

From: Thomas Dickens
To: [Viets, Alexa](#)
Cc: [Leah Duran](#)
Subject: Re: U.S. Department of the Interior News Briefing for Wednesday, January 25, 2017
Date: Wednesday, January 25, 2017 8:40:24 AM

Thank you, Alexa!

Sent from my iPhone

On Jan 25, 2017, at 8:39 AM, Viets, Alexa <alexa_viets@nps.gov> wrote:

Hi Tom,

Looks like DOI Public Affairs would be the point of contact to be added to this list. I'm cc'ing Leah to help.

Thanks,
Alexa

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Bulletin Intelligence** <Interior@bulletinintelligence.com>
Date: Wed, Jan 25, 2017 at 7:04 AM
Subject: U.S. Department of the Interior News Briefing for Wednesday, January 25, 2017
To: Interior@bulletinintelligence.com

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NEWS BRIEFING

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DATE: WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 25, 2017 7:00 AM EST

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DOI in the News:

REVERSING OBAMA, TRUMP SIGNS ORDERS ADVANCING KEYSTONE XL, DAKOTA ACCESS PIPELINES. After [President Trump](#) signed executive orders advancing the construction of the Keystone XL and Dakota Access pipelines, the media coverage – including short stories on all three major network newscasts – highlighted the severe disappointment of the projects' foes. Reports also indicated, however, that Trump's move could lead to the creation of a significant number of jobs, and that with his action the President was fulfilling an unequivocal campaign vow. Media analyses also cast Trump's executive orders as yet additional steps to undo the legacy of the previous Administration. [Bloomberg Politics](#) (1/24, Vamburkar, 201K), for example, called the order "a major departure from the Obama administration" – one that marked "the start of an era with fewer constraints on the oil industry to the chagrin of environmentalists who have bitterly fought the projects." The [AP](#) (1/24, Daly, Thomas) refers to "a sharp blow to Barack Obama's legacy on climate change," part of Trump's "continuing effort to undo the past eight years of a Democratic president," [The Hill](#) (1/24, Cama, 1.25M) to "a sharp turn from the Obama administration's policies," and the [New York Times](#) (1/24, Baker, Davenport, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) to a move "to further dismantle his predecessor's policies." The [CBS Evening News](#) (1/24, story 2, 1:20, Brennan, 11.17M) reported that the Keystone XL pipeline "was halted by the Obama Administration due to environmental concerns," while the Dakota Access would be built "under a reservoir in North Dakota that also is used as a water source for one of the local native American tribes."

[USA Today](#) (1/24, Korte, 5.28M) reports "Trump emphasized that the construction" of the Keystone pipeline "isn't a done deal," saying, "It's something that subject to a renegotiation of terms by us." [Vox](#) (1/24, Plumer, 1.15M) said that it is "not yet certain that the two pipelines will actually get finished," but "the orders lay a lot of groundwork to make approval easier." The [Washington Post](#) (1/24, Mufson, Eilperin, 11.43M) also warns that "it remained unclear, however, how Trump's order would restart the pipeline projects or expedite environmental reviews." The President "said that both pipeline projects would be subject to renegotiation," and that he would "want any new projects to make use of American steel," and it was also "unclear what Trump's caution about renegotiation would mean for TransCanada's plans," which "originally...had planned to get about 65 percent of the steel pipe from US manufacturers but other supplies from Canada." In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (1/24, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) hails Trump's move to advance construction of the pipelines, but warns that Trump's pledge to "renegotiate the term" could ultimately lead the companies to forego the project altogether.

[CNBC](#) (1/24, DiChristopher, 2.17M), however, reported that "shares of Energy Transfer Partners and TransCanada both rose more than 3.5 percent on Tuesday," and quoted from a TransCanada statement that read, "We appreciate the President of the United States inviting us to re-apply for KXL. We are currently preparing the application and intend to do so." The [Omaha \(NE\) World-Herald](#) (1/24, Hammel, 544K) reports that "a spokesman for TransCanada said Tuesday that it...will" also "be working with the Nebraska Public Service Commission to win approval of a route through the state." Said TransCanada's Terry Conha, "KXL represents the safest, most environmentally sound way to connect the

American economy to an abundant energy resource.” [Reuters](#) (1/24, Holland), meanwhile, notes that “Canadian Natural Resources Minister Jim Carr said in Calgary that Keystone XL has all the regulatory approvals, and that the project would be ‘very positive for Canada.’”

Also yesterday, [Business Insider](#) (1/24, Sheth, Tani, 3.42M) reported, Trump issued an order designed to reduce “the regulatory burden on the oil industry and encouraging domestic manufacturing.” Said the President, “The regulatory process in this country has become a tangled up mess and very unfair to people.” His move, said Trump, will create “great construction jobs” and “put a lot of workers back to work.” Moreover, [ABC World News Tonight](#) (1/24, story 2, 2:45, Muir, 14.63M) reported, Trump “ordered the use of American-made steel to the maximum extent possible” for “the construction of those pipelines.” [NBC Nightly News](#) (1/24, story 2, 1:40, Welker, 16.61M) showed him saying during the signing of the orders, “We will build our own pipeline. We will build our own pipes. That’s what it has to do with. Like we used to in the old days.”

To [USA Today](#) (1/24, Korte, 5.28M), “potentially more sweeping are two directives changing the process of approving and regulating future pipeline and infrastructure projects.” Said Trump, “This is about streamlining the incredibly cumbersome, long, horrible, permitting process. ... If it’s a no, we’ll give them a quick no, and if it’s a yes, it’s like ‘Let’s start building. ... The regulatory process in this country has become a tangled up mess, and very unfair to people.” [NPR](#) (1/24, Naylor, 1.92M) reported that another order, according to Trump “will expedite environmental reviews and approvals ‘for high-priority infrastructure projects.’” Said Trump, “We can’t be in an environmental process for 15 years if a bridge is going to be falling down or if a highway is crumbling.”

[Rolling Stone](#) (1/24, Blistein, 9.26M) reported that Trump said “the projects will be massive job-creators – an oft-repeated, but overstated, claim about the pipelines.” Moreover, the President “did not acknowledge the potential environmental or human impact of the construction.” To [Vox](#) (1/24, Plumer, 1.15M), likewise, “Trump, obviously, is not nearly as concerned about America’s global leadership on climate change.” The [Washington Times](#) (1/24, Miller, 272K), meanwhile, reported “the Keystone XL pipeline from Canada to Texas is estimated to create 28,000 jobs” – a number the President cited yesterday. In the [San Diego Union-Tribune](#) (1/24, Hamblin, 496K), Abby Hamblin indicated that “the State Department has projected the number of jobs supported by the Keystone Pipeline alone to be about 42,000 during the construction period,” even if “many opponents raise the argument that most of those jobs would disappear after construction.”

Writing for [Forbes](#) (1/24, Wald, 15.17M), Ellen R. Wald noted that “in 2010, TransCanada, the company behind Keystone XL, commissioned the Perryman Group to examine the long-term economic impact of the pipeline. Their study predicted that anywhere from 250,348 to 553,235 spin-off jobs would be created.” Their “study was largely predicated on the assertion that the pipeline would stabilize oil prices,” though “there is no evidence, historical or otherwise, that pipelines serve to stabilize the price of oil, a global commodity.”

The [Omaha \(NE\) World-Herald](#) (1/24, Hammel, 544K) reports Nebraska Gov. Pete Ricketts “was among those praising the move,” and that “Nebraska and Iowa lawmakers” also “reacted positively.” Rep. Adrian Smith, a Nebraska Republican, is quoted as saying, “A large majority of Nebraskans want to see Keystone XL completed, knowing we need long-term solutions for affordable energy.” [NPR](#) (1/24, Naylor, 1.92M), meanwhile, noted that “North Dakota Democratic Sen. Heidi Heitkamp said Trump’s actions ‘are a needed step’ toward the goal of an all-of-the-above North American energy strategy.”

On Monday, [BuzzFeed](#) (1/24, Lewis, 6.47M) reported, Trump had “met with union leaders who have been outspoken in their support for the controversial Keystone XL and Dakota Access oil pipelines — both projects opposed by many in the labor movement, and blocked by the Obama administration.” Those leaders, however, said Obama’s orders were the “first win for their members in the Trump era.” North America’s Building Trades Unions, “whose

president Sean McGarvey was at Monday's White House meeting," said yesterday, "Today, President Donald J. Trump gave continued hope to thousands of skilled craft construction professionals in America's heartland." James Callahan, President of the International Union of Operating Engineers, "said resuming the Dakota and Keystone projects will bring relief to working families."

[Roll Call](#) (1/24, Bennett, 63K) said "GOP lawmakers were eager to applaud the move," and quoted Speaker Ryan as saying, "It's about time. ... The unfortunate reality is that these important infrastructure projects were used by special interests to advance their radical anti-energy agenda and were, therefore, needlessly halted by the last administration — to the detriment of America's national interest. These pipelines will strengthen our nation's energy supply and help keep energy costs low for American families." [The Hill](#) (1/24, Calfas, 1.25M) reported that Sen. Bernie Sanders "slammed" Trump after he signed the orders, which he said "ignored the voices of millions and put the short-term profits of the fossil fuel industry ahead of the future of our planet."

On the other hand, said [Business Insider](#) (1/24, Sheth, Tani, 3.42M), "environmental activists are incensed," and [CNN](#) (1/24, Jones, Diamond, Krieg, 29.79M) reported that "environmental groups and activists were also quick to slam the decision, with Tom Steyer, the president of NextGen Climate, accusing the Trump administration of putting 'corporate interests ahead of American interests.'" With seeming sarcasm, meanwhile, the [Daily Intelligencer \(NY\)](#) (1/24, Levitz, 795K) reported that "after using his presidential pen to restrict access to abortion worldwide, disrupt the provision of health care here at home, and christen his Inauguration Day a 'National Day of Patriotic Devotion,'" the President "turned his attention...to America's pressing need for new oil pipelines."

[PBS NewsHour](#) (1/24, Norris, 255K) reported that "those opposed to the" Keystone XL "project said it would boost extraction from Canada's oil sands, a process that emits 14 percent more greenhouse gases than other forms of oil production." They also "argued constructing a new oil pipeline would diminish America's role as a global leader of climate change." The [Milwaukee Journal Sentinel](#) (1/24, Egan, 513K) said "the move is likely to set off another wave of protests on the Great Plains at a time when ever-growing volumes of North American oil have been quietly flowing into the far more populous Great Lakes region, including two lines that run across the bottom of the Great Lakes themselves."

In his "Talking Points Memo" segment on [Fox News' The O'Reilly Factor](#) (1/24, 767K), Bill O'Reilly said Trump continued to be an "activist" president in his second day on the job, "angering environmentalists, still threatening companies that move overseas, but doing all of that in the name of the American worker. Clearly, the Trump Administration is putting economic growth above all else." The [Huffington Post](#) (1/24, Kaufman, 237K), on the other hand, described Trump as "opening new fronts in his looming war with environmentalists."

[Mother Jones](#) (1/24, Leber, 1.18M) reported that "environmentalists are already making plans drag the process out." Jane Kleeb, "who runs the Bold Alliance and opposes Keystone, noted that TransCanada doesn't yet have the land it needs to complete the pipeline," added, "We are headed to the courts to challenge the right to use eminent domain." Heartening the Dakota Access project's opponents, [Vice](#) (1/24, Ling, 2.28M) reported, is the fact that "the Army Corps of Engineers underneath...Obama denied the...Pipeline an easement in December, delaying construction until a full environmental impact assessment could be completed." Trump's executive action "is the first step toward advancing progress," but "the Dakota line is still undergoing an environmental impact assessment, which is key to the project proceeding." According to Vice, "for Trump to bypass that, he would need to pass a bill in Congress excluding the pipeline from the National Environmental Protection Act."

[RT](#) (1/24, 213K) reported that "a lawyer for the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe said the decision was made 'hastily and irresponsibly,'" and that the tribe "intended to pursue legal action

against Trump's order, adding that the pipeline posed a risk not just for their water supply but also for millions of Americans living downstream." Meanwhile, "one of the leading organizations in the Standing Rock protests, the Indigenous Environmental Network, called Trump's actions 'insane and extreme, and nothing short of attacks on our ancestral homelands.'" The [Wall Street Journal](#) (1/24, Harder, Lee, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) quotes a spokesperson for the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe saying the President disregarded Native American treaty rights and was "politically motivated." Dave Archambault II, chairman of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, said in a statement, "President Trump is legally required to honor our treaty rights and provide a fair and reasonable pipeline process."

As [Reuters](#) (1/24, Sylvester) reports, "the tribe had recently called for protesters to leave after" the Army Corps of Engineers' decision, "saying the battle had moved beyond the camp and into the courts or back rooms for negotiations with the government." Reuters adds that "some said they feared fresh violence after past clashes between protesters and law enforcement officers." At any rate, said [TIME](#) (1/24, Worland, 6.98M), "the path for permanently stopping the Dakota Access project remains unclear," as "the project is more than 95% complete, with the small region near the Standing Rock Sioux reservation remaining unconstructed, and local law enforcement has shown no hesitation in shutting down protests."

Trump Orders Acceleration Of Environmental Reviews For Infrastructure Projects.

The [Washington Post](#) (1/24, Fears, 11.43M) reports President Trump signed an executive order Tuesday to expedite environmental reviews and approvals to fast track infrastructure projects. Agencies that undertake environmental and other analyses before greenlighting development should work with "maximum efficiency and effectiveness" to complete them. "As part of the order, the chair of the White House Council on Environmental Quality will decide whether a project should be given national priority within 30 days of a request, triggering an expedited approval process." Trump's move follows a day after placing a freeze on all EPA grants and contracts, "possibly suspending efforts to improve local air quality in some parts of the nation." The [Washington Examiner](#) (1/24, Giaritelli, 400K) reports that the Commerce Department will work with the EPA, DOE, the USDA, the Office of Management and Budget and the Small Business Administration. "After the public comment period, an action plan to streamline permitting must be developed in 60 days, according to the memorandum."

SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVITY SCALED BACK AT FEDERAL AGENCIES. E&E (1/24)

reports that "Twitter posts and other social media activity have been scaled back at U.S. EPA, the departments of the Interior and Energy, and other agencies as the new Trump administration gets traction." Under a new rule, "no posts on the 'policy priorities' of the incoming Interior secretary" will be allowed until Rep. Ryan Zinke is "confirmed by the Senate for the position."

Trump Administration Limits On Agencies' Communications Spark Concern. [Reuters](#)

(1/24, Volcovici, Huffstutter) reports that directives from the Trump Administration to the EPA, Interior Department, and Agriculture Department "seeking to limit how they communicate to the public" have "reinforced concerns that Trump, a climate change doubter, could seek to sideline scientific research showing that carbon dioxide emissions from burning fossil fuels contributes to global warming, as well as the career staffers at the agencies that conduct much of this research." The [New York Post](#) (1/24, Fredericks, 3.82M) says Trump "imposed a media blackout" at the EPA and "barred staff from awarding new contracts or grants" The moves "are expected to have a significant and immediate impact on EPA activities nationwide." Correspondent Jim Axelrod reported on the [CBS Evening News](#) (1/24, story 5, 2:35, Pelley, 11.17M) that the restrictions "stoked the fears" of University of Pennsylvania environmental professor Bethany Wiggin and her colleagues and students that "the Administration will limit access to data as it rolls back environmental protections." Axelrod added that on Tuesday, "the Badlands National Park tweeted about climate change in defiance of the White House and then deleted them."

At USDA, the [Washington Post](#) (1/24, Delreal, 11.43M) reports, employees of the Agricultural Research Service “were ordered Monday to cease publication of ‘outward facing’ documents and news releases, raising concerns that the Trump administration was seeking to influence distribution of their findings.”

[Politico](#) (1/24, Restuccia, Guillén, Cook, 2.46M) said the “steps to mute federal employees,” which include “limiting employees’ ability to issue news releases, tweet or otherwise communicate with the public,” are “sparking early fears of a broader crackdown across the government, as Trump vows to pursue an agenda sharply at odds with his predecessor.” There are concerns among watchdog groups “about what restrictions the Trump administration may yet impose on federal workers.” White House press secretary Sean Spicer said Tuesday that he “was still looking into the agency restrictions, but added, ‘I don’t think there’s any surprise that when there’s an administration turnover, we’re going to review the policies.’”

Additional coverage was provided by [The Hill](#) (1/24, Fabian, 1.25M), [USA Today](#) (1/24, Rossman, 5.28M), [Politico](#) (1/24, McCaskill, 2.46M), [U.S. News & World Report](#) (1/24, Levy, 1.02M), the [Washington \(DC\) Post](#) (1/24, Eilperin, Dennis, 11.43M), the [Chicago \(IL\) Tribune](#) (1/24, 2.54M), the [Missoulian \(MT\)](#) (1/24, 114K), the [Raw Story](#) (1/24, 1.24M), and [GeekWire](#) (1/24, 59K).

Also providing coverage are [The Hill](#) (1/24, Shelbourne, 1.25M), [USA Today](#) (1/24, King, 5.28M), [Bloomberg News](#) (1/24, The Associated Press (Biesecker John Flesher), 2.41M), the [Boston \(MA\) Globe](#) (1/24, Biesecker, Flesher, 1.08M), [U.S. News & World Report](#) (1/24, 1.02M), the [Washington \(DC\) Times](#) (1/24, Biesecker, Flesher, 272K), the [Chicago \(IL\) Tribune](#) (1/24, 2.54M), the [Bristol \(VA\) Herald Courier](#) (1/24), the [Daily Mail](#) (1/24, 4.59M), the [Minneapolis \(MN\) Star Tribune](#) (1/24, 1.27M), [Philly \(PA\)](#) (1/24, 942K), the [Sacramento \(CA\) Bee](#) (1/24, 574K), the [Denver \(CO\) Post](#) (1/24, 778K), [RT](#) (1/24, 213K), and the [Japan Times](#) (1/25, 12K).

Badlands National Park Tweeted Climate Facts Amid Social Media Crackdown. [The Hill](#) (1/24, Henry, 1.25M) reports Badlands National Park sent out three Twitter messages on Tuesday “promoting climate science amid a new Trump administration crackdown on agencies communicating on social media.” The tweets are “basic scientific facts and not noteworthy in and of themselves,” but they came against Trump administration directives blocking climate pronouncements from federal agencies. [CNN](#) (1/24, Diaz, 29.79M) reports the tweets were up for a few hours before they were deleted.

Additional coverage was provided by [The Hill](#) (1/24, Henry, 1.25M), [Politico](#) (1/24, Quigley, 2.46M), the [Washington \(DC\) Post](#) (1/24, Fears, 11.43M), the [Washington \(DC\) Times](#) (1/24, Wolfgang, 272K), the [Los Angeles \(CA\) Times](#) (1/24, 4.52M), [CBS News](#) (1/24, 4.4M), [Fox News](#) (1/24, 11.07M), the [Christian Science Monitor](#) (1/23, 387K), [Forbes](#) (1/24, 15.17M), [Bloomberg News](#) (1/25, Roston, 2.41M), [Reuters](#) (1/24, Volcovici, Huffstutter), [TIME](#) (1/24, 6.98M), [USA Today](#) (1/24, Weise, 5.28M), the [Daily Caller](#) (1/24, Bastasch, 898K), [Bloomberg BNA](#) (1/24, 7K), [MarketWatch](#) (1/24, 767K), the [Boston \(MA\) Globe](#) (1/24, 1.08M), the [Chicago \(IL\) Tribune](#) (1/24, 2.54M), the [New York Daily News](#) (1/24, Brennan, 4.45M), the [Daily Beast](#) (1/24, 1.11M), [Vanity Fair](#) (1/24, 6.22M), the [Huffington Post](#) (1/24, 237K), the [Daily Mail](#) (1/24, 4.59M), [Vox](#) (1/24, 1.15M), [Talking Points Memo](#) (1/24, 517K), [Quartz](#) (1/24, 638K), the [New Republic](#) (1/24, 255K), [Federal Computer Week](#) (1/24, 263K), [BBC News \(UK\)](#) (1/25, 2.39M), [The Guardian \(UK\)](#) (1/24, Lartey, 4.07M), the [Independent \(UK\)](#) (1/24, Sampathkumar, 1.28M), [GeekWire](#) (1/24, 59K), [WXYZ-TV Detroit \(MI\)](#) Detroit (1/24, 141K), and [WRC-TV Washington \(DC\)](#) Washington (1/24, 453K).

SENATE COMMITTEE DELAYS VOTE ON ZINKE, PERRY. [E&E](#) (1/24) reports that the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee had scheduled votes Tuesday “on Rep. Ryan Zinke (R-Mont.), nominee for Interior secretary, and former Texas Gov. Rick Perry

(R), Trump's pick to lead the Department of Energy." However, late Monday night the panel announced "that it was postponing the meeting until further notice." Senate Majority Whip John Cornyn said "that he hoped the Senate could confirm Zinke and Perry before Republicans head to Philadelphia later this week for a retreat with their House colleagues and President Trump."

[Politico Pro](#) (1/24) reports that "the Congressional Republicans' annual retreat later this week means the votes won't come until next week at the earliest." The [Montana Standard](#) (1/24, 36K) reports that "several sources indicated the vote would be rescheduled for next week, though nothing had been posted to the committee website early Tuesday evening."

In a piece about the delays on confirmation votes for Cabinet nominees Ed O'Keefe noted the postponed votes on both Perry and Zinke for the [Washington Post](#) (1/24, O'Keefe, 11.43M). O'Keefe calls the delays "unprecedented."

Additional coverage was provided by [Roll Call](#) (1/24, Bowman, 63K), [CBS News](#) (1/24, 4.4M), [NBC News](#) (1/24, 2.67M), the [Washington \(DC\) Examiner](#) (1/24, 400K), [KBZK-TV Butte \(MT\)](#) Butte, MT (1/24, 785), [KFBB-TV Great Falls \(MT\)](#) Great Falls, MT (1/24, 2K), [KHQ-TV Spokane \(WA\)](#) Spokane, WA (1/24, 50K), and [KWYB-TV Butte \(MT\)](#) Butte, MT (1/24).

Delay On Vote Linked To Perry, Miscommunication. The [Great Falls \(MT\) Tribune](#) (1/24, 85K) reports that the postponement of Zinke's vote "doesn't appear to be related to his performance last week when he was questioned by the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee." Nicole Daigle, communications director for the committee, said Tuesday that Sen. Lisa Murkowski "postponed the hearing due to a miscommunication between her" and Maria Cantwell, the ranking Democrat on the committee. Daigle said, "She wants to start 2017 on a good footing with her ranking member. Sen. Murkowski hopes to be able to put a vote before the full committee very quickly." Cantwell "told reporters in Washington Tuesday that Democrats want more information about how Rick Perry will handle energy efficiency standards, according to Cantwell's office." Democrats also "objected to Republicans calling a vote without giving the standard three-day advance notice, Cantwell's office said."

National Wildlife Federation Backs Zinke's Nomination. [Politico Pro](#) (1/24) reports that the National Wildlife Federation sent a letter Monday "urging Senate energy panel members to back Zinke's nomination to run the Interior Department." Collin O'Mara, the group's president, wrote, "Representative Zinke understands the intrinsic wildlife and conservation values of the Nation's public lands that are held in trust for generations of all Americans." O'Mara added that NWF would work with Zinke on "how best to balance energy development decisions with key conservation priorities."

Additional coverage was provided by the [Daily Caller](#) (1/24, Follett, 898K).

Facing Tough Election Cycle, Trump's Cabinet Picks A Boost For Senate Democrats. [The Hill](#) (1/24, Hagen, 1.25M) reported that the Cabinet selections of President Trump "have given Democrats a few bright spots ahead of an otherwise grim 2018 Senate cycle." Facing reelection next year, North Dakota Sen. Heidi Heitkamp (D) and West Virginia Sen. Joe Manchin (D), "both of whom Trump had considered for administration roles, will remain in the upper chamber." Perry was being considered the energy secretary post, which ultimately went to Perry. In addition, Rep. Ryan Zinke (R), who had been viewed as "a top" potential challenger to Montana Sen. Jon Tester (D) in 2018, "has been tapped to serve as Interior secretary." Jim Manley, a former aide to ex-Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid, told [The Hill](#), "Given the number of Democrats up [for reelection in 2018], I don't expect Democrats to catch a lot of breaks, but they sure did in this particular instance."

Additional Coverage Of Zinke's Confirmation Hearing. Additional coverage of Zinke's

confirmation hearing was provided by the [High Country \(CO\) News](#) (1/24, 77K).

TRUMP ASKED TO RESCIND BEARS EARS DESIGNATION, SHRINK STAIRCASE-ESCALANTE NATIONAL MONUMENT. [E&E](#) (1/24) reports that Utah state House Speaker Greg Hughes “used part of his Legislature’s opening day to rail against the newly established Bears Ears National Monument, urging President Trump to rescind the designation for the 1.35-million-acre-site.” Hughes “lashed out against the Obama administration’s decision to establish the monument in southeastern Utah late last year, characterizing it as ‘tragic’ and an ‘overstep.’” His “remarks echoed criticisms fired in recent weeks” by Gov. Gary Herbert and House Natural Resources Chairman Rob Bishop, “who have likewise called for rolling back the Bears Ears designation.”

The [Salt Lake \(UT\) Tribune](#) (1/24, 426K) reports that Utah legislators also want “to erase large portions of the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument created a generation ago.” However, “environmental groups and Democrats blasted the GOP plan.” Steve Bloch, legal director for the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance, said, “The message that Utah is sending by even suggesting this is nothing short of outrageous. This would be a tragic mistake for the president to undo two decades of conservation work that has been heralded across the world as a visionary step by President Clinton to protect a world-class resource.”

UTAH LAWMAKERS HOPE TO CREATE STATE PARKS AT HOLE-IN-THE-ROCK, LITTLE SAHARA. The [Salt Lake \(UT\) Tribune](#) (1/24, 426K) reports that “Utah lawmakers are angling to create two new state parks on federal lands, one at Little Sahara in Juab County and the other at Hole-in-the-Rock.” the House Political Subdivisions Committee, “with its three Democratic members voting against,” advanced HB63. The measure “authorizes the Utah Division of State Parks and Recreation to acquire federal land in Garfield County near where the pioneer expedition cut the trail down a steep crevice.” According to the article, “state officials might negotiate a lease or some other agreement with the National Park Service and the Bureau of Land Management to operate a park.” A different bill, HB95, would “establish a state park at Little Sahara.”

SURVEY FINDS MAJORITY OF AMERICANS WANT MORE ALTERNATIVE FUELS. [E&E](#) (1/24) reports that “approximately 65 percent of Americans prioritize the development of alternative energy sources compared with 27 percent who would put greater emphasis on expanding U.S. fossil fuel production, according to a new study by the Pew Research Center.” The article notes that the “study demonstrates increased popular support for alternative energy at a time when President Trump is pledging to boost production from fossil fuel energy sources like coal.” It also notes that “Democrats are still far more likely than Republicans to believe that developing alternative energy sources like wind and solar should take precedence over expanding production of coal, oil and natural gas.”

ADDITIONAL COVERAGE OF EXPANSION OF BALL’S BLUFF BATTLEFIELD NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK. Additional coverage of the expansion of Ball’s Bluff Battlefield National Historic Landmark was provided by the [Washington Post](#) (1/23, Mauck, 11.43M).

OBAMA’S NATIONAL MONUMENT DESIGNATIONS DEFENDED.. In an op-ed for the [Los Angeles Times](#) (1/23, Blumm, Hoffmann, 4.52M), Michael Blumm, a professor at Lewis and Clark Law School, and Hillary Hoffmann, a professor at Vermont Law School, defends President Obama’s 2016 national monument designations. They argue that “are ignoring the history and scope” of the Antiquities Act of 1906 and “the positive effects of monument designations on nearby communities.” They also point out that “although the Antiquities Act does not require it, the Obama administration engaged in substantial public discussions before the recent designations.” As a result, “those discussions led to scaling down the size of Bears Ears monument and eliminating several areas that might be mined or used for vehicular recreation in the future.”

DESIGNATION OF NORTHEAST CANYONS AND SEAMOUNTS NATIONAL MONUMENT PRAISED. In a piece for the [Worcester \(MA\) Telegram & Gazette](#) (1/23, 181K), Mark Blazis lauds the designation of the Northeast Canyons and Seamounts National Monument. Blazis asserts that “saving the biological treasures of our offshore canyons and seamounts from future resource extraction and other destructive exploitation will require much more public awareness, never-ending education, and politics-free protection and management.” He concludes that “we need future presidential administrations to continue to possess our current biological understanding, environmental values and unselfish vision to insure that our most precious wild lands remain a permanent natural legacy for all Americans.”

ADAMS: TRUMP ENERGY POLICY TO STRIKE FEAR AMONG SOME INDUSTRIES. In a piece titled “Trump’s Energy Policy Is Scary” [Forbes](#) (1/24, 15.17M) contributor Rod Adams writes, “Trump’s plan for American energy strength is rightfully causing angst” for those “who believe that renewable energy is the inevitable path” and “even more fear among the people who are betting on fossil fuel to continue dominating the world’s economy and geopolitics.” Based on statements made during the Senate confirmation hearings of Perry and Scott Pruitt “it appears that we are headed for an era of cheap and abundant power.” Adams contends that the “eventual and almost inevitable result” of a true “all of the above” energy policy “should be a sustainable transition to cheap, abundant, emission-free uranium, plutonium and thorium.” The prospect “that this vision might come to pass” is a frightening possibility “for those who continue to bet their wealth, power and careers on the assumption that the hydrocarbon economy will never end or on the myth that unreliaables can do it all.”

TRUMP ADMINISTRATION SAID TO HAVE NO CONCRETE STANCE ON PUBLIC LANDS. The [Eugene \(OR\) Register-Guard](#) (1/25, 178K) editorializes that “in terms of public lands, the Trump administration’s positions are wide open spaces — and so are its Cabinet members’ views.” It suggests that “the absence of firm policy positions may create an opportunity for the congressional delegations from states such as Oregon to exert influence.”

America’s Great Outdoors:

National Park Service:

NPS EXPANDS OLD SALEM’S NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DISTRICT. The [Winston-Salem \(NC\) Journal](#) (1/24, 204K) reports that the National Park Service has “expanded Old Salem’s National Historic Landmark district, tripling its acreage and increasing the number of time periods considered significant.” The Interior Department took action because it “saw a story that emphasized a kind of significance that had not been recognized before,” Michael “Mo” Hartley, the director of archaeology for Old Salem Museums and Gardens, said.

NPS REPRESENTATIVES TO DISCUSS PLANS FOR RECONSTRUCTION NATIONAL MONUMENT. [WJCL-TV](#) Savannah, GA (1/24, 807) reports that the four sites making up the Reconstruction National Monument are “now working to create an agreement with the National Park Service.” Next week, representatives from the park service will “visit each site to discuss more specific plans for the future.”

PLANS FOR TALLER, STRONGER WHITE HOUSE FENCE APPROVED. [WTTG-TV](#) Washington (1/24, 67K) reports that “a proposal for a new taller and stronger fence for the White House has been approved.” The planned fence, “which will be 11-foot-7-inches tall, will be made with wider and stronger pickets and will be installed beginning in 2018.” The new design for the fence was proposed by the United States Secret Service and the National Park Service.

ROCKY MOUNTAIN NATIONAL PARK BREAKS VISITATION RECORD.. The [Denver Post](#) (1/24, 778K) reports that Rocky Mountain National Park “set a record with 4.5 million visitors in 2016. In fact, every month of the year — except December — set a monthly record.” Kyle Patterson, spokeswoman for the park, noted that “last year’s visitation number is an 8.68 percent increase over the previous annual record in 2015, a 32 percent increase since 2014, and a 40 percent increase since 2012.”

VISITS TO MONROE NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD ON THE RISE. The [Adrian \(MI\) Daily Telegram](#) (1/24, 27K) reports that the River Raisin National Battlefield Park saw an increase in visitors in 2016. Park Supt. Scott Bentley said, “The battlefield received 202,375 visitors during the National Park Service Centennial calendar year. This is another significant increase over 2015.”

MOUNT RAINIER SWITCHING TO ONLINE PERMITTING SYSTEM. [GeekWire](#) (1/24, 59K) reports that “after years of having to fax or mail in reservation requests to camp in Mount Rainier National Park, wilderness enthusiasts will soon be able to submit requests online, The National Park Service announced this week.” According to the article, “the new system will launch on March 15 and was created in a partnership with the University of Washington Information School.”

DRONE ALLOWED INSIDE GREAT SAND DUNES PARK FOR SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH. The [Denver Post](#) (1/24, 778K) reports that officials allowed a drone to be flown in Great Sand Dunes National Park & Preserve on Oct. 19. According to a report released Tuesday, “park officials want to better track the ecosystem to see how sand shifts over time and impacts the dunes’ height and depth.” During the flight, “the drone took high-resolution images of 1 square mile of the park centered around the Star Dune, which at 750 feet is the tallest dune in North America.”

SATELLITE IMAGE SHOWS BLUE MISTS OVER SMOKY MOUNTAINS. [CBS News](#) (1/24, 4.4M) reports that “a new satellite view of the Smoky Mountains shows the blue mist that gives the region its name.” The image, “shared by NASA’s Earth Observatory, is a best-pixel image” of Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

MAN SENTENCED FOR AX ATTACK ON LASSEN NATIONAL PARK RANGER. The [Sacramento \(CA\) Bee](#) (1/24, 574K) reports that “a federal judge on Tuesday sentenced a drunken man who attacked a Lassen National Park ranger with an ax last year to 27 months in prison.” Nicholas Martin Coberley “claimed that he had been staying with a friend and had been drinking when they got into an argument and he wandered away on foot – when ranger Chris Cruz came upon him in a truck, according to court papers filed by his lawyer.” Coberley, “45, pleaded guilty on Oct. 11 for the June 20 incident.”

Additional coverage was provided by the [Sacramento \(CA\) Bee](#) (1/24, 574K).

Fish and Wildlife Service:

GAO REPORT QUESTIONS FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY OF AMERICAN BURYING BEETLE PROGRAM. The [Fort Smith \(AR\) Times Record](#) (1/24, 111K) reports that “Oklahoma state and county governments and oil and gas companies have paid millions of dollars to fund conservation efforts to protect an endangered beetle species found in eastern Oklahoma, but there has been little accountability over how part of that money has been used, according to a U.S. Government Accountability Office report released Monday.” Sen. James Lankford “requested the report in an effort to bolster his argument that the American burying beetle should be removed from the endangered species list.” Lankford said, “This GAO investigation reinforces the need for more rigorous oversight of the Fish and Wildlife Service and the mitigation programs managed by the Fish and Wildlife Service. The listing of the American burying beetle unnecessarily places burdensome land-use

restrictions to build roads, water resources and energy infrastructure in many of our communities.”

FORSYTHE WILDLIFE REFUGE HEADQUARTERS NEARLY COMPLETE. [Shore News Today \(NJ\)](#) (1/23) reports that “three years from the planning stages to completion,” a \$4.7 million project to construct a new headquarters at Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge “with federal money is nearly finished.” According to refuge manager Virginia Rettig, “New Jersey Division of Fish & Wildlife employees will be moving into a new 4,300-square-foot building by mid-February.”

CSKT BACKS FWS’ PREFERRED PLAN TO RETURN BISON MANAGEMENT TO TRIBES. The [Flathead \(MT\) Beacon](#) (1/24, 15K) reports that “on Jan. 18, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service published its notice of intent to prepare a comprehensive conservation plan for the National Bison Range in Moiese, accompanied by an environmental impact statement (EIS).” In its notice, the FWS “states that the EIS will look at different management models for the Bison Range, including the FWS’ preferred option of congressional legislation that would restore the National Bison Range to federal trust ownership for the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes with requirements of continued bison and wildlife conservation, as well as public access.” According to CSKT Communications Director Rob McDonald, the Tribes “welcome this step” and are “pleased that the FWS has selected restoration of the Bison Range, and subsequent Tribal management of the bison and other natural resources, as its preferred choice in this evaluation of management alternatives.”

TWO NORTHERN LONG-EARED BATS FOUND LIVING IN BEAUFORT COUNTY. The [AP](#) (1/24, 272K) reports that “scientists have confirmed a pair of bats found in some woods in Beaufort County is from a species usually found in the mountains.” According to the article, “a lab at Northern Arizona University has confirmed the bats found in Bluffton are northern long-eared bats.” Officials are not certain “how the bats ended up on the coast but may devote more study to the question.”

FWS OFFERING \$10,000 REWARD IN CASE OF MISSING SALAMANDERS. The [Austin \(TX\) American Statesman](#) (1/24, Subscription Publication, 407K) reports that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is “offering a \$10,000 reward for information leading to a conviction in the case of hundreds of rare salamanders that disappeared from a San Marcos fish hatchery.” The article notes that “the 253 Texas blind salamanders and 110 San Marcos salamanders, both protected under the Endangered Species Act and Texas state law, went missing from the San Marcos National Fish Hatchery and Technology Center in San Marcos over the Thanksgiving holiday.”

Additional coverage was provided by the [San Antonio \(TX\) Express-News](#) (1/24, 844K).

REWARD IN INDIANA WHOOPING CRANE KILLING INCREASES TO \$15,000. The [AP](#) (1/24, 272K) reports that “the reward for information leading to a conviction in the fatal shooting of an endangered whooping crane in Indiana has grown to \$15,000.” The Center for Biological Diversity said Tuesday that “it’s added \$5,000 to the \$10,000 reward offered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the International Crane Foundation and other groups.”

Bureau of Land Management:

ADDITIONAL COVERAGE: FEDERAL AGENCIES OUTLINE THE NEXT STEPS FOR BEARS EARS. Additional coverage that federal agencies are planning the next steps for the Bears Ears National Monument was provided by the [San Juan \(UT\) Record](#) (1/24, 479).

US Geological Survey:

USGS STUDY FINDS COASTAL MARSHES THREATENED BY CLIMATE CHANGE.

[E&E](#) (1/24) reports that “salt marshes along the Atlantic and Pacific coasts are being lost to climate change,” according to a study released Tuesday by the U.S. Geological Survey. The article says that “scientists developing a new rapid assessment technique for marshes chose eight areas on both coasts to test their method and found all of those wetlands losing ground.” According to the study, “half these marshes will be gone in 350 years.”

Securing America’s Energy Future:

Offshore Energy Development:

BSEE, COAST GUARD SIGN AGREEMENTS TO INCREASE COLLABORATION.

[Offshore Engineer](#) (1/24) reports that the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement and US Coast Guard “signed four revised memorandums of agreement (MOAs) this week in order to improve regulatory collaboration related to the energy industry on the US Outer Continental Shelf (OCS).” According to the article, “the agreements leverage each agency’s authorities and areas of expertise to increase collaboration, clarify responsibilities, and streamline information sharing.”

Additional coverage was provided by [PennEnergy](#) (1/24, 128).

AUTOMATION MAY OFFSET POTENTIAL ENERGY EMPLOYMENT GAINS. [Bloomberg](#)

[News](#) (1/24, 2.41M) reports robots are increasingly taking over work previously done by people on oil drillships. For example, the Iron Roughneck, made by National Oilwell Varco Inc., automates the process of connecting segments of drill pipe as they are laid through the ocean and oil-bearing rock. The oil industry lost 440,000 jobs through the downturn, but more efficient drilling rigs and increased automation reduce the need for field hand labor. Because of this, even if energy companies expand production in the industry-friendly presidency of Donald Trump, there may not be a subsequent increase in employment.

BOEM’S DECISION TO DENY SEISMIC TESTING WELCOMED. In an editorial, the [St. Augustine \(FL\) Record](#) (1/25, 49K) welcomes BOEM’s decision to deny “six pending applications to permit seismic testing in the mid-and South Atlantic areas of the Atlantic Ocean.” According to the paper, “shutting down the seismic platting of the ocean floor at this time simply made sense — scientifically speaking.”

