



Environmental Data & Governance Initiative Website Monitoring Report

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DOI Further Restricts Access to Climate Change Web Pages

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DOI Further Restricts Access to Climate Change Web Pages

Overview

Since Summer 2018, the Department of the Interior (DOI) has restricted access to its primary climate change webpage: <https://www.doi.gov/climate>. This change extends previous content removals from the page [reported on by EDGI](#) in 2017. DOI has also removed "Climate Change" from its linked menu of "Our Priorities" on the agency's home page and restricted access to: <https://www.doi.gov/climate/carbonfootprint>.

Description of Changes

In Summer 2018 (between June 20 and September 1), DOI restricted access to its primary climate change webpage: [doi.gov/climate](https://www.doi.gov/climate). The page previously stated that "The impacts of climate change have led the Department to focus on how we manage our nation's public lands and resources. The Department of the Interior contributes sound scientific research to address this and other environmental challenges." The page also listed link text and links under a "Resources" subheading to each of four DOI agencies –USGS, FWS, BOEM, NPS– and to its Climate Adaptation Science Centers. Since Summer 2018, the webpage has displayed the standard language DOI utilizes after removing a previously existing page, with a browser tab title of "Access Denied" and the page body reading "Content unavailable. That page doesn't seem to be available on our system. Its content may have been moved elsewhere -- or our site might just be having trouble right now." Note that this is different from "Page Not Found" error messages used by DOI. The block of access to the DOI Climate Change page represents an extension of an earlier modification, in April 2017, [reported on by EDGI](#), in which DOI substantially removed Obama-era climate change content. In Summer 2018, DOI also removed "Climate Change" from its linked menu of "Our Priorities" on its home page (which had linked to [doi.gov/climate](https://www.doi.gov/climate)). Finally, DOI restricted access to <https://www.doi.gov/climate/carbonfootprint> sometime between February 26, 2017 and March 11, 2017. The page had previously described DOI's efforts to comply with an executive order requiring federal agencies to reduce their carbon footprint.

Detailed Description of Changes

1. Climate Change

- URL: <https://www.doi.gov/climate>
- Access Denied / Content Unavailable
- Screenshot 1.1 Changes occurred between [June 20, 2018](#) and [September 1, 2018](#)

Note: This unusually wide range of times is due to technical difficulties in archiving "Access Denied" webpages. We do not use information from web page source code or last updated dates to establish change timeframe, as it is not possible to corroborate that those dates pertain to any particular change.

Screenshot 1.1

This screenshot compares the DOI Climate Change page between June 2018 (left) and September 2018 (right). The following details the content that was modified on the page:

1.1a) Body:

The entire body text of the page was removed:

"Climate Change

The U.S. Department of the Interior manages one-fifth of the land in the United States, 35,000 miles of coastline, and 1.7 billion acres of the Outer Continental Shelf. The Department also upholds the federal government's trust responsibilities to 567 Indian tribes; conserves fish, wildlife, and their habitats; manages water supplies for more than 30 million people; and protects America's natural treasures.

The impacts of climate change have led the Department to focus on how we manage our nation's public lands and resources. The Department of the Interior contributes sound scientific research to address this and other environmental challenges."

and was replaced with:

"Content unavailable

That page doesn't seem to be available on our system. Its content may have been moved elsewhere -- or our site might just be having trouble right now.

Our site-search feature may be able to help. To search DOI.gov and other Interior sites, start by clicking the magnifying lens at the top of the screen."

1.1b) Title:

The title of the page was changed from “Climate Change” to “Content Unavailable.” The browser title (appearing in the browser tab, and not shown in the screenshots) was changed from “Climate Change” to “Access Denied.”

1.1c) Links:

- Link text and link URLs to DOI agency climate resources under a “Resources” header were removed:
 - Bureau of Ocean Energy Management:
<https://www.boem.gov/Environmental-Stewardship/Environmental-Assessment/NEPA/procedure/climate/index.aspx>
Note: The URL remains active.
 - Climate Adaptation Science Centers: <https://casc.usgs.gov/>
Note: The URL remains active.
 - National Parks Service:
<https://www.nps.gov/subjects/climatechange/climatescience.htm>
Note: The URL remains active.
 - U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service:
<https://www.fws.gov/home/climatechange/index.html>
Note: The URL remains active.
 - U.S. Geological Survey:
<https://www.usgs.gov/science/science-explorer/Climate+Change>
 - This page itself is no longer accessible. Additionally, USGS has removed “Climate Change” from its “Science Explorer” homepage menu. Compare July 2017:
<https://web.archive.org/web/20170729160711/https://www.usgs.gov/science/science-explorer/Climate+Change> with September 2018:
<https://web.archive.org/web/20180907153318/https://www.usgs.gov/science/science-explorer/Climate+Change>
 - A search for “climate change” at the top of the Science Explorer page finds a Climate Change page (see <https://www.usgs.gov/science-explorer-results?es=climate+change>), however clicking the link to the Climate Change page listed redirects to a Land Resources page, not to a Climate Change page.
- Link text and link URL to this page (www.doi.gov/climate) was removed under the “Our Priorities” navigational menu (this change occurred across the DOI site; see Page 2 for an example).

