

Environmental Data and Governance Initiative Website Tracking Report

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Changes to DOE's Office of Energy Efficiency & Renewable Energy Bioenergy Technologies Office Web Pages

April 19, 2017

This report is co-released with:

- <u>Changes to DOE's Office of Energy Efficiency & Renewable Energy Vehicle</u>
 Technologies Office Web Pages
- Changes to DOE's Office of Energy Efficiency & Renewable Energy Wind Energy
 Technologies Office Web Pages

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Changes to DOE's Office of Energy Efficiency & Renewable Energy Bioenergy Technologies Office Web Pages

DOE's Office of Energy Efficiency & Renewable Energy (EERE) has made extensive changes to pages pertaining to the Bioenergy Technologies Office. There was a shift in stated office priorities and language referring to greenhouse gas emissions and dependence on fossil fuels was changed.

Description

Extensive changes and reorganizations occurred on pages in the Bioenergy Technologies Office (BETO) of the Department of Energy's Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE) Office. This report focuses on a subset of the entire domain, analysing changes to the "About the Bioenergy Technologies Office: Growing America's Energy Future" page and two of its subpages, "Key Activities" and "Accomplishments and Successes". Of the listed changes, several fall into three main categories: (1) changes in emphasis on bioenergy fuels as a replacement for fossil fuels; removal of mention of "greenhouse gases"; and shift in emphasis on US jobs and economic growth.

For additional context, a similar analysis was applied to changes to EERE's <u>Vehicles</u> <u>Technologies Office</u> and <u>Wind Energy Technologies Office</u> pages. Significant changes were also identified in EERE pages, across multiple domains, outside the scope of these three reports and may be worth further investigation.

The most notable changes to the BETO pages in this report are summarized here:

- 1. Changes in emphasis on bioenergy fuels as a replacement for fossil fuels
 - a. Changed "In addition, through our efforts to develop biobased products and increase biopower generation, we're helping to replace the whole barrel of oil" to "In addition, we're supporting the development of bioproducts, which enable biofuels, since the production of bioproducts relies on much of the same feedstocks, infrastructure, and technologies that are central to biofuel production" (Change 1.1d)
 - b. Language that previously suggested substitution of biofuels for petroleum was removed: "The reduction in petroleum imports and increase in domestic, renewable biomass use will help keep jobs in this country." (Change 1.3a)
 - c. The phrase "reduces U.S. oil dependence" was changed to "reduces dependence on foreign oil" (Change 2.1a). Note that the removed clause "reduces U.S. oil dependence" could possibly mean both domestic and foreign dependence on oil.
 - d. Language that previously suggested substitution of biofuels for petroleum was altered from "a sufficient quantity to displace approximately 30% of the

U.S. petroleum consumption without impacting food or feed needs" to "without impacting food, feed, and fiber needs" (Change 3.1a).

2. Removal of mention of "greenhouse gases"

- a. Removal of "greenhouse gas emissions" from the sentence "Office investigates the life-cycle impacts of bioenergy production on the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, cleaner air, improved soil quality, enhanced water quality, biodiversity, and the use of marginal croplands." (Change 1.2e)
- b. The parenthetical phrase "e.g. reduced greenhouse gas emissions" was removed from the phrase "provides environmental benefits (e.g. reduced greenhouse gas emissions)". (Change 2.1b)
- c. Changed "Reducing greenhouse gases from the transportation sector" to "Reducing harmful emissions from the transportation sector." (Change 2.2e)
- d. The phrase "transportation-related greenhouse gas emissions" was changed to to "transportation-related emissions", removing the reference to GHGs from the introductory paragraph. (Change 3.1c)

3. Shift in emphasis on US jobs and economic growth

a. Added sentence "The potential production could, in turn, directly generate \$30 billion in revenue and 1.1 million jobs in a variety of sectors including farming, plant operations, scientific research, and product and equipment design" (Change 3.1b).