Onshore Energy Development:

BLM OPENS MORE LAND FOR AUCTION IN WAYNE NATIONAL FOREST. The

[Columbus \(OH\) Dispatch](#) (1/24, Renault, 529K) reports officials in the Bureau of Land Management announced plans to auction off seven more land parcels in Ohio’s Wayne National Forest. The officials said that nearly 1,200 acres of land will be sold online on March 23. Environmental advocates say they will continue to fight the sales and to oppose hydraulic fracturing on the land.

MURRAY ENERGY CEO SAYS TRUMP COULD BUOY COAL IN 3 MONTHS. [Bloomberg](#)

[Politics](#) (1/24, 201K) reports Murray Energy founder and outspoken coal advocate Robert Murray expects Donald Trump to improve the regulatory environment for the coal industry within three months. Murray said Monday he is convinced that “the very best people” are running the federal government. Murray has lauded Trump’s plan to exit the Paris agreement and “called on Trump to gut some federal regulatory agencies and install a Supreme Court justice friendly to fossil-fuel interests.” Murray said of the Supreme Court pick, “We should have that in three months, and that should be about the longest.”

Empowering Native American Communities:

FATE OF ELK GROVE'S PROPOSED CASINO UNRESOLVED. The [Sacramento \(CA\) Bee](#) (1/24, 574K) reports that “just before President Barack Obama left office last week, his administration declared the Wilton Rancheria Indian tribe could acquire 36 acres of land in Elk Grove in order to build a \$400 million casino.” However, “the land question is not entirely resolved, and the tribe’s plans could rest with Elk Grove voters – or the administration of President Donald Trump.” The Elk Grove City Council, “which has supported the tribe’s effort, will meet Wednesday night and try to sort out an increasingly complicated legal picture regarding the proposed casino off Highway 99.”

Meanwhile, the [Elk Grove News \(CA\)](#) (1/24) reports that in a letter sent Monday to Elk Grove City Attorney Jonathon Hobbs, and Mona Ebrahimi of the law firm of Kronick Moskowitz Tiedemann & Girard, “the attorney for a California Indian gaming casino watchdog group asserted the final decision on Wilton Rancheria’s proposed \$400 million casino resort is not yet written in stone.”

BIA REVIEWING PLANS FOR GUYMON CASINO. [KFDA-TV](#) Amarillo, TX (1/24, 28K) reports that the Bureau of Indian Affairs is “reviewing the environmental impact assessment of a proposed Casino, two miles south of Guymon, Oklahoma.” However, “people in Guymon are divided when it comes to the economic and social impact a casino would have.” Those opposed “argue once the land is designated a reserve, the state and local governments lose control of what is developed.”

ADDITIONAL COVERAGE: HAVASUPAI NATION STUDENTS FILE LAWSUIT.

Additional coverage of the federal lawsuit filed this month against the government by the Havasupai Tribe on behalf of nine students was provided by the [Grand Canyon \(AZ\) News](#) (1/24).

Tackling America’s Water Challenges:

BOR BACKS BOISE RIVER SYSTEM WATER STORAGE STUDY. The [Salem \(OR\) Capital Press](#) (1/24, 113K) reports that U.S. Bureau of Reclamation officials “hope to conduct a major feasibility study that would look at several options for increasing water storage capacity on the Boise River system.” According to the article, “the study would cost \$5.5 million and look at different options for increasing the Treasure Valley water supply, including raising Arrowrock Dam 10 feet, Anderson Ranch Dam 6 feet or the Lucky Peak Dam pool 4 feet.” Roland Springer, who manages the BOR’s Snake River area office, said “the study could begin as soon as this year and the agency is already doing some hydrologic analysis.”

ADDITIONAL COVERAGE: ARIZONA, CALIFORNIA, AND NEVADA NEGOTIATING DROUGHT CONTINGENCY PLAN. Additional coverage that Arizona, Nevada, and California are negotiating a deal called the Drought Contingency Plan was provided by [USA Today](#) (1/24, Loomis, 5.28M).

Top National News:

TRUMP EXPECTED TO TAKE EXECUTIVE ACTION ON IMMIGRATION, BORDER WALL TODAY. The White House signaled Tuesday that major presidential actions on immigration and border security would come Wednesday, though because the news was not officially announced and hints came late in the day, coverage is limited and sometimes vague. On Tuesday evening at 9:37 p.m., President Trump [tweeted](#), “Big day planned on NATIONAL SECURITY tomorrow. Among many other things, we will build the wall!” This came several hours after [Reuters](#) (1/24, Ainsley) reported that Trump is expected to block visas from residents of Iran, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, and Yemen, and to “order a multi-month ban on allowing refugees into the United States except for religious minorities escaping persecution, until more aggressive vetting is in place.” In a brief update on “a busy

day at the White House,” the [CBS Evening News](#) (1/24, story 3, 0:30, Pelley, 11.17M) had earlier mentioned that on Wednesday, President Trump “is expected to sign orders restricting immigration, especially from countries that harbor a terrorist threat.”

The [New York Times](#) (1/24, Davis, Sanger, Haberman, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) reports the President “will order the construction of a Mexican border wall – the first in a series of actions this week to crack down on immigrants and bolster national security, including slashing the number of refugees who can resettle in the United States and blocking Syrians and others from ‘terror prone’ nations from entering, at least temporarily.” The Times says the orders “could lead to sweeping and controversial changes” in the way the US “conducts itself at home and around the globe...potentially leading to the reinstatement of policies that have been repudiated by much of the world.”

The [Washington Post](#) (1/24, Markon, Costa, 11.43M) reports that Trump is expected to sign the orders at a town hall meeting of DHS employees. According to sources speaking on condition of anonymity, Stephen Bannon and Attorney General-designate Sessions “were deeply involved in the extended debate about the orders,” and while the planned moves are “widely seen inside the White House as a victory for the self-described populist wing of his inner circle – which includes Bannon, Sessions and top policy adviser Stephen Miller – there are ongoing discussions about just how far to go on some policies, in particular the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program.” The [Wall Street Journal](#) (1/24, Meckler, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) says Trump is not expected to take action Wednesday on terminating DACA, though the [Los Angeles Times](#) (1/24, Bierman, 4.52M) says “immigration hawks are pressuring” Trump to stick by his campaign pledge to do so soon. [Politico](#) (1/24, Kim, 2.46M) also reports that “just four days into the new administration, immigration hardliners are demanding that the new president follow through.”

The [New York Post](#) (1/24, Perez, 3.82M) says Trump “will be ordering the construction of his signature Mexican border wall on Wednesday.” [USA Today](#) (1/24, Korte, 5.28M) reports, “Trump aides have made clear that there’s been no change in Trump’s position on the border wall, and he’s getting right to work on it.” But “unlike some of his other first-week actions,” the President “needs congressional support to authorize a border wall.”

While some sources including the New York Times appear to have details on the plans, others were less certain. [McClatchy](#) (1/24, Ordoñez, Kumar, 74K) says it “was not known” how extensive Wednesday’s actions will be, and [Politico](#) (1/24, Isenstadt, 2.46M) reports that it is “not clear if any of the actions would relate to Trump’s pledge to crack down on Muslim immigration.” The [Washington Times](#) (1/24, Pace, Salama, Zoll, 272K) also says that “the specifics of Trump’s orders were unclear.”

MEDIA ANALYSES: SPICER CONFIRMS TRUMP’S BELIEF IN “FALSE CLAIM” ON ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS VOTING. Coverage of White House press secretary Sean Spicer’s briefing confirming President Trump’s belief that he lost the popular tally in November because millions of votes from illegal immigrants is markedly critical – both of Spicer’s remarks and of Trump’s claim. Reports and analyses – which included the lead segments on all three major network newscasts – are nearly universal in saying there is no credible evidence to back up the President’s claim. Another theme in the coverage: Trump’s claim about the voting of illegal immigrants and the President’s continuing focus on the size of his inauguration crowd is distracting the Administration from focusing on its goals and plans.

In the lead story for [ABC World News Tonight](#) (1/24, lead story, 3:50, Muir, 14.63M), David Muir spoke of “the day of controversy within the Trump White House over a claim made once again by the President that has never been proven”: Trump claiming “he lost the popular vote to Hillary Clinton because of millions of illegal votes.” Referring to Spicer’s remarks, ABC’s Cecilia Vega cited what she described as a “stunning admission from the White House today:” Trump “still believes there was massive voter fraud in the election he

won.” Spicer was shown saying, “The President does believe that, he’s stated that before. I think he’s stated his concerns of voter fraud, people voting illegally, during the campaign, and he continues to maintain that belief based on studies and evidence people have presented to him.”

In the lead story for the [CBS Evening News](#) (1/24, lead story, 2:20, Pelley, 11.17M), Scott Pelley intoned, “Well, this has never happened before – the results of an American presidential election are being disputed by the winner.” CBS’ Margaret Brennan added that “Spicer said President Trump told congressional leaders [Monday] that he lost the popular vote by nearly three million votes because of widespread fraud.” However, Spicer “did not present any evidence of fraud in the 2016 election. The association that represents state election officials told CBS News it is ‘not aware of any evidence that supports the voter fraud claims made by President Trump.’”

In the opening segment of [NBC Nightly News](#) (1/24, lead story, 2:30, Holt, 16.61M), Lester Holt stated, “Even as he rapidly reshapes American policy with a flurry of executive actions, President Trump is drawing a scrutiny tonight for repeating a false claim that millions of fraudulent votes were cast in the last election.” Holt said “Trump’s apparent focus on the election conspiracy theories is in sharp contrast to the bold actions he’s taken, including his bold move today to resurrect the controversial Keystone XL Oil Pipeline.” NBC’s Hallie Jackson added, “Instead of working to clarify or backtrack on...Trump’s false claims, today” Spicer “tried to cement them. ... Citing studies that don’t back up his claim, the press secretary backing up his boss.”

In its online “First 100 Days Briefing,” the [New York Times](#) (1/24, Haberman, Steinhauer, Savage, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) said Spicer “confirmed” that Trump “has long believed that millions of undocumented immigrants voted illegally in the 2016 election, furthering a false claim from the podium of the West Wing briefing room and refusing to rule out an investigation down the road.” Addressing “stunned reporters,” Spicer said, “[Trump] said 3 to 5 million people could have voted illegally, based on the studies that he’s seen.”

In the “Fact Checker” blog on the website of the [Washington Post](#) (1/24, Lee, 11.43M), Michelle Ye Hee Lee quoted Spicer as saying, “I think there have been studies; there was one that came out of Pew in 2008 that showed 14 percent of people who have voted were not citizens. There are other studies that were presented to [Trump].” Lee wrote, “Spicer cited repeatedly debunked research to support Trump’s claim that millions of people voted illegally during the 2016 presidential election. These studies do not support Trump’s Four-Pinocchio claims of ‘millions’ of people voting illegally.”

Under the headline “Spicer: Trump Believes Voter Fraud Claim Despite Lack Of Evidence,” [USA Today](#) (1/24, Jackson, 5.28M) reports, “As candidates, lawmakers, government officials and election observers disputed Trump’s claim, congressional Republicans expressed dismay at” his “return to the topic.” Said Sen. Lindsey Graham, “To continue to suggest that the 2016 election was conducted in a fashion that millions of people voted illegally undermines faith in our democracy.”

[Politico](#) (1/24, Conway, 2.46M) reported that Spicer “defended” Trump over the claim, even though “numerous fact checks and other studies that have debunked the theory.” Politico further quoted Graham as saying of Trump, “We’re talking about a man who won the election and seems to be obsessed with the idea that he could not have possibly lost the popular vote without cheating or fraud. I would urge the president to knock this off.” However, speaking with reporters yesterday, Senate Majority Leader McConnell said “that voter fraud ‘does happen.’” McConnell declined to “directly weigh in on Trump’s claim, but said, ‘There are always arguments on both sides about how much, how frequent and all the rest.’”

The [New York Post](#) (1/24, Fredericks, 3.82M) reports that Spicer “doubled down on”

Trump's claim, even though it "has been thoroughly debunked." The Post says Spicer "repeatedly declined to provide any evidence of what would have been the most egregious case of voter fraud in US history – and would not explain why Trump hasn't ordered an investigation if that's what he believes." The [Washington Times](#) (1/24, Boyer, 272K) reports Spicer said Trump thinks "millions of illegal voters cast ballots in the presidential election, but he's 'comfortable' with his victory in the Electoral College vote tally." Spicer said Trump "had mentioned the issue 'in passing' with lawmakers."

CBS News Political Director John Dickerson, host of "Face the Nation," said on the [CBS Evening News](#) (1/24, story 3, 1:35, Pelley, 11.17M), "It was extraordinary to hear" Spicer, answering "questions about [Trump's claim] today, simply say, 'It's something he believes,' as if a White House can allow a President to believe things and talk about them with congressional leaders – things that just aren't so. And the reason it's important to have a President believe in things that are true is it creates a sense of belief in everything he says. But more important, the most important quality for a White House staff is the ability to tell a President something he doesn't want to hear and contradict him when you believe something that's not true. And if they're not able to do it in this case, the question is whether they'll be able to do it on more serious matters."

[Reuters](#) (1/24, Mason) reports Trump's claim was "the latest in a series of distractions in the opening days of the Trump administration that run the risk of overshadowing his legislative goals and efforts to advance policy proposals." Along those lines, the [AP](#) (1/24, Pace, Lemire) says Trump is "dogged by insecurity over his loss of the popular vote in the election and a persistent frustration that the legitimacy of his presidency is being challenged by Democrats and the media," according to "aides and associates." Trump's "fixation has been a drag on the momentum of his opening days in office, with his exaggerations about inauguration crowds and false assertions about illegal balloting intruding on advisers' plans to launch his presidency with a flurry of actions on the economy."

Under the headline "Trump's Disregard For The Truth Threatens His Ability To Govern," Karen Tumulty reports in a front-page story for the [Washington Post](#) (1/24, A1, Tumulty, 11.43M) that "Trump, having propelled his presidential campaign to victory while often disregarding the truth, now is testing the proposition that he can govern the country that way." Since being inaugurated on Friday, Trump "has put the enormous power of the nation's highest office behind spurious – and easily disproved – claims." Peter Wehner, "a Trump critic who was a top strategist in the George W. Bush White House," is quoted as saying of the President and his aides, "The degree to which they are creating their own reality, the degree to which they simply make up their own scripts, is striking," adding, "It's a huge deal, because in the end you really can't govern, and you can't persuade people, if you do not have a common basis of fact."

Writing for the [New York Times](#) (1/24, Poniewozik, Subscription Publication, 13.9M), James Poniewozik, the Times' chief TV critic, says Trump on Saturday stated "that his inauguration crowd – which photographs showed was dwarfed by Barack Obama's estimated 1.8 million in 2009 – 'looked like a million, a million and a half,'" and aides "backed up that claim with what his adviser Kellyanne Conway memorably termed 'alternative facts.'" Poniewozik adds that "for those of us who cover television," this was nothing new, because "Trump has a reputation among TV reporters for using his own bespoke numbers." As the first of several examples, Poniewozik says Trump claimed in 2015 that "The Celebrity Apprentice" was "the Number 1 show on television." It was not." Poniewozik adds that Trump's "tendency to treat truth as negotiable was idiosyncratic in a TV star. In a president, it's disturbing."

Spicer Defends Conway's "Alternative Facts" Comment. Spicer was asked on [Fox News' Hannity](#) (1/24, 535K) about Counselor to the President Kellyanne Conway's "alternative facts" comment. Spicer said, "There are times – like anything else, it's not alternative facts. Sometimes you can watch two different stations and get two different weather reports. That doesn't mean that the station was lying to you. ... The press was

trying to make it seem like we were ignoring the facts.” Spicer added, “This idea that we are immediately lying because – let’s take the [inauguration] audience. We were right. If you add up the number of people who watched that online, on Twitter, Twitter live, Facebook live, on YouTube, it broke all sorts of records. ... Where are their facts? Because I got called a liar for something I can add up and say ‘Here is how we come up with this number.’ And yet, where is the number that proves that I am wrong? ... The default was, ‘You are lying.’”

Public Relations Group Hits Trump White House On “Alternative Facts.” [Politico](#) (1/24, Conway, 2.46M) reports that the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA), “which represents 22,000 communications people and sets a code of ethics for the profession,” on Tuesday rebuked “the new White House for pushing demonstrably false statements about...Trump’s inauguration crowd size and labeling them ‘alternative facts.’” In a written statement, PRSA Chair Jane Dvorak said “that ‘encouraging and perpetuating the use of alternative facts by a high-profile spokesperson reflects poorly on all communications professionals.” Dvorak added, “PRSA strongly objects to any effort to deliberately misrepresent information. Honest, ethical professionals never spin, mislead or alter facts.”

Schumer On Trump: “You Cannot Run A Country Unless You Know The Facts.” [USA Today](#) (1/24, Page, 5.28M) reports that Senate Minority Leader Schumer on Tuesday said that when Trump, during Monday’s meeting with leaders of Congress, made the remark about the illegal immigrants voting, “no one in the room ‘really gave it much credence, including our Republican colleagues.’” However, speaking with USA Today, Schumer said “that ‘I worry’ about what the episode may reveal about the new president.” Schumer is quoted as saying, “In general you cannot run a country unless you know the facts,” adding, “If you’re going to believe your own facts, whether it’s about what Putin is doing in the world or what jobs or companies are doing here, you aren’t going to be able to govern, so I worry about it.”

Trump Says Photo Of His Inauguration Crowd Will Be Displayed In Press Room. The [New York Post](#) (1/24, Fredericks, 3.82M) reports that Trump continues to argue “about the size of the crowd at” Friday’s inauguration – “and plans to display a photo on the wall of the White House press room showing the event. ‘A photo delivered yesterday that will be displayed in the upper/lower press hall. Thank you Abbas!’ Trump [tweeted](#) Tuesday about an image sent to him by Abbas Shirmohammadi, a Washington, DC-based photographer who specializes in panoramic shots.” The Post adds, “Trump has reportedly been enraged at media reports that said his crowd was far smaller than President Obama’s first inaugural in 2009.”

TRUMP SAYS HE WILL ANNOUNCE SUPREME COURT NOMINEE NEXT WEEK.

Ahead of a meeting Tuesday with Senate leaders to discuss his choice to fill the vacancy on the Supreme Court, President Trump said he plans to announce his nominee next week. [McClatchy](#) (1/24, Koh, 74K) reports that Trump “told reporters that he would select who would fill the bench later this week from a shortlist.” [Politico](#) (1/24, Johnson, Goldmacher, 2.46M) cited “people familiar with the search process” who said that Trump has narrowed his list of possible nominees to “three finalists with Tenth Circuit judge Neil Gorsuch and Third Circuit judge Thomas Hardiman emerging as the frontrunners.” Eleventh Circuit Judge Bill Pryor “remains in the running but [is] fading.”

However, the [New York Times](#) (1/24, Liptak, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) says Pryor and Gorsuch are the “two leading contenders” and describes them as “a study in contrasts.” While Pryor is “a former Alabama attorney general, a graduate of Tulane’s law school and an outspoken opponent of abortion and gay rights,” Gorsuch “is a graduate of Columbia, Harvard and Oxford University, a former clerk to two Supreme Court justices and a former Justice Department official.” While both are conservatives, “Gorsuch’s credentials, erudition and more muted stances could smooth his confirmation chances.” Meanwhile, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (1/24, Bravin, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) mentions a fourth contender, Raymond Kethledge of the Sixth Circuit in Cincinnati.

The [AP](#) (1/24, Sherman, Salama) says that according to conservatives, all three “share [late Justice Antonin] Scalia’s commitment to the text and meaning of the Constitution.” Leonard Leo, who has been advising Trump on the nomination, said, “These are not stealth candidates. Their records are there for everyone to see and to understand. Their judicial philosophy is well within the mainstream of American legal thought.” However, not all conservatives are on board. The [Washington Times](#) (1/24, Swoyer, 272K) reports that conservative groups are “actively trying to derail” Pryor and Gorsuch, “saying they can’t be relied on to pursue conservative goals from the federal bench.” The group Public Advocate “has launched online ads in the Washington area trying to raise opposition to Judge Pryor,” and the Judicial Action Group said Pryor’s judicial record “demonstrates that he ‘failed to interpret the Constitution as the framers intended.’” Pro-life activists argue Gorsuch “would not meet Mr. Trump’s pledge to put pro-life judges on the federal bench.”

Justice correspondent Pete Williams said on [NBC Nightly News](#) (1/24, story 3, 1:50, Holt, 16.61M) that while “replacing Justice Scalia with another conservative would not alter the court’s ideological make-up,” Trump’s nominee “is in for a fight” as Democrats “are furious that President Obama’s nominee, Merrick Garland, never even got a hearing.” The [New York Times](#) (1/24, Hulse, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) also says Democrats are “furious” over Republicans’ handling of the Garland nomination, and their “deep resentment is certain to color their handling of Mr. Trump’s choice just as it has contributed to their resistance to moving quickly on Mr. Trump’s cabinet selections.” The Times adds that Democrats “see the forthcoming nomination as a chance to take a strong stand against the new president, since they still have the power to filibuster a Supreme Court choice — at least for now.”

In a story posted before Trump’s meeting with Senate leaders, the [Washington Post](#) (1/24, Sullivan, 11.43M) reported that Senate Majority Leader McConnell said on the Senate floor, “The president has invited the Democratic leader, the chairman and ranking members of the Judiciary Committee and myself to the White House this afternoon to begin to meet with him regarding the Supreme Court vacancy as part of his ongoing consultations with members of the Senate.” [Reuters](#) (1/24, Hurley) says that after the meeting with, McConnell said, “I anticipate what we’re going to get from the president is a highly qualified, well-credentialed conservative jurist.” Senate Minority Leader Schumer “said he reiterated that the president ‘should pick a mainstream nominee who could earn bipartisan support’ and that Democrats would fight any nominee they deem outside the mainstream.” [Roll Call](#) (1/24, Ruger, 63K) reported that White House press secretary Sean Spicer said Trump will look for nominee “who upholds ‘liberty’ and the Constitution, and avoids making laws via their decisions.” Spicer said, “I think it’s pretty mainstream to support the Constitution.”

Editorial Wrap-Up:

NEW YORK TIMES. “*We The People’ Demand Mr. Trump Release His Tax Returns.*”

In an editorial, the [New York Times](#) (1/24, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) writes that a petition to urge President Trump to release his tax information “received at least 100,000 signatures within 30 days” and “garnered more than 310,000 signatures by late Tuesday afternoon,” indicating American citizens and not just journalists, as the Administration claimed, are interested in Trump’s potential conflicts of interest. The Times admonishes Trump’s refusal to release his tax information during the campaign as “deeply suspicious” and now, as president, “indefensible.” The Times concludes, “The only logical conclusion is that the candidate who pledged to clean up Washington is hiding damaging information about his past.”

“Parliament Is Back In The Brexit Game.” In an editorial, the [New York Times](#) (1/24, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) acknowledges that the British Supreme Court’s ruling that Parliamentary approval is needed to begin Britain’s departure from the European Union

isn't likely to see Brexit prevented but "at least restores some order to the process," which the Times values because "the contentious and often demagogic referendum campaign" didn't include "many of the potentially costly consequences." The Times criticizes referendums and concludes, "what's important is that elected representatives of the British people have been restored to a process from which they had been foolishly excluded."

"Bringing A Sorry Chapter In Policing To An End." In an editorial, the [New York Times](#) (1/25, Board, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) welcomes the proposed court settlement for New York City's "abusive policing strategies" that had black and Latino New Yorkers "routinely stopped and frisked by police officers or issued unjustified criminal summonses for minor offenses." The Times lauds steps to "repair a long broken summons system" and notes that the city's "crime rate continues to plummet" after such tactics were discontinued.

WASHINGTON POST. *"Tom Price Is Exhibit A For Congressional Ethics Reform."* The [Washington Post](#) (1/24, 11.43M) says in an editorial that HHS Secretary-designate Tom Price "is a walking, talking example of the ways in which congressional ethics requirements are too lax," and even if he had no "corrupt intent," his financial dealings are "unsettling. As with other government officials, Americans should have confidence that those making policy on their behalf are doing so based on principles and not the potential for personal gain. The simple fact of conflicts of interest corrodes that faith."

"Closing Doors On Trade Isn't Smart Negotiating." The [Washington Post](#) (1/24, 11.43M) says in an editorial that the TPP "was already politically dead by the time President Trump buried it Monday," and Trump "now turns his attention" to NAFTA. But "while NAFTA has surely created winners and losers within the United States, overall it has not been the horrific deal Mr. Trump suggests," and is not worth "risking trade wars that might do far more damage to American companies, workers and consumers than the status quo allegedly does."

"The Trump Team Can't Even Keep Its Own Excuses Straight On His Broken Tax Promises." The [Washington Post](#) (1/24, Board, 11.43M) editorializes President Trump's unwillingness to release his tax returns in accordance with "long-standing tradition" and his "string of changing explanations" as to why he will not release that information "fuels suspicions that he has something to hide and invites questions about what interests are being served by his presidency." The Post says for Trump specifically, the release of tax information is "critical" because of his "complex," "unprecedented" personal business activities. In light of recent "questions of whether there are potential conflicts of interest, particularly from foreign sources," the Post urges Trump to release past tax returns and pledge to make public his 2016 returns "without delay."

WALL STREET JOURNAL. *"No More Keystone Capers."* In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (1/24, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) hails Trump's move to advance construction of the Keystone XL and Dakota Access pipelines, but warns that Trump's pledge to "renegotiate the term" could ultimately lead the companies to forego the project altogether.

"The Comey Reprieve." A [Wall Street Journal](#) (1/24, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) editorial predicts the Trump Administration will come to regret asking FBI Director Comey to stay on, and argues that Comey has shown a willingness to abuse his position to curry favor in Washington, which makes him unfit for the job.

"Don't Ignore The Labor Board." In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (1/24, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) criticizes the little-known National Labor Relations Board because general counsels nominated by former President Obama have abused their legal powers to make partisan-based decisions that have set dangerous precedents, many of which are contrary to judicial decisions. The Journal says the NLRB's past decisions must be immediately challenged because they have harmed business investments and jobs, and calls on President Trump to prioritize the NLRB when naming regulatory agency nominees.

Big Picture:

HEADLINES FROM TODAY'S FRONT PAGES.

Wall Street Journal:

[Trump Takes Action To Revive Keystone, Dakota Pipelines](#)
[Conservatives Try To Shape Trump's Budget](#)
[Google Privacy-policy Change Faces New Scrutiny In EU](#)
[Mall Owners Rush To Get Out Of The Mall Business](#)

New York Times:

[Trump To Order Mexican Border Wall And Curtail Immigration](#)
[Trump Revives Keystone Pipeline Rejected By Obama](#)
[Federal Debt Projected To Grow By Nearly \\$10 Trillion Over Next Decade](#)
[A Supreme Court Pick Is Promised. A Political Brawl Is Certain.](#)
[Emboldened By Trump, Israel Approves A Wave Of West Bank Settlement Expansion](#)
[Trump Injects High Risk Into Relations With China](#)
[Why Women Quit Working: It's Not For The Reasons Men Do](#)

Washington Post:

[Trump To Order Wall, Target Sanctuary Cities](#)
[Trump Seeks To Spark Action On Oil Pipelines](#)
[Progress For The Oscars. Will It Be Permanent?](#)
[Comey In Delicate Spot As FBI Tenure Continues](#)
[Israel Forges Ahead On New Housing](#)
[No Longer On Campaign Trail, But Still Untethered By Facts](#)

Financial Times:

[Trump Ends Obama's Block On Keystone Pipeline](#)
[La La Land Leads Rivals A Merry Dance Before Oscars](#)
[Schulz To Run As SPD Candidate For German Chancellor](#)
[May To Fast-track Brexit Bill Following Court Defeat](#)

Washington Times:

[Conservative Groups Trying To Derail Two Potential Supreme Court Picks](#)
[Trump Revives Oil Pipeline Projects, Demands U.S. Steel Used](#)
[Feuds Spell Trouble For Trump's First National Budget](#)
[Rwanda Economy Recovering Two Decades After Genocide](#)
[Black Lives Matter Resentful Of Peaceful, Favorable Women's March Against Trump](#)
[ISIS Drone Dropping Precision Bombs Alarms U.S. Military](#)

Story Lineup From Last Night's Network News:

ABC: Trump-Illegal Votes Claim; Trump-First Days; Confirmation Hearings; Severe Weather; Weather Forecast; Minnesota Gov Collapse; Utah Train Crash; Erin Andrews Cancer; Oklahoma Wild Fire; Washington State Traffic Collision; Flu Season; Genetically Modified Apple; Oscar Nominees Record.

CBS: Trump-Illegal Votes Claim; Trump-Executive Orders; Trump-Legitimacy Comments; Trump-First Days; Trump-EPA Silenced; Trump-UN Ambassador Appointment; Trump-Israel; US Jobs Automation; New Weather Satellite; Flint Water Lead Level; Minnesota Gov Collapse; Utah Train Crash; Oscar Nominees Record.

NBC: Trump-Illegal Votes Claim; Trump-Executive Orders; Trump-Supreme Court Nominee; Severe Weather; Flint Water Lead Level; Health-Norovirus; China Official-Trump; Controversial Police TV Program; Oscar Nominees Record; Utah Train Crash; Nonprofit Clothing Company.

Network TV At A Glance:

Trump-Illegal Votes Claim – 8 minutes, 40 seconds
Severe Weather – 3 minutes, 45 seconds
Trump-First Days – 3 minutes, 15 seconds
Trump-Executive Orders – 3 minutes
Minnesota Gov Collapse – 1 minute, 55 seconds
Utah Train Crash – 1 minute
Flint Water Lead Level – 45 seconds

Story Lineup From This Morning's Radio News Broadcasts:

ABC: Trump Executive Orders; Trump-Immigration Policy; Trump-Chicago Violence; GHW Bush Health; Wall Street News.

CBS: Trump-Immigration Policy; Trump Executive Orders; Confirmation Hearings; ISIS Drones; Minnesota Gov Collapse; Vegan Health Concern; Wall Street News.

FOX: Trump Executive Orders; Trump-Immigration Policy; Trump-Supreme Court Nomination; Trump-Israel.

NPR: Trump Executive Orders; Trump-Supreme Court Nomination; Trump-Immigration Policy; Abortion-Health Plans; Flint Water Lead Level; Columbia U-Slave Trade Date; DC Pizzeria Shooter Trial.

Washington Schedule:

TODAY'S EVENTS IN WASHINGTON.

White House:

PRESIDENT TRUMP — Takes official portrait; visits the Department of Homeland Security; gives first TV interview since taking office – 'President Trump: The First Interview' broadcast on ABC.

VICE PRESIDENT PENCE — No public schedule announced.

US Senate: No public schedule announced.

US House: 10:30 AM House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi holds weekly press conference
Location: H-207, U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC <http://www.democraticleader.gov/>
<https://twitter.com/NancyPelosi>

No votes scheduled in the House of Representatives Location: Washington, DC
<http://www.house.gov/>

Other: 8:00 AM GOP Rep. Kevin Brady speaks at FSR on tax reform – House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Rep. Kevin Brady delivers keynote address at Financial Services Roundtable tax reform discussion on 'Breaking Down the Barriers to Financial Security', introduced by FSR CEO Tim Pawlenty. Panel discussion follows Rep. Brady's remarks, with Prudential Retirement President Christine Marcks, Principal Financial Retirement and Income Solutions Senior Vice President Gregory Burrows, and Putnam Investments and Empower Retirement Director of Policy Lenny Glynn Location: Financial Services Roundtable, 600 13th St., NW, Washington, DC www.fsround.org
<https://twitter.com/fsroundtable>

9:30 AM Dem Rep. Adam Schiff speaks at CAP Action Fund on 'Democracy in the Age of Cyberwar' – Democratic Rep. Adam Schiff speaks at 'Undermined and Under Siege: Democracy in the Age of Cyberwar' Center for American Progress Action Fund event, with other speakers including former Chief of Staff to the CIA Director Jeremy Bash, former Acting Secretary of Homeland Security Rand Beers, and Center for a New American Security Strategy and Statecraft Program Director Julianne Smith Location: CAP Action Fund, 1333 H St., NW, Washington, DC www.americanprogressaction.org
<https://twitter.com/CAPaction>

9:30 AM The Washington EU-U.S. Conference continues – The Washington EU-U.S. Conference continues, to examine the potential EU-U.S. policy agenda over the next four years of the President Donald Trump administration. Speakers today include EU

Ambassador to the U.S. David O'Sullivan, with panel on 'EU-U.S.: Facing the Challenges of the XXI Century' Location: American University, School of International Service, 3400 Nebraska Ave., Washington, DC www.euintheus.org <https://twitter.com/EUintheUS> #US2017EU

11:00 AM Dialogue on Diversity Internet Data Privacy Colloquium – Dialogue on Diversity Internet Data Privacy Colloquium – 'The Roots of Privacy – Philosophy, Law, Technology' with speakers including Democratic Rep. Tony Cardenas Location: Stewart R. Mott Foundation, 122 Maryland Ave., Washington, DC www.dialogueondiversity.org <https://twitter.com/dialogondiv>

11:30 AM NGA 'State of the States' address – National Governors Association leadership 'State of the States' event, with NGA Chair Virginia Governor Terry McAuliffe and Vice Chair Nevada Governor Brian Sandoval outlining governors' collective priorities for the year ahead, including state-federal priorities for the new administration and Congress Location: Newseum, 555 Pennsylvania Ave NW, Washington, DC <http://www.nga.org> <https://twitter.com/NatlGovsAssoc> #WeTheStates

Last Laughs:

LATE NIGHT POLITICAL HUMOR.

Jimmy Kimmel: "And the person I'm starting to feel bad for is Trump's press secretary, Sean Spicer. Whatever Trump says, Sean Spicer has to go out there and defend. Yesterday he said the administration reserves the right to 'disagree with the facts.' That sounds good, I like that. I'm going to start doing that."

Trevor Noah: "Let's turn to a man whose whole job is to put out fires – new White House Press Secretary Sean Spicer. Although his job is less about putting out fire and more arguing that the fire is working hard for the American people."

Trevor Noah: "Over the past few days of Trump's presidency, I've noticed something interesting. One, we're not dreaming. ...Two, broadcasters still haven't figured out which voice to use when reading President Trump's tweets on air."

Jimmy Fallon: "I saw that ABC will air a prime-time special with President Trump tomorrow night, marking his first interview since taking office. Even though the interview hasn't even aired yet, Trump is already claiming it was watched by a billion people."

Seth Meyers: "Following President Trump's inauguration, the White House website no longer has an option for translation into Spanish. So, sorry, Mexican immigrants, but if you want to live here, you'll just have to learn to speak Russian."

Seth Meyers: "President Trump today met with the leaders of Fiat, Chrysler, Ford, and General Motors. And he asked them one question: 'How many people do you think were at my inauguration?'"

Seth Meyers: "Oscar nominations were announced today, with Meryl Streep nominated for 'Florence Foster Jenkins,' Natalie Portman for 'Jackie,' and Hillary Clinton for smiling her way through the inauguration."

Seth Meyers: [Referring to Trump's comment on voter fraud] "Also, why would you say 3 to 5 million people? We already know from the inauguration you have no idea what a million people looks like."

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Alexa Viets
Chief of Staff (Acting)
National Park Service
202-208-4530

From: Thomas Dickens
To: [Duran, Leah](mailto:Leah.Duran@ios.doi.gov)
Subject: Re: U.S. Department of the Interior News Briefing for Wednesday, January 25, 2017
Date: Wednesday, January 25, 2017 10:00:25 AM

Thank you, Leah!

Sent from my iPhone

On Jan 25, 2017, at 9:52 AM, Duran, Leah <leah_duran@ios.doi.gov> wrote:

Hi Thomas,

I've added you to the list, thanks!
~Leah

On Wed, Jan 25, 2017 at 8:40 AM, Thomas Dickens
<thomas_dickens@ios.doi.gov> wrote:

Thank you, Alexa!

Sent from my iPhone

On Jan 25, 2017, at 8:39 AM, Viets, Alexa <alexa_viets@nps.gov> wrote:

Hi Tom,

Looks like DOI Public Affairs would be the point of contact to be added to this list. I'm cc'ing Leah to help.

Thanks,
Alexa

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Bulletin Intelligence** <Interior@bulletinintelligence.com>
Date: Wed, Jan 25, 2017 at 7:04 AM
Subject: U.S. Department of the Interior News Briefing for
Wednesday, January 25, 2017
To: Interior@bulletinintelligence.com

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NEWS BRIEFING

Mobile version and searchable archives available at
interior.bulletinintelligence.com. Please [contact](#) Public Affairs with
subscription requests, questions or comments.

DATE: WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 25, 2017 7:00 AM EST

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- + Social Media Activity Scaled Back At Federal Agencies.
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- + Trump Asked To Rescind Bears Ears Designation, Shrink Staircase-Escalante National Monument.
- + Utah Lawmakers Hope To Create State Parks At Hole-in-the-Rock, Little Sahara.
- + Survey Finds Majority Of Americans Want More Alternative Fuels.
- + Additional Coverage Of Expansion Of Ball's Bluff Battlefield National Historic Landmark.
- + Obama's National Monument Designations Defended..
- + Designation Of Northeast Canyons And Seamounts National Monument Praised.
- + Adams: Trump Energy Policy To Strike Fear Among Some Industries.
- + Trump Administration Said To Have No Concrete Stance On Public Lands.

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- + NPS Representatives To Discuss Plans For Reconstruction National Monument.
- + Plans For Taller, Stronger White House Fence Approved.
- + Rocky Mountain National Park Breaks Visitation Record..
- + Visits To Monroe National Battlefield On The Rise.
- + Mount Rainier Switching To Online Permitting System.
- + Drone Allowed Inside Great Sand Dunes Park For Scientific Research.
- + Satellite Image Shows Blue Mists Over Smoky Mountains.
- + Man Sentenced For Ax Attack On Lassen National Park Ranger.

Fish and Wildlife Service:

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- + Forsythe Wildlife Refuge Headquarters Nearly Complete.
- + CSKT Backs FWS' Preferred Plan To Return Bison Management To Tribes.
- + Two Northern Long-eared Bats Found Living In Beaufort County.
- + FWS Offering \$10,000 Reward In Case Of Missing Salamanders.
- + Reward In Indiana Whooping Crane Killing Increases To \$15,000.

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- + Additional Coverage: Federal Agencies Outline The Next Steps For Bears Ears.

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- + Automation May Offset Potential Energy Employment Gains.
- + BOEM's Decision To Deny Seismic Testing Welcomed.

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- + [Murray Energy CEO Says Trump Could Buoy Coal In 3 Months.](#)

EMPOWERING NATIVE AMERICAN COMMUNITIES:

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- + [BIA Reviewing Plans For Guymon Casino.](#)
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- + [Trump Says He Will Announce Supreme Court Nominee Next Week.](#)

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- + [Washington Post.](#)
- + [Wall Street Journal.](#)

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- + [Late Night Political Humor.](#)

DOI in the News:

REVERSING OBAMA, TRUMP SIGNS ORDERS ADVANCING KEYSTONE XL, DAKOTA ACCESS PIPELINES. After [President Trump](#) signed executive orders advancing the construction of the Keystone XL and Dakota Access pipelines, the media coverage – including short stories on all three major network newscasts – highlighted the severe disappointment of the projects' foes. Reports also indicated, however, that Trump's move could lead to the creation of a significant number of jobs, and that with his action the President was fulfilling an unequivocal campaign vow. Media analyses also cast Trump's executive orders as yet additional steps to undo the legacy of the previous Administration. [Bloomberg Politics](#) (1/24, Vamburkar, 201K), for example, called the order "a major departure from the Obama administration" – one that marked "the start of an era with fewer constraints on the oil industry to the chagrin of environmentalists who have bitterly fought the projects." The [AP](#) (1/24, Daly, Thomas) refers to "a sharp blow to Barack Obama's legacy on climate change," part of Trump's "continuing effort to undo the past eight years of a Democratic president," [The Hill](#) (1/24, Cama, 1.25M) to "a sharp turn from the Obama administration's policies," and the [New York Times](#) (1/24, Baker,

Davenport, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) to a move “to further dismantle his predecessor’s policies.” The [CBS Evening News](#) (1/24, story 2, 1:20, Brennan, 11.17M) reported that the Keystone XL pipeline “was halted by the Obama Administration due to environmental concerns,” while the Dakota Access would be built “under a reservoir in North Dakota that also is used as a water source for one of the local native American tribes.”