Screenshot 1.1

The screenshot shows a web browser displaying a page from the U.S. Department of the Interior. The page title is "Climate Change". The main content area displays a "Content unavailable" error message in green text, stating: "That page doesn't seem to be available on our system. Its content may have been moved elsewhere -- or our site might just be having trouble right now." Below this message, there is a suggestion: "Our site-search feature may be able to help. To search DOI.gov and other Interior sites, start by clicking the magnifying lens at the top of the screen." The page header includes the U.S. Department of the Interior logo and name, along with social media icons and a search icon. The footer contains navigation links for "About", "Our Priorities", "Resources", and "Contact Us".

Climate Change

The U.S. Department of the Interior manages one-fifth of the land in the United States, 35,000 miles of coastline, and 1.7 billion acres of the Outer Continental Shelf. The Department also upholds the federal government's trust responsibilities to 567 Indian tribes, conserves fish, wildlife, and their habitats; manages water supplies for more than 30 million people, and protects America's natural treasures.

The impacts of climate change have led the Department to focus on how we manage our nation's public lands and resources. The Department of the Interior contributes sound scientific research to address this and other environmental challenges.

Resources:

- Bureau of Ocean Energy Management
- Climate Adaptation Science Centers
- National Park Service
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- U.S. Geological Survey

U.S. Department of the Interior
Protecting America's Great Outdoors and Powering Our Future

Content unavailable

That page doesn't seem to be available on our system. Its content may have been moved elsewhere -- or our site might just be having trouble right now.

Our site-search feature may be able to help. To search DOI.gov and other Interior sites, start by clicking the magnifying lens at the top of the screen.

U.S. Department of the Interior
Protecting America's Great Outdoors and Powering Our Future

About
Meet the Secretary
Bureaus
For Employees

Our Priorities
American Energy
Jobs
Regulatory Reform
Stewardship
Tribal Nations

Resources
Cobell / Land Buy-back
Deepwater Horizon
Hurricane Sandy
Open Government Initiative
Strategic Plan

Contact Us

2. DOI homepage

- URL: <https://www.doi.gov>
- Removed “Climate Change” from “Our Priorities” menu
- Screenshot 2.1 changes occurred between [July 12, 2018](#) and [July 24, 2018](#)

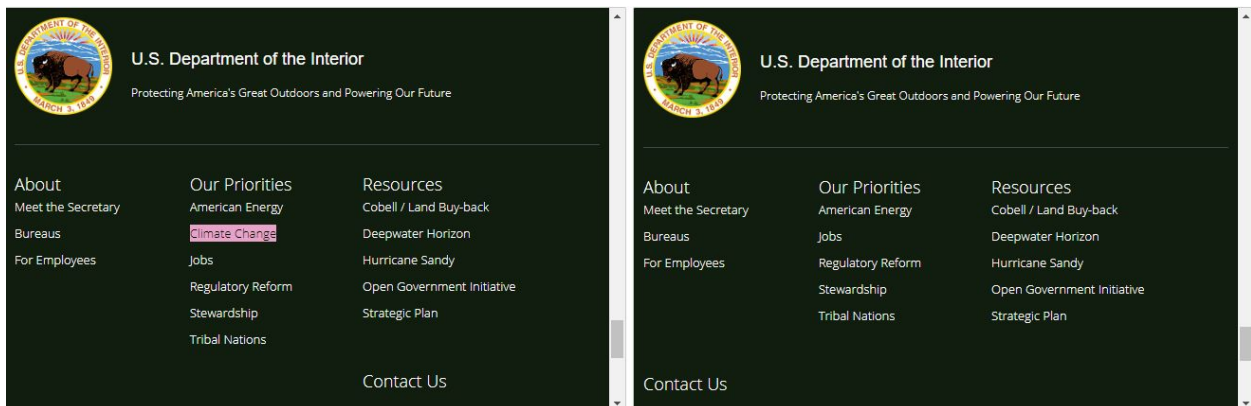
Screenshot 2.1

This screenshot compares the DOI homepage “Our Priorities” menu between July 12, 2018 (left) and July 24, 2018 (right). Note that this menu change applies across the DOI website. The following details the content and access modified on the page.