4. Additional notable changes

a. Removed citation section referencing six relevant documents at the bottom of the "About" page (Change 1.3g)

Detailed Description of Changes

Page 1: ABOUT THE BIOENERGY TECHNOLOGIES OFFICE: GROWING AMERICA'S ENERGY FUTURE

- URL: <u>https://energy.gov/eere/bioenergy/about-bioenergy-technologies-office-growing-am</u>

 ericas-energy-future
- Side-by-side View: 1/17/2017 to 3/17/2017
- Change occurred between Mar 16, 2017 10:18 PM ET and Mar 17, 2017 9:46 PM ET

Screenshot 1.1

Changes to the "WHAT WE DO" Section:

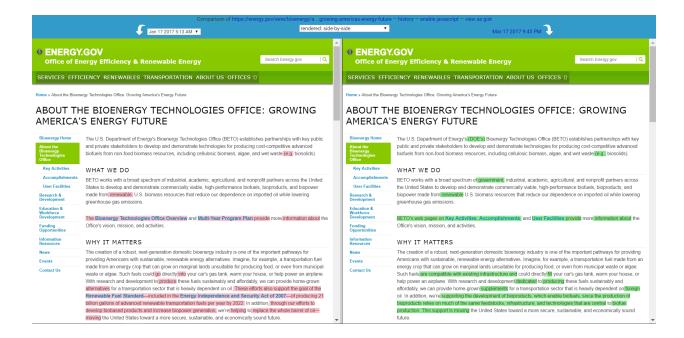
are central to biofuel production"

(1.1a) Changed "The <u>Bioenergy Technologies Office Overview</u> and <u>Multi-Year Program Plan"</u> to "BETO's web pages on <u>Key Activities</u>, <u>Accomplishments</u>, and <u>User Facilities</u>"

- "Bioenergy Technologies Office Overview" linked to page titled "REPLACING THE WHOLE BARREL TO REDUCE U.S. DEPENDENCE ON OIL"
- "Multi-Year Program Plan" linked to a page titled "BIOENERGY TECHNOLOGIES
 OFFICE MULTI-YEAR PROGRAM PLAN: MARCH 2016"

Changes to the Introduction of the "WHY IT MATTERS" Section:

(1.1b) Changed "Such fuels could go directly into your car's gas tank, warm your house, or help power an airplane." to "Such fuels are compatible with existing infrastructure and could directly fill your car's gas tank, warm your house, or help power an airplane." (1.1c) Removed "These efforts also support the goal of the Renewable Fuel Standard—included in the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007—of producing 21 billion gallons of advanced renewable transportation fuels per year by 2022." (1.1d) Changed "In addition, through our efforts to develop biobased products and increase biopower generation, we're helping to replace the whole barrel of oil" to "In addition, we're supporting the development of bioproducts, which enable biofuels, since the production of bioproducts relies on much of the same feedstocks, infrastructure, and technologies that



Screenshot 1.2

Changes to the "Promoting national security [by] developing domestic sources of energy" Subsection:

(1.2a) Changed "The United States spends more than half a billion dollars per day on imported oil, and petroleum-related products accounted for about half of the nearly \$505 billion U.S. trade deficit in 2014." to "In 2015, the United States imported more than 3.4 billion barrels of petroleum from about 88 countries, amounting to approximately one-quarter of all petroleum used in the United States."

(1.2b) Changed "In 2011, the Department signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Departments of the Navy and Agricultural to advance research into military applications of advanced biofuels." to "In partnership with the U.S. Navy and the U.S. Department of Agriculture, under the Defense Protection Act, DOE is co-funding the construction of three integrated biorefineries that will have the capacity to produce hydrocarbon fuels that meet military specifications".

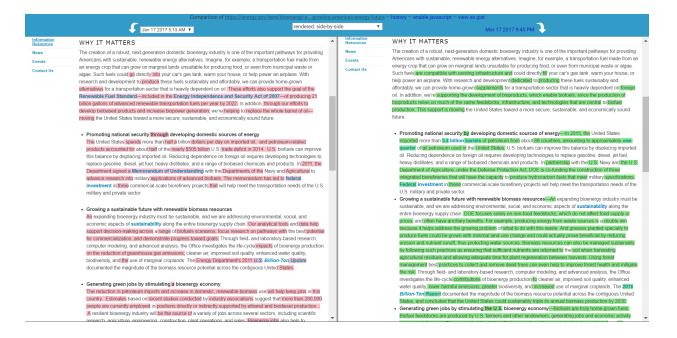
Changes to the "Growing a sustainable future with renewable biomass resources" Subsection:

- (1.2c) Removed "Our analytical tools and data help support decision-making across a range of biofuels scenarios, focus research on pathways with the best potential for commercialization, and demonstrate progress toward goals."
- (1.2d) Added sentences "DOE focuses solely on non-food feedstocks ... to improve forest health and mitigate fire risk."
- (1.2e) Changed "Office investigates the life-cycle impacts of bioenergy production on the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, cleaner air, improved soil quality, enhanced water quality, biodiversity, and the use of marginal croplands." to "Office investigates the life-cycle contributions of bioenergy production to cleaner air, improved soil quality, enhanced water

quality, lower harmful emissions, greater biodiversity, and increased use of marginal croplands."