[USA Today](#) (1/24, Korte, 5.28M) reports “Trump emphasized that the construction” of the Keystone pipeline “isn’t a done deal,” saying, “It’s something that subject to a renegotiation of terms by us.” [Vox](#) (1/24, Plumer, 1.15M) said that it is “not yet certain that the two pipelines will actually get finished,” but “the orders lay a lot of groundwork to make approval easier.” The [Washington Post](#) (1/24, Mufson, Eilperin, 11.43M) also warns that “it remained unclear, however, how Trump’s order would restart the pipeline projects or expedite environmental reviews.” The President “said that both pipeline projects would be subject to renegotiation,” and that he would “want any new projects to make use of American steel,” and it was also “unclear what Trump’s caution about renegotiation would mean for TransCanada’s plans,” which “originally...had planned to get about 65 percent of the steel pipe from US manufacturers but other supplies from Canada.” In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (1/24, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) hails Trump’s move to advance construction of the pipelines, but warns that Trump’s pledge to “renegotiate the term” could ultimately lead the companies to forego the project altogether.

[CNBC](#) (1/24, DiChristopher, 2.17M), however, reported that “shares of Energy Transfer Partners and TransCanada both rose more than 3.5 percent on Tuesday,” and quoted from a TransCanada statement that read, “We appreciate the President of the United States inviting us to re-apply for KXL. We are currently preparing the application and intend to do so.” The [Omaha \(NE\) World-Herald](#) (1/24, Hammel, 544K) reports that “a spokesman for TransCanada said Tuesday that it...will” also “be working with the Nebraska Public Service Commission to win approval of a route through the state.” Said TransCanada’s Terry Conha, “KXL represents the safest, most environmentally sound way to connect the American economy to an abundant energy resource.” [Reuters](#) (1/24, Holland), meanwhile, notes that “Canadian Natural Resources Minister Jim Carr said in Calgary that Keystone XL has all the regulatory approvals, and that the project would be ‘very positive for Canada.’”

Also yesterday, [Business Insider](#) (1/24, Sheth, Tani, 3.42M) reported, Trump issued an order designed to reduce “the regulatory burden on the oil industry and encouraging domestic manufacturing.” Said the President, “The regulatory process in this country has become a tangled up mess and very unfair to people.” His move, said Trump, will create “great construction jobs” and “put a lot of workers back to work.” Moreover, [ABC World News Tonight](#) (1/24, story 2, 2:45, Muir, 14.63M) reported, Trump “ordered the use of American-made steel to the maximum extent possible” for “the construction of those pipelines.” [NBC Nightly News](#) (1/24, story 2, 1:40, Welker, 16.61M) showed him saying during the signing of the orders, “We will build our own pipeline. We will build our own pipes. That’s what it has to do with. Like we used to in the old days.”

To [USA Today](#) (1/24, Korte, 5.28M), “potentially more sweeping are two directives changing the process of approving and regulating future pipeline and infrastructure projects.” Said Trump, “This is about streamlining the

incredibly cumbersome, long, horrible, permitting process. ... If it's a no, we'll give them a quick no, and if it's a yes, it's like 'Let's start building. ... The regulatory process in this country has become a tangled up mess, and very unfair to people." [NPR](#) (1/24, Naylor, 1.92M) reported that another order, according to Trump "will expedite environmental reviews and approvals 'for high-priority infrastructure projects.'" Said Trump, "We can't be in an environmental process for 15 years if a bridge is going to be falling down or if a highway is crumbling."

[Rolling Stone](#) (1/24, Blistein, 9.26M) reported that Trump said "the projects will be massive job-creators – an oft-repeated, but overstated, claim about the pipelines." Moreover, the President "did not acknowledge the potential environmental or human impact of the construction." To [Vox](#) (1/24, Plumer, 1.15M), likewise, "Trump, obviously, is not nearly as concerned about America's global leadership on climate change." The [Washington Times](#) (1/24, Miller, 272K), meanwhile, reported "the Keystone XL pipeline from Canada to Texas is estimated to create 28,000 jobs" – a number the President cited yesterday. In the [San Diego Union-Tribune](#) (1/24, Hamblin, 496K), Abby Hamblin indicated that "the State Department has projected the number of jobs supported by the Keystone Pipeline alone to be about 42,000 during the construction period," even if "many opponents raise the argument that most of those jobs would disappear after construction."

Writing for [Forbes](#) (1/24, Wald, 15.17M), Ellen R. Wald noted that "in 2010, TransCanada, the company behind Keystone XL, commissioned the Perryman Group to examine the long-term economic impact of the pipeline. Their study predicted that anywhere from 250,348 to 553,235 spin-off jobs would be created." Their "study was largely predicated on the assertion that the pipeline would stabilize oil prices," though "there is no evidence, historical or otherwise, that pipelines serve to stabilize the price of oil, a global commodity."

The [Omaha \(NE\) World-Herald](#) (1/24, Hammel, 544K) reports Nebraska Gov. Pete Ricketts "was among those praising the move," and that "Nebraska and Iowa lawmakers" also "reacted positively." Rep. Adrian Smith, a Nebraska Republican, is quoted as saying, "A large majority of Nebraskans want to see Keystone XL completed, knowing we need long-term solutions for affordable energy." [NPR](#) (1/24, Naylor, 1.92M), meanwhile, noted that "North Dakota Democratic Sen. Heidi Heitkamp said Trump's actions 'are a needed step' toward the goal of an all-of-the-above North American energy strategy."

On Monday, [BuzzFeed](#) (1/24, Lewis, 6.47M) reported, Trump had "met with union leaders who have been outspoken in their support for the controversial Keystone XL and Dakota Access oil pipelines — both projects opposed by many in the labor movement, and blocked by the Obama administration." Those leaders, however, said Obama's orders were the "first win for their members in the Trump era." North America's Building Trades Unions, "whose president Sean McGarvey was at Monday's White House meeting," said yesterday, "Today, President Donald J. Trump gave continued hope to thousands of skilled craft construction professionals in America's heartland." James Callahan, President of the International Union of Operating Engineers, "said resuming the Dakota and Keystone projects will bring relief to working families."

[Roll Call](#) (1/24, Bennett, 63K) said "GOP lawmakers were eager to applaud the move," and quoted Speaker Ryan as saying, "It's about time. ... The

unfortunate reality is that these important infrastructure projects were used by special interests to advance their radical anti-energy agenda and were, therefore, needlessly halted by the last administration — to the detriment of America’s national interest. These pipelines will strengthen our nation’s energy supply and help keep energy costs low for American families.” [The Hill](#) (1/24, Calfas, 1.25M) reported that Sen. Bernie Sanders “slammed” Trump after he signed the orders, which he said “ignored the voices of millions and put the short-term profits of the fossil fuel industry ahead of the future of our planet.”

On the other hand, said [Business Insider](#) (1/24, Sheth, Tani, 3.42M), “environmental activists are incensed,” and [CNN](#) (1/24, Jones, Diamond, Krieg, 29.79M) reported that “environmental groups and activists were also quick to slam the decision, with Tom Steyer, the president of NextGen Climate, accusing the Trump administration of putting ‘corporate interests ahead of American interests.’” With seeming sarcasm, meanwhile, the [Daily Intelligencer \(NY\)](#) (1/24, Levitz, 795K) reported that “after using his presidential pen to restrict access to abortion worldwide, disrupt the provision of health care here at home, and christen his Inauguration Day a ‘National Day of Patriotic Devotion,’” the President “turned his attention...to America’s pressing need for new oil pipelines.”

[PBS NewsHour](#) (1/24, Norris, 255K) reported that “those opposed to the” Keystone XL “project said it would boost extraction from Canada’s oil sands, a process that emits 14 percent more greenhouse gases than other forms of oil production.” They also “argued constructing a new oil pipeline would diminish America’s role as a global leader of climate change.” The [Milwaukee Journal Sentinel](#) (1/24, Egan, 513K) said “the move is likely to set off another wave of protests on the Great Plains at a time when ever-growing volumes of North American oil have been quietly flowing into the far more populous Great Lakes region, including two lines that run across the bottom of the Great Lakes themselves.”

In his “Talking Points Memo” segment on [Fox News’ The O’Reilly Factor](#) (1/24, 767K), Bill O’Reilly said Trump continued to be an “activist” president in his second day on the job, “angering environmentalists, still threatening companies that move overseas, but doing all of that in the name of the American worker. Clearly, the Trump Administration is putting economic growth above all else.” The [Huffington Post](#) (1/24, Kaufman, 237K), on the other hand, described Trump as “opening new fronts in his looming war with environmentalists.”

[Mother Jones](#) (1/24, Leber, 1.18M) reported that “environmentalists are already making plans drag the process out.” Jane Kleeb, “who runs the Bold Alliance and opposes Keystone, noted that TransCanada doesn’t yet have the land it needs to complete the pipeline,” added, “We are headed to the courts to challenge the right to use eminent domain.” Heartening the Dakota Access project’s opponents, [Vice](#) (1/24, Ling, 2.28M) reported, is the fact that “the Army Corps of Engineers underneath...Obama denied the...Pipeline an easement in December, delaying construction until a full environmental impact assessment could be completed.” Trump’s executive action “is the first step toward advancing progress,” but “the Dakota line is still undergoing an environmental impact assessment, which is key to the project proceeding.” According to Vice, “for Trump to bypass that, he would need to pass a bill in Congress excluding the pipeline from the National Environmental Protection Act.”

[RT](#) (1/24, 213K) reported that “a lawyer for the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe said the decision was made ‘hastily and irresponsibly,’” and that the tribe “intended to pursue legal action against Trump’s order, adding that the pipeline posed a risk not just for their water supply but also for millions of Americans living downstream.” Meanwhile, “one of the leading organizations in the Standing Rock protests, the Indigenous Environmental Network, called Trump’s actions ‘insane and extreme, and nothing short of attacks on our ancestral homelands.’” The [Wall Street Journal](#) (1/24, Harder, Lee, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) quotes a spokesperson for the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe saying the President disregarded Native American treaty rights and was “politically motivated.” Dave Archambault II, chairman of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, said in a statement, “President Trump is legally required to honor our treaty rights and provide a fair and reasonable pipeline process.”

As [Reuters](#) (1/24, Sylvester) reports, “the tribe had recently called for protesters to leave after” the Army Corps of Engineers’ decision, “saying the battle had moved beyond the camp and into the courts or back rooms for negotiations with the government.” Reuters adds that “some said they feared fresh violence after past clashes between protesters and law enforcement officers.” At any rate, said [TIME](#) (1/24, Worland, 6.98M), “the path for permanently stopping the Dakota Access project remains unclear,” as “the project is more than 95% complete, with the small region near the Standing Rock Sioux reservation remaining unconstructed, and local law enforcement has shown no hesitation in shutting down protests.”

Trump Orders Acceleration Of Environmental Reviews For Infrastructure Projects. The [Washington Post](#) (1/24, Fears, 11.43M) reports President Trump signed an executive order Tuesday to expedite environmental reviews and approvals to fast track infrastructure projects. Agencies that undertake environmental and other analyses before greenlighting development should work with “maximum efficiency and effectiveness” to complete them. “As part of the order, the chair of the White House Council on Environmental Quality will decide whether a project should be given national priority within 30 days of a request, triggering an expedited approval process.” Trump’s move follows a day after placing a freeze on all EPA grants and contracts, “possibly suspending efforts to improve local air quality in some parts of the nation.” The [Washington Examiner](#) (1/24, Giaritelli, 400K) reports that the Commerce Department will work with the EPA, DOE, the USDA, the Office of Management and Budget and the Small Business Administration. “After the public comment period, an action plan to streamline permitting must be developed in 60 days, according to the memorandum.”

SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVITY SCALED BACK AT FEDERAL AGENCIES.

[E&E](#) (1/24) reports that “Twitter posts and other social media activity have been scaled back at U.S. EPA, the departments of the Interior and Energy, and other agencies as the new Trump administration gets traction.” Under a new rule, “no posts on the ‘policy priorities’ of the incoming Interior secretary” will be allowed until Rep. Ryan Zinke is “confirmed by the Senate for the position.”

Trump Administration Limits On Agencies’ Communications Spark Concern. [Reuters](#) (1/24, Volcovici, Huffstutter) reports that directives from the Trump Administration to the EPA, Interior Department, and Agriculture Department “seeking to limit how they communicate to the public” have “reinforced concerns that Trump, a climate change doubter, could seek to

sideline scientific research showing that carbon dioxide emissions from burning fossil fuels contributes to global warming, as well as the career staffers at the agencies that conduct much of this research.” The [New York Post](#) (1/24, Fredericks, 3.82M) says Trump “imposed a media blackout” at the EPA and “barred staff from awarding new contracts or grants” The moves “are expected to have a significant and immediate impact on EPA activities nationwide.” Correspondent Jim Axelrod reported on the [CBS Evening News](#) (1/24, story 5, 2:35, Pelley, 11.17M) that the restrictions “stoked the fears” of University of Pennsylvania environmental professor Bethany Wiggins and her colleagues and students that “the Administration will limit access to data as it rolls back environmental protections.” Axelrod added that on Tuesday, “the Badlands National Park tweeted about climate change in defiance of the White House and then deleted them.”

At USDA, the [Washington Post](#) (1/24, Delreal, 11.43M) reports, employees of the Agricultural Research Service “were ordered Monday to cease publication of ‘outward facing’ documents and news releases, raising concerns that the Trump administration was seeking to influence distribution of their findings.”

[Politico](#) (1/24, Restuccia, Guillén, Cook, 2.46M) said the “steps to mute federal employees,” which include “limiting employees’ ability to issue news releases, tweet or otherwise communicate with the public,” are “sparking early fears of a broader crackdown across the government, as Trump vows to pursue an agenda sharply at odds with his predecessor.” There are concerns among watchdog groups “about what restrictions the Trump administration may yet impose on federal workers.” White House press secretary Sean Spicer said Tuesday that he “was still looking into the agency restrictions, but added, ‘I don’t think there’s any surprise that when there’s an administration turnover, we’re going to review the policies.’”

Additional coverage was provided by [The Hill](#) (1/24, Fabian, 1.25M), [USA Today](#) (1/24, Rossman, 5.28M), [Politico](#) (1/24, McCaskill, 2.46M), [U.S. News & World Report](#) (1/24, Levy, 1.02M), the [Washington \(DC\) Post](#) (1/24, Eilperin, Dennis, 11.43M), the [Chicago \(IL\) Tribune](#) (1/24, 2.54M), the [Missoulian \(MT\)](#) (1/24, 114K), the [Raw Story](#) (1/24, 1.24M), and [GeekWire](#) (1/24, 59K).

Also providing coverage are [The Hill](#) (1/24, Shelbourne, 1.25M), [USA Today](#) (1/24, King, 5.28M), [Bloomberg News](#) (1/24, The Associated Press (Biesecker John Flesher), 2.41M), the [Boston \(MA\) Globe](#) (1/24, Biesecker, Flesher, 1.08M), [U.S. News & World Report](#) (1/24, 1.02M), the [Washington \(DC\) Times](#) (1/24, Biesecker, Flesher, 272K), the [Chicago \(IL\) Tribune](#) (1/24, 2.54M), the [Bristol \(VA\) Herald Courier](#) (1/24), the [Daily Mail](#) (1/24, 4.59M), the [Minneapolis \(MN\) Star Tribune](#) (1/24, 1.27M), [Philly \(PA\)](#) (1/24, 942K), the [Sacramento \(CA\) Bee](#) (1/24, 574K), the [Denver \(CO\) Post](#) (1/24, 778K), [RT](#) (1/24, 213K), and the [Japan Times](#) (1/25, 12K).

Badlands National Park Tweeted Climate Facts Amid Social Media Crackdown. [The Hill](#) (1/24, Henry, 1.25M) reports Badlands National Park sent out three Twitter messages on Tuesday “promoting climate science amid a new Trump administration crackdown on agencies communicating on social media.” The tweets are “basic scientific facts and not noteworthy in and of themselves,” but they came against Trump administration directives blocking climate pronouncements from federal agencies. [CNN](#) (1/24, Diaz, 29.79M) reports the tweets were up for a few hours before they were deleted.

Additional coverage was provided by [The Hill](#) (1/24, Henry, 1.25M), [Politico](#) (1/24, Quigley, 2.46M), the [Washington \(DC\) Post](#) (1/24, Fears, 11.43M), the [Washington \(DC\) Times](#) (1/24, Wolfgang, 272K), the [Los Angeles \(CA\) Times](#) (1/24, 4.52M), [CBS News](#) (1/24, 4.4M), [Fox News](#) (1/24, 11.07M), the [Christian Science Monitor](#) (1/23, 387K), [Forbes](#) (1/24, 15.17M), [Bloomberg News](#) (1/25, Roston, 2.41M), [Reuters](#) (1/24, Volcovici, Huffstutter), [TIME](#) (1/24, 6.98M), [USA Today](#) (1/24, Weise, 5.28M), the [Daily Caller](#) (1/24, Bastasch, 898K), [Bloomberg BNA](#) (1/24, 7K), [MarketWatch](#) (1/24, 767K), the [Boston \(MA\) Globe](#) (1/24, 1.08M), the [Chicago \(IL\) Tribune](#) (1/24, 2.54M), the [New York Daily News](#) (1/24, Brennan, 4.45M), the [Daily Beast](#) (1/24, 1.11M), [Vanity Fair](#) (1/24, 6.22M), the [Huffington Post](#) (1/24, 237K), the [Daily Mail](#) (1/24, 4.59M), [Vox](#) (1/24, 1.15M), [Talking Points Memo](#) (1/24, 517K), [Quartz](#) (1/24, 638K), the [New Republic](#) (1/24, 255K), [Federal Computer Week](#) (1/24, 263K), [BBC News \(UK\)](#) (1/25, 2.39M), [The Guardian \(UK\)](#) (1/24, Lartey, 4.07M), the [Independent \(UK\)](#) (1/24, Sampathkumar, 1.28M), [GeekWire](#) (1/24, 59K), [WXYZ-TV Detroit \(MI\)](#) Detroit (1/24, 141K), and [WRC-TV Washington \(DC\)](#) Washington (1/24, 453K).

SENATE COMMITTEE DELAYS VOTE ON ZINKE, PERRY. [E&E](#) (1/24) reports that the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee had scheduled votes Tuesday “on Rep. Ryan Zinke (R-Mont.), nominee for Interior secretary, and former Texas Gov. Rick Perry (R), Trump’s pick to lead the Department of Energy.” However, late Monday night the panel announced “that it was postponing the meeting until further notice.” Senate Majority Whip John Cornyn said “that he hoped the Senate could confirm Zinke and Perry before Republicans head to Philadelphia later this week for a retreat with their House colleagues and President Trump.”

[Politico Pro](#) (1/24) reports that “the Congressional Republicans’ annual retreat later this week means the votes won’t come until next week at the earliest.” The [Montana Standard](#) (1/24, 36K) reports that “several sources indicated the vote would be rescheduled for next week, though nothing had been posted to the committee website early Tuesday evening.”

In a piece about the delays on confirmation votes for Cabinet nominees Ed O’Keefe noted the postponed votes on both Perry and Zinke for the [Washington Post](#) (1/24, O’Keefe, 11.43M). O’Keefe calls the delays “unprecedented.”

Additional coverage was provided by [Roll Call](#) (1/24, Bowman, 63K), [CBS News](#) (1/24, 4.4M), [NBC News](#) (1/24, 2.67M), the [Washington \(DC\) Examiner](#) (1/24, 400K), [KBZK-TV Butte \(MT\)](#) Butte, MT (1/24, 785), [KFBB-TV Great Falls \(MT\)](#) Great Falls, MT (1/24, 2K), [KHQ-TV Spokane \(WA\)](#) Spokane, WA (1/24, 50K), and [KWYB-TV Butte \(MT\)](#) Butte, MT (1/24).

Delay On Vote Linked To Perry, Miscommunication. The [Great Falls \(MT\) Tribune](#) (1/24, 85K) reports that the postponement of Zinke’s vote “doesn’t appear to be related to his performance last week when he was questioned by the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee.” Nicole Daigle, communications director for the committee, said Tuesday that Sen. Lisa Murkowski “postponed the hearing due to a miscommunication between her” and Maria Cantwell, the ranking Democrat on the committee. Daigle said, “She wants to start 2017 on a good footing with her ranking member. Sen. Murkowski hopes to be able to put a vote before the full committee very quickly.” Cantwell “told reporters in

Washington Tuesday that Democrats want more information about how Rick Perry will handle energy efficiency standards, according to Cantwell's office." Democrats also "objected to Republicans calling a vote without giving the standard three-day advance notice, Cantwell's office said."

National Wildlife Federation Backs Zinke's Nomination. [Politico Pro](#) (1/24) reports that the National Wildlife Federation sent a letter Monday "urging Senate energy panel members to back Zinke's nomination to run the Interior Department." Collin O'Mara, the group's president, wrote, "Representative Zinke understands the intrinsic wildlife and conservation values of the Nation's public lands that are held in trust for generations of all Americans." O'Mara added that NWF would work with Zinke on "how best to balance energy development decisions with key conservation priorities."

Additional coverage was provided by the [Daily Caller](#) (1/24, Follett, 898K).

Facing Tough Election Cycle, Trump's Cabinet Picks A Boost For Senate Democrats. [The Hill](#) (1/24, Hagen, 1.25M) reported that the Cabinet selections of President Trump "have given Democrats a few bright spots ahead of an otherwise grim 2018 Senate cycle." Facing reelection next year, North Dakota Sen. Heidi Heitkamp (D) and West Virginia Sen. Joe Manchin (D), "both of whom Trump had considered for administration roles, will remain in the upper chamber." Perry was being considered the energy secretary post, which ultimately went to Perry. In addition, Rep. Ryan Zinke (R), who had been viewed as "a top" potential challenger to Montana Sen. Jon Tester (D) in 2018, "has been tapped to serve as Interior secretary." Jim Manley, a former aide to ex-Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid, told The Hill, "Given the number of Democrats up [for reelection in 2018], I don't expect Democrats to catch a lot of breaks, but they sure did in this particular instance."

Additional Coverage Of Zinke's Confirmation Hearing. Additional coverage of Zinke's confirmation hearing was provided by the [High Country \(CO\) News](#) (1/24, 77K).

TRUMP ASKED TO RESCIND BEARS EARS DESIGNATION, SHRINK STAIRCASE-ESCALANTE NATIONAL MONUMENT. [E&E](#) (1/24) reports that Utah state House Speaker Greg Hughes "used part of his Legislature's opening day to rail against the newly established Bears Ears National Monument, urging President Trump to rescind the designation for the 1.35-million-acre-site." Hughes "lashed out against the Obama administration's decision to establish the monument in southeastern Utah late last year, characterizing it as 'tragic' and an 'overstep.'" His "remarks echoed criticisms fired in recent weeks" by Gov. Gary Herbert and House Natural Resources Chairman Rob Bishop, "who have likewise called for rolling back the Bears Ears designation."

The [Salt Lake \(UT\) Tribune](#) (1/24, 426K) reports that Utah legislators also want "to erase large portions of the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument created a generation ago." However, "environmental groups and Democrats blasted the GOP plan." Steve Bloch, legal director for the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance, said, "The message that Utah is sending by even suggesting this is nothing short of outrageous. This would be a tragic mistake for the president to undo two decades of conservation work that has been heralded across the world as a visionary step by President Clinton to protect a world-class resource."

UTAH LAWMAKERS HOPE TO CREATE STATE PARKS AT HOLE-IN-THE-ROCK, LITTLE SAHARA. The [Salt Lake \(UT\) Tribune](#) (1/24, 426K) reports that “Utah lawmakers are angling to create two new state parks on federal lands, one at Little Sahara in Juab County and the other at Hole-in-the-Rock.” the House Political Subdivisions Committee, “with its three Democratic members voting against,” advanced HB63. The measure “authorizes the Utah Division of State Parks and Recreation to acquire federal land in Garfield County near where the pioneer expedition cut the trail down a steep crevice.” According to the article, “state officials might negotiate a lease or some other agreement with the National Park Service and the Bureau of Land Management to operate a park.” A different bill, HB95, would “establish a state park at Little Sahara.”

SURVEY FINDS MAJORITY OF AMERICANS WANT MORE ALTERNATIVE FUELS. [E&E](#) (1/24) reports that “approximately 65 percent of Americans prioritize the development of alternative energy sources compared with 27 percent who would put greater emphasis on expanding U.S. fossil fuel production, according to a new study by the Pew Research Center.” The article notes that the “study demonstrates increased popular support for alternative energy at a time when President Trump is pledging to boost production from fossil fuel energy sources like coal.” It also notes that “Democrats are still far more likely than Republicans to believe that developing alternative energy sources like wind and solar should take precedence over expanding production of coal, oil and natural gas.”

ADDITIONAL COVERAGE OF EXPANSION OF BALL’S BLUFF BATTLEFIELD NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK. Additional coverage of the expansion of Ball’s Bluff Battlefield National Historic Landmark was provided by the [Washington Post](#) (1/23, Mauck, 11.43M).

OBAMA’S NATIONAL MONUMENT DESIGNATIONS DEFENDED.. In an op-ed for the [Los Angeles Times](#) (1/23, Blumm, Hoffmann, 4.52M), Michael Blumm, a professor at Lewis and Clark Law School, and Hillary Hoffmann, a professor at Vermont Law School, defends President Obama’s 2016 national monument designations. They argue that “are ignoring the history and scope” of the Antiquities Act of 1906 and “the positive effects of monument designations on nearby communities.” They also point out that “although the Antiquities Act does not require it, the Obama administration engaged in substantial public discussions before the recent designations.” As a result, “those discussions led to scaling down the size of Bears Ears monument and eliminating several areas that might be mined or used for vehicular recreation in the future.”

DESIGNATION OF NORTHEAST CANYONS AND SEAMOUNTS NATIONAL MONUMENT PRAISED. In a piece for the [Worcester \(MA\) Telegram & Gazette](#) (1/23, 181K), Mark Blazis lauds the designation of the Northeast Canyons and Seamounts National Monument. Blazis asserts that “saving the biological treasures of our offshore canyons and seamounts from future resource extraction and other destructive exploitation will require much more public awareness, never-ending education, and politics-free protection and management.” He concludes that “we need future presidential administrations to continue to possess our current biological understanding, environmental values and unselfish vision to insure that our most precious wild lands remain a permanent natural legacy for all Americans.”

ADAMS: TRUMP ENERGY POLICY TO STRIKE FEAR AMONG SOME INDUSTRIES. In a piece titled “Trump’s Energy Policy Is Scary” [Forbes](#) (1/24, 15.17M) contributor Rod Adams writes, “Trump’s plan for American energy strength is rightfully causing angst” for those “who believe that renewable energy is the inevitable path” and “even more fear among the people who are betting on fossil fuel to continue dominating the world’s economy and geopolitics.” Based on statements made during the Senate confirmation hearings of Perry and Scott Pruitt “it appears that we are headed for an era of cheap and abundant power.” Adams contends that the “eventual and almost inevitable result” of a true “all of the above” energy policy “should be a sustainable transition to cheap, abundant, emission-free uranium, plutonium and thorium.” The prospect “that this vision might come to pass” is a frightening possibility “for those who continue to bet their wealth, power and careers on the assumption that the hydrocarbon economy will never end or on the myth that unreliaables can do it all.”

TRUMP ADMINISTRATION SAID TO HAVE NO CONCRETE STANCE ON PUBLIC LANDS. The [Eugene \(OR\) Register-Guard](#) (1/25, 178K) editorializes that “in terms of public lands, the Trump administration’s positions are wide open spaces — and so are its Cabinet members’ views.” It suggests that “the absence of firm policy positions may create an opportunity for the congressional delegations from states such as Oregon to exert influence.”

[America’s Great Outdoors:](#)

National Park Service:

NPS EXPANDS OLD SALEM’S NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DISTRICT. The [Winston-Salem \(NC\) Journal](#) (1/24, 204K) reports that the National Park Service has “expanded Old Salem’s National Historic Landmark district, tripling its acreage and increasing the number of time periods considered significant.” The Interior Department took action because it “saw a story that emphasized a kind of significance that had not been recognized before,” Michael “Mo” Hartley, the director of archaeology for Old Salem Museums and Gardens, said.

NPS REPRESENTATIVES TO DISCUSS PLANS FOR RECONSTRUCTION NATIONAL MONUMENT. [WJCL-TV](#) Savannah, GA (1/24, 807) reports that the four sites making up the Reconstruction National Monument are “now working to create an agreement with the National Park Service.” Next week, representatives from the park service will “visit each site to discuss more specific plans for the future.”

PLANS FOR TALLER, STRONGER WHITE HOUSE FENCE APPROVED. [WTTG-TV](#) Washington (1/24, 67K) reports that “a proposal for a new taller and stronger fence for the White House has been approved.” The planned fence, “which will be 11-foot-7-inches tall, will be made with wider and stronger pickets and will be installed beginning in 2018.” The new design for the fence was proposed by the United States Secret Service and the National Park Service.

ROCKY MOUNTAIN NATIONAL PARK BREAKS VISITATION RECORD.. The [Denver Post](#) (1/24, 778K) reports that Rocky Mountain National Park “set a record with 4.5 million visitors in 2016. In fact, every month of the year — except December — set a monthly record.” Kyle Patterson,

spokeswoman for the park, noted that “last year’s visitation number is an 8.68 percent increase over the previous annual record in 2015, a 32 percent increase since 2014, and a 40 percent increase since 2012.”

VISITS TO MONROE NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD ON THE RISE. The [Adrian \(MI\) Daily Telegram](#) (1/24, 27K) reports that the River Raisin National Battlefield Park saw an increase in visitors in 2016. Park Supt. Scott Bentley said, “The battlefield received 202,375 visitors during the National Park Service Centennial calendar year. This is another significant increase over 2015.”

MOUNT RAINIER SWITCHING TO ONLINE PERMITTING SYSTEM. [GeekWire](#) (1/24, 59K) reports that “after years of having to fax or mail in reservation requests to camp in Mount Rainier National Park, wilderness enthusiasts will soon be able to submit requests online, The National Park Service announced this week.” According to the article, “the new system will launch on March 15 and was created in a partnership with the University of Washington Information School.”

DRONE ALLOWED INSIDE GREAT SAND DUNES PARK FOR SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH. The [Denver Post](#) (1/24, 778K) reports that officials allowed a drone to be flown in Great Sand Dunes National Park & Preserve on Oct. 19. According to a report released Tuesday, “park officials want to better track the ecosystem to see how sand shifts over time and impacts the dunes’ height and depth.” During the flight, “the drone took high-resolution images of 1 square mile of the park centered around the Star Dune, which at 750 feet is the tallest dune in North America.”

SATELLITE IMAGE SHOWS BLUE MISTS OVER SMOKY MOUNTAINS. [CBS News](#) (1/24, 4.4M) reports that “a new satellite view of the Smoky Mountains shows the blue mist that gives the region its name.” The image, “shared by NASA’s Earth Observatory, is a best-pixel image” of Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

MAN SENTENCED FOR AX ATTACK ON LASSEN NATIONAL PARK RANGER. The [Sacramento \(CA\) Bee](#) (1/24, 574K) reports that “a federal judge on Tuesday sentenced a drunken man who attacked a Lassen National Park ranger with an ax last year to 27 months in prison.” Nicholas Martin Coberley “claimed that he had been staying with a friend and had been drinking when they got into an argument and he wandered away on foot – when ranger Chris Cruz came upon him in a truck, according to court papers filed by his lawyer.” Coberley, “45, pleaded guilty on Oct. 11 for the June 20 incident.”

Additional coverage was provided by the [Sacramento \(CA\) Bee](#) (1/24, 574K).

Fish and Wildlife Service:

GAO REPORT QUESTIONS FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY OF AMERICAN BURYING BEETLE PROGRAM. The [Fort Smith \(AR\) Times Record](#) (1/24, 111K) reports that “Oklahoma state and county governments and oil and gas companies have paid millions of dollars to fund conservation efforts to protect an endangered beetle species found in eastern Oklahoma, but there has been little accountability over how part of that money has been used, according to a U.S. Government Accountability Office report released Monday.” Sen. James Lankford “requested the report

in an effort to bolster his argument that the American burying beetle should be removed from the endangered species list.” Lankford said, “This GAO investigation reinforces the need for more rigorous oversight of the Fish and Wildlife Service and the mitigation programs managed by the Fish and Wildlife Service. The listing of the American burying beetle unnecessarily places burdensome land-use restrictions to build roads, water resources and energy infrastructure in many of our communities.”

FORSYTHE WILDLIFE REFUGE HEADQUARTERS NEARLY

COMPLETE. [Shore News Today \(NJ\)](#) (1/23) reports that “three years from the planning stages to completion,” a \$4.7 million project to construct a new headquarters at Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge “with federal money is nearly finished.” According to refuge manager Virginia Rettig, “New Jersey Division of Fish & Wildlife employees will be moving into a new 4,300-square-foot building by mid-February.”

CSKT BACKS FWS’ PREFERRED PLAN TO RETURN BISON

MANAGEMENT TO TRIBES. The [Flathead \(MT\) Beacon](#) (1/24, 15K) reports that “on Jan. 18, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service published its notice of intent to prepare a comprehensive conservation plan for the National Bison Range in Moiese, accompanied by an environmental impact statement (EIS).” In its notice, the FWS “states that the EIS will look at different management models for the Bison Range, including the FWS’ preferred option of congressional legislation that would restore the National Bison Range to federal trust ownership for the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes with requirements of continued bison and wildlife conservation, as well as public access.” According to CSKT Communications Director Rob McDonald, the Tribes “welcome this step” and are “pleased that the FWS has selected restoration of the Bison Range, and subsequent Tribal management of the bison and other natural resources, as its preferred choice in this evaluation of management alternatives.”

TWO NORTHERN LONG-EARED BATS FOUND LIVING IN BEAUFORT

COUNTY. The [AP](#) (1/24, 272K) reports that “scientists have confirmed a pair of bats found in some woods in Beaufort County is from a species usually found in the mountains.” According to the article, “a lab at Northern Arizona University has confirmed the bats found in Bluffton are northern long-eared bats.” Officials are not certain “how the bats ended up on the coast but may devote more study to the question.”

FWS OFFERING \$10,000 REWARD IN CASE OF MISSING

SALAMANDERS. The [Austin \(TX\) American Statesman](#) (1/24, Subscription Publication, 407K) reports that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is “offering a \$10,000 reward for information leading to a conviction in the case of hundreds of rare salamanders that disappeared from a San Marcos fish hatchery.” The article notes that “the 253 Texas blind salamanders and 110 San Marcos salamanders, both protected under the Endangered Species Act and Texas state law, went missing from the San Marcos National Fish Hatchery and Technology Center in San Marcos over the Thanksgiving holiday.”

Additional coverage was provided by the [San Antonio \(TX\) Express-News](#) (1/24, 844K).

REWARD IN INDIANA WHOOPING CRANE KILLING INCREASES TO

\$15,000. The [AP](#) (1/24, 272K) reports that “the reward for information

leading to a conviction in the fatal shooting of an endangered whooping crane in Indiana has grown to \$15,000.” The Center for Biological Diversity said Tuesday that “it’s added \$5,000 to the \$10,000 reward offered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the International Crane Foundation and other groups.”

Bureau of Land Management:

ADDITIONAL COVERAGE: FEDERAL AGENCIES OUTLINE THE NEXT STEPS FOR BEARS EARS. Additional coverage that federal agencies are planning the next steps for the Bears Ears National Monument was provided by the [San Juan \(UT\) Record](#) (1/24, 479).

US Geological Survey:

USGS STUDY FINDS COASTAL MARSHES THREATENED BY CLIMATE CHANGE. [E&E](#) (1/24) reports that “salt marshes along the Atlantic and Pacific coasts are being lost to climate change,” according to a study released Tuesday by the U.S. Geological Survey. The article says that “scientists developing a new rapid assessment technique for marshes chose eight areas on both coasts to test their method and found all of those wetlands losing ground.” According to the study, “half these marshes will be gone in 350 years.”

Securing America’s Energy Future:

Offshore Energy Development:

BSEE, COAST GUARD SIGN AGREEMENTS TO INCREASE COLLABORATION. [Offshore Engineer](#) (1/24) reports that the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement and US Coast Guard “signed four revised memorandums of agreement (MOAs) this week in order to improve regulatory collaboration related to the energy industry on the US Outer Continental Shelf (OCS).” According to the article, “the agreements leverage each agency’s authorities and areas of expertise to increase collaboration, clarify responsibilities, and streamline information sharing.”

Additional coverage was provided by [PennEnergy](#) (1/24, 128).

AUTOMATION MAY OFFSET POTENTIAL ENERGY EMPLOYMENT GAINS. [Bloomberg News](#) (1/24, 2.41M) reports robots are increasingly taking over work previously done by people on oil drillships. For example, the Iron Roughneck, made by National Oilwell Varco Inc., automates the process of connecting segments of drill pipe as they are laid through the ocean and oil-bearing rock. The oil industry lost 440,000 jobs through the downturn, but more efficient drilling rigs and increased automation reduce the need for field hand labor. Because of this, even if energy companies expand production in the industry-friendly presidency of Donald Trump, there may not be a subsequent increase in employment.

BOEM’S DECISION TO DENY SEISMIC TESTING WELCOMED. In an editorial, the [St. Augustine \(FL\) Record](#) (1/25, 49K) welcomes BOEM’s decision to deny “six pending applications to permit seismic testing in the mid-and South Atlantic areas of the Atlantic Ocean.” According to the paper, “shutting down the seismic platting of the ocean floor at this time simply made sense — scientifically speaking.”

Onshore Energy Development:

BLM OPENS MORE LAND FOR AUCTION IN WAYNE NATIONAL FOREST. The [Columbus \(OH\) Dispatch](#) (1/24, Renault, 529K) reports officials in the Bureau of Land Management announced plans to auction off seven more land parcels in Ohio's Wayne National Forest. The officials said that nearly 1,200 acres of land will be sold online on March 23. Environmental advocates say they will continue to fight the sales and to oppose hydraulic fracturing on the land.

MURRAY ENERGY CEO SAYS TRUMP COULD BUOY COAL IN 3 MONTHS. [Bloomberg Politics](#) (1/24, 201K) reports Murray Energy founder and outspoken coal advocate Robert Murray expects Donald Trump to improve the regulatory environment for the coal industry within three months. Murray said Monday he is convinced that "the very best people" are running the federal government. Murray has lauded Trump's plan to exit the Paris agreement and "called on Trump to gut some federal regulatory agencies and install a Supreme Court justice friendly to fossil-fuel interests." Murray said of the Supreme Court pick, "We should have that in three months, and that should be about the longest."

Empowering Native American Communities:

FATE OF ELK GROVE'S PROPOSED CASINO UNRESOLVED. The [Sacramento \(CA\) Bee](#) (1/24, 574K) reports that "just before President Barack Obama left office last week, his administration declared the Wilton Rancheria Indian tribe could acquire 36 acres of land in Elk Grove in order to build a \$400 million casino." However, "the land question is not entirely resolved, and the tribe's plans could rest with Elk Grove voters – or the administration of President Donald Trump." The Elk Grove City Council, "which has supported the tribe's effort, will meet Wednesday night and try to sort out an increasingly complicated legal picture regarding the proposed casino off Highway 99."