2.1a) Links:

The link text and link URL to “Climate Change” was removed from the “Our Priorities” menu.

Screenshot 2.1



3. Reducing Our Carbon Footprint

- URL: <https://www.doi.gov/climate/carbonfootprint>
- Access Denied / Content Unavailable
- Screenshot 3.1 changes occurred between [February 26, 2017](#) and [March 11, 2017](#)
- Screenshot 3.2 changes occurred between [April 27, 2017](#) and [February 15, 2019](#)

Screenshot 3.1

This screenshot compares the DOI “Reducing Our Carbon Footprint” page between February 26, 2017 (left) and March 11, 2017 (right). The following details the content that was modified on the page:

3.1a) Body:

The entire body text of the page was removed:

“Reducing Our Carbon Footprint

On Oct. 5, 2009, President Obama issued Executive Order 13514, which directed all the agencies of the federal government to lead by example in the reduction of greenhouse-gas emissions. At the U.S. Department of the Interior, we are developing a baseline of existing greenhouse-gas emissions from our activities and will be setting aggressive targets for reductions. Interior bureaus are already taking action to reduce the carbon footprint of our activities through the installation of renewable-energy sources to power departmental facilities, improving the energy efficiency of those facilities, purchasing more fuel-efficient vehicles, exploring ways to reduce employee travel and much more...”

and replaced with:

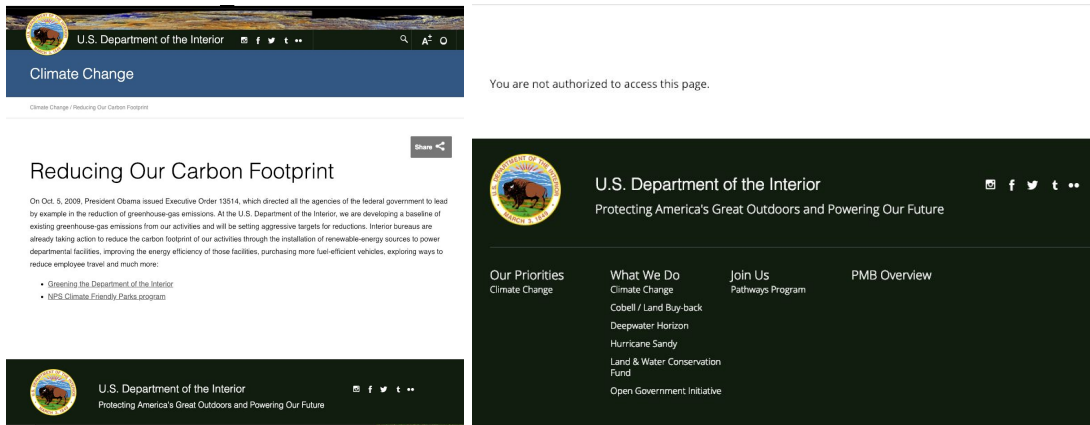
“You are not authorized to access this page.”

3.1b) Links:

Link text and links to two websites were removed from the body of the page:

- [Greening the Department of the Interior](#)
 - Removed within a similar timeframe ([Feb. 26, 2017](#) - [April 28, 2017](#)), with URLs leading to a “Content Unavailable” page.
- [NPS Climate Friendly Parks program](#)
 - Currently live as of Feb. 2019, but this site has seen significant modifications previously (see EDGI’s report [here](#)).

Screenshot 3.1



Screenshot 3.2

This screenshot shows the DOI “Reducing Our Carbon Footprint” page on February 15, 2019. The following details the content that was modified on the page:

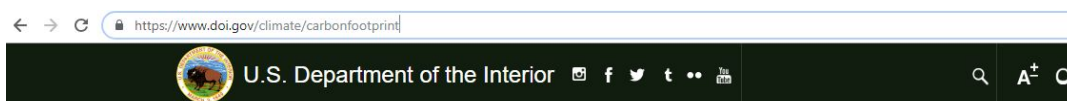
(3.2a) By February 15, 2019, the message “You are not authorized to access this page” had been replaced with:

“Content unavailable

That page doesn't seem to be available on our system. Its content may have been moved elsewhere -- or our site might just be having trouble right now.

Our site-search feature may be able to help. To search DOI.gov and other Interior sites, start by clicking the magnifying lens at the top of the screen.”

Screenshot 3.2



Content unavailable

That page doesn't seem to be available on our system. Its content may have been moved elsewhere -- or our site might just be having trouble right now.

Our site-search feature may be able to help. To search DOI.gov and other Interior sites, start by clicking the magnifying lens at the top of the screen.