(1.2f) Changed text "<u>U.S. Billion-Ton Update</u>" linked to URL https://energy.gov/eere/bioenergy/2016-billion-ton-report

(1.2g) Added continuation of last sentence in section "...and concluded that the United States could sustainably triple its annual biomass production by 2030."



Screenshot 1.3

Changes to the "Generating green jobs by stimulating the U.S. bioenergy economy" Subsection:

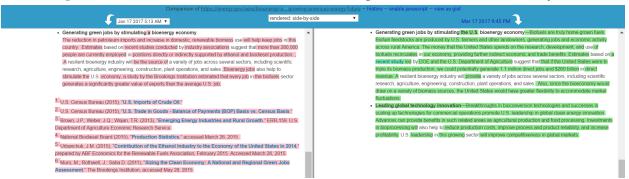
- (1.3a) Removed "The reduction in petroleum imports and increase in domestic, renewable biomass use will help keep jobs in this country."
- (1.3b) Removed "Estimates based on recent studies conducted by industry associations suggest that more than 280,000 people are currently employed in positions directly or indirectly supported by ethanol and biodiesel production"
- (1.3c) Removed "Bioenergy jobs also help to stimulate the U.S. economy; a study by the Brookings Institution estimated that every job in the biofuels sector generates a significantly greater value of exports than the average U.S. job."
- (1.3d) Added "Biofuels are truly home-grown fuels ... Estimates based on a <u>recent study</u> led by DOE and the U.S. Department of Agriculture suggest that that if the United States were to triple its biomass production, we could potentially generate 1.1 million direct jobs and \$260 billion in direct revenue"
- (1.3e) Added "Also, since the bioeconomy would draw on a variety of biomass sources, the United States would have greater flexibility to accommodate market fluctuations."

Changes to Other Subsections:

(1.3f) Added "Leading global technology innovation" Section: "Breakthroughs in bioconversion technologies and successes in scaling up technologies for commercial operations promote U.S. leadership in global clean energy innovation. Advances can provide benefits in such related areas as agricultural production and food processing. Investments in bioprocessing will also help to reduce production costs, improve process and product reliability, and increase profitability. U.S. leadership in this growing sector will improve competitiveness in global markets."

(1.3g) Removed citation section:

- ^{1.}U.S. Census Bureau (2015), "U.S. Imports of Crude Oil."
- ^{2.} U.S. Census Bureau (2015), "<u>U.S. Trade in Goods Balance of Payments (BOP) Basis</u> <u>vs. Census Basis.</u>"
- ^{3.} Brown, J.P.; Weber, J.Q.; Wojan, T.R. (2013), "<u>Emerging Energy Industries and Rural Growth</u>." ERR-159. U.S. Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service.
- ⁴ National Biodiesel Board (2015), "Production Statistics," accessed March 26, 2015.
- ^{5.} Urbanchuk, J.M. (2015), "<u>Contribution of the Ethanol Industry to the Economy of the United States in 2014</u>," prepared by ABF Economics for the Renewable Fuels Association, February 2015. Accessed March 26, 2015.
- ^{6.} Muro, M.; Rothwell, J.; Saha D. (2011), "<u>Sizing the Clean Economy: A National and Regional Green Jobs Assessment</u>," The Brookings Institution, accessed May 28, 2015.



