

StuCo Environmental Citizenship News

Week of November 9

Need some good news?

With Election Day come and gone, we are now waiting for all eligible votes to be counted. While the process tugs on our patience, it is also a display of democracy in action, which should not be undercut by misinformation about how votes are counted, claims of fraud, and insinuations about election theft. The good news is that the 2020 election has already broken records in voter participation and so far, the country remains overwhelmingly calm and peaceful.

There were also a number of environmental issues on the ballot across the country. Colorado's Proposition 114 would require the state's Parks and Wildlife Commission to plan the reintroduction of gray wolves in areas west of the continental divide by 2023. With 90% of ballots counted, the proposition leads with 50.5 percent to 49.5 percent. Bringing this apex predator back to Colorado would help reestablish natural ecological equilibria in species abundance and distribution.

Voters in Nevada were asked to enshrine a 50 percent renewable electricity by 2030 goal in the state's constitution. While looking good at first glance, it might make further increases in the state's renewable energy portfolio harder to achieve and the state is already on track to meet this goal. Nonetheless, Question 6 was approved by 56.5 percent of the counted votes.

In addition to ballot measures that support environmental clauses, the people who get elected to public office can have a big impact as well. In Washington, Governor James Inslee, a staunch advocate for climate change action, was reelected with currently 57.9 percent of votes. And in Michigan, Gary Peters (D) was reelected to the senate where he has been a supporter of environmental legislation.

Upcoming Dates & Events ...

11/21 - 11/29 Thanksgiving Break

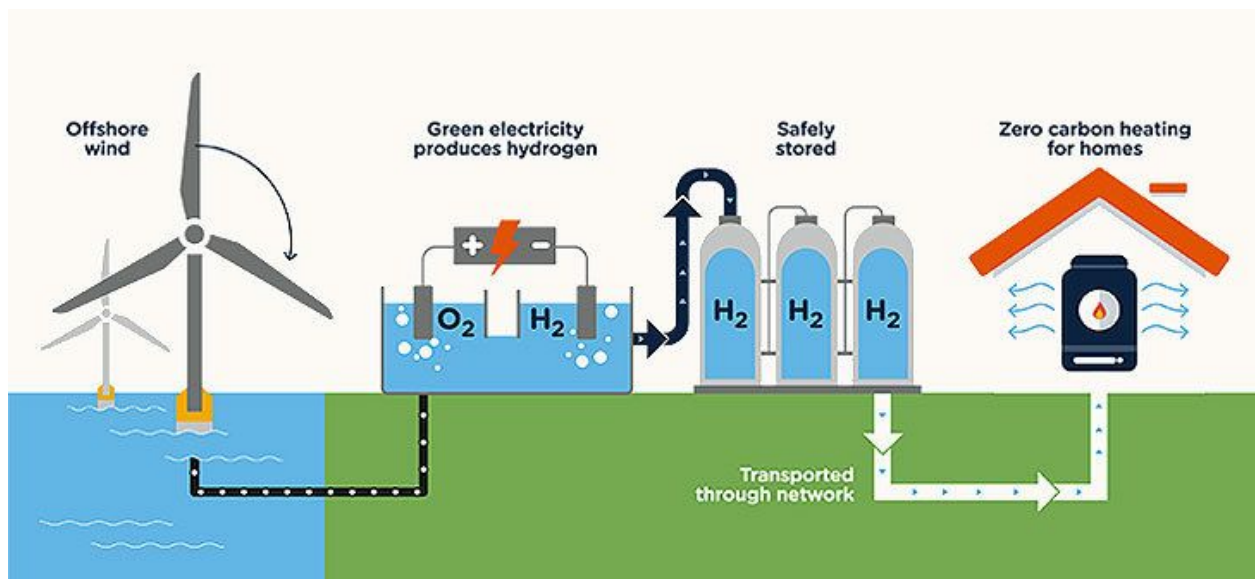
11/13/2020 [Past, Present and Future on the Bay Area Ridge Trail](#)

12/9/2020 [Electric Vehicles \(EV\) 101](#)

Good to know ...

You've probably heard about hydrogen fuel cells. They power buildings and some cars. At its core, a hydrogen fuel cell enables an electrochemical reaction that converts the chemical energy of hydrogen and an oxidizing agent, such as oxygen, into electricity. Water, H₂O, is a great supplier of that hydrogen, but it requires energy to break the water molecules apart. If that

energy is sourced from polluting fossil fuels, not much is gained from using the fuel cell's power. That opens the path for **green hydrogen**—a carbon-free fuel made from water by using renewably produced electricity to split hydrogen molecules from oxygen molecules. There is a small green hydrogen revolution underway with countries from Australia to Germany and Saudi Arabia investing in green hydrogen facilities that can power entire towns and provide mobility solutions beyond the electric vehicle. In Germany, for example, the government has earmarked the largest share of its green stimulus packet for green hydrogen and the [EU stated in July](#) that “[i]t is the missing part of the puzzle to a fully decarbonized economy”. Hydrogen fuel-based electricity is not without limitations, primarily the demanding and costly storage requirements at high pressure and cold temperatures and of course, the need for abundant renewable energy generation. On the other hand, hydrogen is the most abundant element on the planet and the ability to store it can help with smoothing out the variability in wind and solar power generation.



Source:

<https://e360.yale.edu/features/green-hydrogen-could-it-be-key-to-a-carbon-free-economy>

Things you can do ...

As votes continue to be counted and legal challenges start accumulating, perhaps one of the best things to do is to stay calm and engage with friends, neighbors, and social media to reinforce trust in our electoral system. Building bridges across our ideological and political is now more important than ever. More active forms of supporting democracy such as demonstrations will have their time and place as well, but should be designed to not further increase the potential for confrontations and tensions. See Alegria's recent Social Justice News on the Election, Claudia Rankine, and Thanksgiving.

Photo of the Week

Seeing long lines of voters snake around buildings and blocks is inspiring on some level, but also makes us think that people should not have to wait for hours to cast their vote. So our photo of the week is a close-up of voting in action.



Source:

<https://www.mercurynews.com/2020/08/30/election-2020-a-breakdown-of-californias-12-ballot-propositions/>