The Wisconsin Senate race pits Tammy Baldwin (D) against Tommy Thompson (R) — Tammy versus Tommy, as the newspapers are fond of saying. In the environmental area, the two are as different as day and night. Baldwin champions environmental protection, while Thompson is in love with fossil fuels.

Tommy Thompson's position on energy essentially amounts to "drill, baby, drill." His website calls for legislative action to "open areas of shoreline in the Atlantic, Pacific, Gulf of Mexico and Alaska to oil and natural gas exploration and production." The website also expresses great enthusiasm for fracking and for the Keystone Pipeline. Interestingly, the website does not mention other environmental issues that might be of interest to Wisconsin voters such as the Great Lakes (unlike Paul Ryan's website).

The website also does not mention climate change. At a 2007 event (here), he seemed confused about the issue, saying that coal was not a problem as long as scrubbers are used — that addressed SO2 but has nothing to do with climate change. So far, I haven't found any later statements by Thompson about climate change, which seems odd — most politicians have *something* to say about the issue.

Tammy Baldwin's campaign website focuses on economic issues, but her congressional website has a full treatment of environmental issues. (It may also be the only congressional website in history to mention Aldo Leopold by name!) She is also quite clear (here) about her views regarding climate change:

> *As a member of the Energy & Commerce Committee, I support mandatory, market-based, cap and trade legislation to address climate change. . . . Energy conservation and efficiency policies, and investments in research and development of clean energy technologies will help us use less energy.*

Even more than in the Massachusetts race that I discussed previously, the choice in the Wisconsin race is stark: more drilling versus environmental protection.

UPDATE (Oct. 3). E&E News has now published a piece about the Wisconsin Senate race. It argues that environmental issues, particularly those relating to water quality and water availability, may play a significant role in what is looking like a tighter race:

"Given the close races in the state, the candidates' stances on environmental issues

like access to clean water could tip the scales. Among the big issues on Wisconsinites' minds these days are cow manure that's seeping into groundwater, lead in drinking water supplies and a scarcity of water in some parts of the state as aquifers are depleted."