Meanwhile, the [Elk Grove News \(CA\)](#) (1/24) reports that in a letter sent Monday to Elk Grove City Attorney Jonathon Hobbs, and Mona Ebrahimi of the law firm of Kronick Moskowitz Tiedemann & Girard, "the attorney for a California Indian gaming casino watchdog group asserted the final decision on Wilton Rancheria's proposed \$400 million casino resort is not yet written in stone."

BIA REVIEWING PLANS FOR GUYMON CASINO. [KFDA-TV](#) Amarillo, TX (1/24, 28K) reports that the Bureau of Indian Affairs is "reviewing the environmental impact assessment of a proposed Casino, two miles south of Guymon, Oklahoma." However, "people in Guymon are divided when it comes to the economic and social impact a casino would have." Those opposed "argue once the land is designated a reserve, the state and local governments lose control of what is developed."

ADDITIONAL COVERAGE: HAVASUPAI NATION STUDENTS FILE LAWSUIT. Additional coverage of the federal lawsuit filed this month against the government by the Havasupai Tribe on behalf of nine students was provided by the [Grand Canyon \(AZ\) News](#) (1/24).

Tackling America's Water Challenges:

BOR BACKS BOISE RIVER SYSTEM WATER STORAGE STUDY. The [Salem \(OR\) Capital Press](#) (1/24, 113K) reports that U.S. Bureau of Reclamation officials “hope to conduct a major feasibility study that would look at several options for increasing water storage capacity on the Boise River system.” According to the article, “the study would cost \$5.5 million and look at different options for increasing the Treasure Valley water supply, including raising Arrowrock Dam 10 feet, Anderson Ranch Dam 6 feet or the Lucky Peak Dam pool 4 feet.” Roland Springer, who manages the BOR’s Snake River area office, said “the study could begin as soon as this year and the agency is already doing some hydrologic analysis.”

ADDITIONAL COVERAGE: ARIZONA, CALIFORNIA, AND NEVADA NEGOTIATING DROUGHT CONTINGENCY PLAN. Additional coverage that Arizona, Nevada, and California are negotiating a deal called the Drought Contingency Plan was provided by [USA Today](#) (1/24, Loomis, 5.28M).

Top National News:

TRUMP EXPECTED TO TAKE EXECUTIVE ACTION ON IMMIGRATION, BORDER WALL TODAY. The White House signaled Tuesday that major presidential actions on immigration and border security would come Wednesday, though because the news was not officially announced and hints came late in the day, coverage is limited and sometimes vague. On Tuesday evening at 9:37 p.m., President Trump [tweeted](#), “Big day planned on NATIONAL SECURITY tomorrow. Among many other things, we will build the wall!” This came several hours after [Reuters](#) (1/24, Ainsley) reported that Trump is expected to block visas from residents of Iran, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, and Yemen, and to “order a multi-month ban on allowing refugees into the United States except for religious minorities escaping persecution, until more aggressive vetting is in place.” In a brief update on “a busy day at the White House,” the [CBS Evening News](#) (1/24, story 3, 0:30, Pelley, 11.17M) had earlier mentioned that on Wednesday, President Trump “is expected to sign orders restricting immigration, especially from countries that harbor a terrorist threat.”

The [New York Times](#) (1/24, Davis, Sanger, Haberman, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) reports the President “will order the construction of a Mexican border wall – the first in a series of actions this week to crack down on immigrants and bolster national security, including slashing the number of refugees who can resettle in the United States and blocking Syrians and others from ‘terror prone’ nations from entering, at least temporarily.” The Times says the orders “could lead to sweeping and controversial changes” in the way the US “conducts itself at home and around the globe...potentially leading to the reinstatement of policies that have been repudiated by much of the world.”

The [Washington Post](#) (1/24, Markon, Costa, 11.43M) reports that Trump is expected to sign the orders at a town hall meeting of DHS employees. According to sources speaking on condition of anonymity, Stephen Bannon and Attorney General-designate Sessions “were deeply involved in the extended debate about the orders,” and while the planned moves are “widely seen inside the White House as a victory for the self-described populist wing of his inner circle – which includes Bannon, Sessions and top policy adviser Stephen Miller – there are ongoing discussions about just how far to go on some policies, in particular the Deferred Action for

Childhood Arrivals program.” The [Wall Street Journal](#) (1/24, Meckler, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) says Trump is not expected to take action Wednesday on terminating DACA, though the [Los Angeles Times](#) (1/24, Bierman, 4.52M) says “immigration hawks are pressuring” Trump to stick by his campaign pledge to do so soon. [Politico](#) (1/24, Kim, 2.46M) also reports that “just four days into the new administration, immigration hardliners are demanding that the new president follow through.”

The [New York Post](#) (1/24, Perez, 3.82M) says Trump “will be ordering the construction of his signature Mexican border wall on Wednesday.” [USA Today](#) (1/24, Korte, 5.28M) reports, “Trump aides have made clear that there’s been no change in Trump’s position on the border wall, and he’s getting right to work on it.” But “unlike some of his other first-week actions,” the President “needs congressional support to authorize a border wall.”

While some sources including the New York Times appear to have details on the plans, others were less certain. [McClatchy](#) (1/24, Ordoñez, Kumar, 74K) says it “was not known” how extensive Wednesday’s actions will be, and [Politico](#) (1/24, Isenstadt, 2.46M) reports that it is “not clear if any of the actions would relate to Trump’s pledge to crack down on Muslim immigration.” The [Washington Times](#) (1/24, Pace, Salama, Zoll, 272K) also says that “the specifics of Trump’s orders were unclear.”

MEDIA ANALYSES: SPICER CONFIRMS TRUMP’S BELIEF IN “FALSE CLAIM” ON ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS VOTING. Coverage of White House press secretary Sean Spicer’s briefing confirming President Trump’s belief that he lost the popular tally in November because millions of votes from illegal immigrants is markedly critical – both of Spicer’s remarks and of Trump’s claim. Reports and analyses – which included the lead segments on all three major network newscasts – are nearly universal in saying there is no credible evidence to back up the President’s claim. Another theme in the coverage: Trump’s claim about the voting of illegal immigrants and the President’s continuing focus on the size of his inauguration crowd is distracting the Administration from focusing on its goals and plans.

In the lead story for [ABC World News Tonight](#) (1/24, lead story, 3:50, Muir, 14.63M), David Muir spoke of “the day of controversy within the Trump White House over a claim made once again by the President that has never been proven”: Trump claiming “he lost the popular vote to Hillary Clinton because of millions of illegal votes.” Referring to Spicer’s remarks, ABC’s Cecilia Vega cited what she described as a “stunning admission from the White House today:” Trump “still believes there was massive voter fraud in the election he won.” Spicer was shown saying, “The President does believe that, he’s stated that before. I think he’s stated his concerns of voter fraud, people voting illegally, during the campaign, and he continues to maintain that belief based on studies and evidence people have presented to him.”

In the lead story for the [CBS Evening News](#) (1/24, lead story, 2:20, Pelley, 11.17M), Scott Pelley intoned, “Well, this has never happened before – the results of an American presidential election are being disputed by the winner.” CBS’ Margaret Brennan added that “Spicer said President Trump told congressional leaders [Monday] that he lost the popular vote by nearly three million votes because of widespread fraud.” However, Spicer “did not present any evidence of fraud in the 2016 election. The association that represents state election officials told CBS News it is ‘not aware of any evidence that supports the voter fraud claims made by President Trump.’”

In the opening segment of [NBC Nightly News](#) (1/24, lead story, 2:30, Holt, 16.61M), Lester Holt stated, “Even as he rapidly reshapes American policy with a flurry of executive actions, President Trump is drawing a scrutiny tonight for repeating a false claim that millions of fraudulent votes were cast in the last election.” Holt said “Trump’s apparent focus on the election conspiracy theories is in sharp contrast to the bold actions he’s taken, including his bold move today to resurrect the controversial Keystone XL Oil Pipeline.” NBC’s Hallie Jackson added, “Instead of working to clarify or backtrack on...Trump’s false claims, today” Spicer “tried to cement them. ... Citing studies that don’t back up his claim, the press secretary backing up his boss.”

In its online “First 100 Days Briefing,” the [New York Times](#) (1/24, Haberman, Steinhauer, Savage, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) said Spicer “confirmed” that Trump “has long believed that millions of undocumented immigrants voted illegally in the 2016 election, furthering a false claim from the podium of the West Wing briefing room and refusing to rule out an investigation down the road.” Addressing “stunned reporters,” Spicer said, “[Trump] said 3 to 5 million people could have voted illegally, based on the studies that he’s seen.”

In the “Fact Checker” blog on the website of the [Washington Post](#) (1/24, Lee, 11.43M), Michelle Ye Hee Lee quoted Spicer as saying, “I think there have been studies; there was one that came out of Pew in 2008 that showed 14 percent of people who have voted were not citizens. There are other studies that were presented to [Trump].” Lee wrote, “Spicer cited repeatedly debunked research to support Trump’s claim that millions of people voted illegally during the 2016 presidential election. These studies do not support Trump’s Four-Pinocchio claims of ‘millions’ of people voting illegally.”

Under the headline “Spicer: Trump Believes Voter Fraud Claim Despite Lack Of Evidence,” [USA Today](#) (1/24, Jackson, 5.28M) reports, “As candidates, lawmakers, government officials and election observers disputed Trump’s claim, congressional Republicans expressed dismay at his “return to the topic.” Said Sen. Lindsey Graham, “To continue to suggest that the 2016 election was conducted in a fashion that millions of people voted illegally undermines faith in our democracy.”

[Politico](#) (1/24, Conway, 2.46M) reported that Spicer “defended” Trump over the claim, even though “numerous fact checks and other studies that have debunked the theory.” Politico further quoted Graham as saying of Trump, “We’re talking about a man who won the election and seems to be obsessed with the idea that he could not have possibly lost the popular vote without cheating or fraud. I would urge the president to knock this off.” However, speaking with reporters yesterday, Senate Majority Leader McConnell said “that voter fraud ‘does happen.’” McConnell declined to “directly weigh in on Trump’s claim, but said, ‘There are always arguments on both sides about how much, how frequent and all the rest.’”

The [New York Post](#) (1/24, Fredericks, 3.82M) reports that Spicer “doubled down on” Trump’s claim, even though it “has been thoroughly debunked.” The Post says Spicer “repeatedly declined to provide any evidence of what would have been the most egregious case of voter fraud in US history – and would not explain why Trump hasn’t ordered an investigation if that’s what he believes.” The [Washington Times](#) (1/24, Boyer, 272K) reports

Spicer said Trump thinks “millions of illegal voters cast ballots in the presidential election, but he’s ‘comfortable’ with his victory in the Electoral College vote tally.” Spicer said Trump “had mentioned the issue ‘in passing’ with lawmakers.”

CBS News Political Director John Dickerson, host of “Face the Nation,” said on the [CBS Evening News](#) (1/24, story 3, 1:35, Pelley, 11.17M), “It was extraordinary to hear” Spicer, answering “questions about [Trump’s claim] today, simply say, ‘It’s something he believes,’ as if a White House can allow a President to believe things and talk about them with congressional leaders – things that just aren’t so. And the reason it’s important to have a President believe in things that are true is it creates a sense of belief in everything he says. But more important, the most important quality for a White House staff is the ability to tell a President something he doesn’t want to hear and contradict him when you believe something that’s not true. And if they’re not able to do it in this case, the question is whether they’ll be able to do it on more serious matters.”

[Reuters](#) (1/24, Mason) reports Trump’s claim was “the latest in a series of distractions in the opening days of the Trump administration that run the risk of overshadowing his legislative goals and efforts to advance policy proposals.” Along those lines, the [AP](#) (1/24, Pace, Lemire) says Trump is “dogged by insecurity over his loss of the popular vote in the election and a persistent frustration that the legitimacy of his presidency is being challenged by Democrats and the media,” according to “aides and associates.” Trump’s “fixation has been a drag on the momentum of his opening days in office, with his exaggerations about inauguration crowds and false assertions about illegal balloting intruding on advisers’ plans to launch his presidency with a flurry of actions on the economy.”

Under the headline “Trump’s Disregard For The Truth Threatens His Ability To Govern,” Karen Tumulty reports in a front-page story for the [Washington Post](#) (1/24, A1, Tumulty, 11.43M) that “Trump, having propelled his presidential campaign to victory while often disregarding the truth, now is testing the proposition that he can govern the country that way.” Since being inaugurated on Friday, Trump “has put the enormous power of the nation’s highest office behind spurious – and easily disproved – claims.” Peter Wehner, “a Trump critic who was a top strategist in the George W. Bush White House,” is quoted as saying of the President and his aides, “The degree to which they are creating their own reality, the degree to which they simply make up their own scripts, is striking,” adding, “It’s a huge deal, because in the end you really can’t govern, and you can’t persuade people, if you do not have a common basis of fact.”

Writing for the [New York Times](#) (1/24, Poniewozik, Subscription Publication, 13.9M), James Poniewozik, the Times’ chief TV critic, says Trump on Saturday stated “that his inauguration crowd – which photographs showed was dwarfed by Barack Obama’s estimated 1.8 million in 2009 – ‘looked like a million, a million and a half,’” and aides “backed up that claim with what his adviser Kellyanne Conway memorably termed ‘alternative facts.’” Poniewozik adds that “for those of us who cover television,” this was nothing new, because “Trump has a reputation among TV reporters for using his own bespoke numbers.” As the first of several examples, Poniewozik says Trump claimed in 2015 that “The Celebrity Apprentice” was “‘the Number 1 show on television.’ It was not.” Poniewozik adds that Trump’s “tendency to treat truth as negotiable was idiosyncratic in a TV star. In a president, it’s disturbing.”

Spicer Defends Conway's "Alternative Facts" Comment. Spicer was asked on [Fox News' Hannity](#) (1/24, 535K) about Counselor to the President Kellyanne Conway's "alternative facts" comment. Spicer said, "There are times – like anything else, it's not alternative facts. Sometimes you can watch two different stations and get two different weather reports. That doesn't mean that the station was lying to you. ... The press was trying to make it seem like we were ignoring the facts." Spicer added, "This idea that we are immediately lying because – let's take the [inauguration] audience. We were right. If you add up the number of people who watched that online, on Twitter, Twitter live, Facebook live, on YouTube, it broke all sorts of records. ... Where are their facts? Because I got called a liar for something I can add up and say 'Here is how we come up with this number.' And yet, where is the number that proves that I am wrong? ... The default was, 'You are lying.'"

Public Relations Group Hits Trump White House On "Alternative Facts." [Politico](#) (1/24, Conway, 2.46M) reports that the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA), "which represents 22,000 communications people and sets a code of ethics for the profession," on Tuesday rebuked "the new White House for pushing demonstrably false statements about...Trump's inauguration crowd size and labeling them 'alternative facts.'" In a written statement, PRSA Chair Jane Dvorak said "that 'encouraging and perpetuating the use of alternative facts by a high-profile spokesperson reflects poorly on all communications professionals.'" Dvorak added, "PRSA strongly objects to any effort to deliberately misrepresent information. Honest, ethical professionals never spin, mislead or alter facts."

Schumer On Trump: "You Cannot Run A Country Unless You Know The Facts." [USA Today](#) (1/24, Page, 5.28M) reports that Senate Minority Leader Schumer on Tuesday said that when Trump, during Monday's meeting with leaders of Congress, made the remark about the illegal immigrants voting, "no one in the room 'really gave it much credence, including our Republican colleagues.'" However, speaking with USA Today, Schumer said "that 'I worry' about what the episode may reveal about the new president." Schumer is quoted as saying, "In general you cannot run a country unless you know the facts," adding, "If you're going to believe your own facts, whether it's about what Putin is doing in the world or what jobs or companies are doing here, you aren't going to be able to govern, so I worry about it."

Trump Says Photo Of His Inauguration Crowd Will Be Displayed In Press Room. The [New York Post](#) (1/24, Fredericks, 3.82M) reports that Trump continues to argue "about the size of the crowd at" Friday's inauguration – "and plans to display a photo on the wall of the White House press room showing the event. 'A photo delivered yesterday that will be displayed in the upper/lower press hall. Thank you Abbas!' Trump [tweeted](#) Tuesday about an image sent to him by Abbas Shirmohammadi, a Washington, DC-based photographer who specializes in panoramic shots." The Post adds, "Trump has reportedly been enraged at media reports that said his crowd was far smaller than President Obama's first inaugural in 2009."

TRUMP SAYS HE WILL ANNOUNCE SUPREME COURT NOMINEE NEXT WEEK. Ahead of a meeting Tuesday with Senate leaders to discuss his choice to fill the vacancy on the Supreme Court, President Trump said

he plans to announce his nominee next week. [McClatchy](#) (1/24, Koh, 74K) reports that Trump “told reporters that he would select who would fill the bench later this week from a shortlist.” [Politico](#) (1/24, Johnson, Goldmacher, 2.46M) cited “people familiar with the search process” who said that Trump has narrowed his list of possible nominees to “three finalists with Tenth Circuit judge Neil Gorsuch and Third Circuit judge Thomas Hardiman emerging as the frontrunners.” Eleventh Circuit Judge Bill Pryor “remains in the running but [is] fading.”

However, the [New York Times](#) (1/24, Liptak, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) says Pryor and Gorsuch are the “two leading contenders” and describes them as “a study in contrasts.” While Pryor is “a former Alabama attorney general, a graduate of Tulane’s law school and an outspoken opponent of abortion and gay rights,” Gorsuch “is a graduate of Columbia, Harvard and Oxford University, a former clerk to two Supreme Court justices and a former Justice Department official.” While both are conservatives, “Gorsuch’s credentials, erudition and more muted stances could smooth his confirmation chances.” Meanwhile, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (1/24, Bravin, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) mentions a fourth contender, Raymond Kethledge of the Sixth Circuit in Cincinnati.

The [AP](#) (1/24, Sherman, Salama) says that according to conservatives, all three “share [late Justice Antonin] Scalia’s commitment to the text and meaning of the Constitution.” Leonard Leo, who has been advising Trump on the nomination, said, “These are not stealth candidates. Their records are there for everyone to see and to understand. Their judicial philosophy is well within the mainstream of American legal thought.” However, not all conservatives are on board. The [Washington Times](#) (1/24, Swoyer, 272K) reports that conservative groups are “actively trying to derail” Pryor and Gorsuch, “saying they can’t be relied on to pursue conservative goals from the federal bench.” The group Public Advocate “has launched online ads in the Washington area trying to raise opposition to Judge Pryor,” and the Judicial Action Group said Pryor’s judicial record “demonstrates that he ‘failed to interpret the Constitution as the framers intended.’” Pro-life activists argue Gorsuch “would not meet Mr. Trump’s pledge to put pro-life judges on the federal bench.”

Justice correspondent Pete Williams said on [NBC Nightly News](#) (1/24, story 3, 1:50, Holt, 16.61M) that while “replacing Justice Scalia with another conservative would not alter the court’s ideological make-up,” Trump’s nominee “is in for a fight” as Democrats “are furious that President Obama’s nominee, Merrick Garland, never even got a hearing.” The [New York Times](#) (1/24, Hulse, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) also says Democrats are “furious” over Republicans’ handling of the Garland nomination, and their “deep resentment is certain to color their handling of Mr. Trump’s choice just as it has contributed to their resistance to moving quickly on Mr. Trump’s cabinet selections.” The Times adds that Democrats “see the forthcoming nomination as a chance to take a strong stand against the new president, since they still have the power to filibuster a Supreme Court choice — at least for now.”

In a story posted before Trump’s meeting with Senate leaders, the [Washington Post](#) (1/24, Sullivan, 11.43M) reported that Senate Majority Leader McConnell said on the Senate floor, “The president has invited the Democratic leader, the chairman and ranking members of the Judiciary Committee and myself to the White House this afternoon to begin to meet with him regarding the Supreme Court vacancy as part of his ongoing

consultations with members of the Senate.” [Reuters](#) (1/24, Hurley) says that after the meeting with, McConnell said, “I anticipate what we’re going to get from the president is a highly qualified, well-credentialed conservative jurist.” Senate Minority Leader Schumer “said he reiterated that the president ‘should pick a mainstream nominee who could earn bipartisan support’ and that Democrats would fight any nominee they deem outside the mainstream.” [Roll Call](#) (1/24, Ruger, 63K) reported that White House press secretary Sean Spicer said Trump will look for nominee “who upholds ‘liberty’ and the Constitution, and avoids making laws via their decisions.” Spicer said, “I think it’s pretty mainstream to support the Constitution.”

Editorial Wrap-Up:

NEW YORK TIMES. *“We The People’ Demand Mr. Trump Release His Tax Returns.”* In an editorial, the [New York Times](#) (1/24, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) writes that a petition to urge President Trump to release his tax information “received at least 100,000 signatures within 30 days” and “garnered more than 310,000 signatures by late Tuesday afternoon,” indicating American citizens and not just journalists, as the Administration claimed, are interested in Trump’s potential conflicts of interest. The Times admonishes Trump’s refusal to release his tax information during the campaign as “deeply suspicious” and now, as president, “indefensible.” The Times concludes, “The only logical conclusion is that the candidate who pledged to clean up Washington is hiding damaging information about his past.”

“Parliament Is Back In The Brexit Game.” In an editorial, the [New York Times](#) (1/24, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) acknowledges that the British Supreme Court’s ruling that Parliamentary approval is needed to begin Britain’s departure from the European Union isn’t likely to see Brexit prevented but “at least restores some order to the process,” which the Times values because “the contentious and often demagogic referendum campaign” didn’t include “many of the potentially costly consequences.” The Times criticizes referendums and concludes, “what’s important is that elected representatives of the British people have been restored to a process from which they had been foolishly excluded.”

“Bringing A Sorry Chapter In Policing To An End.” In an editorial, the [New York Times](#) (1/25, Board, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) welcomes the proposed court settlement for New York City’s “abusive policing strategies” that had black and Latino New Yorkers “routinely stopped and frisked by police officers or issued unjustified criminal summonses for minor offenses.” The Times lauds steps to “repair a long broken summons system” and notes that the city’s “crime rate continues to plummet” after such tactics were discontinued.

WASHINGTON POST. *“Tom Price Is Exhibit A For Congressional Ethics Reform.”* The [Washington Post](#) (1/24, 11.43M) says in an editorial that HHS Secretary-designate Tom Price “is a walking, talking example of the ways in which congressional ethics requirements are too lax,” and even if he had no “corrupt intent,” his financial dealings are “unsettling. As with other government officials, Americans should have confidence that those making policy on their behalf are doing so based on principles and not the potential for personal gain. The simple fact of conflicts of interest corrodes that faith.”

“Closing Doors On Trade Isn’t Smart Negotiating.” The [Washington Post](#) (1/24, 11.43M) says in an editorial that the TPP “was already politically dead by the time President Trump buried it Monday,” and Trump “now turns his attention” to NAFTA. But “while NAFTA has surely created winners and losers within the United States, overall it has not been the horrific deal Mr. Trump suggests,” and is not worth “risking trade wars that might do far more damage to American companies, workers and consumers than the status quo allegedly does.”

“The Trump Team Can’t Even Keep Its Own Excuses Straight On His Broken Tax Promises.” The [Washington Post](#) (1/24, Board, 11.43M) editorializes President Trump’s unwillingness to release his tax returns in accordance with “long-standing tradition” and his “string of changing explanations” as to why he will not release that information “fuels suspicions that he has something to hide and invites questions about what interests are being served by his presidency.” The Post says for Trump specifically, the release of tax information is “critical” because of his “complex,” “unprecedented” personal business activities. In light of recent “questions of whether there are potential conflicts of interest, particularly from foreign sources,” the Post urges Trump to release past tax returns and pledge to make public his 2016 returns “without delay.”

WALL STREET JOURNAL. “No More Keystone Capers.” In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (1/24, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) hails Trump’s move to advance construction of the Keystone XL and Dakota Access pipelines, but warns that Trump’s pledge to “renegotiate the term” could ultimately lead the companies to forego the project altogether.

“The Comey Reprieve.” A [Wall Street Journal](#) (1/24, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) editorial predicts the Trump Administration will come to regret asking FBI Director Comey to stay on, and argues that Comey has shown a willingness to abuse his position to curry favor in Washington, which makes him unfit for the job.

“Don’t Ignore The Labor Board.” In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (1/24, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) criticizes the little-known National Labor Relations Board because general counsels nominated by former President Obama have abused their legal powers to make partisan-based decisions that have set dangerous precedents, many of which are contrary to judicial decisions. The Journal says the NLRB’s past decisions must be immediately challenged because they have harmed business investments and jobs, and calls on President Trump to prioritize the NLRB when naming regulatory agency nominees.

Big Picture:

HEADLINES FROM TODAY’S FRONT PAGES.

Wall Street Journal:

[Trump Takes Action To Revive Keystone, Dakota Pipelines](#)
[Conservatives Try To Shape Trump’s Budget](#)
[Google Privacy-policy Change Faces New Scrutiny In EU](#)
[Mall Owners Rush To Get Out Of The Mall Business](#)

New York Times:

[Trump To Order Mexican Border Wall And Curtail Immigration](#)

[Trump Revives Keystone Pipeline Rejected By Obama](#)
[Federal Debt Projected To Grow By Nearly \\$10 Trillion Over Next Decade](#)
[A Supreme Court Pick Is Promised. A Political Brawl Is Certain.](#)
[Emboldened By Trump, Israel Approves A Wave Of West Bank Settlement Expansion](#)
[Trump Injects High Risk Into Relations With China](#)
[Why Women Quit Working: It's Not For The Reasons Men Do](#)

Washington Post:

[Trump To Order Wall, Target Sanctuary Cities](#)
[Trump Seeks To Spark Action On Oil Pipelines](#)
[Progress For The Oscars. Will It Be Permanent?](#)
[Comey In Delicate Spot As FBI Tenure Continues](#)
[Israel Forges Ahead On New Housing](#)
[No Longer On Campaign Trail, But Still Untethered By Facts](#)

Financial Times:

[Trump Ends Obama's Block On Keystone Pipeline](#)
[La La Land Leads Rivals A Merry Dance Before Oscars](#)
[Schulz To Run As SPD Candidate For German Chancellor](#)
[May To Fast-track Brexit Bill Following Court Defeat](#)

Washington Times:

[Conservative Groups Trying To Derail Two Potential Supreme Court Picks](#)
[Trump Revives Oil Pipeline Projects, Demands U.S. Steel Used](#)
[Feuds Spell Trouble For Trump's First National Budget](#)
[Rwanda Economy Recovering Two Decades After Genocide](#)
[Black Lives Matter Resentful Of Peaceful, Favorable Women's March Against Trump](#)
[ISIS Drone Dropping Precision Bombs Alarms U.S. Military](#)

Story Lineup From Last Night's Network News:

ABC: Trump-Illegal Votes Claim; Trump-First Days; Confirmation Hearings; Severe Weather; Weather Forecast; Minnesota Gov Collapse; Utah Train Crash; Erin Andrews Cancer; Oklahoma Wild Fire; Washington State Traffic Collision; Flu Season; Genetically Modified Apple; Oscar Nominees Record.

CBS: Trump-Illegal Votes Claim; Trump-Executive Orders; Trump-Legitimacy Comments; Trump-First Days; Trump-EPA Silenced; Trump-UN Ambassador Appointment; Trump-Israel; US Jobs Automation; New Weather Satellite; Flint Water Lead Level; Minnesota Gov Collapse; Utah Train Crash; Oscar Nominees Record.

NBC: Trump-Illegal Votes Claim; Trump-Executive Orders; Trump-Supreme Court Nominee; Severe Weather; Flint Water Lead Level; Health-Norovirus; China Official-Trump; Controversial Police TV Program; Oscar Nominees Record; Utah Train Crash; Nonprofit Clothing Company.

Network TV At A Glance:

Trump-Illegal Votes Claim – 8 minutes, 40 seconds
Severe Weather – 3 minutes, 45 seconds
Trump-First Days – 3 minutes, 15 seconds
Trump-Executive Orders – 3 minutes
Minnesota Gov Collapse – 1 minute, 55 seconds
Utah Train Crash – 1 minute
Flint Water Lead Level – 45 seconds

Story Lineup From This Morning's Radio News Broadcasts:

ABC: Trump Executive Orders; Trump-Immigration Policy; Trump-Chicago

Violence; GHW Bush Health; Wall Street News.

CBS: Trump-Immigration Policy; Trump Executive Orders; Confirmation Hearings; ISIS Drones; Minnesota Gov Collapse; Vegan Health Concern; Wall Street News.

FOX: Trump Executive Orders; Trump-Immigration Policy; Trump-Supreme Court Nomination; Trump-Israel.

NPR: Trump Executive Orders; Trump-Supreme Court Nomination; Trump-Immigration Policy; Abortion-Health Plans; Flint Water Lead Level; Columbia U-Slave Trade Date; DC Pizzeria Shooter Trial.

Washington Schedule:

TODAY'S EVENTS IN WASHINGTON.

White House:

PRESIDENT TRUMP — Takes official portrait; visits the Department of Homeland Security; gives first TV interview since taking office – ‘President Trump: The First Interview’ broadcast on ABC.

VICE PRESIDENT PENCE — No public schedule announced.

US Senate: No public schedule announced.

US House: 10:30 AM House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi holds weekly press conference Location: H-207, U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC
<http://www.democraticleader.gov/> <https://twitter.com/NancyPelosi>

No votes scheduled in the House of Representatives Location: Washington, DC <http://www.house.gov/>

Other: 8:00 AM GOP Rep. Kevin Brady speaks at FSR on tax reform – House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Rep. Kevin Brady delivers keynote address at Financial Services Roundtable tax reform discussion on ‘Breaking Down the Barriers to Financial Security’, introduced by FSR CEO Tim Pawlenty. Panel discussion follows Rep. Brady’s remarks, with Prudential Retirement President Christine Marcks, Principal Financial Retirement and Income Solutions Senior Vice President Gregory Burrows, and Putnam Investments and Empower Retirement Director of Policy Lenny Glynn Location: Financial Services Roundtable, 600 13th St., NW, Washington, DC www.fsround.org <https://twitter.com/fsroundtable>

9:30 AM Dem Rep. Adam Schiff speaks at CAP Action Fund on ‘Democracy in the Age of Cyberwar’ – Democratic Rep. Adam Schiff speaks at ‘Undermined and Under Siege: Democracy in the Age of Cyberwar’ Center for American Progress Action Fund event, with other speakers including former Chief of Staff to the CIA Director Jeremy Bash, former Acting Secretary of Homeland Security Rand Beers, and Center for a New American Security Strategy and Statecraft Program Director Julianne Smith Location: CAP Action Fund, 1333 H St., NW, Washington, DC www.americanprogressaction.org <https://twitter.com/CAPaction>

9:30 AM The Washington EU-U.S. Conference continues – The Washington EU-U.S. Conference continues, to examine the potential EU-U.S. policy agenda over the next four years of the President Donald Trump administration. Speakers today include EU Ambassador to the U.S. David O’Sullivan, with panel on ‘EU-U.S.: Facing the Challenges of the XXI Century’ Location: American University, School of International Service, 3400 Nebraska Ave., Washington, DC www.euintheus.org <https://twitter.com/EUintheUS> #US2017EU

11:00 AM Dialogue on Diversity Internet Data Privacy Colloquium –

Dialogue on Diversity Internet Data Privacy Colloquium – ‘The Roots of Privacy – Philosophy, Law, Technology’ with speakers including Democratic Rep. Tony Cardenas Location: Stewart R. Mott Foundation, 122 Maryland Ave., Washington, DC www.dialogueondiversity.org
<https://twitter.com/dialogondiv>

11:30 AM NGA ‘State of the States’ address – National Governors Association leadership ‘State of the States’ event, with NGA Chair Virginia Governor Terry McAuliffe and Vice Chair Nevada Governor Brian Sandoval outlining governors’ collective priorities for the year ahead, including state-federal priorities for the new administration and Congress Location: Newseum, 555 Pennsylvania Ave NW, Washington, DC <http://www.nga.org>
<https://twitter.com/NatlGovsAssoc> #WeTheStates

Last Laughs:

LATE NIGHT POLITICAL HUMOR.

Jimmy Kimmel: “And the person I’m starting to feel bad for is Trump’s press secretary, Sean Spicer. Whatever Trump says, Sean Spicer has to go out there and defend. Yesterday he said the administration reserves the right to ‘disagree with the facts.’ That sounds good, I like that. I’m going to start doing that.”

Trevor Noah: “Let’s turn to a man whose whole job is to put out fires – new White House Press Secretary Sean Spicer. Although his job is less about putting out fire and more arguing that the fire is working hard for the American people.”

Trevor Noah: “Over the past few days of Trump’s presidency, I’ve noticed something interesting. One, we’re not dreaming. ...Two, broadcasters still haven’t figured out which voice to use when reading President Trump’s tweets on air.”

Jimmy Fallon: “I saw that ABC will air a prime-time special with President Trump tomorrow night, marking his first interview since taking office. Even though the interview hasn’t even aired yet, Trump is already claiming it was watched by a billion people.”

Seth Meyers: “Following President Trump’s inauguration, the White House website no longer has an option for translation into Spanish. So, sorry, Mexican immigrants, but if you want to live here, you’ll just have to learn to speak Russian.”

Seth Meyers: “President Trump today met with the leaders of Fiat, Chrysler, Ford, and General Motors. And he asked them one question: ‘How many people do you think were at my inauguration?’”

Seth Meyers: “Oscar nominations were announced today, with Meryl Streep nominated for ‘Florence Foster Jenkins,’ Natalie Portman for ‘Jackie,’ and Hillary Clinton for smiling her way through the inauguration.”

Seth Meyers: [Referring to Trump’s comment on voter fraud] “Also, why would you say 3 to 5 million people? We already know from the inauguration you have no idea what a million people looks like.”

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From: Daniel Jorjani
To: daniel_jorjani@ios.doi.gov
Date: Friday, January 27, 2017 7:00:46 AM
Attachments: [ATT00001.txt](#)
[testimony_hrobsky.pdf](#)

http://democrats-naturalresources.house.gov/imo/media/doc/testimony_hrobsky.pdf

Sent from my iPhone

Testimony of Jon Hrobsky

July 6, 2016

U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Natural Resources

Energy and Mineral Resources Subcommittee

Legislative Hearing on H.R. 5577,

The Innovation in Offshore Leasing Act of 2016

Thank you Chairman Lamborn, Ranking Member Lowenthal, Congressman Graves and Members of the Subcommittee for the opportunity to testify before the Subcommittee today on H.R. 5577, the Innovation in Offshore Leasing Act of 2016. I appreciate the invitation to testify today, and I appreciate the opportunity to share my own views with you. These views are informed by my experience of working on Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) issues for over a dozen years both in federal service at the U.S. Department of the Interior and in the private sector, including understanding all of the work that goes into preparing for a lease sale, having been behind the scenes for some of the largest OCS oil and gas lease sales in history and then working with the region as they went through a rigorous process to determine bid adequacy. I believe the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (the Bureau) possesses one of the most highly skilled workforces in the country and is more than up to the challenge of implementing H.R. 5577 and conducting OCS oil and lease sales online. I would note that while a different leasing process and bid evaluation occurs, the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management already conducts wind energy lease sales online. I support H.R. 5577.

Congress made it clear in the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act their direction to Secretary of the Interior that oil and gas leasing and oil and gas lease sales are an important element of our nation's energy policy by stating, "the outer Continental Shelf is a vital national resource reserve held by the Federal Government for the public, which should be made available for expeditious and

orderly development, subject to environmental safeguards, in a manner which is consistent with the maintenance of competition and other national needs.”

Since the very first lease sale of the U.S. Outer Continental Shelf off the coast of Louisiana in 1954, the U.S. Department of the Interior has been conducting oil and gas sales regularly with most years having multiple sales per year. These sales have resulted in billions of dollars to the treasury and billions of barrels of oil and gas equivalent produced. The technology within the industry has changed since that time where today there is activity in over 10,000 feet of water and wells have been drilled over six-miles deep from the surface of the ocean.

While the technology to analyze bids and comb through seismic data has kept up, the reading of the bids in person, before an audience should be modernized and take advantage of technology, including moving the system online.

H.R. 5577 builds upon that that work and keeps it in place while migrating to the Internet. One of the reasons OCS oil and gas lease sales have been so successful is the concept that competing bidders do not know how many bidders, their identity or the amount of money placed within individual bids. That often can mean a delta of tens of millions of dollars in difference between the highest and second highest bidder. That disparity benefits taxpayers. Keeping the bids sealed and requiring that all bids must be submitted 24-hours prior to the Sale are important concepts reflected in the legislation.

Data security is the most important component to the online nature of leasing. H.R. 5577 requires the Secretary of the Interior to have a secure system in place that has been tested and verified. With some of the notable data breaches that have taken place in the private and public sector, making sure the Bureau has the security capability in place to meet the challenge is paramount.

On Page 2, Line 25 of the bill states the Secretary shall ensure, “an independent, third-party observer from the Department of the Interior’s Office of the Inspector General present during the bid reading process to prevent

wrongdoing, independently certify the bidding process, and maintain transparency.” While I believe having someone outside of the bureau verify the process is a positive and would like to see that aspect retained in the bill; by placing the Inspector General in an operational role, the legislation may inadvertently frustrate the Inspector General’s office’s ability to be independent should they need to investigate an irregularity in a future sale. There are a number of officials that could be assigned the duty and act independently of the Bureau, including a designee of the Department’s Solicitor, while still ensuring the Inspector General’s independence.

An additional aspect of the bill I think will be useful is the requirement to make statistical information of individual Sales available to the public. That data will continue to allow historic comparisons for policy makers and may aid in future decision-making in the direction of OCS oil and gas sales.

I believe the efforts in the bill and the ensuing dialogue between the Bureau and potential future lessees, including the workshop will ensure a better experience for lessees and the Bureau and one in which all parties will have greater confidence. Inviting some of the oversight entities to witness tests and understand the online process including the Inspector General’s office, the Government Accountability Office and staff from the Congressional committees of jurisdiction may also reduce future confusion.

The feedback to Congress and hopefully the flexibility to make changes where necessary will continue to ensure this process is transparent and accountable to the taxpayer.

I applaud the transparency and efforts to bring leasing online. From our stock markets to applying for a loan, managing personal finances or shopping at an online retailer, most of the public uses the Internet for financial transactions. While the process to move oil and gas lease sales online will not be overnight, it is an endeavor that the Bureau can and should do.

Thank you again, and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

From: Macgregor, Katharine
To: [Cardinale, Richard](#); [Kathleen Lacko](#); [Troy Ezell](#)
Subject: Template
Date: Monday, January 30, 2017 10:48:59 AM
Attachments: [Onshore Offshore Leasing At a Glance.docx](#)

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Kate MacGregor
1849 C ST NW
Room 6625
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202-706-9351 Mobile Phone
202-208-3671 Office Phone

From: Chambers, Micah
To: [Darren Pete](#); [Wilkinson, Patrick](#); [Anita Gonzales-Evans](#); [Kodis, Martin](#); [Melissa Kuckro](#); [Lee Frazier](#); [Stephen Sander](#); [Julia Jester](#); [Maucieri, Mathew](#); [Regina Weil](#); julie.s.fleming@bsee.gov; lee.tilton@boem.gov; [Simpson, Moshay](#); [Salotti, Christopher](#); [Barkin, Pamela](#); [Tracy Goodluck](#); [Mahan, Joshua](#); [Dominic Maione](#); [Quinn, Matthew](#); [Amanda Kaster](#)
Subject: Re: Zinke QFR & Hearing Promises
Date: Monday, January 30, 2017 2:36:37 PM
Attachments: [RZ - Committee Hearing Promises .pdf](#)
[RZ QFR Responses 1-17-17 SENR.pdf](#)
[RZ QFRs 1-17-17 SENR Cmte Hrg .pdf](#)
[RZ Record ConservationSportsmen.pdf](#)
[RZ Record EnergyMineralResources.pdf](#)
[RZ Record Tribes.pdf](#)

Let's try this again. It says in my email that they were all attached but apparently they weren't?

