



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
December 19, 2018

## TRC's Fearless Predictions for 2019: Clean Power Advances, Pipelines Get Safer and Natural Gas Burns Hot

LOWELL, Mass. – [TRC](#), a leading provider of end-to-end engineering, consulting and construction management solutions fueled by innovative technology, today released its bold predictions for 2019, which include clean power continuing to spread, long overdue improvements to our nation's infrastructure (despite a labor crunch), new pipeline safety mandates from Congress, and natural gas-fueled power plants continuing to increase.

"The U.S. economy has taken off over the last few years, and that's keeping us busy across all of our market sectors," said TRC CEO Chris Vincze. "As the federal regulatory landscape continues to evolve, we expect more projects to get the green light and anticipate their timelines will shrink due to streamlined permitting and fewer hurdles. Infrastructure expenditures should increase as well at both the federal and state level as political leaders of every stripe agree that the country desperately needs to shore up its aging infrastructure."

Here are TRC's predictions for 2019 by business sector, as offered by our many in-house experts:

### Environmental

- 1. The public will embrace eco-friendly transportation options.** "The transportation industry continues to transform, with electric scooters and bikes taking off in U.S. cities, increasing accessibility and mobility while reducing emissions and improving air quality. Ridership will vastly exceed the 10 million rides milestone, even as regulations and infrastructure hurdles continue to be addressed. And the number of electric vehicles worldwide will exceed 6 million for the first time." – Karen Lutz, Sustainability Director.
- 2. Industry will welcome new and improved air quality testing methods.** "Industrial facilities that have been unable to expand due to particulate matter permitting issues will take advantage of a newly-approved EPA testing method to revisit their particulate emission inventories. This new method overcomes the positive bias of other methods and improves measurement accuracy for sources with low particulate matter emissions, such as gas-fired turbines." – Dave Elam, Vice President, Air Measurements.
- 3. Schools and hospitals will continue to pump money into their real estate assets.** "The real estate market will remain steady, with schools and hospitals investing in renovations and new construction to increase size, capacity and amenities. In addition, energy companies and utilities will continue to increase the efficiency of their operations and improve their balance sheets, which includes retiring non-performing assets. Many companies are eliminating these liabilities off their books and generating income as real estate values have increased." – Dave Tiernan, Senior Vice President, Building Sciences.

## Infrastructure

- 1. Spending on infrastructure will remain steady through 2019.** “Regardless of uncertainty in Washington, federal funding will continue to flow at about the current pace. Just this month, the Department of Transportation awarded \$1.5 billion for 91 transportation projects in 49 states through the BUILD program – a three-fold increase over last year. Meanwhile, existing federal programs such as transportation funding to state highway agencies and military base upgrades will continue, although some new contracts will take longer than usual to be awarded. On the state side, a number of states have passed new bond bills to pay for upgrades to transportation and water systems.” – Peter Spawn, Vice President of Business Development, Northeast Public.
- 2. The red-hot infrastructure market will face a personnel crunch.** “Staying competitive during an already tight labor market will prove challenging. With the infrastructure sector remaining strong, we will once again see heavy demand for qualified personnel and companies turning to new technologies to improve productivity and realize efficiencies.” – Scott Gallaher, Deputy Director.
- 3. Quick response teams will need to deal with an increase in infrastructure emergencies.** “According to the recently released Fourth National Climate Assessment, climate change will cause growing losses to American infrastructure, increasing the need for designers, engineers and construction managers to stand at the ready to respond to emergencies and quickly repair or replace key assets.” – Agnes Weber, Senior Vice President, Construction Services West.
- 4. California will be busy transforming power plants and rebuilding transportation networks.** “Two segments are going to boom in the next few years in California: power plant decommissioning – with the power plants replaced by battery storage or renewable energy projects – and transportation infrastructure. With funding sources now in hand and thankfully not eliminated via bond measure repeals, the work will begin. The industry just hopes it can attract skilled professionals to execute on the projects.” – Dave Zarider, Senior Vice President of Business Development, California.

## Oil and Gas

- 1. U.S. oil and natural gas exports will reach record levels.** “The United States will export more oil, natural gas and refined products than ever before – with the volume of crude oil exported 10 times higher than it was in 2013. In addition, the gas pipeline “Mega Rule” will go into effect in 2019, placing additional levels of scrutiny on the development and operation of natural gas gathering and transmission lines.” – Ed Wiecele, President.
- 2. New pipeline networks will spring up to serve the Permian Basin.** “We will see tremendous growth in the renewables sector even as the oil and gas industry continues to be very busy developing new delivery routes from the Permian. The focus for pipeline operators will continue to be on verifying the integrity of their assets and updating them to meet current needs and standards.” – Robin Tomberlin, Vice President, Field Services.
- 3. Congress will act to bolster the safety of natural gas transmission lines.** “2019 begins the quadrennial reauthorization of the nation’s Pipeline Safety Program. Combined with the impetus provided by the recent gas distribution incident in Massachusetts, new mandates from Congress seem inevitable. Bottom line: expect at least one new final rule in the first quarter of 2019 – undoubtedly the natural gas transmission rule that will require a pipeline operator to reconfirm a system’s maximum operating pressure using verified records.” – Jeff Wiese, Vice President, Integrity Services.

- 4. Nobody will mess with Texas when it comes to oil production.** “The rig count in Texas will remain the highest in the United States, with half of the 1,070 rigs currently in operation across the nation. The main reason is that drilling and production costs in Texas are the lowest in the country. But West Texas oil producers need to have an outlet for their natural gas (a natural byproduct of crude oil production) – which is why so many large diameter pipelines are being built to transport the natural gas to eastern markets in a more cost effective and efficient way.” – David Sowards, Director of Business Development.

## **Power**

- 1. Rate-making policies will be updated to reflect the shift to clean power.** “Expect 2019 to bring the onset of major reform to regulatory rate making at the state and federal level aimed at strengthening the financial health of clean power generators and stimulating further investments in a resilient electric power grid. Because of the dramatic acceleration in the use of new technologies for power generation and delivery, existing rate-making policies no longer support the economic and societal goals required to sustainably satisfy stakeholders.” – Jim Mayer, President.
- 2. Energy storage will improve, helping renewables become more reliable and resilient.** “Growth in renewable energy will continue, expanding into new parts of the country, reaching new customers and creating challenges and opportunities for grid operators. We will see a significant increase in energy storage deployed in association with renewable projects. But the crunch for talent in power generation will continue as more experienced workers retire and the industry struggles to attract new engineers and operators into the field.” – Mark Hall, Vice President, Power Generation.
- 3. Natural gas power plants will increase as coal cools and solar slows.** “With coal-fired power plants continuing to shut down, federal incentives for solar power declining and industry returning to the United States, natural gas power plants will continue be built to fill the void – especially in the Northeast, Mid-Atlantic and Gulf Coast. Coal plants that remain viable will continue to grapple with coal combustion residuals and eventually effluent limitation guidelines.” – Peter Belmonte, Vice President and National Market Director.

## **About TRC**

A pioneer in groundbreaking scientific and engineering developments since the 1960s, TRC is a global consulting, engineering and construction management firm that provides technology-enabled solutions to the power, oil and gas, environmental and infrastructure markets. We serve a broad range of public and private clients, steering complex projects from concept to completion to help solve the toughest challenges. TRC is ranked #19 on ENR’s list of the Top 500 Design Firms in the United States.

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### **Contact:**

Doug Hanchett  
Communications Manager  
[dhanchett@trcsolutions.com](mailto:dhanchett@trcsolutions.com)  
978-656-3640

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