Internet Archive: previous version from Mar 13, 2016 and current version from April 15, 2017

Page 2: KEY ACTIVITIES

- URL: https://energy.gov/eere/bioenergy/key-activities
- Side-by-side View: 1/17/2017 to 3/22/2017
- Change occurred between Mar 20, 2017 5:54 AM ET and Mar 22, 2017 1:16 AM ET

Screenshot 2.1

Changes to the Introduction Section:

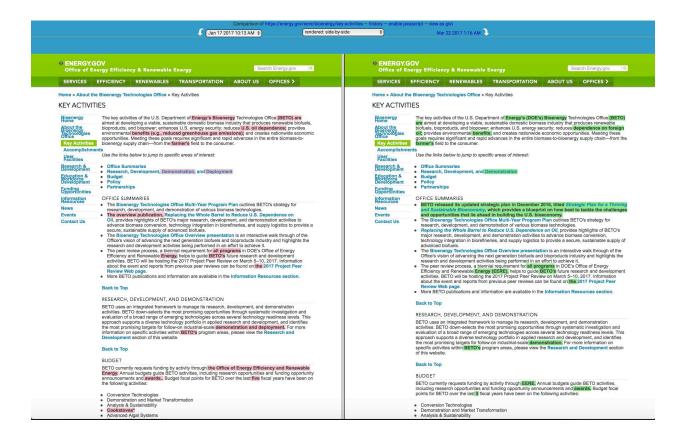
(2.1a) The key activities of the U.S. Department of Energy's Bioenergy Technologies Office (BETO) are aimed at developing a viable, sustainable domestic biomass industry that produces renewable biofuels, bioproducts, and biopower; enhances U.S. energy security; reduces U.S. oil dependence..." to "The key activities of the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE's) Bioenergy Technologies Office (BETO) are aimed at developing a viable, sustainable domestic biomass industry that produces renewable biofuels, bioproducts, and biopower; enhances U.S. energy security; reduces dependence on foreign oil..." (2.1b) Removed parenthetical "e.g. reduced greenhouse gas emissions" from phrase "provides environmental benefits (e.g. reduced greenhouse gas emissions)" (2.1c) Removed "Deployment" from text "Research, Development, Demonstration, and Deployment" linking to https://energy.gov/eere/bioenergy/key-activities#RDD_D

Changes to the "OFFICE SUMMARIES" Section:

(2.1d) Added bullet point: "BETO released its updated strategic plan in December 2016, titled <u>Strategic Plan for a Thriving and Sustainable Bioeconomy</u>, which provides a blueprint on how best to tackle the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead in building the U.S. bioeconomy."

Changes to the "RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT, AND DEMONSTRATION" Section:

(2.1e) Changed "...the most promising targets for follow-on industrial-scale demonstration and deployment" to "...the most promising targets for follow-on industrial-scale demonstration."



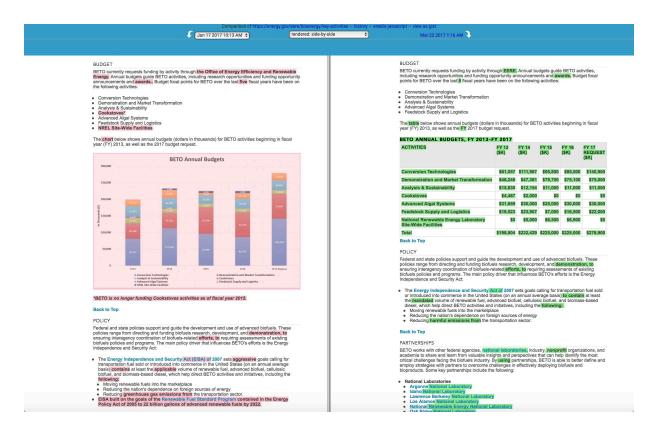
Screenshot 2.2

Changes to the "BUDGET" Section:

- (2.2a) Removed "cookstoves*" in the bullet point summary. Note: Asterisk indicates: "*BETO is no longer funding Cookstoves activities as of fiscal year 2015."
- (2.2b) Removed "NREL Site-Wide Facilities" in the bullet point summary.
- (2.2c) Changed presentation of BETO budget from a chart to a table

Changes to the "POLICY" Section:

- (2.2d) Removed "aggressive" from the phrase "The Energy Independence and Security Act (EISA) of 2007 sets aggressive goals..."
- (2.2e) Changed "Reducing greenhouse gases from the transportation sector" to "Reducing harmful emissions from the transportation sector"
- (2.2f) Removed "EISA built on the goals of the <u>Renewable Fuel Standard Program</u> contained in the Energy Policy Act of 2005 to 22 billion gallons of advanced renewable fuels by 2022."