On Mon, Jan 30, 2017 at 2:27 PM, Chambers, Micah <micah_chambers@ios.doi.gov> wrote:

All. Please find the copy of the QFR responses from Committee and Ranking Member Udall along with a compiled list of promises made during the confirmation hearing.

I've also attached some top line issue papers that give a 30k foot level view of the Congressman's policy positions. Some of the hyperlinks won't work because it's created in the House office and are connected to the share drive there, but everything on these docs is public record and can be found elsewhere. This was shared with OCL Legal Advisers at the end of last week, so you all can disregard.

Hope this helps as a reference.

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Micah Chambers
Special Assistant / Acting Director
Office of Congressional & Legislative Affairs
Office of the Secretary of the Interior

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Micah Chambers
Special Assistant / Acting Director
Office of Congressional & Legislative Affairs
Office of the Secretary of the Interior

PROMISES, PROMISES

Congressman Zinke's Opening Statement Promises

Overall Commitment

“When asked about what my goals might be, I would say there are three immediate tasks.

The **first** is to restore trust by working with rather than against local communities and states. I fully recognize that there is distrust, anger, and even hatred against some federal management policies. Being a listening advocate rather than a deaf adversary is a good start.

Second, is to prioritize the estimated 12.5 billion dollars in backlog of maintenance and repair in our National Parks. The President-elect is committed to a jobs and infrastructure bill, and I am going to need your help in making sure that bill includes shoring up our Nations treasures.

And **third**, to ensure the professionals on the front line, our rangers and field managers, have the right tools, right resources, and flexibility to make the right decisions that give a voice to the people they serve.”

Senate Hearing Promises

Alabama, Jeff Sessions
None

Alaska, Lisa Murkowski

- Travel to Alaska
- Review King Cove access road issue
- Work with the people of Alaska to be sure promises are kept re the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act
- Conduct a formal review with the Park's service and wit NFW on the regs and then work with the state of Alaska re management decisions
- Conduct formal review of the Obama Administration's actions that took resource-bearing lands and waters in Alaska off the table - can the actions be reversed?

Arizona – visit second, Jeff Flake

- Travel to Arizona
- Review Tribal water rights issues
- Review Lower Colorado River drought contingency plan to be certain that Arizona has enough water
- Commitment to work with the Tribes and other parties in Arizona to move the Hualapai settlement forward, and to get the necessary clarifications to the White mountain Apache tribe settlement

Colorado, Cory Gardner

- Travel to Colorado
- Commit to work with Congress to make LWCF permanent
- Committed to look at DOI across the board, especially BLM, re moving agencies to the West
- Work to protect the private water rights and work with Congress on permits and water storage projects

Hawaii, Mazie Hirono

- Travel to Hawaii,
- Climate Change debate – more commitment in research
- Water research commitment – nothing specific
- Concerns on sexual harassment at NPS – need zero tolerance
- Travel to Guam, Puerto Rico, Palau, Marshall Islands, and Micronesia requested by Hirono

Idaho, Jim Risch

- Travel to Idaho, visit NIFC in Boise
- Sage grouse – FWS and BLM management review process
- Wild Fire plans/funding

Illinois, Tammy Duckworth

- Concerns on sexual harassment at NPS, what will you do other than listen to the front line?

Louisiana, Bill Cassidy

- Travel to Louisiana
- Leasing permit – complete review
- Coastal impact issues
- National Parks review
- Pipeline review process

Maine, Angus King

- Funding for maintenance of the National parks to address the backlog
- Attempt to fully fund the Land and Water Conservation Fund

Michigan, Debbie Stabenow

- Travel to Michigan
- Sexual harassment issue – create a work environment for victims free of fear of retaliation
- Great Lakes concerns – advocate funding for FWS to control invasive species (Carp)
- Support USGS science
- Support the right to clean water

Minnesota, Al Franken

- Travel to Minnesota

- Climate Change debate – more commitment in research
- Support for LWCF

Montana, Steve Daines

- Tribal water right agreements concerns
- Fossil fuel permit process – complete review
- Gas flaring – complete review
- Sage grouse – complete review
- Wild Fire funding – complete review

Nevada, Catherine Cortez Masto

- Concerns on federal land exchanges
- Commit to guarantee that tribal members on the 32 reservations will have a seat at the table when it comes to decisions, activities, and land management near their communities
- Address the wild horse and burro problem
- Commitment to working with the states on drought contingency plans

New Mexico, Martin Heinrich

- Travel to New Mexico
- Climate Change debate – commitment to more research
- Continue to work together on access issues
- Support for LWCF
- Pursue the pillage and profiting side of repatriating a sacred shield from an auction house in Paris working with the State and Justice Departments

North Dakota – visit third, John Hoeven

- Travel to North Dakota
- Dakota access pipeline protest – need BIA law enforcement to resolve situation-make sure the rule of law is followed
- Gas flaring – complete review
- Review Wild Fire management/funding
- Review buffer stream rule

Ohio, Rob Portman

- Travel to Ohio
- Help with funding the National Parks Centennial Act fully in the next appropriations cycle
- Review stream buffer rule in Eastern Ohio

Oregon, Ron Wyden

- Travel to Oregon
- Seek collaboration on bipartisan healthy forest issues
- Klamath River project – complete review
- Review wild fire funding
- Support for LWCF

Tennessee, Lamar Alexander

- Wild Fire review
- Look at allocation of funding between the Smokies and other parks
- Agreed to look ahead and think about ways to motivate and incentivize millennials by teaching the importance of the great outdoors.

Utah – visit first, Mike Lee

- Travel to Utah, talk to the people affected by the monument designation, and return to DC and make a recommendation to the President.
- Sage grouse – review policy
- Monument(s) – review
- Federal land exchange discussion – specific ask

Vermont, Bernie Sanders

- Climate Change analysis – RZ to further study
- Improve life (healthcare and education) for Native American people throughout the country

Washington, Maria Cantwell

- Travel to Washington
- Get rid of the maintenance backlogs in National parks
- Continue work on the Yakima River Basin project support
- Review/update of coal permits
- The war on coal – taxpayers' fairness
- Tribal concerns review sovereignty and tribal rights
- Pacific Gateway Terminal, follow NEPA process and complete EIS before making any decisions
- Technology review of LiDAR, and push for funding on the next budget request
- Look at ways to support the Spokane Tribe on their dam construction settlement

West Virginia, Joe Manchin

- Travel to West Virginia
- Discussion about appropriating AML funds

Wyoming, John Barrasso

- Travel to Wyoming
- End the moratorium on federal coal leasing
- Support efforts to reverse the venting and flaring rule under the Congressional Review Act
- Sage grouse – commit to returning conservation and management authority back to the states

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Questions for the Record from Chairman Lisa Murkowski

Question 1: From 1944 to 1982, the Interior Department conducted oil exploration in the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska, leaving behind 136 well sites in need of environmental remediation and proper plugging and abandonment. While I secured \$50 million in 2013 to clean up many of these legacy wells, by 2019, when that funding is exhausted, the Department estimates there will still be 29 wells in need of remediation. If you are confirmed as Secretary, will you commit to working with me to develop a plan to expedite the cleanup of all remaining wells, rather than allowing piecemeal, bare minimum federal efforts to continue year after year?

Response: Madam Chairman, I believe that cleaning up those legacy wells should be a priority, and, if confirmed, I look forward to working with you to achieve that goal.

Question 2: Fisheries and tourism are vital to the livelihoods of thousands of Southeast Alaskans, but the Canadian government is permitting new hardrock mines that could threaten transboundary watersheds if they do not adhere to strong environmental standards. While the State Department is generally the lead on this issue, one of Interior's agencies, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, has provided grant funding to study water quality on the Stikine, Taku, and Unuk Rivers. This will help establish a baseline and protect our ability to seek damages in the event of an environmental mishap under terms of a treaty between the U.S. and Canada. Are you willing to engage on this issue, consider increasing transboundary water studies, and consult with other Departments to encourage Canada to take all necessary steps to protect the environment in this region?

Response: If confirmed, yes.

Question 3: Will you review recently completed and ongoing Resource Management Plans in Alaska to ensure that these plans are consistent and do not prevent access to resources needed for economic development?

Response: If confirmed, yes.

Question 4: Will you staff the Alaska Special Assistant to the Secretary positions, both in Anchorage and Washington, DC?

Response: As I have discussed with you and your staff, Alaska deserves special attention given the large Federal footprint and impact on the state. With this in mind, if I am confirmed, I will work with you to fill the Special Assistant position based in Anchorage, and learn more as to why the position in Washington was eliminated.

Question 5: Will you ensure that all Interior agency actions affecting Alaska are consistent with recent principles set forth in Supreme Court decision in the *Sturgeon* case, requiring that agency organic acts' interpretations and all agency actions be consistent

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with the Alaska Statehood Act, the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, and the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act?

Response: I have been informed that the Supreme Court in the *Sturgeon* case, recognized that when passing the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act, Congress appreciated that Alaska is different in many respects from the lower 48 states in law. To the extent that the Congress has recognized such differences in the law, I will work to ensure that those differences are properly recognized in agency decisions.

Question 6: Will you review BLM's recent decision to require new cadastral survey standards for lands being transferred to the State of Alaska and Native corporations, which are opposed by the State, and which could affect the dependability of land title?

Response: If confirmed, yes.

Question 7: One of the greatest challenges facing Alaska is that our economic backbone, the Trans-Alaska-Pipeline System, is running three-quarters empty. It now carries just about 500,000 barrels per day—not due to a lack of resources, but instead an almost blanket lack of permission to access our federal areas. If you are confirmed as Interior Secretary, will you make it a priority to work with me, as well as Senator Sullivan, Congressman Young, and Governor Walker, to develop a plan to refill the Trans-Alaska Pipeline?

Response: President-elect Trump has declared energy dominance to be a strategic economic and foreign policy goal of the United States and that he intends to unleash America's \$50 trillion in untapped shale, oil, and natural gas reserves. Accomplishing that goal will, in part, depend on increasing flow on the Trans-Alaska Pipeline, and, if confirmed, I will work to ensure that happens.

Question 8: A critical element of statehood is the primary authority to regulate resident fish and wildlife and establish the means, methods, seasons, and bag limits for the taking of such resident fish and wildlife. This state authority also extends to federal lands unless and until expressly and specifically countermanded by Congress using its Property Clause authority. Congress later provided that federal land designations and administration were not to diminish this State authority. Do you concur that states, possess primary authority to regulate hunting and fishing on federal lands?

Response: Madam Chairman, I agree that, in general, states have primary responsibility for wildlife management and that authority generally extends to federal lands. Moreover, I am committed to collaborating with state wildlife managers to ensure that we jointly conserve our wildlife resources.

Questions for the Record from Ranking Member Maria Cantwell

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Question 1: If confirmed, do you intend to serve the entire four-year term as Secretary?

Response: Yes.

Question 2: Have you severed all ties with the Special Operations For America super PAC you formed in 2012?

Response: Yes.

There was a complaint filed against the Special Operations For America super PAC with the Federal Election Commission in 2014 that alleged improper contributions to your congressional campaign. What action did the FEC take on that complaint?

Response: Because I no longer have any role at Special Operations For America and am not a party to the complaint, I do not know all the actions the FEC has taken on that matter, but I do understand it remains under review.

Have you severed ties with SEAL PAC? If not, what involvement will you have with it if you are confirmed as Secretary? What steps will you take to avoid any conflicts of interest or the appearance of any conflicts of interest resulting from your association with SEAL PAC?

Response: SEAL PAC is my leadership PAC, and I will step down from my position with the PAC upon confirmation if confirmed.

If confirmed, I will abide by the recusal policy of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources which requires that I:

- (1) Abide by the recusal requirements imposed by federal conflict of interest laws and the Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch;
- (2) Seek the advice of my designated agency ethics officer before proceeding whenever faced with a situation that may give rise to an actual or apparent conflict of interest, and;
- (3) Adhere to the principles of ethical conduct and avoid any actions creating the appearance of violating the Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch

Question 3: Thinning at-risk ponderosa pine forests and re-introducing prescribed fires (when the conditions are acceptable) is an idea supported almost universally by the scientific community, the environmental groups, and the timber industry. Will you be helpful in getting the pine pilot we developed here last Congress—a program to expedite those thinnings—enacted?

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I know the House prevented any wildfire or forestry legislation from being enacted at the end of last Congress—I suppose thinking they'd have a better chance this Congress to enact some of the sweeping ideas and environmental waivers that have been floating around. But don't you think a program focused on collaborative projects in the most at-risk forests—which are supported by science—are a better approach to protecting our communities, strengthening our timber industry, and restoring our forests?

If confirmed, will you be supportive of fixing the fire-borrowing problem that plagues the Federal wildland-firefighting agencies? And working within the Administration and with your current House colleagues on putting in place a plan that takes this issue off the table once and for all?

Response: If confirmed, I will work with you, Members of the House of Representatives and my colleagues within the Administration to get a handle on the fire-borrowing problem.

Question 4: The Department of the Interior has put into place a robust scientific integrity policy. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the Department's Bureaus and Offices, including the Secretary, are using the highest quality science, subject to rigorous scientific and scholarly standards, to inform decision making. This policy is also in place to ensure that the production and use of science at the Department is insulated from political intervention.

What are your views on scientific integrity and how will you ensure that the highest standards of scientific integrity are maintained at the Department of the Interior?

Response: If confirmed, I will work to ensure that the U.S. Department of the Interior depends on the best available science for agency decision-making. I will review agency policies and guidance to ensure that scientific integrity underpins agency action.

Question 5: The U.S. Geological Survey is the Nation's primary earth science agency and is responsible for producing the science to ensure that our nation is prepared for hazards like floods and earthquakes, produces our nation's maps, assesses our nation's energy and mineral resources, conducts science necessary to understand and manage our nation's lands and waters, and produced critical satellite imagery which is all over the world and by our own military and civilian agencies. Each of the Department's bureaus also produce science needed to carry out their missions.

What do you believe is the role of science in informing decision-making and how will you ensure that the USGS and science at the Department is properly resourced to provide for the safety and prosperity of our country?

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Response: The U.S. Department of Interior will rely on objective science and rigorous scientific review to inform agency decisions. I look forward to reviewing agency resources at the U.S. Geological Survey and other divisions if confirmed.

Questions for the Record from Senator John Barrasso

Question 1: In December 2016, the National Park Service issued its Record of Decision (ROD) for the Moose-Wilson Road Final Comprehensive Management Plan. The Moose-Wilson Corridor is a 7.1-mile stretch of road at the southern end of the Grand Teton National Park. Public access to the corridor is highly valued by locals, state residents, and national and international visitors alike for the unique opportunity it provides to view wildlife and enjoy the natural setting and beauty of the Grand Teton National Park.

The 2016 ROD represents a dramatic shift in the management approach for the Corridor from the 2007 Final Transportation Plan by severely limiting the public's access to this national park, forcing a 30-plus mile rerouting; eliminating a multi-use pathway from the southern entrance despite 2 tragic deaths from vehicle-cyclist collisions in this park; and reversing course on the 2007 decision to reroute the northern segment of the Road out of important wildlife habitat and wetlands. The Park Service has decided to limit access to the Corridor to no more than 200 vehicles—a threshold that lacks any rational scientific or factual basis, and will require new construction of 3-lane queuing station on both ends of the Corridor essentially cutting off public access to the Park. The second Environmental Impact Statement spent millions of taxpayer dollars for 7.1 miles of road planning – intended to keep the public out. The park even says it may be 2-4 years of through-road closures to pave 1.7 miles of the road and a spur entrance – which raises serious questions of intent to habituate the public to keep out of their national park.

Given the contrived and arbitrary nature of this decision and the dramatic shift from the Final Transportation Plan, will you consider reopening the Record of Decision (ROD) for the Moose-Wilson Road Final Comprehensive Management Plan?

Response: Senator, I am not sufficiently informed of the details of the situation to make a judgment today. However, access to our public lands is one of my highest priorities, and, from your description, it appears this may be an example of a situation that needs attention. I commit that, if confirmed, I will review this situation and consult with you further.

Question 2: In Wyoming, and other states across the West, agencies have identified limited land parcels that would be more suitable for management or ownership by the state, county, or other entity. Administratively, these lands could be made available for sale, transfer, or other means of disposal, but change in the status of these lands is limited by agency use of employee time and funding priorities. Given your support for H.R. 1214, the National Forest Small Tracts Act Amendments Act of 2015, will you commit to

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prioritizing funds for disposal of lands that have been identified, agreed upon, and approved by the respective agencies?

Response: I remain committed to managing our federal land in a way that best serves those who use it. Wyoming and Montana are very similar. Both our states understand the challenges and opportunities associated with Federal Land. I supported H.R. 1214's unanimous passage because it is common sense. While I oppose the large-scale sale or transfer of public land, small parcel exchanges or conveyances that benefit the local community have received my full support as a Congressman and will continue should I be confirmed as Secretary of the Interior.

Questions for the Record from Senator Ron Wyden

Question 1: When working on difficult forestry issues, which I've been doing for over 20 years, you learn that no one gets everything they want but everyone must get something they need. My O&C bill brings people together, it gets the harvest up, and it protects bedrock environmental laws. I understand the urge to streamline process, but forestry policies that stack the deck in favor of one side won't work, particularly if you're interested in rebuilding faith in the federal government, which you noted in your remarks and in our meeting.

Litigation reform bars the path to the courthouse and sufficiency language essentially hands forests over to just one side of the debate. Coupled together, you create a scenario where the actions of one side are deemed automatically compliant and the other side has no way of challenging the action. That's the definition of stacking the deck and it will drive the two sides of an issue further apart, rather than bringing them together in a collaborative way.

How would you encourage collaboration in forestry while balancing the needs of all interests and avoiding reforms, like sufficiency language, that hand the entire deck over to one side?

Response: I appreciate your concerns about the need for collaboration in balancing the needs of all interests while avoiding policies that stack the deck for one side of any issue. As a member of the Natural Resources Committee in the House, I supported legislation that would have expanded the collaborative model to help resolve natural resource conflicts on our public lands. I would like to work with you and the other members of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee to provide appropriate authority to the Department of the Interior to expand and protect the work of the Resource Advisory Committees under the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act, the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program, and the Community Wildfire Protection Plans that have been collaboratively developed under the Healthy Forest Restoration Act.

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Question 2: Representative Zinke, in our meeting, I told you about my bill, the Recreation Not Red-Tape Act, to cut the bureaucratic red tape that stands in the way of getting more people outdoors and opening access to America's special places. Recreation is an economic driver, particularly in rural areas, with studies showing recreation is a \$646 billion economy.

As Secretary, will you commit to working with me on my bill and prioritizing outdoor recreation and its vast economic potential on public lands, without sacrificing critical environmental protections?

Response: Senator, I appreciate the time you took to meet with me prior to the hearing. As we discussed, I believe public lands should be available for the enjoyment of all, and, if confirmed, outdoor recreation will be a priority of mine, and I believe recreation can occur while respecting and caring for the environment.

Question 3: Throughout the process of developing the Klamath water management agreements in Southern Oregon, the Bureau of Reclamation, under the direction of the Secretary of Interior, was a critical player in helping with stakeholder negotiations. Those agreements have expired and the future of the Klamath Basin remains uncertain. Are you familiar at all with what is happening in the Klamath Basin?

Response: Senator, I am somewhat familiar with the issues in the Klamath, but, if confirmed will need to learn a great deal more. I hope I will have the opportunity to visit the area with you and learn from you what needs to be done.

Question 4: Can you commit to working with me and the other members of the Oregon delegation and to supporting the Bureau of Reclamation and their efforts to help solve this complex problem in the Klamath Basin?

Response: If confirmed, yes.

Question 5: I've introduced the Wildfire Disaster Funding Act for the last several congresses, and I know you cosponsored the House companion bill in the past. While the issue of wildfire funding has been primarily a Forest Service issue, wildfires don't pay any attention to jurisdictional borders and they don't care who manages the land they're burning, so as Secretary of Interior, this is an issue you'll have to address. Do you think the practice of fire borrowing should be ended?

Response: Thank you for your leadership on the Wildfire Disaster Funding Act. The entire Montana delegation has cosponsored this bill because Western states like ours intimately know the devastation of forest fires. I understand the importance of fixing the current wildfire borrowing system, but I believe it is only one component of the problem. As Montana's Congressman, I have been an active proponent of forest management reforms so wildfires are less severe. Active management reforms will get to the root of

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the problem and lessen the burden of fighting wildfires. I fully agree that our firefighting funding mechanisms must be reformed, but it must be part of a comprehensive solution. I look forward to crafting those measures with you if I am confirmed.

Question 6: Do you think controlling the 10-year average cost of fires by freezing it at a certain level, or using some other budget control tool so it doesn't continue to erode the agency budgets, help the agencies better budget for and fund fires in the future as well as fund other non-fire programs in forest management and recreation?

Response: As you know, we are both supporters of the Wildfire Disaster Funding Act. I do believe these budget reforms would provide relief to the agencies to better invest in other priorities. However, if we do not tackle comprehensive management reforms, forest health will continue to deteriorate and escalate the potential for severe forest fires. Should I be confirmed, I look forward to working with you and your colleagues on comprehensive solutions that fix our budget process and management shortfalls.

Question 7: I'm sure you're aware of the situation that unfolded at the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge in Harney County Oregon this time last year and the disruptions it caused in the local communities. I was grateful that federal officials coordinated closely with the County Sheriff and Commissioners to ensure that community members were safe and that the rule of law was preserved. Incidents like this, led by extremists, that compromise our public lands are very concerning and I'm just glad it ended without escalating further.

If you are confirmed as the Secretary of Interior, you will be in charge of managing National Wildlife Refuges, Wilderness Areas, and recreation lands, in an era where hostility toward federal lands and federal officials is rampant, particularly in rural areas.

What will you do to ensure the protection of not only our incredible public lands that have been set aside by Republican and Democratic Presidents and Congresses, but also the protection of your employees, like the employees at the Malheur Refuge, who are not just federal employees, but Oregonians?

Response: Senator, as someone who has led soldiers in combat, I am committed to the safety of the Department's employees. I am also committed to restoring trust by freeing up our employees to make decisions and to collaborate with local law enforcement if things get difficult.

Question 8: Oregon is no stranger to an ESA listing, so ranchers and conservationists took a front seat in the collaborative efforts to establish land management plans to prevent one. After all the collaborative success, the last thing that the people of my state want to see is an Endangered Species Act (ESA) listing of the greater sage grouse. Fortunately, that was avoided in September 2015, when the Fish and Wildlife Service decided that listing the bird was unwarranted. However, FWS's decision was

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predicated on the strength of federal sage grouse conservation plans, without which, the bird would likely have been listed.

As secretary, can you outline what steps you will take to support the robust implementation of both federal and state grouse conservation plans, so that we can prevent an ESA listing and continue to support and encourage collaboration?

Response: I believe that the goals of the Endangered Species Act, which are to halt and reverse the trend towards species extinction, are very important. I am aware that there are several grant programs within the Department of the Interior to provide federal funding towards species recovery efforts. If I am confirmed, I will review these programs and work with Congress to set appropriate funding levels for them.

Question 9: Are you committed to meeting the goals of the Endangered Species Act and would you agree that federal funding to help recover threatened and endangered species is crucial to preserving our nation's wildlife and biodiversity?

Response: I support the goals of the Endangered Species Act. I agree that focusing efforts on the recovery of listed species is important and I look forward to working with you on this important issue.

Question 10: Can you help me understand your stance on public land ownership and tell me whether you think that public lands should remain in federal ownership or be sold or transferred to states or other jurisdictions?

Response: I believe that Teddy Roosevelt had it right when he put under federal protection millions of acres of federal lands. I share President-elect Trump's view that federal lands should not be sold to states and I have voted 17 times against such action.

Question 11: Oregonians and all West Coast residents are becoming increasingly concerned about the next major earthquake, which has become a matter of "when" and not "if." Preparation is key, and even just a few seconds of warning is enough to take steps to prevent casualties and mitigate destruction. In a few seconds, supplies of oil, natural gas, and chemicals can be turned off, trains and cars can be slowed or stopped, sensitive data can be secured, and people can get to safe places. This is a bipartisan priority and we need to get this system finished -- failing to prepare for these events is not an option, and could have dire consequences for West Coast populations. Given the importance of this technology to provide the kind of warning that exists for hurricane, winter storms, and other extreme events, how would you, if confirmed, work with USGS to ensure ShakeAlert becomes fully operational for the west coast?

Response: As a geologist, I am fully aware of the hazards along the western coast of the United States, and appreciate that the risks are a matter of "when" and not "if". Earthquakes are an important applied science focus of USGS' Natural Hazards Mission

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Area. I fully support the collaborative research and scientific efforts related to earth hazards and, if confirmed, will continue these efforts.

Question 12: Can you assure us that the annual budgets you would propose would back up your stated commitment to those resources with the actual conservation and maintenance dollars they clearly need?

Response: If I am confirmed, I will review these programs and work with Congress to set appropriate funding levels for them.

Question 13: The California water provisions that passed as part of the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation (WIIN) Act gives the Secretaries of Interior and Commerce discretion in implementing the mandates to maximize water deliveries to Central Valley farmers. How do you plan to balance the mandates to maximize water deliveries to farmers with the mandates to protect fishery resources and comply with the Endangered Species Act when making critical decisions about how to interpret and implement the provisions in this legislation?

Response: Water from the Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers Delta provides drinking water to 25 million Californians from the Bay area to San Diego and provides water supplies to over two million acres of farmland. In addition, it serves as an important stop on the Pacific flyway and is home or a gateway to the home for numerous endangered fish species. In addition to other provisions, the WIIN Act calls for the Secretaries of the Interior and of Commerce to use science and the adaptive management provisions of the existing biological opinions to maximize water supply and water supply reliability, consistent with the Endangered Species Act. If confirmed, I will work with the Secretary of Commerce and the State of California to fulfill the directives in the WIIN Act, consistent with the Endangered Species Act.

Question 14: The Fisheries Restoration and Irrigation Mitigation Act (FRIMA) provides funding in the Pacific Northwest (Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Montana and now California) to carry out fish passage projects and screen irrigation channels to reduce fish mortality. This program was recently reauthorized, but authorized funding was drastically reduced. Would you support funding for the implementation of this critical program that benefits farmers and fish?

Response: If I am confirmed, I will review these programs and work with Congress to set appropriate funding levels for them.

Question 15: The Secretary currently oversees eight regional DOI Climate Science Centers, including an active center at Oregon State University. Would you support the continued climate change research and education at these eight centers?

Response: I value and support collaboration with public and private research institutions. As mentioned at the confirmation hearing, I believe that programs are most

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effective when they operate according to “clear and precise” goals. I look forward to a complete review of the eight DOI Climate Science Centers and their results over the past six years as we develop an agenda for moving forward.

Question 16: In general, what do you see as your role and the role of the Department of Interior in combating climate change?

Response: Senator, that is a challenging question simply because it is so broad. Many programs at the Department relate to or impact the climate. In general, my role, if confirmed, and the Department’s role will be to ensure that we manage programs and makes decisions based upon best available information and sound science.

Question 17: The American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) has made the following statement: “The scientific evidence is clear: global climate change caused by human activities is occurring now, and it is a growing threat to society.” Would you agree with this statement?

Response: Senator, as I said at my confirmation hearing, I believe the climate is changing, and man is an influence.

Question 18: The American Geophysical Union has made the following statement: “The scientific evidence is clear: global climate change caused by human activities is occurring now, and it is a growing threat to society.” Would you agree with this statement?

Response: Senator, as I said at my confirmation hearing, I believe the climate is changing, and man is an influence.

Question 19: Representative Zinke, I noticed that, in 2010, you signed a letter to the President and the Congress calling for “comprehensive clean energy jobs and climate change legislation.” I applaud your leadership, and I have submitted that letter for the record. Do you still agree, as you apparently did in 2010, with the vast majority of scientists that climate change is happening and that we as humans are contributing to it?

Response: Senator, as I said at my confirmation hearing, I believe the climate is changing, and man is an influence.

Question 20: Do you still believe, as you did in your letter to the President in 2010, that “the clean energy and climate challenge is America’s new space race”? And that our country should not back down from a challenge on this scale?

Response: Senator, I believe that the impacts of climate change are uncertain and that we have not yet determined the best way or ways to address it.

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Question 21: Representative Zinke, do you think the American taxpayer should get a fair, market-value, return on the coal, oil and natural gas extracted from publicly-owned lands?

Response: Yes.

Question 22: The GAO found, for example, that in order to get a fair return on oil and gas from public lands, the BLM should update its more than 30-year old rules on the venting and flaring of gas. I assume you would agree that it is time to dust off these rules and make sure they're delivering appropriately for the American people? Correct?

Response: I am committed to ensuring that the American taxpayers get a fair return on all natural resource development on federal lands. While I have not been briefed on the details of the regulations covering the venting and flaring of gas, I will review them if I am confirmed and make a determination on whether those rules need to be updated.

Question 23: Using GAO's estimates about the amount of federally owned natural gas that is wasted due to venting and flaring, over \$63.5 million in royalties was lost, over \$31.1 million to individual states in 2013 alone. This is millions of dollars that could go to state infrastructure needs, schools, and emergency services. Do you believe that states should be receiving this money instead of allowing companies to waste American energy resources and not give the American public their due? If so, how do you plan to make sure that states are getting the money they should from wasted natural gas, especially since you stated in your nomination hearing before the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee your support for the repeal of the current rule under a Congressional Review Act joint resolution of disapproval?

Response: I am committed to ensuring that the American taxpayers get a fair return on all natural resource development on federal lands. While I have concerns about the current rules regarding venting and flaring on federal lands, I will commit to a review of the oil and natural gas leasing program in order to evaluate whether any further regulation is appropriate.

Question 24: A federal court in Wyoming refused to enjoin the BLM's new wasted gas rule on January 16th. The court found that the rule was "unambiguously" within the BLM's authority to regulate oil and gas development for the prevention of waste, has economic and environmental benefits, will not impinge on states' sovereign interests, and will not cause significant economic burden to states or oil and gas companies. Do you believe the BLM has the authority to regulate oil and gas production on federal lands so as to prevent waste?

Response: While I have not been briefed on the legal issues surrounding the litigation over the BLM rules regarding venting and flaring on federal lands, I will commit to a

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review of the oil and natural gas leasing program in order to evaluate those legal issues and determine whether additional regulation of these activities is appropriate.

Question 25: I applaud your comments in your nomination hearing before the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee that “we’re wasting a lot, we’re venting a lot, and we’re wasting energy, and that is troubling me...The amount of venting in North Dakota alone almost exceeds what we get out of the fields. Let us build a system that recaptures what is being wasted.” Given that only 9% of venting or flaring requests cite a lack of infrastructure as the reason, according to the GAO, and the vast majority of wasted gas can be traced to leaks, what would you do to fix this problem?

Response: I am committed to ensuring that the American taxpayers get a fair return on all natural resource development on federal lands. While I have concerns about the current rules regarding venting and flaring on federal lands, I will commit to a review of the oil and natural gas leasing program in order to evaluate whether any further regulation is appropriate.

Question 26: If you support the repeal of the current rule under a Congressional Review Act joint resolution of disapproval, as you stated in your nomination hearing before the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, how do you plan to use existing DOI authority to address what you say is troubling to you regarding the amount of wasted gas coming from production on federal lands?

Response: I am committed to ensuring that the American taxpayers get a fair return on all natural resource development on federal lands. While I have concerns about the current rules regarding venting and flaring on federal lands, I will commit to a review of the oil and natural gas leasing program in order to evaluate whether any further regulation is appropriate.

Question 27: Based on hundreds of thousands of public comments, on January 11, 2017, the Department of Interior has clearly identified there is a need to modernize the federal coal program. We have a responsibility to ensure the public gets a fair market-value return from the sale of America's coal, and that we operate the program efficiently, while minimizing the impact of coal production on our communities and environment. The only responsible next step is to continue the review and implement the commonsense measures identified in the Department’s recent roadmap. I want your commitment to continue the work of modernizing the federal coal program, through the completion of an above-board transparent, scientific and public process.

What assurances can you give me that you will continue this important work?

Response: I have not personally reviewed the Federal Coal Programmatic EIS scoping report published by the Bureau of Land Management, which I believe is the document you are referencing. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that decisions are based on

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objective science and transparency. I will examine the scoping document and visit with the Bureau of Land Management and determine the appropriate next steps to be taken as part of the NEPA process.

Question 28: What will you do to limit liabilities to the American people associated with the cleanup of mining on public lands, including bonding and other protections?

Response: As someone from Montana, I appreciate the need for reclamation and want to ensure that we hold companies appropriately accountable for their responsibilities.

Question 29: You have said that you are supportive of an “all of the above energy policy, which includes renewables.” I suspect we agree renewable that energy projects can be important drivers of economic development in rural communities, often supplementing the income of farmers and ranchers and raising needed tax revenue for small towns. Yet we must balance the need for clean energy with the need to protect wilderness and fragile habitat. What will you do to ensure the Department of Interior continues to support the responsible construction of renewable energy projects on public lands?

Response: I will support responsible construction of projects. However, I have not been fully briefed on the regulatory regime in place for permitting renewable projects on federal lands, but I do believe that the NEPA process is a critical component of any federal permitting decision. If confirmed, I will review the process for evaluating these projects and ensure that all of the Department’s actions are appropriate.

Question 30: What are your plans for the siting and leasing processes for offshore renewable energy development, such as wind and marine hydrokinetic? How do you plan to involve other maritime industries, such as fishing and shipping, to ensure that the development of offshore renewable energy is collaborative?

Response: I have not been fully briefed on the permit applications for these projects, but I do believe that the NEPA process is a critical component of any federal permitting decision. A critical component of the NEPA process is consultation with all affected stakeholders. If confirmed, I will review the process for evaluating these projects and ensure that all of the Department’s actions are appropriate.

Question 31: You recently made some misinformed comments about the competitiveness of wind and solar energy in relation to coal-fired electricity. Wind energy is one of the most affordable options for new electric generation, and wind energy is reliably providing over 30% of the electricity in Iowa, and over 20% in Kansas, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Oklahoma; and generating more than 10% of the electricity in eight additional states. In fact, 79% of electricity power generation jobs in Oregon are in wind and solar, according to the Energy Information Administration. Given the importance of renewable energy in so many states, will you state for the record your support for good,

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American jobs in renewable energy production that are not only affordable but also provide an over 13% share of US energy production?

Response: I strongly support good, American jobs in renewable energy production.

Question 32: I know you have been supportive of the Keystone XL pipeline. Although Keystone is an international project, other pipeline projects--like the Dakota access pipeline--could fall onto your plate. Could you give us some insight into how you would deal with such a sensitive tribal issue, such as the Dakota Access Pipeline?

Response: Senator, the current situation with regard to the Dakota Access Pipeline is very challenging and unfortunate. This country needs to build and operate infrastructure, and the permitting process for infrastructure needs to comply with all laws and regulations and be relatively predictable so that companies and individuals undertaking infrastructure projects can reasonably estimate costs and schedules.

We must also be sensitive to tribal issues. Our great Indian nations deserve respect, and, if confirmed, I will work to rebuild the trust that comes from mutual respect. I believe that, if we build and then maintain mutual trust, we can build relative consensus around infrastructure siting issues.

Question 33: Reuters has reported that the incoming administration aims to privatize oil-rich and coal-rich Indian reservations. Can you comment on your understanding of such conversations, and what is your opinion on whether we should privatize tribal lands for the purpose of extracting energy resources?

Response: I have not personally reviewed the referenced Reuters' report. I am unaware of any effort by anyone to privatize tribal lands.

Question 34: As Secretary of Interior, you are in charge of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and the trust relationship with all U.S. Tribes. What are your thoughts on tribal sovereignty and the role of the federal government in the tribal trust relationship?

Response: As I stated during the hearing, I believe tribal sovereignty is very important. I believe it should be meaningful. As a member of Congress, I have been a strong advocate for the Tribes in Montana.

Question 35: When Secretary Sally Jewell spoke of DOI's scientific integrity policies, she stated that the Department must be a leader in the federal efforts for robust scientific integrity policies because "science is the very foundation of our mission." Would you agree that science is the foundation of the DOI's mission and what would be your plan to ensure that the Department's integrity policies remain robust and reliable?

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Response: I have not studied the referenced policy. However, I would agree that DOI's mission has always included a strong science component within its bureaus. I will want to be informed by objective science as I make policy decisions, and I look forward to hearing from the Department's scientists in that regard.

Question 36: How will you work with your counterparts at the Defense and State Departments to support approval and implementation of the 2010 Agreement between the U.S and Palau to update and extend the strategic "Compact" relationship between our two nations?

Response: This is an important issue. As I have said, the relationship between the United States and the territories and freely associated states is important to me. If I am confirmed, I will learn more about this issue and work with you to address it in a way that benefits the people of Palau, and the U.S. Government.

Question 37: Will you, if confirmed, work with the ENR Committee and with the Departments of Justice, Treasury and Labor to fully investigate any allegations that money laundering and abuse of guest workers is occurring in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands?

Response: Allegations of the criminal abuse of workers anywhere are significant and serious. If I am confirmed, I will look into this matter, work with the appropriate law enforcement agencies, and act accordingly.

Question 38: Prior to 2008, even though the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) was under US sovereignty, it had authority to control its borders and immigration. However, the CNMI proved unable to properly control the border or to prevent the abuse of guest workers who were admitted to the CNMI under local immigration control. Consequently, Congress extended federal border and immigration control to the CNMI. Can you assure the Committee that you will oppose any proposal to weaken federal border and immigration control in the CNMI?

Response: Control of US borders is important whether in CNMI or anywhere. If I am confirmed, I will learn more about this issue and work with you and other federal agencies to develop an appropriate response.

Question 39: There have been press articles regarding the activities of "Best Sunshine" corporation in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Would you please review these articles and let me know what action, if any, should be taken by the Interior Department and other Departments.

Response: If I am confirmed, I will make it a priority to review this material and respond accordingly.

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Question 40: One responsibility of the Interior Department is to create economic opportunities and improve the quality of life for Americans in the insular areas of our nation: American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Marianas, and the Virgin Islands. There have been improvements over time. But in terms of income, infrastructure, and many other measures these insular areas still lag far behind the rest of America. Often they are not given the same level of funding or access to federal programs as other parts of our country. Federal agencies often don't compile data on the territories the way they do for the rest of the U.S. What specific plans do you have to increase the pace of development in the insular areas to bring them up to the economic level of the rest of America?

Response: Economic development is the best way to increase opportunity and the standard of living for all peoples. The U.S. territories face significant challenges and deserve special attention. If I am confirmed, I look forward to learning more about the ways we can work to correct these issues.

Question 41: Currently, an Interior Assistant Secretary heads the Office of Insular Affairs. That is a serious acknowledgement of the importance of the work of this office; and I think the office should continue to be led by an Assistant Secretary. Do you plan to maintain this position of Assistant Secretary?

Response: U.S. territories deserve recognition and representation within the Department. If I am confirmed, I will look into the ASIA position, but I am not aware of any effort to change the status of the position.

Question 42: In a bipartisan appropriation for the current fiscal year, FY17, the Senate voted to increase funding for the Office of Insular Affairs by \$6.9 million dollars. Will you be supportive of providing increased bipartisan support and funding to America's insular areas to create economic opportunity and improve quality of life?

