

MATTHEW RIDGE BUTNER
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RESEARCH INTEREST

Environmental and energy economics, industrial organization, applied microeconometrics

EDUCATION

Ph.D. University of Colorado, Boulder, Economics, 2019 (expected)
M.A. University of Colorado, Boulder, Economics, 2015

B.A. University of South Florida, Economics 2013
B.S. University of South Florida, Environmental Science and Policy, 2013
summa cum laude, Minor Mathematics

RESEARCH

Works in progress

“Pass-through of increased renewable generation in wholesale electricity markets”
“Concentration effects of heterogeneous standards: refinery response to the Clean Air Act”

Research Assistant for

Scott Savage, University of Colorado, Fall 2015 – Fall 2016
Wolfgang Keller & Carol Shiue, University of Colorado, Summer 2015 – Summer 2016
Jay Shimshack, Tulane University, Summer 2012

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Graduate Instructor, University of Colorado Boulder
Statistics with Computer Applications, Spring 2017
Intermediate Microeconomics, Spring 2016
Departmental Tutor, University of Colorado Boulder
Economics Department, Fall 2014 - Spring 2015
Teaching Assistant & Recitation Leader, University of Colorado Boulder
Environmental Economics (Fall 2016), Intermediate Microeconomics (Fall 2015),
Statistics with Computer Applications (Summer 2015), Principles of Macroeconomics
(Spring 2014), Principles of Microeconomics (Fall 2013)
University Tutor, University of South Florida
Mathematics, Statistics, and Economics, Summer 2010 – Summer 2013

AWARDS & HONORS

Domestic Travel Grant, University of Colorado, 2016
Partial Academic Fellowship, University of Colorado, 2013-2014, Fall 2016
Alumni Scholarship, University of South Florida, Fall 2012
Sustainability Scholar, University of South Florida, Spring 2012
Burton Memorial Scholarship in Economics, University of South Florida, Fall 2011
Presidential Scholarship, University of South Florida, 2009 – 2013

SKILLS

Proficient: Stata, R, ArcGIS, Latex, Microsoft Office Suite, English
Familiar: Python, Matlab, GAMS

ABSTRACTS

Pass-through of increased renewable generation in wholesale electricity markets

Renewable generation has become a significant portion of the American electrical grid as costs have declined, efficiency has improved, and policies have support investment and production. Quantifying the change in welfare from this transformation of the electricity market is important for designing effective public policy design and understanding investment decisions by the market, and is not yet a settled issue. Using micro-data on the bidding strategies by electricity generators in MISO from 2014 to 2016, I show evidence of incomplete pass-through of renewable generation on price despite demand being highly inelastic. This is explained by the horizontal ownership of diverse assets by electricity generators, as they can alter the market price by shifting production away from legacy generators during period of significant wind generation.

Concentration effects of heterogeneous standards: refinery response to the clean air act

Sometimes environmental regulations will alter the geographic and product markets in which firms compete. This can impact the firm's ability to exercise market power, and profits subsequently. The boutique fuel standards related to the 1990 Clean Air Act Amendments did exactly this to the petroleum refining industry by mandating unconventional, cleaner burning, fuels to be used in certain counties of the United States. While the production of the cleaner fuel increased the fixed and variable cost of refineries, it also allowed them to recuperate lost profits by selling their product in a more concentrated market. Reduced form evidence using a latent profit approach suggests the change in profitability offset investment cost, in contrast to industry claims. Using confidential data from the EIA, this paper considers the dynamic process in which refineries compare sunk investment cost with the ability to exercise market power.

CONFERENCES AND PRESENTATIONS

Western Economic Association Annual Meeting, AERE session (2017)
Southern Economic Association Annual Meeting, AERE session (2016)
Front Range Energy Camp (2016, 2017)
University of Colorado Boulder Environmental Brown Bag (x4)

OTHER EXPERIENCE

Sloan Technology Primer in Electricity for Social Scientists, Summer 2017
Sloan Summer School in Environmental and Energy Economics, Summer 2016
Environmental Education Intern, Spring 2013
Learning Gate Community School, Lutz, Florida
Legislative Intern, Fall 2012
County Commissioner Al Higginbotham, Tampa, Florida
Environmental Conservation Campaign Leader, Summer 2009
Gulf Restoration Network, Tampa, Florida, USA

INTERESTS

Outdoors, running, biking, hiking, camping.

REFERENCES

Primary Academic Advisor: Jonathan Hughes, jonathan.e.hughes@colorado.edu
Additional references can be made available upon request