, who said there is potential for common ground in the future following the meeting.

Trump nominates Pruitt for EPA

At press time, President-elect Trump has confirmed his plan to nominate Oklahoma Attorney General Scott Pruitt for the role of U.S. EPA Administrator. The EPA administrator oversees the 15,000-employee agency that writes and enforces regulations on air pollution, water pollution, climate change, land



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contamination, and more.

Scott Pruitt is known as a top challenger of President Obama's environmental agenda – and specifically is at the forefront of lawsuits challenging EPA regulations on carbon emissions and water pollution. Pruitt has been a leading critic of the aforementioned Clean Water Rule. He also is a leading critic of climate change.

Pruitt began his career as a private lawyer before spending 8 years in the Oklahoma Senate where he served as GOP whip and assistant floor leader at different times during his tenure.

Congressional changes

Also, over the next several months, congressional committee chairmanships and memberships will be assigned. For the water

sector, key committees in the House include

- the Committee on Appropriations (specifically, the Energy and Water Development and the Interior and Environment Subcommittees),
- the Natural Resources Committee, and
- the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee (specifically, the Water Resources and Environment Subcommittee).

Rep. Bob Gibbs (R-OH) is term-limited as the chairman of the Water Resources Subcommittee. His replacement will be made in the coming months to lead what is expected to be a busy legislative agenda for the subcommittee in 2017.

The key Senate committees include

- the Committee on Appropriations (specifically, the Energy and Water

Development Subcommittee and the Interior and Environment Subcommittee),

- the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, and
- the Environment and Public Works Committee.

Sen. Jim Inhofe (R-OK) also is term-limited and is stepping down as chairman of the Environment and Public Works Committee. He is likely to be replaced by Sen. John Barrasso (R-WY).

Sen. Barbara Boxer (D-CA), the ranking member is retiring and potential replacements include Sen. Tom Carper (D-DE), Sen. Ben Cardin (D-MD), and Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI).

Transition communication

On Dec. 7, WEF sent a letter to President-Elect Donald Trump providing recommendations for water sector priorities for the next administration. Specifically, WEF addressed water sector challenges related to aging water infrastructure, research and development, workforce development, stormwater, affordability, and resource recovery and the energy–water nexus. In the letter WEF pledged to provide reliable and expert input to the next administration to help solve the nation's water challenges.

Read the letter at www.wef.org/advocacy/legislative-affairs.

– **Amy Kathman, Steve Dye, and Claudio Ternieden, WE&T**

Engage with your newly elected leaders

Water Advocates

Join the WEF Water Advocate program to form a network of water professionals in every state and community, in every congressional district, to get the word out about the value of water and steps needed to protect it. Visit www.wef.org/water-advocates.

2017 National Water Policy Forum

Participate in the 2017 National Water Policy Forum, Fly-in, and Expo on March 21 and 22, in Washington, D.C. Held in conjunction with Water Week, this event attracts water professionals from across the U.S. to hear congressional speakers, attend policy briefings, visit Capitol Hill, and participate in roundtable dialogues with key policymakers and experts on important regulatory and policy matters. Visit www.wef.org/waterweek.

EPA to survey WRRFs about nutrient practices

Baseline data on nutrient removal would help set more realistic and achievable reduction targets

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is initiating a national study focused on nutrient removal and secondary technologies at water resource recovery facilities (WRRFs). The goals of EPA's

multiyear, multiphase study are to establish a statistically representative, nationwide baseline for nutrient discharge and removal and to characterize operation and management practices that result in improved nutrient reduction.

As a first stage of this study, EPA will collect basic information from all facilities nationwide through a voluntary questionnaire, to be sent out later this year. Making the questionnaire voluntary is a change from the agency's earlier plans