Response: Providing resources is one important way the U.S. can support the challenges of the territories. If I am confirmed, I will work with you and the Congress on the proper appropriations levels for this and other areas of the budget.

Question 43: As a follow-up to my question on the Office of Insular Affairs, is more funding needed? And if so, how exactly do you think additional funds should be targeted to be most effective?

Response: If I am confirmed, I look forward to learning more about the budget needs and allocations and will work with your office as appropriate.

Question 44: A role of the Office of Insular Affairs is to make sure that all federal agencies take the islands into account when formulating and implementing policy. What plans do you have to make sure that the Interior Department's input is welcome—and

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listened to—by other agencies, when they put together and administer policies that affect the territories?

Response: This is an important issue to me. Often the parts of the federal family neglect the territories completely or forget to take into account their unique circumstances. If I am confirmed, I will learn more about the ways we can solve this problem.

Questions for the Record from Senator Bernard Sanders

Tribal Issues

Question 1: The Department of the Interior is the most important federal government agency for dealing with the issues that affect Native American tribes. The Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs “assists and supports the Secretary of the Interior in fulfilling the United States’ trust responsibility to the Federally recognized American Indian and Alaska Native tribes and villages and individual Indian trust beneficiaries, as well as in maintaining the Federal-Tribal government-to-government relationship.”

If confirmed, will you commit to an open door policy for the Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs to ensure sufficient access to you and recognition of the importance of Indian Affairs within the department? Will you commit to an open door policy for tribal leaders to ensure that the federal government upholds its trust responsibility and maintains its government-to-government relationship with tribal leaders?

Response: Yes.

Question 2: While the Department of Interior plays a primary role in upholding our Government’s obligations to Indian tribes, there are many other federal agencies that also work to meet the responsibility. Department of Health and Human Services plays a major role in providing health and mental health care. Department of Justice works to ensure the public safety. Department of Commerce, Department of Agriculture, and other agencies administer programs designed to help improve Indian reservation economic development.

To succeed in its tribal relationships and trust, Interior must work with these agencies and ensure that they work collaboratively with Indian tribes. President Obama formed the White House Council on Native American Affairs to help inter-agency coordination.

How will you ensure that inter-agency coordination remains a top priority in this new administration?

Response: Senator, I agree with you that the federal agencies with obligations to and responsibilities for Indian tribes need to coordinate effectively. I am not familiar with the White House Council on Native American Affairs, but, if confirmed, inter-agency

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coordination will be a priority of mine, and, if the Council continues, I will utilize it to advance the interests of Indian tribes.

Question 3: The failed federal policies of Removal, Allotment and Termination resulted in the forced taking of hundreds of millions of acres of Native American homelands. The Interior Secretary is authorized to restore tribal homelands through the Indian Reorganization Act and the administrative Part 151 Indian land to trust process. The U.S. Supreme Court attacked that process in 2009.

What are you prepared to do to ensure that the administrative land to trust process continues to move forward under your administration?

Response: I understand that the land into trust process is very important to the Tribes. I will meet with the Bureau of Indian Affairs to gain a greater appreciation of the specific administrative challenges caused by the referenced 2009 decision and determine how they are best addressed.

Hydropower

Question 4: The U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources debated several bills regarding energy and natural resource policy that culminated in the Energy Policy Modernization Act. One of the energy sources addressed in this legislation was hydropower, which accounts for roughly 7 percent of all energy produced in the United States today. While the legislation this committee reported, and the Senate sent to the House, protected the ability of states to manage water and the ability of the federal resource managers to rely on science and expertise, the House passed legislation effectively stripping them of the tools available to them.

Hydropower is a critical source of carbon-free energy, but it is not without negative externalities. Several states, including Vermont, support hydropower, but opposed these efforts to hobble oversight.

Question 5: As Secretary of the Interior, would you counsel the President to reject legislation that would eliminate the ability of states and federal resource managers to protect drinking water, outdoor recreation, fisheries, and vulnerable wildlife populations?

Response: If confirmed, I will seek to inform the President of my views on specific legislative proposals related to water, outdoor recreation, fisheries and wildlife as they arise.

Question 6: Would you resist efforts by industry to federalize all aspects of the hydropower licensing process and consolidate in the industry-captured FERC responsibilities for evaluating environmental impact?

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Response: If confirmed, I will work to gain a greater appreciation of the specific role Interior's agencies play in the hydropower licensing process.

Land and Water Conservation Fund

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) has been an important source for state and local outdoor recreation facilities, state parks improvements, and public park land acquisition. Vermont has benefitted extensively from LWCF funding.

Question 7: You have been a long-term supporter of the LWCF. If confirmed, do you plan to continue your strong advocacy for this important source of funding for states and local governments to create parks and open spaces, protect wilderness and forests, and provide outdoor recreation opportunities?

Response: You and I both share a deep appreciation for the LWCF. This program has been incredibly successful in Montana. I have seen the benefits of the program first-hand with critical projects in my hometown. Should I be confirmed, I look forward to continuing to work with you and your colleagues to protect and bolster this important program.

Question 8: As the Secretary of the Interior, will you recommend to the President that the LWCF be fully funded?

Response: LWCF has my full support. I have cosponsored two bipartisan pieces of legislation to permanently reauthorize the program, have opposed my own Chairman's reform proposals and was the only member of the Montana delegation to vote in support of the program's reauthorization and funding. As a Montanan, I have personally witnessed the good work LWCF does for local communities, the sportsmen and recreation community, and conservation. As the budget process moves forward, I look forward to working the President-elect and Congress to support LWCF's critical work.

Question 9: Federal funding programs like the LWCF often involve a lot of "red tape" which can make them inaccessible to small rural communities with limited staff and resources. Would you be willing to re-examine any of the rules and regulations related to applying for and using federal funds such as the LWCF monies?

Response: Since coming to Congress, I have been one of the most vocal proponents of LWCF. It is a great program that serves Montana and our nation incredibly well. However, that does not mean it is perfect. We both represent rural states and I share your concern regarding "red tape" and limited resources. I have consistently voiced my opposition to the excessive bureaucracy that inhibits funds from making their way to those who need them most. The process should be streamlined and I look forward to working with you and your colleagues to achieve this goal.

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Conservation and Public Lands

Question 10: During your time in Congress, you earned a 3 percent rating (out of 100 percent) from the League of Conservation Voters (LCV). The votes used to rate Senators and members of Congress are scored on protection of the environment, public lands, waters and air.

Your LCV score reflects that, with just one exception, you voted against federal conservation policies. You have voted for cutting back Antiquity Act authorities, against public review of hard rock mining on public lands, against a review process for grazing permits on drought-damaged public lands, and against removing harmful riders undermining protections for imperiled species including removing Endangered Species Act-protections for the gray wolf. All of these issues will be under your authority as Secretary of Interior.

Can you explain your anti-conservation voting record while in Congress? How does this record suggest that you will protect our lands, waters and wildlife against corporate short-term interests, like Teddy Roosevelt?

Response: The League of Conservation Voters (LCV) voting score does not accurately represent my commitment to clean air and water, conservation and protecting public lands. I am a firm believer in the multiple use doctrine that President Roosevelt championed. However, under the current administration, the Executive Branch has often governed by rules and regulations that should have been debated and passed by Congress. I fundamentally believe in the separate but equal roles of government and the rule of law. Many of the votes calculated by the LCV had to do with rules that I believed were outside the purview of the Executive Branch. If I am confirmed as Secretary of the Interior, you have my commitment to follow and enforce the laws passed by you and your colleagues in Congress rather than governing by Executive Order.

Question 11: You signed the Montana Constitutional Governance Pledge promising to “legally and administratively oppose the multitude of bureaucracies that have sprung up to enforce the unlawful seizure of our native land and its resources including, but not limited to: the Bureau of Land Management, the United States Park Service, the various bureaus of Wildlife and Fisheries, etc., and restore the rightful powers over the land to the state and private ownership.”

Could you provide examples of the “unlawful seizure of our native land and its resources” by the agencies of the Department of Interior and what measures you would support as Secretary of interior to “restore the rightful powers over the land to the state and private ownership?”

Response: States across the West are uniquely familiar with the ‘checkerboard’ of private, state, and federal lands. The mix of lands under different management poses

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numerous issues, ranging from protecting recreational access to respecting the rights of private land owners. If confirmed, I want to ensure our public lands remain in public hands, and private and state-owned lands are respected as well. This means making sure small tract land transfers and sales adhere to the proper procedures.

Question 12: You are on record as supporting retention of federal lands in public ownership yet you voted for H. R. 3650, the “State National Forest Management Act of 2015” which would transfer over two million acres of Forest Service land to the states for sale to private interests. Could you explain the apparent inconsistency?

Response: I would like to respectfully correct the record. I was actually the only Republican on the House Committee on Natural Resources to vote against H.R.3650 when it came up for a markup on June 15, 2016. After the bill passed committee without my support, I reiterated my promise to my constituents that I would not support any legislation that transfers or sells large portions of our public lands. I remain committed to that promise should I be confirmed as Secretary of the Interior.

Question 13: What improvements can be made to the management of federal public lands?

Response: If confirmed, I will work to improve the management of our federal lands for multiple uses, including recreation, conservation and responsible energy development. I intend to restore trust by working with states and local communities to inform agency decisions. I intend to promote greater public access, responsible development and ensure that professionals within the Department of the Interior receive the resources, training, and tools needed to make informed decisions that give voice to the American public. I also recognize and will preserve those lands that deserve special recognition and are better managed with man as an observer.

Scientific integrity

Question 14: Are you familiar with the scientific integrity policy at the Department of the Interior? What is the importance of the policy in your opinion?

Response: Senator, I have not had the opportunity to review the Department’s scientific integrity policy. I value sound science, and I will review the policy if confirmed.

Question 15: Should Department of the Interior scientists be allowed to express their personal opinions about any issue as private citizens as long as they provide a disclaimer that they are speaking in a personal capacity and not for the agency?

Response: Senator, I have not had the opportunity to review the Department’s scientific integrity policy. I value sound science, and I will review the policy if confirmed.

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Question 16: Should Department of the Interior scientists have the right of last review to ensure the accuracy of materials that rely on their scientific work or expertise—including scientific reports, executive summaries, congressional testimony, press releases, and websites?

Response: I will review federal guidelines and Departmental policies on this issue and rely on the best available science for agency decision-making, if confirmed.

Question 17: Are there any parts of the Department of the Interior websites that you believe contain incorrect, incomplete, or erroneous information? Specifically, do you believe that any web pages currently contain incorrect, incomplete, or erroneous descriptions of climate change science?

Response: I have not reviewed the full extent of the Interior Department website, but if confirmed, I look forward to reviewing it further and paying special attention to the questions you raise.

Question 18: The most robust federal government scientific integrity policies empower scientists to speak openly with the public and the press about scientific matters. Would you improve your agency's policy to make this explicit?

Response: Senator, I respect scientists and the need for scientific integrity. I have not yet reviewed the Department's scientific integrity policies, but I will do so, and I am certainly willing to discuss this with you further if I am confirmed.

Management of Government Employees

The Department of the Interior employs 70,000 people at nine technical bureaus and a number of other offices. The following questions ask about how you would manage these personnel.

Question 19: Do you support and promise to uphold the merit system principles set forth in Chapter 23 Title 5 U.S. Code, which prohibit factors other than merit from consideration in civil service employment decisions?

Response: I support the merit system principles.

Question 20: As Secretary, do you believe that Congress using the Holman Rule, which allows any member of Congress to propose amending an appropriations bill to single out a government employee or cut a specific program, to be an appropriate measure when used against your Department? Will you support Congress in passing an amendment under the Holman Rule or would you oppose?

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Response: The U.S. House of Representatives sets its rules. If confirmed, as Secretary, it will be my responsibility to express my views to the President on any specific legislative proposal, and I will do so.

Question 21: As Secretary, do you believe that you will be better able to recruit and retain top talent if Congress is able to individually target employees based on their political whims?

Response: If confirmed, I will work to restore trust and give the employees on the front lines – our rangers, field managers and managers – the space and support to make the decisions they need to make. If I do that, I believe we will continue to retain and recruit top level talent.

Question 22: As Secretary, do you support Congress targeting and altering the salaries of individuals within your Department?

Response: I recognize that Congress has the power of the purse pursuant to the Constitution.

Question 23: As Secretary, how do you view the division of responsibility and authority between Congress and your Department on personnel issues?

Response: The Senate has the responsibility of advice and consent. Beyond that, I believe the authority of specific personnel decisions rests with the Department of the Interior and its bureaus.

Questions for the Record from Senator Debbie Stabenow

Question 1: I serve as Ranking Member of the Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry Committee -- which has a good deal of oversight of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service. When we met, we discussed your position on the Forest Service in broad terms. Please answer, preferably with a simple yes or no, whether you would advocate for Congress to approve legislation to transfer the Forest Service to the Interior Department?

Response: Senator, when we met, I said that I think we should consider moving the Forest Service to the Department of the Interior. As we discussed, the structure we use to manage federal lands has not been given a comprehensive review since its inception, and I believe there are numerous issues that need to be addressed. Among those issues, I believe the current situation in which one federal agency manages the surface and a second manages subsurface issues creates unnecessary duplication and conflict.

I clearly got the impression in our meeting and from these questions that you have concerns about moving the Forest Service to the Department of Interior. If confirmed, I

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look forward to further discussions with you. My goal is to ensure that our public lands are managed consistent with the inscription in the Roosevelt Arch at Yosemite, “for the enjoyment and benefit of the people.”

Question 2: If you would recommend transferring the Forest Service to the Interior Department, why with all of the challenges facing the Forest Service – including ballooning costs for wildfire suppression, nationwide invasive species outbreaks, and record numbers of recreationists and sportsmen looking for well-maintained trails and facilities on their public lands – would you want to undertake a complex, multi-year bureaucratic reorganization that will cost millions of dollars and precious staff time?

Response: Senator, I agree there are real challenges facing our public lands agencies, and I want to work to solve those problems rather than make them worse. If confirmed, I will work with you to that end.

Question 3: As you know, the responsibility for suppressing wildfires is shared between the Interior Department and the Agriculture Department’s Forest Service. In recent years, as suppression costs have ballooned, critical resources have been siphoned away from programs to safeguard and enhance our public lands and are instead being used to fight wildfires. The Forest Service is now spending over half their budget fighting wildfires, which is up from 16% in 1996. If Congress does not act, the Forest Service will be spending 2/3 of their overall budget on wildfire in 2025.

Bipartisan bills have been introduced in both chambers to address this problem and you were a cosponsor of the latest House bill, the Wildfire Disaster Funding Act. As Interior Secretary, will you continue to support the measure and work with Congress to see it enacted?

Response: If confirmed, fighting forest fires will be a major effort of mine. We need to better manage our forests to reduce the risk and consequences of fire, better coordinate firefighting and firefighting policies among federal agencies, and we should develop a better method of funding firefighting efforts. I realize these are complex issues and that you have spent considerable effort working to address them. If confirmed, I want to work with you on these issues.

Question 4: In addition to the maintenance backlogs that exist on federal lands, which I am also concerned with, I am distressed about insufficient funding for staff on Park Service lands. For example, Sleeping Bear Dunes in Michigan has experienced more than a 7% reduction in base level park staff and more than a 12% reduction in its base budget between 2010 and 2015. If confirmed, will you support additional cuts in funding for park rangers and other on-the-ground personnel that are struggling to meet their mission with increasing numbers of visitors; or, is this an area in the budget that you think should be increased?

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Response: Senator, I want front-line Interior employees to love their jobs and be committed to their mission. That will require attractive benefits, ensuring that staffing levels are commensurate with the need, and that those employees have the resources they need to do their jobs well. You can be assured that I will be an advocate for on-the-ground personnel.

Question 5: U.S. Department of Agriculture grant programs through the Natural Resources Conservation Service provide hundreds of millions of dollars around the country for on-farm conservation projects that improve water management. The Bureau of Reclamation, through its WaterSMART water efficiency grant program, provides around \$30 million annually for water conservation projects proposed by its beneficiaries and other water suppliers. In June, USDA and Reclamation agreed to coordinate these programs for on and off farm funding to maximize the benefits of both programs, specifically in the Colorado River Basin. If confirmed as Secretary of the Interior, would you commit to continue this cooperation and make it a funding priority in your budget?

Response: If I am confirmed, I will review the coordination between DOI and USDA on these programs, as well as the funding levels for those programs and work with Congress to set appropriate funding levels for them.

Question 6: Farmers and ranchers in the west receive substantial assistance from federal conservation initiatives to improve sagebrush ecosystem, consistent with state wildlife recommendations. A key driver of these resources are the sage grouse conservation plans, which were a factor for the Fish and Wildlife Service decision against an endangered species listing for the sage grouse last year. Can farmers and ranchers be certain that you will continue to support funding for these land management efforts?

Response: I have not been fully briefed on the conservation plans that have been put into place for the sagebrush ecosystem. If I am confirmed, I will review those plans and work with Congress to set appropriate funding levels for them.

Questions for the Record from Senator Jeff Flake

Question 1: The Indian Gaming Regulatory Act, or “IGRA,” was intended to provide an economic engine for tribes on their traditional tribal lands. In Arizona, tribal casinos in the Phoenix metropolitan area have created some controversy. Late last year, the State of Arizona and the tribes agreed to amendments to their gaming compacts. Previous Secretaries of the Interior have rejected these compacts negotiated in good faith between tribes and states. Shouldn’t the Secretary foster the tribes’ collective rights to self-determination by giving deference to the compacts they negotiate?

Response: I am an advocate for tribal sovereignty and self-determination. In general, if a tribe and a state have reached an agreement, it should be given meaning, but I will have

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to learn more about specific instances such as the one to which you refer and I look forward to doing so.

Question 2: The Department's Colorado River Basin study identified a growing gap between water supply and demand in the basin. One of the options identified by the Department and the State of Arizona is desalination of seawater. Israel has been a world leader in desalination and there are a number of partnerships developing with Israel on water. These include the participation of Arizona Governor Ducey in a recent trade mission and water conference in Israel. What role do you see the Department playing in desalination technology and cooperation with Israel in the water field?

Response: Israel is our ally, and cooperation with Israel will be an important part of President Trump's foreign policy. Your question highlights one of the many ways that our country's cooperation with Israel can provide a benefit here at home. Finding new water supplies and securing existing supplies is important to all western state economies and desalination is one of the possible options. If confirmed, I look forward to learning more about this and working with you moving forward.

Questions for the Record from Senator Al Franken

Question 1: If you are confirmed as Secretary of Interior, you will be responsible for overseeing the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). With the multitude of problems in Indian Country today, from disturbingly high rates of youth suicide to a lack of sufficient economic opportunity and many others, we need a bipartisan commitment to address the living conditions on tribal lands. One of the most frustrating issues with the BIA has been the chronic underfunding of important programs and general lack of support from the federal government.

- a. As Secretary of Interior, would you advocate for strong funding for federal programs that support American Indians?

Response: Yes, as appropriate.

- b. Do you have a timeline for filling BIA positions?

Response: If confirmed, the timeline for filling positions at the BIA is the same as it is for all other positions – as quickly as possible.

- c. Will expand on your ideas for improving living conditions in Indian Country?

Response: I believe we need to listen to the tribes and we need to work to empower them, recognizing that each Tribe's situation is different.

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Question 2: Economic development is vital for improving Indian Country, and one area of opportunity is the energy sector. For example, there is significant potential for clean energy development in Indian Country—like wind, solar, and biomass.

- a. Will you commit to working with me to boost renewable energy generation on tribal lands, which would bring important funds and jobs to these communities?

Response: Yes. If confirmed, I will work with you.

- b. I have been working to fund the Tribal Energy Loan Guarantee Program (TIELGP), which was included in the Energy Policy Act of 2005 but has never been funded. This program would allow the DOE to guarantee up to 90 percent of the principal and interest of a loan issued to an Indian tribe for energy development. By leveraging federal resources, this program would encourage borrowers to partner with the private sector to develop energy projects. While I know that this program falls outside of the purview of the DOI, would you commit to working with me to get this program funded?

Response: I will commit to learning more about the program. I would be happy to work with the Secretary of Energy and you as appropriate.

Question 3: Many of the communities in my home state of Minnesota cannot safely rely on the water currently supplied to their homes. These communities and my state have worked tirelessly, investing millions of dollars, in a tristate water system known as the Lewis & Clark Regional Water System. A successful state and federal partnership, Lewis & Clark is funded by local communities, states and expected annual funds from the federal government. Like two water projects in your home state of Montana, federal funding for Lewis & Clark is allocated through the Department of Interior's Bureau of Reclamation. Nearly completed, all communities and states involved have paid their share of the project and in numerous cases, prefunded the necessary dollars to complete this critical water project. However, the federal share of the project has fallen short year-after-year, putting the project far behind construction schedule causing an increase in cost to the project. Will you support prioritizing the Lewis & Clark Regional Water System through the water funds allocated by the Bureau of Reclamation?

Response: I am unaware of the specifics regarding the funding for the referenced project, but I will look into it as the budget for the Department is developed, if I am confirmed.

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Question 4: I appreciate your support for the Land and Water Conservation Fund. In April of 2015, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and the Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board received one of 8 new Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership grants administered through the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) state and local assistance program for Sheridan Veteran’s Memorial Park. This grant is helping to connect low income communities to trail networks, an environmentally restored riverfront, and other outdoor recreation opportunities near Minneapolis’ newest war memorial. If confirmed as Secretary, will you commit to ensuring LWCF dollars continue to foster partnerships that connect people, particularly those in underserved communities, to safe, accessible places to enjoy the great outdoors and establish meaningful relationships with their communities and public lands?

Response: Senator, growing up in Whitefish, Montana, Glacier Park was the sort of national park I learned about as a kid. But I recognize that lots of kids don’t have the opportunity to visit parks like Glacier, and for them an urban park may be their gateway to our great national parks. I want our parks to serve and inspire all Americans, and I will work with you to accomplish that goal.

Question 5: Under what circumstances would support or oppose the transfer of public land to state governments? For example, if Congress passed a bill transferring large sections of public lands to the states, would you recommend that the President veto it?

Response: I generally oppose the sale or transfer of federal lands, and President-elect Trump shares that view. There are some situations in which commitments have previously been made, inholdings need to be swapped or exchanged, or land banks are well situated to address the needs of growing urban areas, where limited transfer is appropriate. However, to your question, while I would wait to evaluate any legislation based on its specifics, I am inclined to oppose legislation that would transfer “large sections of public lands to the states.”

Question 6: Do you support allowing state and local governments to manage federal public lands? From a practical standpoint, how is this different from transferring federal lands to states?

Response: Yes.

Federal lands belong to all Americans, but they need to be managed with particular consideration of the people in local communities whose lives and livelihoods depend on the land. Implicit in the notion of allowing local and state governments to manage federal lands is the belief that local and state officials will be more aware and respectful of the interests of their local constituents and that land will be managed differently based on local considerations. I believe that

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federal ownership and local management can provide the proper balance among interests and be a viable model for management of certain federal lands.

Question 7: According to the Bureau of Land Management’s statistics for Fiscal Year 2015, there are 32.1 million acres of public lands (approximately the size of Alabama) currently under lease for oil and gas activities. However, merely one-third of these acres are actually producing fuel. In fact, the United States has a record high 7,500 approved drilling permits that industry has yet to put to use. In light of this overcapacity, do you believe it is necessary for United States to open up additional public land for oil and gas production? If so, why?

Response: If I am confirmed, I will fully review the oil and gas leasing program at BLM and evaluate whether the acreage levels are appropriate.

Question 8: The United States has been chronically underfunding our National Parks for years. As you know, the parks currently face a more than \$12 billion backlog in deferred maintenance, including \$47 million in Minnesota. I appreciate that you have committed to working with Congress to solve this unacceptable deferred maintenance backlog.

- a. What do you feel would be the best way to approach this issue?
- b. Will you advocate including deferred maintenance in any infrastructure package the new administration is planning?

Response: As I said yesterday, I want to work to make our park system great again. In doing so, I look forward to working with you to find ways to address the maintenance backlog and enhance our parks’ infrastructure.

Question 9: Recently, there has been a lot of discussion about increasing coal production in the United States. Much of this discussion has centered around a supposed “war on coal” being launched by the Obama administration. However, rather than regulation, the decrease in coal jobs has been largely due to the steady progression of automation technology in coal mining, and that fact natural gas is now cheaper than coal due to innovations in hydraulic fracturing and horizontal drilling. One industry expert was quoted in the Wall Street Journal in December saying, “the truth is, gas has already made coal uneconomic.”

- a. If you are confirmed, you will be tasked with oversight of energy production on federal lands—including about 40 percent of our nation’s coal production. Given the current economic reality of energy what do you see as the future of coal?

Response: The Energy Information Administration has projected that coal will remain an important part of the American fuel mix for decades.

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a.b. The Obama Administration put a moratorium on new coal leasing on public lands while it assessed whether taxpayers were receiving a fair return for publically-owned resources. If you are confirmed, will you continue this process?

Response: I have not personally reviewed the Federal Coal Programmatic EIS scoping report published by the Bureau of Land Management, which I believe is the document you are referencing. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that decisions are based on objective science and transparency. I will examine the scoping document and visit with the Bureau of Land Management and determine the appropriate next steps to be taken as part of the NEPA process.

b.c. For a century DOI has managed all aspects of oil and gas development on federal lands. Do you believe it should exercise the same authority involving wells that are hydraulically fractured? For example, do you support the current requirement that wells on federal lands capture methane—rather than waste a valuable public resource by releasing a potent greenhouse gas?

Response: I have not been fully briefed on all the regulatory regimes for coal or for oil and natural gas development on federal lands. If I am confirmed, I will review both of these programs in order to determine what changes may be appropriate in the oil and natural gas leasing program.

Question 10: If confirmed, you will oversee the National Parks which currently has a major problem with sexual harassment in its workforce. As I understand it, Park Service employees with sexual harassment claims are forced to deal with a complex and opaque complaint process and are often afraid to come forward for fear of retaliation. How will you address the culture at the National Park Service that deters abused workers from coming forward with their claims? What steps will you take to ensure our national parks are safe for visitors and workers alike?

Response: If confirmed, as I described in yesterday's hearing, I will work to ensure we have zero tolerance policy for the sexual harassment in the workforce. In addition, if confirmed, I will need to learn more about the specific problems that exist and then address them in the context of a zero tolerance policy.

Question 11: With a changing climate, we are seeing longer wildfire seasons and more extreme fires. At the same time, more and more people in the United States are living in and around forests, grasslands, shrublands, and other vegetated natural areas – places commonly referred to as the wildland-urban interface (WUI). Approximately 70,000 communities nationwide are considered to be at

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high risk from wildland fire, including some in Minnesota. Defense of private property – much of which is located in the WUI – accounts for a large percentage of fire suppression costs. How will you work with the United States Forest Service to mitigate the costs of these fires while ensuring the safety of vulnerable communities?

Response: The issues surrounding the prevention of forest fires and funding for fire suppression efforts are tremendously important. If I am confirmed, I will fully evaluate the Department's current role in fire prevention and suppression and work closely with USDA, the Forest Service, the States and Congress to ensure that these programs are appropriately funded and managed.

Question 12: Do you believe that climate change impacts should be included in environmental reviews under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)?

Response: I have been informed that the Council on Environmental Quality has published guidance for all federal agencies, which requires them to include climate change impacts in environmental reviews under the National Environmental Policy Act. I have not studied the issue.

Question 13: Do you believe that climate change has a cost to society and that this social cost of carbon should be used in regulatory analyses?

Response: I have been informed that the Council on Environmental Quality has published guidance for all federal agencies which requires them to include the social cost of carbon in environmental reviews under the National Environmental Policy Act and other major federal rulemaking analyses.

Question 14: If confirmed, what will do you do to promote renewable electricity generation—including wind and solar—on public lands?

Response: Senator, I am a supporter of an all-of-the-above energy policy, and that includes the development of renewable energy projects and transmission projects on federal lands. That development should be conducted in accordance with the principles of multiple use and fully consider and preserve hunting, fishing and recreating on federal lands.

Question 15: One of the many impacts of climate change has been the increasingly difficult problem of invasive species. Large areas of public lands and waters managed by the Department of the Interior have been damaged by invasions of non-native plants and wildlife. This problem both significantly threatens our most valued ecosystems and places a difficult financial burden on federal and state wildlife management programs, which detracts from their other important duties. Minnesotans are on the frontlines of this problem with the onset

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harmful invasive species in our state such as emerald ash borer, zebra mussels, Asian carp, and Eurasian watermilfoil.

- a. What actions would you take to enhance effectiveness of invasive species control programs on public lands?
- b. The Lacey Act is the most important federal statute in addressing the spread of invasive species. If confirmed, would you enforce the Lacey Act in its current form and list potential invaders as injurious? Additionally, would you call for any legislative changes to be made to the Lacey Act?

Response: I share your concern, especially since my home state of Montana also has significant and numerous invasive species problems; most recently with a very worrisome invasion by zebra mussels. I think it is critical that federal land managers be encouraged and empowered to be good neighbors in controlling invasive species in cooperation with adjacent private land owners. We all need to work together if we are to succeed in defending our ecosystems, economy, and public health from the threats posed by invasive species. I will most definitely enforce the Lacey Act if confirmed, and I am aware that there is broad bipartisan frustration with the lack of an efficient process for listing injurious species under the Act. I will ask the Fish and Wildlife Service to provide me recommendations on how the Act's implementation may be approved, and if it seems that legislative changes may be helpful, I would be pleased to have that conversation with the Congress.

Questions for the Record from Senator Steve Daines

Question 1: You have been a strong partner in the House on improving treatment of our National Forests. As you know, in many ways, Montana is ground zero for obstructionist litigation which hold up common sense, collaboratively developed forest health projects. In the House, you introduced counterpart legislation to my *Litigation Relief for Forest Management Projects Act*. Senator Tester joined us in this effort as well as a cosponsor. This bill would avoid the effects of a disastrous 9th Circuit Court decision in *Cottonwood Environmental Law Center v. United States Forest Service (Cottonwood)* by codifying the Obama Administration's position into law.

In 2015, the Ninth Circuit Court ruled in *Cottonwood* that the U.S. Forest Service (FS) needed to reinitiate consultation with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) at the programmatic (plan) level following the 2009 designation of critical habitat for the Canada lynx. As a result of this ruling, courts have stopped projects during the consultation process throughout the 18 national forests inhabited by lynx. The Department of Justice (DOJ), advocating a view shared by the FS and FWS, argued that the Endangered Species Act does not require re-initiation of consultation on completed forest plans and that only project-level analysis is needed. The Tenth Circuit in 2007 ruled in favor of the FS/FWS' position in a similar case, *Forest Guardians v. Forsgren*.

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In May 2016, DOJ filed a writ of certiorari petition to the U.S. Supreme Court to ask for review of the Cottonwood ruling and resolve the conflicting circuit opinions. On October 11, 2016, the Supreme Court denied this request, allowing the Ninth Circuit's *Cottonwood* decision to stand. As such, federal lands in the states of Montana, Idaho, Washington, Oregon, Nevada, California, and Arizona must operate according to the *Cottonwood* ruling, and the impacts could spread to other circuits as well. According to the Obama Administration, the *Cottonwood* ruling could "shutdown land management," substantially increases unnecessary paperwork requirements without conservation benefits, delays much-needed management projects, and encourages more litigation against important management projects. At least two forest management projects in Montana have been held up in Court as a result of the *Cottonwood* ruling.

Congress must act to reverse this disastrous ruling. Congressional action will require leadership from your Department and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and other land management agencies.

Will you commit to work with me and other colleagues to enact a legislative solution and protect worthwhile land management projects?

Response: I share your concerns about this issue. You have my commitment that, if confirmed, we will work together to address this.

Question 2: If it was not for your personal attention to shepherding the *Blackfeet Water Rights Settlement Act* through the House of Representatives, we would not have succeeded in enacting that historic legislation last Congress. As you know, our work is not finished for the Blackfeet people. In order to effectively implement the Compact and uphold our commitments to the Tribe, our state, and other water users in the Golden Triangle of our state—we need to fully-fund this water settlement.

Will you work with me through the Budget and Appropriations process to ensure robust funding for the Blackfeet Water Rights Settlement?

Response: Whether in Congress or the Administration, I am and will remain dedicated to ensuring that our commitments to the Blackfeet are met.

Questions for the Record from Senator Joe Manchin III

Question 1: Addressing invasive species

Controlling and managing Invasive species is a wide-ranging and constantly evolving challenge. As you know, Congressman Zinke, invasive species decrease biodiversity, damage infrastructure and negatively impact ecosystems. Congress has not been able to address this issue in a meaningful way, as no comprehensive legislation to address the

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treatment, management, and repair of invasive species has been signed into law. However there is a patchwork of laws, regulations, policies and programs in place to mitigate the damage of invasive species. One of the reasons managing invasive species is challenging in a state like West Virginia is because we are a heavily forested state, with considerable amounts of public lands and many large private landowners, including Timber Investment Management Organizations, Real Estate Investments Trusts, coal companies, forest products companies, and family forest owners. This patchwork of Federal, state and private lands makes for a challenging landscape, however it is obvious to me that this is an issue that needs to be addressed by the Federal government. If you are confirmed as Secretary, you will co-chair the National Invasive Species Council (NISC) along with the Secretaries of the Agriculture and Commerce.

What measures do you intend to undertake to prevent, eradicate, and control invasive species?

What steps can Congress take to help you address the issue legislatively?

Response: I share your concern, especially since my home state of Montana also has significant and numerous invasive species problems; including a number of forest pests that threaten the health of our forests. I think it is critical that federal land managers be encouraged and empowered to be good neighbors in controlling invasive species in cooperation with adjacent private land owners. We all need to work together if we are to succeed in defending our ecosystems, economy, and public health from the threats posed by invasive species. If confirmed, I will explore ways to improve the operations of the National Invasive Species Council, and actively engage with the Secretaries of Commerce and Agriculture to get off to a strong start on this issue. One place to start will be to explore how we may work with the States to cooperatively implement the recent framework for early detection and rapid response to new invasive species introductions. Eliminating new invasive species introductions before they become firmly established is the most effective and efficient way to avoid serious and expensive long-term problems from invasive species. Once I have undertaken a review of this issue, I would be pleased to explore with the Congress any legislative changes that might be helpful to better protect our environment, economy, and public health.

Question 2: Developing energy infrastructure

I am a longtime supporter of our nation's sportsmen and sportswomen. West Virginia's natural resources provide us with incredible vistas and outdoor recreational opportunities. I believe in protecting these resources for future generations of West Virginians and for our guests from around the nation and the globe. But, I am also a pragmatist and I believe that we must balance the economy and the environment. West Virginia has a long tradition of being an energy exporting state. That's a tradition that we are determined to continue but – in order to do so - our nation's energy infrastructure must be modernized and expanded in an environmentally responsible way. I want to

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make sure that, when these projects cross public lands, federal agencies with permitting authority are doing their part. I'm sure you are aware that the National Park Service, the Bureau of Land Management and other agencies are engaged in permitting several pipeline projects in my state. And I'm sure you know that the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) is the lead federal agency on these matters. The Department of the Interior is a big agency and while you have stated that you are supportive of responsible energy production, I'd like to get a better understanding of how you plan to manage infrastructure permitting and clarify duplications in the permitting process for pipelines.

What specifically will you do to ensure that your agencies' regional offices are being responsive to and transparent with project developers?

Response: As someone who has led the development of an EIS, I know how frustrating it can be to have another federal agency fail to participate as a cooperating agency. I will work to ensure consistency within the bureaus.

Question 3: The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) is a critical tool to ensuring environmental reviews are comprehensive; our natural resources are preserved; and the mitigation of environmental impacts are minimal. There is certainly room for improvement but energy companies rely on the NEPA process to provide them certainty and a "roadmap" for their projects. And, yet there seems to be increasing uncertainty when it comes to these projects - particularly when a federal agency does not participate as a "cooperating agency".

How will you work to encourage agencies like the National Park Service to act as a cooperating agency on a NEPA review in order to prevent duplication? Because I believe that would ensure that the Park Service is using its financial and staffing resources prudently in a manner that is not redundant.

Response: I have not been fully briefed on the cooperation between all of the Department's agencies on NEPA reviews. If I am confirmed, I will review these procedures and ensure that coordination is appropriate.

Questions for the Record from Senator Cory Gardner

Question 1: Senator Shaheen and I passed the Outdoor Recreation Jobs and Economic Impact Act in December 2016, and President Obama signed it into law. The law requires the Secretary of the Interior to work with the Secretaries of Commerce and Agriculture to measure the outdoor recreation economy. This marks the first time that the federal government will measure the outdoor recreation industry's contribution to our economy.

Should you be confirmed to be Secretary of the Interior, will you commit to supporting an ongoing, annual report on the economic impact of the outdoor recreation economy?

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Response: It is my understanding that the Secretary of Commerce is required to submit the referenced report. I will work with the Secretary of Commerce to support his efforts as appropriate.

Question 2: Will you commit to providing at least \$3 million in funding in the President's budget request for FY18 to the Arkansas Valley Conduit in Southeast Colorado and look for all opportunities to direct additional discretionary funding in FY17 to the Conduit?

Response: Senator, as we discussed in your office, I understand the importance of the Arkansas Valley Conduit, but I cannot make a commitment on behalf of the President-elect about his future budget requests. The most I can do is pledge to work with you on this, and I am committed to do that.

Question 3: As Secretary of the Interior, will you make a renewed effort to work with Tribes no matter what kind of energy resources they have, or potential resources, so they can make their own decisions to develop their own resources for the benefit of their members and the country?

Response: If confirmed, this will be one of my highest priorities. As I said at yesterday's hearing on my designation, tribal sovereignty is meaningful and important. I believe tribes should be able to make their own resource decisions for the benefit of their members.

Questions for the Record from Senator Martin Heinrich

Question 1: Will you work with western senators to make sure that renewable energy development and associated transmission projects will remain a priority on public lands, while protecting the places where we all love to hunt, hike, and fish?

Response: Senator, I am a supporter of an all-of-the-above energy policy, and that includes the development of renewable energy projects and transmission projects on federal lands. That development should be conducted in accordance with the principles of multiple use and fully consider and preserve hunting, fishing and recreating on federal lands.

Question 2: As the new administration looks at hiring freezes or budget cuts, will you commit to protecting critical functions at Interior agencies, including fire management, law enforcement, realty, and permit processing?

Response: I agree with you that those are critical DOI responsibilities, and I will work to ensure funding for those programs are adequate.

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Question 3: Congress enacted the Indian Reorganization Act in 1934 to help restore homelands for tribal governments. Interior Secretaries of both parties worked to move tribal fee lands into trust for nearly 75 years before the Supreme Court struck down a portion of this law in 2009. Since 2009, the Interior Solicitor's office has worked to ensure that the Administrative land to trust process will continue to work for tribes. Can you please share your thoughts for continuing the Administrative Indian land to trust process?

Response: I understand that the land into trust process is very important to the tribes. I will meet with the Bureau of Indian Affairs to gain a greater appreciation of the specific administrative challenges caused by the referenced 2009 decision and the efforts taken by the Solicitor's office.

Question 4: As you know, many national forests, parks, and lands were carved out of the ancestral homelands of Indian tribes. Many tribes retain their connections to these sacred lands and places. What are your views about ensuring that these lands remain under federal control, and the need for the Interior Department and other federal land managers to protect tribal sacred places and access to these places for Native Americans?

Response: Senator, as I said at the hearing on my designation, I believe federal lands should remain under federal control, and I deeply respect the rights and heritage of Indian tribes. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that the Department of Interior's management practices respect sacred places and Native Americans.

Question 5: Tribal water rights settlements like the Taos and Aamodt Settlement Agreements promise to resolve long-standing conflicts and reduce uncertainty over water rights. Will you commit to transparently implementing water rights settlements in a way that protects water rights and the environment while ensuring adequate future water supplies?