Internet Archive: previous version from December 18, 2016 and current version from April 6, 2017

Page 3: ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND SUCCESSES

- URL: https://energy.gov/eere/bioenergy/accomplishments-and-successes
- Side-by-side View: 1/17/2017 to 3/22/2017
- Change occurred between Mar 20, 2017 10:15 AM ET and Mar 22, 2017 6:12 AM ET

Screenshot 3.1

Changes to Introduction Section:

- (3.1a) Altered language from "a sufficient quantity to displace approximately 30% of the U.S. petroleum consumption without impacting food or feed needs" to "without impacting food, feed, and fiber needs".
- (3.1b) Added sentence "The potential production could, in turn, directly generate \$30 billion in revenue and 1.1 million jobs in a variety of sectors including farming, plant operations, scientific research, and product and equipment design".
- (3.1c) Changed "transportation-related greenhouse gas emissions" to "transportation-related emissions".

Changes to the "SUCCESSES" Section:

(3.1d) Renamed section from "Growing America's Energy Future: Bioenergy Technologies Office Successes of 2014" to "Bioenergy Technologies Office Fiscal Year 2016 Successes" (3.1e) Text "Fact Sheet" linked to URL

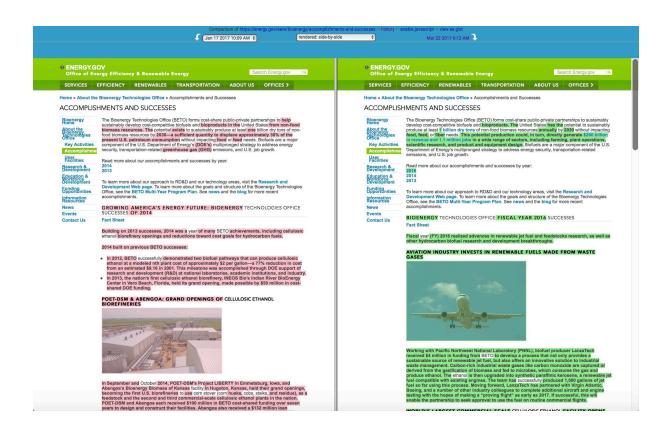
https://energy.gov/eere/bioenergy/downloads/growing-america-s-energy-future-bioenergy-technologies-office-successes changed to link URL

https://energy.gov/eere/bioenergy/downloads/bioenergy-technologies-office-fy-2016-successes

- (3.1f) Changed "Building on 2013 successes, 2014 was a year of many BETO achievements, including cellulosic ethanol biorefinery openings and reductions toward cost goals for hydrocarbon fuels." to "Fiscal year (FY) 2016 realized advances in renewable jet fuel and feedstocks research, as well as other hydrocarbon biofuel research and development breakthroughs."
- (3.1g) Removed section: "2014 built on previous BETO successes"
- (3.1h) Text "BETO Multi-Year Program Plan" linked to URL

https://energy.gov/eere/bioenergy/downloads/bioenergy-technologies-office-multi-year-program-plan-march-2015-update changed to link URL

https://energy.gov/eere/bioenergy/downloads/bioenergy-technologies-office-multi-year-program-plan-march-2016



Screenshots 3.2-3.4

Note: The "SUCCESSES" section was changed from "Growing America's Energy Future: Bioenergy Technologies Office Successes of 2014" to "Bioenergy Technologies Office Fiscal Year 2016 Successes". Shown below is a complete list of title removals (red highlights) and additions (green highlights). See the side-by-side comparison for the full text.

