

✖ Brief takes on good and bad news from around the web.

First the good news:

- EPA and NHTSA have proposed [joint fuel efficiency and greenhouse gas reduction standards](#) for medium and large trucks, the ones that move freight around the country. “The agencies estimate that the combined proposed standards have the potential to reduce GHG emissions by nearly 250 million metric tons and save approximately 500 million barrels of oil over the life of vehicles sold during 2014 to 2018, while providing an estimated \$35 billion in net benefits to truckers, or \$41 billion in net benefits when societal benefits are included.” Talk about your low-hanging fruit. The proposed rules don’t go as far as current technology would allow, according to [a recent report from the National Research Council](#), apparently because the Office of Management and Budget was [on EPA’s case to keep costs down](#). Still, they are much better than nothing, which is the current status quo.
- Although it [initially declined to say so publicly](#), EPA has taken the next step toward vetoing the permit granted by the Army Corps of Engineers that would allow valley fills from the enormous Spruce No. 1 mountaintop removal coal mine. Having sifted through the evidence submitted at a public hearing and comment period this spring, EPA Region 3 [is recommending a veto](#), based on its determination that the impacts on headwaters, downstream waters, and the fish and wildlife that depend on them would be unacceptable. The recommendation will be forwarded to the [Assistant Administrator for Water, Peter Silva](#), who will make the final determination. Ken Ward has much more on his wonderful [Coal Tattoo](#) blog, starting with [this post](#).
- The California condor population has reached a new milestone. In 1987, the last nine wild condors were captured and put in captive breeding facilities in a last-ditch effort to save the species. Reintroduction to the wild began in 1992 in California, and later in Arizona. Now, according to Bettina Boxall of the L.A. Times, [there are 100 wild, free-flying condors](#) in California. Although most of the population growth is still coming from periodic releases of captive-born chicks, the birds are breeding in the wild.

Lest we get too giddy, now for some bad news:

- [Climate Science Watch reports](#) that California has approved a textbook for use in its Education and the Environment Initiative program that doesn’t mention global warming and could easily be read to suggest that the environmental impacts of coal and renewable energy sources are roughly equivalent.
- A [satellite-image study by the European Space Agency](#) concludes that the Gulf oil spill

hit in just the wrong place (prime spawning habitat) and at just the wrong time (the end of the breeding season) for bluefin tuna, probably reducing juvenile production of this already critically dwindling species by 20%. (Hat tip to [Earth Justice's Unearthed blog](#).)