Response: I appreciate how important these tribal water rights settlements are throughout the western states and to the tribes. I am not aware of the specific issues regarding a lack of transparency in the area of water rights, but as a general matter I believe Interior should act in a transparent manner.

Question 6: Across the West, our quality of life, tourism, and outdoor recreation are driving an economic resurgence and sustainable, healthy rivers and streams, lakes, and reservoirs are foundational to this economic growth. How do we protect and promote these resources while ensuring we have reliable water supplies for farms, industry and municipal use?

Response: I believe we need to recognize that everything needs to be on the table when it comes to our water resources from increased conservation to additional infrastructure. If

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confirmed, I believe the executive branch and congress need to work together to address the issue of water supply and reliability for the next century.

Question 7: Facing persistent drought in the West, Congress has boosted support for the WaterSmart program, the Bureau of Reclamation's primary tool in promoting water conservation and modern, efficient water infrastructure in agricultural and municipal uses. Will you work with us on increased funding and capacity for WaterSmart and federal leadership on efficient water infrastructure?

Response: In the West, water infrastructure is the backbone of local and regional economies, including the infrastructure on Indian Reservations. If confirmed I think it will be important for the Department of the Interior to explore many ways in which it can provide assistance to local and regional efforts to improve water certainty. I look forward to learning more about the WaterSmart Program and how it can be used to improve local economies in the West.

Question 8: You have talked about working with states on Antiquities Act monument proclamations and policies, but you have not mentioned collaboration with affected tribes. Will you commit to meeting with and working with tribes and tribal communities whose ancestral lands and sacred sites are protected by Antiquities Act proclamations before making any decisions about them?

Response: Yes, if confirmed.

Question 9: The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service just finalized revisions to the eagle conservation/take permit program in December. Will you commit to work with industry to ensure a practical and workable implementation, including incorporating the latest data and an appropriate consideration of low-risk projects?

Response: I am not familiar with the specifics of this program. As a general matter, any program needs to be workable and practical to be successful. If it is not, it needs to be improved.

Questions for the Record from Senator Mazie Hirono

Question 1: In Hawaii and the Pacific Region, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service works closely with the Department of Defense (DoD) in ensuring that they meet their environmental obligations including requirements under the Endangered Species Act, the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. This work is critical as our nation continues to strengthen our strategic interests in the Indo-Asia-Pacific region. Yet, this coordination takes up a large part of Fish and Wildlife Service's resources in the Pacific Island Office.

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As Secretary of Interior, you will be responsible for managing the Fish and Wildlife Service and as such, I want to make sure you are aware of this engagement between the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the DoD. I want to work with you to both ensure that this important work can continue as well as to address other important resource management issues under the responsibility of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Hawaii and the Pacific Region.

Response: Senator, I do not know much about the relationship between the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Department of Defense on these issues. Thank you for bringing this to my attention, and I look forward to learning more about this important issue as we work together.

Question 2: While in the House you voted in favor of an amendment that would have blocked funding for any listed species for which the Fish and Wildlife Service has failed to complete a 5-year review as required by the Endangered Species Act even though the Fish and Wildlife Service failure to do so is due to insufficient appropriations by Congress. This amendment would have devastated conservation and recovery efforts for as many as 850 species across the country, 137 of which are in Hawaii.

As Secretary, will you work with Congress to ensure that sufficient funding is provided to Fish and Wildlife Service so that they can fulfill their duties, including completing 5-year reviews, to protect and recover our nation's endangered species?

Response: If I am confirmed, I will work closely with Congress to ensure that conservation and recovery programs are appropriately funded.

Question 3: Despite Hawaii and the Pacific Islands being home to a large percentage of endangered species, we have suffered from a lack of funding. For example, in FY 16 the Fish and Wildlife Service's Recovery Fund was \$17.8 million for Region 1. The Pacific Islands received only 37% of the funding, despite being home to over 90% of Region 1's endangered species.

Can you commit to working with me to provide more federal resources to Hawaii and the Pacific Islands in recovery funding for our endangered species?

Response: Senator, I recognize that Hawaii is a special place with unique needs. If I am confirmed, I will work with you to ensure that funding for recovery and conservation programs in Hawaii are appropriate.

Question 4: Funding for Fish and Wildlife Service's State Wildlife Grants is based on a formula that takes into account human population and land area, with the added caveat that no state receives less than 1% of funding. As Hawaii does not have a large land area or large human population, we receive the minimum amount of funding, despite having a disproportionately large need to protect our threatened and endangered species.

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If confirmed, can I count on working with you to either adjust the formula to account for need (including number of endangered species) or raise the minimum amount of funding that states shall receive?

Response: If I am confirmed, I will commit to fully review the funding formulas for the Fish and Wildlife Service's State Wildlife Grant program to determine whether adjustments to the program are appropriate. I will also work with you and Congress to ensure that funding levels for the program are appropriate.

Question 5: As you know, the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) is a priority for Hawaii. It drives local economies and is the cornerstone federal program that provides access to public lands for all Americans, and helps protect our incredible diversity of plants and wildlife that make Hawaii so unique and special, as previously mentioned.

Getting into specifics, I understand you supported legislation that reflected the Senate energy bill compromise language that permanently reauthorized the LWCF. Will you carry over that support into your role as Secretary? Will you work to ensure that annual full funding for LWCF is provided in your budget proposal including robust funding for critical federal land acquisition priorities? Along those same lines, will you work with me and other members of Congress to find a reliable long-term funding solution for LWCF?

Response: LWCF has my full support. I have cosponsored two bipartisan pieces of legislation to permanently reauthorize the program, have opposed my own Chairman's reform proposals, and was the only member of the Montana delegation to vote in support of the program's reauthorization and funding. As a Montanan, I have personally witnessed the good work LWCF does for local communities, the sportsmen and recreation community, and conservation. As the budget process moves forward, I look forward to working the President-elect and Congress to support LWCF's critical work. That includes identifying stable, diverse and long-term funding mechanisms to keep the fund viable for generations to come.

Question 6: Water security is becoming increasingly important across the nation. As an island state, we in Hawaii are in a unique situation where we must be self-reliant for our freshwater needs. Just this past fall I hosted a Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee field hearing to examine opportunities for federal and non-federal partnerships in watershed protection and efforts to improve water security in Hawaii.

During the field hearing a couple of Federally-funded projects that target specific geographic locations, including the Forest Service's Watershed Improvement Program and the Bureau of Reclamation's Western Watershed Enhancement Partnership, were mentioned. Due to Hawaii's limited endangered species resources and invasive species threat, coupled with the importance of maintaining the health of our forested watersheds,

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can I count on working with you to identify opportunities for similar DOI initiatives to focus on the Pacific Islands?

Response: Water security is important. I will work with you on opportunities for initiatives that could benefit the Pacific Islands.

Question 7: DOI's stated mission is as follows: "The Department of Interior protects and manages the Nation's natural resources and cultural heritage; provides scientific and other information about those resources; and honors its trust responsibilities or special commitments to American Indians, Alaska Natives, and affiliated island communities."

As Secretary, how do you plan to carry out the Department's mission? What will the Department look like in, say 2 years, compared to now? What parts of the Department do you seek to change or enhance?

Response: If confirmed, I intend to restore trust and strong management to America's public lands and resources. In our meeting in your office and at the hearing this week, I shared the impact that attending the ceremony at Yellowstone National Park commemorating the 100 year anniversary of the National Park Service had on me. I believe we need to ensure that our approach to responsibly managing America's public lands will make our children's children proud in the next century. If confirmed, I will review agency policies, resources, and priorities and look forward to the opportunity to meet with you to discuss areas that would benefit from changes or enhancements.

Question 8: In an op-ed that you wrote last spring you noted that it's our responsibility to "ensure our children and grandchildren's children enjoy the same outdoor opportunities that we have." In Hawaii a lot of our native species are found only in Hawaii and are under constant threat from invasive species, climate change, development, etc.

As Secretary of Interior, what will you do to ensure that our grandchildren's children in Hawaii get to enjoy our native species?

Response: Senator, during the hearing on my designation, you know that I referred on several occasions to my two granddaughters sitting behind me. I am committed to looking at issues facing the Department with a 100-year perspective. I want to ensure that our grandchildren's children look back and think, "They did right by us." Frankly, I don't know all that can be done to address the threat of non-native species, but, if confirmed, I will consult with you and Hawaiian officials, and we will work together to find the best possible solutions.

Question 9: The Senate Environment and Public Works Committee held a successful bipartisan hearing last year on the issue of marine debris. The Fish and Wildlife Service testified on how marine debris is harming wildlife and fouling coastal National Wildlife Refuges.

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Coming from a non-coastal state, what steps will you take to familiarize yourself with this global problem? Will you support the Fish and Wildlife Service and Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement to continue their participation in the Interagency Marine Debris Coordinating Committee? What other steps could the DOI take to help find global solutions to this growing problem?

Response: I am familiar with marine debris, given my 23 years in the Navy and I recognize that it is a serious problem. However, I will need to learn more about the specific role the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement have with the interagency committee.

Question 10: Many of our National parks are suffering severe damage by invasive species. Examples include pythons and other invasive wildlife in Everglades, wild boars and tree-killing insects in Great Smoky Mountains, and saltcedar and invasive grasses in Joshua Tree National Park. The parks in Hawai'i are particularly invaded. The forests of Hawai'i Volcanoes are under threat from many invasive plants, feral pigs, and the plant disease rapid o' hia death. The Park's unique birds are being decimated by mongooses, rats, and avian malaria.

What steps will you take to protect our National parks from invasive species?

Response: I share your concern, especially since my home state of Montana also has significant and numerous invasive species problems in our national parks. I think it is critical that federal land managers be encouraged and empowered to be good neighbors in controlling invasive species in cooperation with adjacent private land owners. We all need to work together if we are to succeed in defending our ecosystems, economy, and public health from the threats posed by invasive species. I am especially concerned that Hawaii's unique flora and fauna are vulnerable to invasive species. I would not want to see invasive species push any of these unique plants and animals onto the Endangered Species list. Once confirmed, I will ask the National Park Service to present me with options for better protecting our national parks from invasive species.

Question 11: I'm sure you are familiar with visitor concerns about noise from park overflights. I understand Glacier National Park deals with issue. Since the passage of the National Parks Air Tour Management Act of 2000 every national park unit with significant air tour operations (50 or more air tours annually) has been required to prepare an air tour management plan or agreement. This is a joint responsibility of the National Park Service and Federal Aviation Administration. There are 27 national park units that qualify for plans including two in my state, Haleakala and Hawai'i Volcanoes national parks. Yet only two parks have had plans completed thus far (Biscayne and Big Cypress) and both of those just last year.

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What will you do to protect the environment and visitor experience at our national parks from air tour noise?

Response: I hope to work to enhance the visitor experience in our Nation's National Parks across the board. Frankly, I have not given a lot of thought to the issue of air tour noise, but, if confirmed, I will, and I would appreciate your recommendations on how best to address the issue.

Question 12: Last Congress I cosponsored a bill introduced by Senators Murkowski and Cantwell called the "National Volcano Early Warning and Monitoring Program Act." As you know, we have a number of volcanoes in Hawaii and this bill would provide important updates as well as unify the monitoring systems of volcano observatories, including the Hawaiian Volcano Observatory.

As Secretary will you support this bill? Will you make volcano monitoring a priority for the Department and commit to working with myself and other members of Congress to advance this legislation?

Response: If confirmed as Secretary, I will fully support the mission and intent of the "National Volcano Early Warning and Monitoring Program Act". Advancing our technological capabilities in this area is important. Volcanos are an important applied science focus of USGS' Natural Hazards Mission Area. As a geologist, I am aware and fully appreciative of the natural hazards that we face, and will continue to support USGS's efforts to address these risks.

Question 13: When we had our courtesy meeting you said that what is important to me is important to you. In Hawaii there are a number of priorities affecting the state that are important to me and that fall within the purview of the Department. These include:

- securing our freshwater resources,
- Compact of Free Association,
- permanent reauthorization of and full funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund,
- protecting and recovering endangered species, and
- preventing and eradicating invasive species.

As Secretary of Interior, will you commit to working with me on these issues?

Response: Senator, I appreciate you taking the time to meet with me prior to the hearing on my designation. What is important to you is important to me. If confirmed, I look forward to working together to address these issues.

Question 14: Hawaii is the state most impacted by the three compacts of free association that the United States has entered into with the Republic of Palau, Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Federated States of Micronesia. I have worked in the past on a

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number of items, including fulfilling our financial commitments to Palau, working to restore Medicaid reimbursements for citizens of the Freely Associated States (FAS), and establishing a one-stop resource center to facilitate the resettlement needs of FAS citizens residing in Hawaii.

If confirmed, can Hawaii, Guam, the Northern Marianas, and American Samoa continue counting on your department—and enlist your assistance in dealing with other departments as well—to assist us in working to support U.S. states and territories with large FAS citizen populations?

Response: This is an important issue to me. The relationship between the US, our territories, and the Freely Associated States is significant and deserves special focused attention. If I am confirmed, I look forward to learning more and working with you on finding appropriate solutions to the issues they face.

Question 15: Protecting our freshwater resources is becoming increasingly important across the nation as well as to our national security. As an island state, we in Hawaii are in a unique situation where we must be self-reliant for our freshwater needs. Just this past fall I hosted a Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee field hearing to examine opportunities for federal and non-federal partnerships in watershed protection and efforts to improve water security in Hawaii.

During this Congress I will be working to identify and provide federal resources to address water security both in Hawaii and across the nation. Will you make finding solutions to protect our water resources a priority at the department? How will you prioritize funding resources for USGS streamgages and other observational equipment that we rely on? Can I count on you as Secretary to work with me on this issue?

Response: As I mentioned in my opening testimony at my confirmation hearing, water resource security is of critical importance to our nation. I understand and appreciate your concerns related to the complex interaction between fresh groundwater “lens” and saltwater and the critical need to prioritize self-reliance and freshwater security for Hawaii and the country as a whole. I support your efforts to identify potential opportunities for federal and non-federal partnerships related to watershed protection and water security, and look forward to working with Congress in developing its funding priorities for developing and protecting our freshwater resources.

Question 16: As our military focuses on the strategic importance of the Indo-Asia-Pacific region, we expect an increase in traffic throughout the Pacific region. With that traffic comes an increased threat of invasive species in Hawaii, which is the gateway to the mainland U.S. from Asia.

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As Secretary, what resources will your department provide to assist the Pacific island communities in protecting against this threat? Do you agree with the proverb that “an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure?” If so, can I count on working with you to protect our environment from existing and anticipated threats?

Response: If confirmed, I will work to enhance coordination with the Department of Defense and the Pacific island communities to reduce the risks posed by invasive species. I definitely agree that “an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.” One place to start will be to explore how we may implement the recent framework for early detection and rapid response to new invasive species introductions. Eliminating new invasive species introductions before they become firmly established is the most effective and efficient way to avoid serious and expensive long-term problems from invasive species.

Question 17: As Secretary, you will be responsible for managing over 500 million acres of public lands.

What are your priorities for utilization of these lands for the public good?

Response: Senator, as I said at the hearing on my designation, I am inspired by the inscription on the Roosevelt Arch in the Yosemite National Park that reads, “For the Benefit and Enjoyment of the People.” I believe the public good is best met if we keep both of those goals in mind. That means that different portions of our federal lands will be managed differently; that our priorities will vary depending on the land. In some cases, we should honor the Muir model in which man has a light footprint and simply observes nature. In other areas, lands should be managed in accordance with the Pinchot principles of best-practices and allow for greater impact and management by man including the production of resources to benefit our lives and the economy.

Question 18: As Secretary, you will be making decisions that impact our water, air, land, and oceans. You have a record of questioning the scientific consensus on climate change and have alluded to our nation’s energy independence being more important than addressing climate change.

Energy independence does not necessarily have to come at the cost of our nation’s environment. Do you see opportunities for advancing our nation’s energy independence in tandem with mitigating climate change?

Response: Yes. From my years in the Navy, when I observed energy production around the world, I know that energy production in accordance with reasonable regulation here in the United States is preferable to energy production with little or no regulation elsewhere. As a result, I believe the production of domestic energy can both reduce our Nation’s dependence on energy imports and benefit the environment.

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Question 19: The Department of Energy, Department of Interior, and Bureau of Ocean Energy Management released their 2016 National Offshore Wind Strategy Report and discussed several important improvements to BOEM’s regulatory review process. The report recommended that BOEM’s existing regulatory process could be improved and made more efficient. This may include establishing more predictable review timelines and maintaining a reasonable level of flexibility given the early stage of the industry’s development.

Do you agree to work with the DOE to ensure the regulations and process that govern offshore wind development should be both efficient and fair to help facilitate the growth of infrastructure projects under the DOI’s jurisdiction?

Response: Yes, if confirmed.

Question 20: With the first offshore wind turbines currently spinning off the coast of Rhode Island, the potential for offshore wind development in the United States is finally starting to be realized. Part of the reason for the Block Island Wind Farm’s success is the extensive ocean planning process and corresponding stakeholder engagement process that helped identify an area for the wind farm that provided the least conflict with other users, and kept the broader ocean community well-informed of the project as it developed.

Do you agree ocean planning on a broader regional and national scale could also support other offshore renewable energy projects? Other areas that are also being considered for offshore wind energy development have not benefited from this level of community involvement and conflict identification prior to being bid. How will you direct BOEM to take into consideration the concerns of the fishing, shipping, and other pertinent industries early on in the lease sale process?

Response: President Obama issued an Executive Order entitled Stewardship of the Ocean, Our Coasts, and the Great Lakes in June 2010. If I am confirmed, I will review the Department’s compliance with this Executive Order and determine what steps the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management is taking to address the concerns of the fishing, shipping and other pertinent industries within the lease sale process.

Question 21: The Department of Interior is charged with managing the nation’s wildlife, natural resources, and public lands. All of these are threatened by climate change. Whether it be sea level rise stealing protected land from coastal National Wildlife Refuges, increased drought threatening migratory bird habitat, or milder winters allowing parasites, like ticks, to overburden large game animals like moose – the wildlife and habitats under the Department of Interior’s charge are at the frontline of the negative consequences of climate change. USGS, FWS, National Park Service, and other DOI agencies have all concluded that the science behind climate change is well established and have for years issued rules and followed policies consistent with this position. In 2014 you stated climate change “[is not a hoax, but it’s not proven science either.](#)”

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Will you direct DOI agencies to reconsider their decisions to act in accordance with climate science?

Response: Senator, as I said at the hearing, the Department's decisions in the past and future should be based on sound science. As I review past decisions and make new decisions, I will keep sound science in mind.

Question 22: The U.S. Geological Survey is an agency wholly dedicated to scientific research and advancement. Its talented and well-respected researchers have authored more than 130,000 publications since the agency's founding in 1879 and are looked to as national experts in the natural sciences.

Do you accept the scientific research and other products that have been produced by USGS? Further, the top mission area listed on [USGS's website](#) is currently "climate and land use change." Will you in any way try to limit USGS's work on climate change issues?

Response: As a student of geology, the USGS has a rich history and a proud tradition. I have been told various, sometimes inconsistent, things about the current work at the USGS labs, and I need to learn more. If confirmed, I will look at those issues. I will try to ensure that priorities are appropriately addressed. I anticipate that I will learn more about the USGS's role in climate change research versus the other the role of other agencies and departments if I am confirmed.

Question 23: How will you navigate the dual responsibilities of overseeing the protection of the nation's environment (including working to mitigate the effects of human-driven climate change) with managing extractive energy projects that are producing the fuel that is driving climate change?

Response: Managing these responsibilities in a balanced and appropriate manner is an essential duty for the Secretary of the Interior. If I am confirmed, I will work closely with the officers of the Department, the public, stakeholders and Congress to develop and execute Departmental policies in an appropriate manner.

Question 24: The Obama Administration was a leader in accelerating the deployment of clean energy on federal lands. Powering Our Future, through the Department of Interior, looks to permit gigawatts of renewable energy on public lands by 2020.

Do you support siting renewable energy projects on public lands? What will you do, if confirmed, to keep in place existing programs like Powering our Future?

Response: If I am confirmed, I will review these programs and work closely with Congress to ensure the appropriate funding levels for the Powering our Future program.

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Question 25: Some examples of invasive species that threaten our native habitat include mammals, birds, reptiles, plants, insects, and worms. These bioinvaders threaten all kinds of ecosystems across the country, ranging from swamps to deserts, seacoasts to mountain tops. Countering these threats would seem to require coordination across many players – federal and state agencies, Tribes, landowners, and other private entities. The National Invasive Species Council was created to facilitate this coordination. As you know, the Secretary of the Interior co-chairs the Council, and provides its staff.

How would you strengthen the Council’s leadership in these areas?

Response: If confirmed, I will explore ways to improve the operations of the National Invasive Species Council, and actively engage with the Secretaries of Commerce and Agriculture to get off to a strong start on this issue. I agree that we need to cooperatively engage with States, tribes, local governments, and private landowners to make progress on invasive species. One place to start will be to explore how we may work with the States and others to cooperatively implement the recent framework for early detection and rapid response to new invasive species introductions. We also need to create a more effective linkage between the National Invasive Species Council policy operation in Washington DC and the on-the-ground federal land managers across the country who deal with invasive species on a daily basis.

Question 26: Many people think that detecting invasive species as soon as possible and taking effective action to eradicate or contain them is a crucial component of an effective invasive species program. The Department (of Interior) and Council recently published a national “early detection and rapid response” strategy.

What steps would you take to implement this strategy?

Response: I agree that early detection and rapid response to new invasive species introductions is the most effective and cost-efficient way to protect our environment, and economy and public health from invasive species. If confirmed, I will direct my staff to quickly analyze the new framework for early detection and rapid response to new invasive species introductions, and provide me with recommendations on how we might work cooperatively with the States and others to more effectively and efficiently deal with new invasive species introductions.

Question 27: When President Richard Nixon signed the Endangered Species Act (ESA) into law on December 28, 1973, it had already passed the U.S. House of Representatives by an overwhelmingly vote of 355 to four. Over the last 42 years, the ESA has become one of our bedrock environmental laws. Among other things, it helped to save the American bald eagle, the whooping crane, and the black-footed ferret from extinction. The ESA has prevented the extinction of 99% of species placed under its protection and remains the most important law our nation has ever passed to protect imperiled species.

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Polling shows that the ESA continues to have overwhelming support from the American public (90% of Americans support the ESA).

Will you continue to enforce and strengthen this law that has proved so vital in preventing species extinction?

Response: If confirmed, I will swear an oath to uphold all of the laws of the United States, which includes the implementation of the Endangered Species Act.

Question 28: During our courtesy meeting you mentioned that one of your top priorities as Secretary will be to build trust. In the past you have come out on different sides of some very important issues. For example, in 2010 you sent a letter to President Obama urging him to take action on climate change but then later questioned the science that supports climate change. You also support keeping public lands public but just recently voted in favor of a rule that allows the House to consider federal land transfers cost-free and budget-neutral.

When you talk about building trust what do you mean? Do you mean within the Department of Interior, between the Department and the public, or between the Department and Members of Congress? Also, given your support for conflicting actions in the past, how do you specifically plan for people within the Department, the public, and Members of Congress trust you to maintain the priorities you note today throughout your term as Secretary?

Response: If confirmed as Secretary of the Interior, I intend to be a listening advocate and promote openness and transparency within the Department and its 70,000 talented employees as well as with local, state and federal elected officials, other experts and organizations, and the American public. 20 percent of U.S. land is managed by the Department and, if confirmed, I intend to work with Congress throughout my tenure to meet the priorities of the Trump Administration and those outlined for you today.

Question 29: During our meeting you mentioned that your three priorities for the Department are establishing trust, addressing DOI's infrastructure needs, and reorganizing the Department. Along the lines of infrastructure, you had mentioned not wanting to use the Land and Water Conservation fund to pay for the \$12.5 billion maintenance backlog within the National Park Service.

What specifically will you do as Secretary to address our infrastructure needs and how will you pay for it? What specific steps are needed to "grow our economy?"

Response: Senator, if confirmed, I am going to work with and on behalf of President-elect Trump to include funding to address our national parks' infrastructure backlog in

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infrastructure legislation. That package is envisioned to address national needs of which the backlog in the national parks is only a part, and I do not know how the administration will propose to pay for the entire package.

As to growing the economy, there are many steps that need to be taken, but a sound energy policy is one of the underpinnings of a strong and growing economy, and I am dedicated to ensuring that our federal resources are available in accordance with best management practices to support that goal.

Question 30: During our meeting you mentioned that one of your three priorities for the Department is to reorganize.

How would you go about reorganizing the Department? Can you elaborate on the specific steps you will take in reorganizing and the expertise you will take into consideration during the process?

Response: Senator, if confirmed, I intend to undertake a 100-year review of the Department's structure and management. I don't know what conclusions that review will reach, but I can imagine they will touch on fundamental issues about the manner in which the Department is structured, where its functions are located, and changes that should be made in resource allocation.

Question 31: If confirmed as Secretary, what would your top three policy objectives be for the Department? For example, one of Secretary Jewell's priorities for the Department was "ensuring healthy watersheds and sustainable, secure water supplies." In carrying out those three policy objectives how much consideration would you give to public and community input? What resources do you intend to rely upon to inform these policy objectives?

Response: Senator, as I said at the hearing on my designation, if confirmed, my three highest priorities are:

1. Restoring trust by working with rather than against local communities and states;
2. Prioritize the estimated \$12.5 billion backlog in maintenance at our national parks, and;
3. To ensure that the professionals on the front line, our rangers and field managers, have the right tools, right resources, and flexibility to make the right decisions that give a voice to the people they serve.

As to the amount of public and community input I will consider, I will say that public and community input is key to my highest priority of restoring trust. The Department must be a good listener.

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Question 32: During our courtesy meeting you mentioned the issue of sexual harassment within the National Park Service (NPS), that you have discussed it with Secretary Jewell, and that you have a zero tolerance policy.

What specifically will you do to prevent further occurrence of this within NPS? What steps will you take to hold employees accountable for reports of sexual harassment? How will you address retaliation? Will you institute reporting mechanisms that make it easier for victims to come forward with reports?

Response: Senator, I have zero tolerance for sexual harassment. If confirmed, I will ensure that the leadership at all levels of the Department understands how seriously I take the issue, and the issue will be addressed. In fact, I take this issue so seriously that, rather than give you a complete answer today, I would ask for you to give me some time, if confirmed, to better understand exactly what needs to be done and then to discuss with you my findings and the steps I will take to address the issue.

Questions for the Record from Senator Bill Cassidy

Question 1: Congressman, the President-Elect has talked many times about his desire to create jobs—a message well received in my state. In fact, he’s talked about “big league” jobs and establishing American energy dominance. The outgoing Administration will point to the declining unemployment rate (4.7 percent in December). Yet the Labor Participation Rate, now at 62.7 percent, has also steadily declined since President Obama took office, and that is not a positive trend. The Labor Participation Rate when President Obama took office in January 2009, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, was 65.7 percent. As I just mentioned, it has steadily declined and has remained at 62 percent since April 2014.

In my state, the oil and gas industry is one of our largest employers. The industry not only employs thousands of hard working men and women but the dollars my home state of Louisiana receives from energy development goes towards rebuilding our coastline. Due to the Obama Administration’s regulatory tactic of “death by one thousand cuts” as well as the decline in the price of oil, folks in my state have been losing their jobs and struggling to find adequate employment to

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provide for themselves and their families. Just last week there was a headline in one of my state's local newspapers that read "Baker Hughes to close Crowley facility." Another headline last month read "Shreveport near top for U.S. job losses".

According to the website 24/7WallStreet.com which analyzed data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Lafayette, Houma and Shreveport, Louisiana all rank at or near the top for job loss in 2016.

While I recognize that oil prices are one of the key drivers for development, regulations also play a pivotal role for the industry.

Congressman, how will you, if confirmed, work to fulfill the President-Elect's commitment to create a regulatory climate that encourages both American energy dominance and job creation while at the same time honoring the Department's mission to protect natural resources?

The departing Interior Department leadership repeatedly used oil prices and lack of industry interest as rationale for rescinding planned lease sales in the Atlantic and Artic.

- i. Do you believe that the current regulatory environment contributed to "lack of interest" in the prospect of OCS lease sales?
- ii. Considering these leases take several years to develop, do you believe temporary low oil and gas prices are an adequate reason to withhold lease acreage?

Response: Senator, I believe that an uncertain regulatory environment in which companies have reason to doubt whether permits will be issued causes potential lease bidders to reduce the price they are willing to pay. Regulatory uncertainty is reflected in bid prices. I believe reforms are necessary if we want to ensure both that production will be done in accordance with reasonable regulation and our taxpayers will receive true fair value for lease sales.

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Question 2: Last Congress, the committee passed my legislation that opened up access to the Eastern Gulf of Mexico and expanded the scope of Outer Continental Shelf state revenue sharing. At the end of last Congress, a majority of Senators, with a bi-partisan vote, supported a later iteration of my legislation that would expand revenue sharing for Gulf and Mid-Atlantic States as well as Alaska. In my opening statement, I mentioned that federal revenues from energy developed in the Gulf go to rebuild Louisiana's coast, which is vital to my state's future.

Unfortunately, the Obama Administration's 5-year OCS plan and aggressive effort to name new or expand current national monument areas means that states such as mine or Virginia where they have large budget deficits are missing out on additional or new dollars that could flow to states.

- iii. What are your thoughts on the most recent 5-year OCS plan proposed by the Interior Department, and will you pledge to work with myself and others in Congress to ensure the next five year plan pursues the goals of energy independence and robust job growth?
- iv. What are your thoughts on increasing and expanding the ability for coastal states to receive revenue payments from the federal leases on the OCS?

Response: If I am confirmed, I will work to implement President-elect Trump's energy independence policy. That will certainly require a require a review of our OCS lease plans, and I commit to working closely with Congress, the States, local governments and stakeholders to develop a comprehensive policy towards OCS leasing.

Questions for the Record from Senator Catherine Cortez Masto

Question 1: Minute 319 provides important guidelines for both Western States and Mexico regarding the management of the Colorado River's water, but expires at the end of 2017. The Upper and Lower Basin states have been working on a new agreement with Mexico, Minute 3 2X, which has been proposed based on Minute 319 and evolving basin conditions. What steps can the Department take to ensure the process is smooth and timely? Can you commit to working closely with the Western States to ensure their concerns are addressed before Minute 319 expires?

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Response: I understand there is a longstanding tradition of collaboration on Colorado River between the Secretary of the Interior and the Colorado River basin states. That's a tradition I intend to maintain. I will ensure that we work closely with basin states over the course of the year.

Question 2: Will you commit to strong tribal consultation when it comes to decisions, activities, and land management on Bureau of Land Management land?

Response: I have proudly represented the tribes of Montana in Congress. I appreciate the importance of tribal consultation and will work to implement a culture that ensures opportunities for consultation.

Question 3: In 2014, Department of Interior employees were under threat in Nevada during a standoff over BLM land use. As you are aware, the danger facing Interior employees has increased over the past several years, and we have seen an rise in similar incidents. If you are confirmed as Secretary of the Interior, you have an obligation to protect your employees from harm. What are your plans to protect the health and welfare of your employees? How will the Department provide the training and resources necessary to handle these kinds of situations in the future?

Response: If confirmed, and as someone who has spent 23 years in the Navy, nothing will be more important than ensuring Interior's employees have a safe place to work. I will learn more about the specific challenges the agency faces. If confirmed, I will work to free up some of the decision-making on the front lines and collaborate with local law enforcement, which I believe will foster greater trust.

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Questions for the Record from Chairman Lisa Murkowski

Question 1: From 1944 to 1982, the Interior Department conducted oil exploration in the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska, leaving behind 136 well sites in need of environmental remediation and proper plugging and abandonment. While I secured \$50 million in 2013 to clean up many of these legacy wells, by 2019, when that funding is exhausted, the Department estimates there will still be 29 wells in need of remediation. If you are confirmed as Secretary, will you commit to working with me to develop a plan to expedite the cleanup of all remaining wells, rather than allowing piecemeal, bare minimum federal efforts to continue year after year?

Response: Madam Chairman, I believe that cleaning up those legacy wells should be a priority, and, if confirmed, I look forward to working with you to achieve that goal.

Question 2: Fisheries and tourism are vital to the livelihoods of thousands of Southeast Alaskans, but the Canadian government is permitting new hardrock mines that could threaten transboundary watersheds if they do not adhere to strong environmental standards. While the State Department is generally the lead on this issue, one of Interior's agencies, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, has provided grant funding to study water quality on the Stikine, Taku, and Unuk Rivers. This will help establish a baseline and protect our ability to seek damages in the event of an environmental mishap under terms of a treaty between the U.S. and Canada. Are you willing to engage on this issue, consider increasing transboundary water studies, and consult with other Departments to encourage Canada to take all necessary steps to protect the environment in this region?

Response: If confirmed, yes.

Question 3: Will you review recently completed and ongoing Resource Management Plans in Alaska to ensure that these plans are consistent and do not prevent access to resources needed for economic development?

Response: If confirmed, yes.

Question 4: Will you staff the Alaska Special Assistant to the Secretary positions, both in Anchorage and Washington, DC?

Response: As I have discussed with you and your staff, Alaska deserves special attention given the large Federal footprint and impact on the state. With this in mind, if I am confirmed, I will work with you to fill the Special Assistant position based in Anchorage, and learn more as to why the position in Washington was eliminated.

Question 5: Will you ensure that all Interior agency actions affecting Alaska are consistent with recent principles set forth in Supreme Court decision in the *Sturgeon* case, requiring that agency organic acts' interpretations and all agency actions be consistent

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with the Alaska Statehood Act, the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, and the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act?

Response: I have been informed that the Supreme Court in the *Sturgeon* case, recognized that when passing the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act, Congress appreciated that Alaska is different in many respects from the lower 48 states in law. To the extent that the Congress has recognized such differences in the law, I will work to ensure that those differences are properly recognized in agency decisions.

Question 6: Will you review BLM's recent decision to require new cadastral survey standards for lands being transferred to the State of Alaska and Native corporations, which are opposed by the State, and which could affect the dependability of land title?

Response: If confirmed, yes.

Question 7: One of the greatest challenges facing Alaska is that our economic backbone, the Trans-Alaska-Pipeline System, is running three-quarters empty. It now carries just about 500,000 barrels per day—not due to a lack of resources, but instead an almost blanket lack of permission to access our federal areas. If you are confirmed as Interior Secretary, will you make it a priority to work with me, as well as Senator Sullivan, Congressman Young, and Governor Walker, to develop a plan to refill the Trans-Alaska Pipeline?

Response: President-elect Trump has declared energy dominance to be a strategic economic and foreign policy goal of the United States and that he intends to unleash America's \$50 trillion in untapped shale, oil, and natural gas reserves. Accomplishing that goal will, in part, depend on increasing flow on the Trans-Alaska Pipeline, and, if confirmed, I will work to ensure that happens.

Question 8: A critical element of statehood is the primary authority to regulate resident fish and wildlife and establish the means, methods, seasons, and bag limits for the taking of such resident fish and wildlife. This state authority also extends to federal lands unless and until expressly and specifically countermanded by Congress using its Property Clause authority. Congress later provided that federal land designations and administration were not to diminish this State authority. Do you concur that states, possess primary authority to regulate hunting and fishing on federal lands?

Response: Madam Chairman, I agree that, in general, states have primary responsibility for wildlife management and that authority generally extends to federal lands. Moreover, I am committed to collaborating with state wildlife managers to ensure that we jointly conserve our wildlife resources.

Questions for the Record from Ranking Member Maria Cantwell

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Question 1: If confirmed, do you intend to serve the entire four-year term as Secretary?

Response: Yes.

Question 2: Have you severed all ties with the Special Operations For America super PAC you formed in 2012?

Response: Yes.

There was a complaint filed against the Special Operations For America super PAC with the Federal Election Commission in 2014 that alleged improper contributions to your congressional campaign. What action did the FEC take on that complaint?

Response: Because I no longer have any role at Special Operations For America and am not a party to the complaint, I do not know all the actions the FEC has taken on that matter, but I do understand it remains under review.

Have you severed ties with SEAL PAC? If not, what involvement will you have with it if you are confirmed as Secretary? What steps will you take to avoid any conflicts of interest or the appearance of any conflicts of interest resulting from your association with SEAL PAC?

Response: SEAL PAC is my leadership PAC, and I will step down from my position with the PAC upon confirmation if confirmed.

If confirmed, I will abide by the recusal policy of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources which requires that I:

- (1) Abide by the recusal requirements imposed by federal conflict of interest laws and the Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch;
- (2) Seek the advice of my designated agency ethics officer before proceeding whenever faced with a situation that may give rise to an actual or apparent conflict of interest, and;
- (3) Adhere to the principles of ethical conduct and avoid any actions creating the appearance of violating the Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch

Question 3: Thinning at-risk ponderosa pine forests and re-introducing prescribed fires (when the conditions are acceptable) is an idea supported almost universally by the scientific community, the environmental groups, and the timber industry. Will you be helpful in getting the pine pilot we developed here last Congress—a program to expedite those thinnings—enacted?

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I know the House prevented any wildfire or forestry legislation from being enacted at the end of last Congress—I suppose thinking they'd have a better chance this Congress to enact some of the sweeping ideas and environmental waivers that have been floating around. But don't you think a program focused on collaborative projects in the most at-risk forests—which are supported by science—are a better approach to protecting our communities, strengthening our timber industry, and restoring our forests?

If confirmed, will you be supportive of fixing the fire-borrowing problem that plagues the Federal wildland-firefighting agencies? And working within the Administration and with your current House colleagues on putting in place a plan that takes this issue off the table once and for all?

Response: If confirmed, I will work with you, Members of the House of Representatives and my colleagues within the Administration to get a handle on the fire-borrowing problem.

Question 4: The Department of the Interior has put into place a robust scientific integrity policy. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the Department's Bureaus and Offices, including the Secretary, are using the highest quality science, subject to rigorous scientific and scholarly standards, to inform decision making. This policy is also in place to ensure that the production and use of science at the Department is insulated from political intervention.

What are your views on scientific integrity and how will you ensure that the highest standards of scientific integrity are maintained at the Department of the Interior?

Response: If confirmed, I will work to ensure that the U.S. Department of the Interior depends on the best available science for agency decision-making. I will review agency policies and guidance to ensure that scientific integrity underpins agency action.

Question 5: The U.S. Geological Survey is the Nation's primary earth science agency and is responsible for producing the science to ensure that our nation is prepared for hazards like floods and earthquakes, produces our nation's maps, assesses our nation's energy and mineral resources, conducts science necessary to understand and manage our nations lands and waters, and produced critical satellite imagery which is all over the world and by our own military and civilian agencies. Each of the Department's bureaus also produce science needed to carry out their missions.

What do you believe is the role of science in informing decision-making and how will you ensure that the USGS and science at the Department is properly resourced to provide for the safety and prosperity of our country?

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Response: The U.S. Department of Interior will rely on objective science and rigorous scientific review to inform agency decisions. I look forward to reviewing agency resources at the U.S. Geological Survey and other divisions if confirmed.

Questions for the Record from Senator John Barrasso

Question 1: In December 2016, the National Park Service issued its Record of Decision (ROD) for the Moose-Wilson Road Final Comprehensive Management Plan. The Moose-Wilson Corridor is a 7.1-mile stretch of road at the southern end of the Grand Teton National Park. Public access to the corridor is highly valued by locals, state residents, and national and international visitors alike for the unique opportunity it provides to view wildlife and enjoy the natural setting and beauty of the Grand Teton National Park.