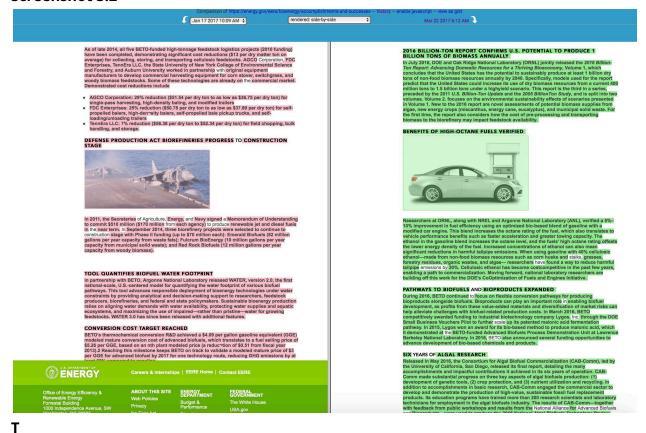
Removed

- 1. POET-DSM & ABENGOA: GRAND OPENINGS OF CELLULOSIC ETHANOL BIOREFINERIES
- 2. FIRST U.S. CELLULOSIC ETHANOL COMMERCIAL SHIPMENT AND WOODY BIOMASS RINS
- 3. THREE YEARS OF ALGAE RESEARCH PUBLISHED
- 4. COMPLETED FEEDSTOCK LOGISTICS PROJECTS DEMONSTRATE SIGNIFICANT COST REDUCTIONS
- DEFENSE PRODUCTION ACT BIOREFINERIES PROGRESS TO CONSTRUCTION STAGE
- 6. TOOL QUANTIFIES BIOFUEL WATER FOOTPRINT
- 7. CONVERSION COST TARGET REACHED

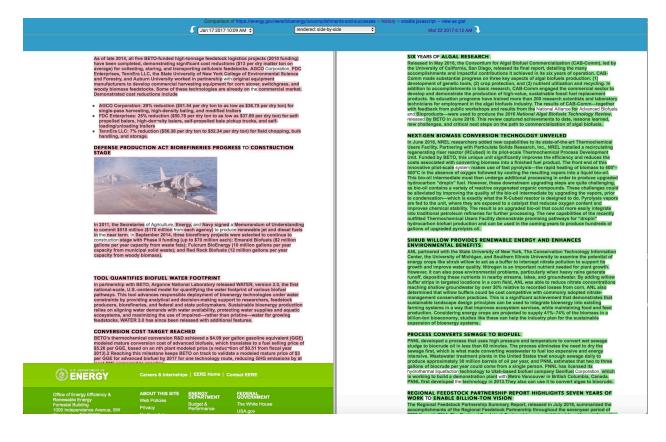
Added

- 1. AVIATION INDUSTRY INVESTS IN RENEWABLE FUELS MADE FROM WASTE GASES
- WORLD'S LARGEST COMMERCIAL-SCALE CELLULOSIC ETHANOL FACILITY OPENS.
- 3. 2016 BILLION-TON REPORT CONFIRMS U.S. POTENTIAL TO PRODUCE 1 BILLION TONS OF BIOMASS ANNUALLY
- 4. BENEFITS OF HIGH-OCTANE FUELS VERIFIED
- 5. PATHWAYS TO BIOFUELS AND BIOPRODUCTS EXPANDED
- 6. SIX YEARS OF ALGAL RESEARCH
- 7. NEXT-GEN BIOMASS CONVERSION TECHNOLOGY UNVEILED
- 8. SHRUB WILLOW PROVIDES RENEWABLE ENERGY AND ENHANCES ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS
- 9. PROCESS CONVERTS SEWAGE TO BIOFUEL
- 10. REGIONAL FEEDSTOCK PARTNERSHIP REPORT HIGHLIGHTS SEVEN YEARS OF WORK TO ENABLE BILLION-TON VISION
- 11. IMPROVED PROCESS BOOSTS ALGAL FUEL YIELD
- 12. NEW PILOT PLANT DEMONSTRATES THE POTENTIAL TO CO-PROCESS BIOMASS STREAMS WITH PETROLEUM

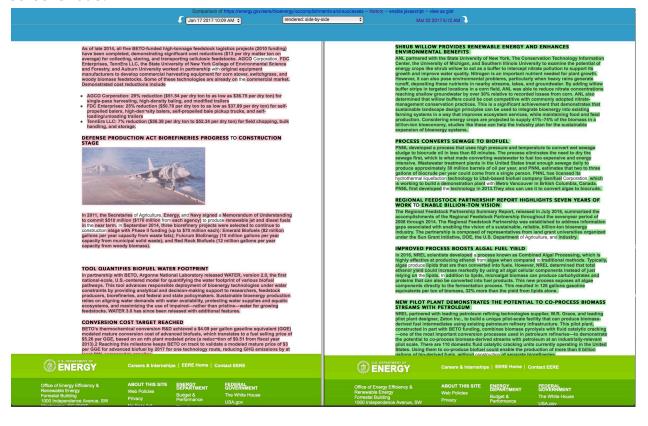
Screenshot 3.2



Screenshot 3.3



Screenshot 3.4



Internet Archive: previous version from Dec 18, 2017 and current version from April 6, 2017