

The Rundown

By: CLEARPATH
ACTION



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ClearPath Action Rundown October 9th, 2026

Happy Friday!

1. DOE backs more power from Vistra's nuclear fleet



The fastest way to add firm power is to get more out of the reactors America already runs. DOE **offered a conditional loan commitment** of up to \$4.2 billion to **Vistra** to uprate and modernize its Beaver Valley plant in Pennsylvania and Davis-Besse and Perry plants in Ohio.

The loan will:

- Add 433 megawatts of new nuclear capacity while preserving the nearly four gigawatts of existing generation;
- Licensing the plants to operate for 20 more years following the end of current licenses and support nearly 3,000 jobs; and
- Include an option to finance future uprates at Vistra's Comanche Peak plant in Texas.

What's clear: Upgrading is one of the fastest approaches to deploying new nuclear generation capacity. Getting more out of existing plants keeps power affordable while the next generation of reactors gets built.

Plug in: Read ClearPath's [Jake Kincer's](#) take in [this Daily Caller article](#).

2. USDA moves to map America's seed bank



America can't afford to depend on foreign competitors for the genetics behind next year's crop. USDA launched a \$180 million **Seed Sovereignty Initiative** to sequence, or read the DNA of, the plant collections in its National Plant Germplasm System, which holds more than 600,000 samples from over 16,000 plant species. Foreign competitors are already sequencing plant genetic resources, while most U.S. collections remain unsequenced.

The initiative will:

- Sequence and characterize major crop collections over two years;
- Use advanced technologies, like artificial intelligence, to spot valuable traits; which will
- Help researchers breed new crop varieties and respond faster to emerging pests and diseases for American farmers.

What's clear: Seeds are a strategic asset. Knowing the details of America's own collection is the first step to ensuring American farmers lead agricultural innovation and develop crops that help reduce emissions

Plug in: Read ClearPath CEO [Jeremy Harrell's "U.S. Agriculture Built the 20th Century; Innovation Will Decide the 21st"](#) for why agricultural research decides who leads on food security.

3. NEW podcast episode... Grids, Gas and AI: Can Washington Make a Deal?



Permitting reform is America's first step in the race to power our future. The latest episode of [Political Climate](#) includes an analysis of the new, bipartisan permitting proposal by hosts Julia Pyper, Brandon Hurlbut and former FERC Chairman Neil Chatterjee. The episode also features remarks from Sen. John Curtis (R-UT), Anthropic's Ariel Horowitz and Associate Deputy Secretary of Energy of DOE, Alex Fitzsimmons, at ClearPath's [Carbon Innovation Forum](#) during New York Climate Week.

About the episode:

- A breakdown of the new, bipartisan permitting proposal and how faster approvals could get energy infrastructure built sooner;
- A discussion of who should pay for the grid upgrades as demand grows, and how utilities and regulators set the rates families pay; and
- A debate over electricity market reforms, lowering power prices and how America competes with China on cheap imports and domestic manufacturing.

What's clear: Speed to power decides who wins the race to build. A bipartisan permitting deal is within reach, and Congress should pass it.

Plug in: Listen to [the full Political Climate episode](#), also on Apple Podcasts, Spotify and Amazon Music.

4. New agricultural productivity report released



Steady investment in agricultural research is how America keeps its farms the most productive in the world. Virginia Tech's Global Agricultural Productivity (GAP) Initiative released its **2026 GAP Report**, which finds global farm productivity increasing less than in previous years. The report details priorities to accelerate productivity by employing regenerative tools and practices. ClearPath is a GAP Initiative partner and contributor to the report.

The report:

- Finds productivity growth is around 0.7 percent a year;
- Examines how regenerative practices can cut costs, increase soil health and steady yields despite extreme weather; and
- Calls for better measurement, local decision tools, extension support, transition finance and outcome-based policy.

Plug in: Explore ClearPath's work on [**agriculture innovation**](#) for more on how research drives farm productivity.

5. Microsoft pours lower-emissions cement at its new campus



Big buyers are choosing cleaner concrete. Microsoft **used** building materials innovator **Fortera's** lower-emissions ReAct Blend in a slab for a new building at its Redmond, Washington headquarters. Fortera turns captured carbon dioxide into supplementary cementitious materials (SCMs) that can be used in a concrete mixture.

What to know:

- ReAct works just like conventional cement and can be poured using standard equipment;
- Using ReAct delivers a 37% reduction in carbon emissions while meeting performance, durability and constructability requirements;
- This is a real-world demonstration of a technology Microsoft has previously **invested in**.

What's clear: Tech companies are contributing to materials innovation, but large-scale deployment requires states to increase the adoption of performance specifications. Bipartisan legislation like the **Concrete and Asphalt Innovation Act** can unlock market access for new materials by helping states make the shift.

Plug in: Read ClearPath's "**Driving American Innovation in the Highway Bill**" for how a surface transportation reauthorization can increase the use of performance specifications to scale innovative companies like Fortera.

6. The Circuit



ClearPath CEO **Jeremy Harrell** joined Groundwork Collaborative's Alex Jacques and policy experts from Crux Climate for a webinar titled "**What new data shows about US clean energy supply chains,**" where they discussed how the Section 45X tax credit has shaped domestic manufacturing investment and where U.S. capacity still trails.

7. Coming down the pipeline

- **TODAY, at 1:00 PM EDT** – ClearPath CEO **Jeremy Harrell** will join Xan Fishman from the Bipartisan Policy Center for a webinar titled, "**A Detailed Walkthrough of the Bipartisan American Affordability and Jobs Act,**" to discuss the Senate's new permitting package.

8. ICYMI

- USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) opened **applications** for nearly \$25 million in Phase II Small Business Innovation Research and Small Business Technology Transfer grants to help agricultural startups bring their research to market.
- Constellation and Google **announced** a 20-year power purchase agreement that will add 890 megawatts of new nuclear capacity to the PJM Interconnection grid through uprates at 11 reactor units in Illinois, Pennsylvania and New Jersey, with the first uprate expected by 2028.
- Lawrence Berkley National Lab has **opened applications** for the next cohort of its Cradle to Commerce (C2C) program. The program seeks to bring together inventors and entrepreneurs to scale secure, affordable and reliable energy solutions.
- Sens. Tim Sheehy (R-MT) and Chris Coons (D-DE) **introduced** the Strategic Technology and Resilient Alliances (STRATA) Act, which would strengthen domestic critical mineral supply chains and accelerate innovation. Reps. Young Kim (R-CA) and Ami Bera (D-CA) introduced the House version of the bill.



*ClearPath believes America must lead the world in innovation over regulation...
markets over mandates...providing affordable, reliable, clean energy.*

That's all from us. Thanks for reading and have a great weekend!

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