The 2016 ROD represents a dramatic shift in the management approach for the Corridor from the 2007 Final Transportation Plan by severely limiting the public's access to this national park, forcing a 30-plus mile rerouting; eliminating a multi-use pathway from the southern entrance despite 2 tragic deaths from vehicle-cyclist collisions in this park; and reversing course on the 2007 decision to reroute the northern segment of the Road out of important wildlife habitat and wetlands. The Park Service has decided to limit access to the Corridor to no more than 200 vehicles—a threshold that lacks any rational scientific or factual basis, and will require new construction of 3-lane queuing station on both ends of the Corridor essentially cutting off public access to the Park. The second Environmental Impact Statement spent millions of taxpayer dollars for 7.1 miles of road planning – intended to keep the public out. The park even says it may be 2-4 years of through-road closures to pave 1.7 miles of the road and a spur entrance – which raises serious questions of intent to habituate the public to keep out of their national park.

Given the contrived and arbitrary nature of this decision and the dramatic shift from the Final Transportation Plan, will you consider reopening the Record of Decision (ROD) for the Moose-Wilson Road Final Comprehensive Management Plan?

Response: Senator, I am not sufficiently informed of the details of the situation to make a judgment today. However, access to our public lands is one of my highest priorities, and, from your description, it appears this may be an example of a situation that needs attention. I commit that, if confirmed, I will review this situation and consult with you further.

Question 2: In Wyoming, and other states across the West, agencies have identified limited land parcels that would be more suitable for management or ownership by the state, county, or other entity. Administratively, these lands could be made available for sale, transfer, or other means of disposal, but change in the status of these lands is limited by agency use of employee time and funding priorities. Given your support for H.R. 1214, the National Forest Small Tracts Act Amendments Act of 2015, will you commit to

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prioritizing funds for disposal of lands that have been identified, agreed upon, and approved by the respective agencies?

Response: I remain committed to managing our federal land in a way that best serves those who use it. Wyoming and Montana are very similar. Both our states understand the challenges and opportunities associated with Federal Land. I supported H.R. 1214's unanimous passage because it is common sense. While I oppose the large-scale sale or transfer of public land, small parcel exchanges or conveyances that benefit the local community have received my full support as a Congressman and will continue should I be confirmed as Secretary of the Interior.

Questions for the Record from Senator Ron Wyden

Question 1: When working on difficult forestry issues, which I've been doing for over 20 years, you learn that no one gets everything they want but everyone must get something they need. My O&C bill brings people together, it gets the harvest up, and it protects bedrock environmental laws. I understand the urge to streamline process, but forestry policies that stack the deck in favor of one side won't work, particularly if you're interested in rebuilding faith in the federal government, which you noted in your remarks and in our meeting.

Litigation reform bars the path to the courthouse and sufficiency language essentially hands forests over to just one side of the debate. Coupled together, you create a scenario where the actions of one side are deemed automatically compliant and the other side has no way of challenging the action. That's the definition of stacking the deck and it will drive the two sides of an issue further apart, rather than bringing them together in a collaborative way.

How would you encourage collaboration in forestry while balancing the needs of all interests and avoiding reforms, like sufficiency language, that hand the entire deck over to one side?

Response: I appreciate your concerns about the need for collaboration in balancing the needs of all interests while avoiding policies that stack the deck for one side of any issue. As a member of the Natural Resources Committee in the House, I supported legislation that would have expanded the collaborative model to help resolve natural resource conflicts on our public lands. I would like to work with you and the other members of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee to provide appropriate authority to the Department of the Interior to expand and protect the work of the Resource Advisory Committees under the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act, the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program, and the Community Wildfire Protection Plans that have been collaboratively developed under the Healthy Forest Restoration Act.

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Question 2: Representative Zinke, in our meeting, I told you about my bill, the Recreation Not Red-Tape Act, to cut the bureaucratic red tape that stands in the way of getting more people outdoors and opening access to America's special places. Recreation is an economic driver, particularly in rural areas, with studies showing recreation is a \$646 billion economy.

As Secretary, will you commit to working with me on my bill and prioritizing outdoor recreation and its vast economic potential on public lands, without sacrificing critical environmental protections?

Response: Senator, I appreciate the time you took to meet with me prior to the hearing. As we discussed, I believe public lands should be available for the enjoyment of all, and, if confirmed, outdoor recreation will be a priority of mine, and I believe recreation can occur while respecting and caring for the environment.

Question 3: Throughout the process of developing the Klamath water management agreements in Southern Oregon, the Bureau of Reclamation, under the direction of the Secretary of Interior, was a critical player in helping with stakeholder negotiations. Those agreements have expired and the future of the Klamath Basin remains uncertain. Are you familiar at all with what is happening in the Klamath Basin?

Response: Senator, I am somewhat familiar with the issues in the Klamath, but, if confirmed will need to learn a great deal more. I hope I will have the opportunity to visit the area with you and learn from you what needs to be done.

Question 4: Can you commit to working with me and the other members of the Oregon delegation and to supporting the Bureau of Reclamation and their efforts to help solve this complex problem in the Klamath Basin?

Response: If confirmed, yes.

Question 5: I've introduced the Wildfire Disaster Funding Act for the last several congresses, and I know you cosponsored the House companion bill in the past. While the issue of wildfire funding has been primarily a Forest Service issue, wildfires don't pay any attention to jurisdictional borders and they don't care who manages the land they're burning, so as Secretary of Interior, this is an issue you'll have to address. Do you think the practice of fire borrowing should be ended?

Response: Thank you for your leadership on the Wildfire Disaster Funding Act. The entire Montana delegation has cosponsored this bill because Western states like ours intimately know the devastation of forest fires. I understand the importance of fixing the current wildfire borrowing system, but I believe it is only one component of the problem. As Montana's Congressman, I have been an active proponent of forest management reforms so wildfires are less severe. Active management reforms will get to the root of

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the problem and lessen the burden of fighting wildfires. I fully agree that our firefighting funding mechanisms must be reformed, but it must be part of a comprehensive solution. I look forward to crafting those measures with you if I am confirmed.

Question 6: Do you think controlling the 10-year average cost of fires by freezing it at a certain level, or using some other budget control tool so it doesn't continue to erode the agency budgets, help the agencies better budget for and fund fires in the future as well as fund other non-fire programs in forest management and recreation?

Response: As you know, we are both supporters of the Wildfire Disaster Funding Act. I do believe these budget reforms would provide relief to the agencies to better invest in other priorities. However, if we do not tackle comprehensive management reforms, forest health will continue to deteriorate and escalate the potential for severe forest fires. Should I be confirmed, I look forward to working with you and your colleagues on comprehensive solutions that fix our budget process and management shortfalls.

Question 7: I'm sure you're aware of the situation that unfolded at the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge in Harney County Oregon this time last year and the disruptions it caused in the local communities. I was grateful that federal officials coordinated closely with the County Sheriff and Commissioners to ensure that community members were safe and that the rule of law was preserved. Incidents like this, led by extremists, that compromise our public lands are very concerning and I'm just glad it ended without escalating further.

If you are confirmed as the Secretary of Interior, you will be in charge of managing National Wildlife Refuges, Wilderness Areas, and recreation lands, in an era where hostility toward federal lands and federal officials is rampant, particularly in rural areas.

What will you do to ensure the protection of not only our incredible public lands that have been set aside by Republican and Democratic Presidents and Congresses, but also the protection of your employees, like the employees at the Malheur Refuge, who are not just federal employees, but Oregonians?

Response: Senator, as someone who has led soldiers in combat, I am committed to the safety of the Department's employees. I am also committed to restoring trust by freeing up our employees to make decisions and to collaborate with local law enforcement if things get difficult.

Question 8: Oregon is no stranger to an ESA listing, so ranchers and conservationists took a front seat in the collaborative efforts to establish land management plans to prevent one. After all the collaborative success, the last thing that the people of my state want to see is an Endangered Species Act (ESA) listing of the greater sage grouse. Fortunately, that was avoided in September 2015, when the Fish and Wildlife Service decided that listing the bird was unwarranted. However, FWS's decision was

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predicated on the strength of federal sage grouse conservation plans, without which, the bird would likely have been listed.

As secretary, can you outline what steps you will take to support the robust implementation of both federal and state grouse conservation plans, so that we can prevent an ESA listing and continue to support and encourage collaboration?

Response: I believe that the goals of the Endangered Species Act, which are to halt and reverse the trend towards species extinction, are very important. I am aware that there are several grant programs within the Department of the Interior to provide federal funding towards species recovery efforts. If I am confirmed, I will review these programs and work with Congress to set appropriate funding levels for them.

Question 9: Are you committed to meeting the goals of the Endangered Species Act and would you agree that federal funding to help recover threatened and endangered species is crucial to preserving our nation's wildlife and biodiversity?

Response: I support the goals of the Endangered Species Act. I agree that focusing efforts on the recovery of listed species is important and I look forward to working with you on this important issue.

Question 10: Can you help me understand your stance on public land ownership and tell me whether you think that public lands should remain in federal ownership or be sold or transferred to states or other jurisdictions?

Response: I believe that Teddy Roosevelt had it right when he put under federal protection millions of acres of federal lands. I share President-elect Trump's view that federal lands should not be sold to states and I have voted 17 times against such action.

Question 11: Oregonians and all West Coast residents are becoming increasingly concerned about the next major earthquake, which has become a matter of "when" and not "if." Preparation is key, and even just a few seconds of warning is enough to take steps to prevent casualties and mitigate destruction. In a few seconds, supplies of oil, natural gas, and chemicals can be turned off, trains and cars can be slowed or stopped, sensitive data can be secured, and people can get to safe places. This is a bipartisan priority and we need to get this system finished -- failing to prepare for these events is not an option, and could have dire consequences for West Coast populations. Given the importance of this technology to provide the kind of warning that exists for hurricane, winter storms, and other extreme events, how would you, if confirmed, work with USGS to ensure ShakeAlert becomes fully operational for the west coast?

Response: As a geologist, I am fully aware of the hazards along the western coast of the United States, and appreciate that the risks are a matter of "when" and not "if". Earthquakes are an important applied science focus of USGS' Natural Hazards Mission

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Area. I fully support the collaborative research and scientific efforts related to earth hazards and, if confirmed, will continue these efforts.

Question 12: Can you assure us that the annual budgets you would propose would back up your stated commitment to those resources with the actual conservation and maintenance dollars they clearly need?

Response: If I am confirmed, I will review these programs and work with Congress to set appropriate funding levels for them.

Question 13: The California water provisions that passed as part of the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation (WIIN) Act gives the Secretaries of Interior and Commerce discretion in implementing the mandates to maximize water deliveries to Central Valley farmers. How do you plan to balance the mandates to maximize water deliveries to farmers with the mandates to protect fishery resources and comply with the Endangered Species Act when making critical decisions about how to interpret and implement the provisions in this legislation?

Response: Water from the Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers Delta provides drinking water to 25 million Californians from the Bay area to San Diego and provides water supplies to over two million acres of farmland. In addition, it serves as an important stop on the Pacific flyway and is home or a gateway to the home for numerous endangered fish species. In addition to other provisions, the WIIN Act calls for the Secretaries of the Interior and of Commerce to use science and the adaptive management provisions of the existing biological opinions to maximize water supply and water supply reliability, consistent with the Endangered Species Act. If confirmed, I will work with the Secretary of Commerce and the State of California to fulfill the directives in the WIIN Act, consistent with the Endangered Species Act.

Question 14: The Fisheries Restoration and Irrigation Mitigation Act (FRIMA) provides funding in the Pacific Northwest (Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Montana and now California) to carry out fish passage projects and screen irrigation channels to reduce fish mortality. This program was recently reauthorized, but authorized funding was drastically reduced. Would you support funding for the implementation of this critical program that benefits farmers and fish?

Response: If I am confirmed, I will review these programs and work with Congress to set appropriate funding levels for them.

Question 15: The Secretary currently oversees eight regional DOI Climate Science Centers, including an active center at Oregon State University. Would you support the continued climate change research and education at these eight centers?

Response: I value and support collaboration with public and private research institutions. As mentioned at the confirmation hearing, I believe that programs are most

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effective when they operate according to “clear and precise” goals. I look forward to a complete review of the eight DOI Climate Science Centers and their results over the past six years as we develop an agenda for moving forward.

Question 16: In general, what do you see as your role and the role of the Department of Interior in combating climate change?

Response: Senator, that is a challenging question simply because it is so broad. Many programs at the Department relate to or impact the climate. In general, my role, if confirmed, and the Department’s role will be to ensure that we manage programs and makes decisions based upon best available information and sound science.

Question 17: The American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) has made the following statement: “The scientific evidence is clear: global climate change caused by human activities is occurring now, and it is a growing threat to society.” Would you agree with this statement?

Response: Senator, as I said at my confirmation hearing, I believe the climate is changing, and man is an influence.

Question 18: The American Geophysical Union has made the following statement: “The scientific evidence is clear: global climate change caused by human activities is occurring now, and it is a growing threat to society.” Would you agree with this statement?

Response: Senator, as I said at my confirmation hearing, I believe the climate is changing, and man is an influence.

Question 19: Representative Zinke, I noticed that, in 2010, you signed a letter to the President and the Congress calling for “comprehensive clean energy jobs and climate change legislation.” I applaud your leadership, and I have submitted that letter for the record. Do you still agree, as you apparently did in 2010, with the vast majority of scientists that climate change is happening and that we as humans are contributing to it?

Response: Senator, as I said at my confirmation hearing, I believe the climate is changing, and man is an influence.

Question 20: Do you still believe, as you did in your letter to the President in 2010, that “the clean energy and climate challenge is America’s new space race”? And that our country should not back down from a challenge on this scale?

Response: Senator, I believe that the impacts of climate change are uncertain and that we have not yet determined the best way or ways to address it.

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Question 21: Representative Zinke, do you think the American taxpayer should get a fair, market-value, return on the coal, oil and natural gas extracted from publicly-owned lands?

Response: Yes.

Question 22: The GAO found, for example, that in order to get a fair return on oil and gas from public lands, the BLM should update its more than 30-year old rules on the venting and flaring of gas. I assume you would agree that it is time to dust off these rules and make sure they're delivering appropriately for the American people? Correct?

Response: I am committed to ensuring that the American taxpayers get a fair return on all natural resource development on federal lands. While I have not been briefed on the details of the regulations covering the venting and flaring of gas, I will review them if I am confirmed and make a determination on whether those rules need to be updated.

Question 23: Using GAO's estimates about the amount of federally owned natural gas that is wasted due to venting and flaring, over \$63.5 million in royalties was lost, over \$31.1 million to individual states in 2013 alone. This is millions of dollars that could go to state infrastructure needs, schools, and emergency services. Do you believe that states should be receiving this money instead of allowing companies to waste American energy resources and not give the American public their due? If so, how do you plan to make sure that states are getting the money they should from wasted natural gas, especially since you stated in your nomination hearing before the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee your support for the repeal of the current rule under a Congressional Review Act joint resolution of disapproval?

Response: I am committed to ensuring that the American taxpayers get a fair return on all natural resource development on federal lands. While I have concerns about the current rules regarding venting and flaring on federal lands, I will commit to a review of the oil and natural gas leasing program in order to evaluate whether any further regulation is appropriate.

Question 24: A federal court in Wyoming refused to enjoin the BLM's new wasted gas rule on January 16th. The court found that the rule was "unambiguously" within the BLM's authority to regulate oil and gas development for the prevention of waste, has economic and environmental benefits, will not impinge on states' sovereign interests, and will not cause significant economic burden to states or oil and gas companies. Do you believe the BLM has the authority to regulate oil and gas production on federal lands so as to prevent waste?

Response: While I have not been briefed on the legal issues surrounding the litigation over the BLM rules regarding venting and flaring on federal lands, I will commit to a

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review of the oil and natural gas leasing program in order to evaluate those legal issues and determine whether additional regulation of these activities is appropriate.

Question 25: I applaud your comments in your nomination hearing before the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee that “we’re wasting a lot, we’re venting a lot, and we’re wasting energy, and that is troubling me...The amount of venting in North Dakota alone almost exceeds what we get out of the fields. Let us build a system that recaptures what is being wasted.” Given that only 9% of venting or flaring requests cite a lack of infrastructure as the reason, according to the GAO, and the vast majority of wasted gas can be traced to leaks, what would you do to fix this problem?

Response: I am committed to ensuring that the American taxpayers get a fair return on all natural resource development on federal lands. While I have concerns about the current rules regarding venting and flaring on federal lands, I will commit to a review of the oil and natural gas leasing program in order to evaluate whether any further regulation is appropriate.

Question 26: If you support the repeal of the current rule under a Congressional Review Act joint resolution of disapproval, as you stated in your nomination hearing before the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, how do you plan to use existing DOI authority to address what you say is troubling to you regarding the amount of wasted gas coming from production on federal lands?

Response: I am committed to ensuring that the American taxpayers get a fair return on all natural resource development on federal lands. While I have concerns about the current rules regarding venting and flaring on federal lands, I will commit to a review of the oil and natural gas leasing program in order to evaluate whether any further regulation is appropriate.

Question 27: Based on hundreds of thousands of public comments, on January 11, 2017, the Department of Interior has clearly identified there is a need to modernize the federal coal program. We have a responsibility to ensure the public gets a fair market-value return from the sale of America's coal, and that we operate the program efficiently, while minimizing the impact of coal production on our communities and environment. The only responsible next step is to continue the review and implement the commonsense measures identified in the Department’s recent roadmap. I want your commitment to continue the work of modernizing the federal coal program, through the completion of an above-board transparent, scientific and public process.

What assurances can you give me that you will continue this important work?

Response: I have not personally reviewed the Federal Coal Programmatic EIS scoping report published by the Bureau of Land Management, which I believe is the document you are referencing. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that decisions are based on

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objective science and transparency. I will examine the scoping document and visit with the Bureau of Land Management and determine the appropriate next steps to be taken as part of the NEPA process.

Question 28: What will you do to limit liabilities to the American people associated with the cleanup of mining on public lands, including bonding and other protections?

Response: As someone from Montana, I appreciate the need for reclamation and want to ensure that we hold companies appropriately accountable for their responsibilities.

Question 29: You have said that you are supportive of an “all of the above energy policy, which includes renewables.” I suspect we agree renewable that energy projects can be important drivers of economic development in rural communities, often supplementing the income of farmers and ranchers and raising needed tax revenue for small towns. Yet we must balance the need for clean energy with the need to protect wilderness and fragile habitat. What will you do to ensure the Department of Interior continues to support the responsible construction of renewable energy projects on public lands?

Response: I will support responsible construction of projects. However, I have not been fully briefed on the regulatory regime in place for permitting renewable projects on federal lands, but I do believe that the NEPA process is a critical component of any federal permitting decision. If confirmed, I will review the process for evaluating these projects and ensure that all of the Department’s actions are appropriate.

Question 30: What are your plans for the siting and leasing processes for offshore renewable energy development, such as wind and marine hydrokinetic? How do you plan to involve other maritime industries, such as fishing and shipping, to ensure that the development of offshore renewable energy is collaborative?

Response: I have not been fully briefed on the permit applications for these projects, but I do believe that the NEPA process is a critical component of any federal permitting decision. A critical component of the NEPA process is consultation with all affected stakeholders. If confirmed, I will review the process for evaluating these projects and ensure that all of the Department’s actions are appropriate.

Question 31: You recently made some misinformed comments about the competitiveness of wind and solar energy in relation to coal-fired electricity. Wind energy is one of the most affordable options for new electric generation, and wind energy is reliably providing over 30% of the electricity in Iowa, and over 20% in Kansas, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Oklahoma; and generating more than 10% of the electricity in eight additional states. In fact, 79% of electricity power generation jobs in Oregon are in wind and solar, according to the Energy Information Administration. Given the importance of renewable energy in so many states, will you state for the record your support for good,

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American jobs in renewable energy production that are not only affordable but also provide an over 13% share of US energy production?

Response: I strongly support good, American jobs in renewable energy production.

Question 32: I know you have been supportive of the Keystone XL pipeline. Although Keystone is an international project, other pipeline projects--like the Dakota access pipeline--could fall onto your plate. Could you give us some insight into how you would deal with such a sensitive tribal issue, such as the Dakota Access Pipeline?

Response: Senator, the current situation with regard to the Dakota Access Pipeline is very challenging and unfortunate. This country needs to build and operate infrastructure, and the permitting process for infrastructure needs to comply with all laws and regulations and be relatively predictable so that companies and individuals undertaking infrastructure projects can reasonably estimate costs and schedules.

We must also be sensitive to tribal issues. Our great Indian nations deserve respect, and, if confirmed, I will work to rebuild the trust that comes from mutual respect. I believe that, if we build and then maintain mutual trust, we can build relative consensus around infrastructure siting issues.

Question 33: Reuters has reported that the incoming administration aims to privatize oil-rich and coal-rich Indian reservations. Can you comment on your understanding of such conversations, and what is your opinion on whether we should privatize tribal lands for the purpose of extracting energy resources?

Response: I have not personally reviewed the referenced Reuters' report. I am unaware of any effort by anyone to privatize tribal lands.

Question 34: As Secretary of Interior, you are in charge of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and the trust relationship with all U.S. Tribes. What are your thoughts on tribal sovereignty and the role of the federal government in the tribal trust relationship?

Response: As I stated during the hearing, I believe tribal sovereignty is very important. I believe it should be meaningful. As a member of Congress, I have been a strong advocate for the Tribes in Montana.

Question 35: When Secretary Sally Jewell spoke of DOI's scientific integrity policies, she stated that the Department must be a leader in the federal efforts for robust scientific integrity policies because "science is the very foundation of our mission." Would you agree that science is the foundation of the DOI's mission and what would be your plan to ensure that the Department's integrity policies remain robust and reliable?

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Response: I have not studied the referenced policy. However, I would agree that DOI's mission has always included a strong science component within its bureaus. I will want to be informed by objective science as I make policy decisions, and I look forward to hearing from the Department's scientists in that regard.

Question 36: How will you work with your counterparts at the Defense and State Departments to support approval and implementation of the 2010 Agreement between the U.S and Palau to update and extend the strategic "Compact" relationship between our two nations?

Response: This is an important issue. As I have said, the relationship between the United States and the territories and freely associated states is important to me. If I am confirmed, I will learn more about this issue and work with you to address it in a way that benefits the people of Palau, and the U.S. Government.

Question 37: Will you, if confirmed, work with the ENR Committee and with the Departments of Justice, Treasury and Labor to fully investigate any allegations that money laundering and abuse of guest workers is occurring in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands?

Response: Allegations of the criminal abuse of workers anywhere are significant and serious. If I am confirmed, I will look into this matter, work with the appropriate law enforcement agencies, and act accordingly.

Question 38: Prior to 2008, even though the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) was under US sovereignty, it had authority to control its borders and immigration. However, the CNMI proved unable to properly control the border or to prevent the abuse of guest workers who were admitted to the CNMI under local immigration control. Consequently, Congress extended federal border and immigration control to the CNMI. Can you assure the Committee that you will oppose any proposal to weaken federal border and immigration control in the CNMI?

Response: Control of US borders is important whether in CNMI or anywhere. If I am confirmed, I will learn more about this issue and work with you and other federal agencies to develop an appropriate response.

Question 39: There have been press articles regarding the activities of "Best Sunshine" corporation in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Would you please review these articles and let me know what action, if any, should be taken by the Interior Department and other Departments.

Response: If I am confirmed, I will make it a priority to review this material and respond accordingly.

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Question 40: One responsibility of the Interior Department is to create economic opportunities and improve the quality of life for Americans in the insular areas of our nation: American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Marianas, and the Virgin Islands. There have been improvements over time. But in terms of income, infrastructure, and many other measures these insular areas still lag far behind the rest of America. Often they are not given the same level of funding or access to federal programs as other parts of our country. Federal agencies often don't compile data on the territories the way they do for the rest of the U.S. What specific plans do you have to increase the pace of development in the insular areas to bring them up to the economic level of the rest of America?

Response: Economic development is the best way to increase opportunity and the standard of living for all peoples. The U.S. territories face significant challenges and deserve special attention. If I am confirmed, I look forward to learning more about the ways we can work to correct these issues.

Question 41: Currently, an Interior Assistant Secretary heads the Office of Insular Affairs. That is a serious acknowledgement of the importance of the work of this office; and I think the office should continue to be led by an Assistant Secretary. Do you plan to maintain this position of Assistant Secretary?

Response: U.S. territories deserve recognition and representation within the Department. If I am confirmed, I will look into the ASIA position, but I am not aware of any effort to change the status of the position.

Question 42: In a bipartisan appropriation for the current fiscal year, FY17, the Senate voted to increase funding for the Office of Insular Affairs by \$6.9 million dollars. Will you be supportive of providing increased bipartisan support and funding to America's insular areas to create economic opportunity and improve quality of life?

Response: Providing resources is one important way the U.S. can support the challenges of the territories. If I am confirmed, I will work with you and the Congress on the proper appropriations levels for this and other areas of the budget.

Question 43: As a follow-up to my question on the Office of Insular Affairs, is more funding needed? And if so, how exactly do you think additional funds should be targeted to be most effective?

Response: If I am confirmed, I look forward to learning more about the budget needs and allocations and will work with your office as appropriate.

Question 44: A role of the Office of Insular Affairs is to make sure that all federal agencies take the islands into account when formulating and implementing policy. What plans do you have to make sure that the Interior Department's input is welcome—and

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listened to—by other agencies, when they put together and administer policies that affect the territories?

Response: This is an important issue to me. Often the parts of the federal family neglect the territories completely or forget to take into account their unique circumstances. If I am confirmed, I will learn more about the ways we can solve this problem.

Questions for the Record from Senator Bernard Sanders

Tribal Issues

Question 1: The Department of the Interior is the most important federal government agency for dealing with the issues that affect Native American tribes. The Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs “assists and supports the Secretary of the Interior in fulfilling the United States’ trust responsibility to the Federally recognized American Indian and Alaska Native tribes and villages and individual Indian trust beneficiaries, as well as in maintaining the Federal-Tribal government-to-government relationship.”

If confirmed, will you commit to an open door policy for the Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs to ensure sufficient access to you and recognition of the importance of Indian Affairs within the department? Will you commit to an open door policy for tribal leaders to ensure that the federal government upholds its trust responsibility and maintains its government-to-government relationship with tribal leaders?

Response: Yes.

Question 2: While the Department of Interior plays a primary role in upholding our Government’s obligations to Indian tribes, there are many other federal agencies that also work to meet the responsibility. Department of Health and Human Services plays a major role in providing health and mental health care. Department of Justice works to ensure the public safety. Department of Commerce, Department of Agriculture, and other agencies administer programs designed to help improve Indian reservation economic development.

To succeed in its tribal relationships and trust, Interior must work with these agencies and ensure that they work collaboratively with Indian tribes. President Obama formed the White House Council on Native American Affairs to help inter-agency coordination.

How will you ensure that inter-agency coordination remains a top priority in this new administration?

Response: Senator, I agree with you that the federal agencies with obligations to and responsibilities for Indian tribes need to coordinate effectively. I am not familiar with the White House Council on Native American Affairs, but, if confirmed, inter-agency

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coordination will be a priority of mine, and, if the Council continues, I will utilize it to advance the interests of Indian tribes.

Question 3: The failed federal policies of Removal, Allotment and Termination resulted in the forced taking of hundreds of millions of acres of Native American homelands. The Interior Secretary is authorized to restore tribal homelands through the Indian Reorganization Act and the administrative Part 151 Indian land to trust process. The U.S. Supreme Court attacked that process in 2009.

What are you prepared to do to ensure that the administrative land to trust process continues to move forward under your administration?

Response: I understand that the land into trust process is very important to the Tribes. I will meet with the Bureau of Indian Affairs to gain a greater appreciation of the specific administrative challenges caused by the referenced 2009 decision and determine how they are best addressed.

Hydropower

Question 4: The U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources debated several bills regarding energy and natural resource policy that culminated in the Energy Policy Modernization Act. One of the energy sources addressed in this legislation was hydropower, which accounts for roughly 7 percent of all energy produced in the United States today. While the legislation this committee reported, and the Senate sent to the House, protected the ability of states to manage water and the ability of the federal resource managers to rely on science and expertise, the House passed legislation effectively stripping them of the tools available to them.

Hydropower is a critical source of carbon-free energy, but it is not without negative externalities. Several states, including Vermont, support hydropower, but opposed these efforts to hobble oversight.

Question 5: As Secretary of the Interior, would you counsel the President to reject legislation that would eliminate the ability of states and federal resource managers to protect drinking water, outdoor recreation, fisheries, and vulnerable wildlife populations?

Response: If confirmed, I will seek to inform the President of my views on specific legislative proposals related to water, outdoor recreation, fisheries and wildlife as they arise.

Question 6: Would you resist efforts by industry to federalize all aspects of the hydropower licensing process and consolidate in the industry-captured FERC responsibilities for evaluating environmental impact?

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Response: If confirmed, I will work to gain a greater appreciation of the specific role Interior's agencies play in the hydropower licensing process.

Land and Water Conservation Fund

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) has been an important source for state and local outdoor recreation facilities, state parks improvements, and public park land acquisition. Vermont has benefitted extensively from LWCF funding.

Question 7: You have been a long-term supporter of the LWCF. If confirmed, do you plan to continue your strong advocacy for this important source of funding for states and local governments to create parks and open spaces, protect wilderness and forests, and provide outdoor recreation opportunities?

Response: You and I both share a deep appreciation for the LWCF. This program has been incredibly successful in Montana. I have seen the benefits of the program first-hand with critical projects in my hometown. Should I be confirmed, I look forward to continuing to work with you and your colleagues to protect and bolster this important program.

Question 8: As the Secretary of the Interior, will you recommend to the President that the LWCF be fully funded?

Response: LWCF has my full support. I have cosponsored two bipartisan pieces of legislation to permanently reauthorize the program, have opposed my own Chairman's reform proposals and was the only member of the Montana delegation to vote in support of the program's reauthorization and funding. As a Montanan, I have personally witnessed the good work LWCF does for local communities, the sportsmen and recreation community, and conservation. As the budget process moves forward, I look forward to working the President-elect and Congress to support LWCF's critical work.

Question 9: Federal funding programs like the LWCF often involve a lot of "red tape" which can make them inaccessible to small rural communities with limited staff and resources. Would you be willing to re-examine any of the rules and regulations related to applying for and using federal funds such as the LWCF monies?

Response: Since coming to Congress, I have been one of the most vocal proponents of LWCF. It is a great program that serves Montana and our nation incredibly well. However, that does not mean it is perfect. We both represent rural states and I share your concern regarding "red tape" and limited resources. I have consistently voiced my opposition to the excessive bureaucracy that inhibits funds from making their way to those who need them most. The process should be streamlined and I look forward to working with you and your colleagues to achieve this goal.

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Conservation and Public Lands

Question 10: During your time in Congress, you earned a 3 percent rating (out of 100 percent) from the League of Conservation Voters (LCV). The votes used to rate Senators and members of Congress are scored on protection of the environment, public lands, waters and air.

Your LCV score reflects that, with just one exception, you voted against federal conservation policies. You have voted for cutting back Antiquity Act authorities, against public review of hard rock mining on public lands, against a review process for grazing permits on drought-damaged public lands, and against removing harmful riders undermining protections for imperiled species including removing Endangered Species Act-protections for the gray wolf. All of these issues will be under your authority as Secretary of Interior.

Can you explain your anti-conservation voting record while in Congress? How does this record suggest that you will protect our lands, waters and wildlife against corporate short-term interests, like Teddy Roosevelt?

Response: The League of Conservation Voters (LCV) voting score does not accurately represent my commitment to clean air and water, conservation and protecting public lands. I am a firm believer in the multiple use doctrine that President Roosevelt championed. However, under the current administration, the Executive Branch has often governed by rules and regulations that should have been debated and passed by Congress. I fundamentally believe in the separate but equal roles of government and the rule of law. Many of the votes calculated by the LCV had to do with rules that I believed were outside the purview of the Executive Branch. If I am confirmed as Secretary of the Interior, you have my commitment to follow and enforce the laws passed by you and your colleagues in Congress rather than governing by Executive Order.

Question 11: You signed the Montana Constitutional Governance Pledge promising to “legally and administratively oppose the multitude of bureaucracies that have sprung up to enforce the unlawful seizure of our native land and its resources including, but not limited to: the Bureau of Land Management, the United States Park Service, the various bureaus of Wildlife and Fisheries, etc., and restore the rightful powers over the land to the state and private ownership.”

Could you provide examples of the “unlawful seizure of our native land and its resources” by the agencies of the Department of Interior and what measures you would support as Secretary of interior to “restore the rightful powers over the land to the state and private ownership?”

Response: States across the West are uniquely familiar with the ‘checkerboard’ of private, state, and federal lands. The mix of lands under different management poses

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numerous issues, ranging from protecting recreational access to respecting the rights of private land owners. If confirmed, I want to ensure our public lands remain in public hands, and private and state-owned lands are respected as well. This means making sure small tract land transfers and sales adhere to the proper procedures.

Question 12: You are on record as supporting retention of federal lands in public ownership yet you voted for H. R. 3650, the “State National Forest Management Act of 2015” which would transfer over two million acres of Forest Service land to the states for sale to private interests. Could you explain the apparent inconsistency?

Response: I would like to respectfully correct the record. I was actually the only Republican on the House Committee on Natural Resources to vote against H.R.3650 when it came up for a markup on June 15, 2016. After the bill passed committee without my support, I reiterated my promise to my constituents that I would not support any legislation that transfers or sells large portions of our public lands. I remain committed to that promise should I be confirmed as Secretary of the Interior.

Question 13: What improvements can be made to the management of federal public lands?

Response: If confirmed, I will work to improve the management of our federal lands for multiple uses, including recreation, conservation and responsible energy development. I intend to restore trust by working with states and local communities to inform agency decisions. I intend to promote greater public access, responsible development and ensure that professionals within the Department of the Interior receive the resources, training, and tools needed to make informed decisions that give voice to the American public. I also recognize and will preserve those lands that deserve special recognition and are better managed with man as an observer.

Scientific integrity

Question 14: Are you familiar with the scientific integrity policy at the Department of the Interior? What is the importance of the policy in your opinion?

Response: Senator, I have not had the opportunity to review the Department’s scientific integrity policy. I value sound science, and I will review the policy if confirmed.

Question 15: Should Department of the Interior scientists be allowed to express their personal opinions about any issue as private citizens as long as they provide a disclaimer that they are speaking in a personal capacity and not for the agency?

Response: Senator, I have not had the opportunity to review the Department’s scientific integrity policy. I value sound science, and I will review the policy if confirmed.

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Question 16: Should Department of the Interior scientists have the right of last review to ensure the accuracy of materials that rely on their scientific work or expertise—including scientific reports, executive summaries, congressional testimony, press releases, and websites?

Response: I will review federal guidelines and Departmental policies on this issue and rely on the best available science for agency decision-making, if confirmed.

Question 17: Are there any parts of the Department of the Interior websites that you believe contain incorrect, incomplete, or erroneous information? Specifically, do you believe that any web pages currently contain incorrect, incomplete, or erroneous descriptions of climate change science?

Response: I have not reviewed the full extent of the Interior Department website, but if confirmed, I look forward to reviewing it further and paying special attention to the questions you raise.

Question 18: The most robust federal government scientific integrity policies empower scientists to speak openly with the public and the press about scientific matters. Would you improve your agency's policy to make this explicit?

Response: Senator, I respect scientists and the need for scientific integrity. I have not yet reviewed the Department's scientific integrity policies, but I will do so, and I am certainly willing to discuss this with you further if I am confirmed.

Management of Government Employees

The Department of the Interior employs 70,000 people at nine technical bureaus and a number of other offices. The following questions ask about how you would manage these personnel.

Question 19: Do you support and promise to uphold the merit system principles set forth in Chapter 23 Title 5 U.S. Code, which prohibit factors other than merit from consideration in civil service employment decisions?

Response: I support the merit system principles.

Question 20: As Secretary, do you believe that Congress using the Holman Rule, which allows any member of Congress to propose amending an appropriations bill to single out a government employee or cut a specific program, to be an appropriate measure when used against your Department? Will you support Congress in passing an amendment under the Holman Rule or would you oppose?

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Response: The U.S. House of Representatives sets its rules. If confirmed, as Secretary, it will be my responsibility to express my views to the President on any specific legislative proposal, and I will do so.

Question 21: As Secretary, do you believe that you will be better able to recruit and retain top talent if Congress is able to individually target employees based on their political whims?

Response: If confirmed, I will work to restore trust and give the employees on the front lines – our rangers, field managers and managers – the space and support to make the decisions they need to make. If I do that, I believe we will continue to retain and recruit top level talent.

Question 22: As Secretary, do you support Congress targeting and altering the salaries of individuals within your Department?

Response: I recognize that Congress has the power of the purse pursuant to the Constitution.

Question 23: As Secretary, how do you view the division of responsibility and authority between Congress and your Department on personnel issues?

Response: The Senate has the responsibility of advice and consent. Beyond that, I believe the authority of specific personnel decisions rests with the Department of the Interior and its bureaus.

Questions for the Record from Senator Debbie Stabenow

Question 1: I serve as Ranking Member of the Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry Committee -- which has a good deal of oversight of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service. When we met, we discussed your position on the Forest Service in broad terms. Please answer, preferably with a simple yes or no, whether you would advocate for Congress to approve legislation to transfer the Forest Service to the Interior Department?

Response: Senator, when we met, I said that I think we should consider moving the Forest Service to the Department of the Interior. As we discussed, the structure we use to manage federal lands has not been given a comprehensive review since its inception, and I believe there are numerous issues that need to be addressed. Among those issues, I believe the current situation in which one federal agency manages the surface and a second manages subsurface issues creates unnecessary duplication and conflict.

I clearly got the impression in our meeting and from these questions that you have concerns about moving the Forest Service to the Department of Interior. If confirmed, I

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look forward to further discussions with you. My goal is to ensure that our public lands are managed consistent with the inscription in the Roosevelt Arch at Yosemite, “for the enjoyment and benefit of the people.”

Question 2: If you would recommend transferring the Forest Service to the Interior Department, why with all of the challenges facing the Forest Service – including ballooning costs for wildfire suppression, nationwide invasive species outbreaks, and record numbers of recreationists and sportsmen looking for well-maintained trails and facilities on their public lands – would you want to undertake a complex, multi-year bureaucratic reorganization that will cost millions of dollars and precious staff time?

Response: Senator, I agree there are real challenges facing our public lands agencies, and I want to work to solve those problems rather than make them worse. If confirmed, I will work with you to that end.

Question 3: As you know, the responsibility for suppressing wildfires is shared between the Interior Department and the Agriculture Department’s Forest Service. In recent years, as suppression costs have ballooned, critical resources have been siphoned away from programs to safeguard and enhance our public lands and are instead being used to fight wildfires. The Forest Service is now spending over half their budget fighting wildfires, which is up from 16% in 1996. If Congress does not act, the Forest Service will be spending 2/3 of their overall budget on wildfire in 2025.

Bipartisan bills have been introduced in both chambers to address this problem and you were a cosponsor of the latest House bill, the Wildfire Disaster Funding Act. As Interior Secretary, will you continue to support the measure and work with Congress to see it enacted?

Response: If confirmed, fighting forest fires will be a major effort of mine. We need to better manage our forests to reduce the risk and consequences of fire, better coordinate firefighting and firefighting policies among federal agencies, and we should develop a better method of funding firefighting efforts. I realize these are complex issues and that you have spent considerable effort working to address them. If confirmed, I want to work with you on these issues.

Question 4: In addition to the maintenance backlogs that exist on federal lands, which I am also concerned with, I am distressed about insufficient funding for staff on Park Service lands. For example, Sleeping Bear Dunes in Michigan has experienced more than a 7% reduction in base level park staff and more than a 12% reduction in its base budget between 2010 and 2015. If confirmed, will you support additional cuts in funding for park rangers and other on-the-ground personnel that are struggling to meet their mission with increasing numbers of visitors; or, is this an area in the budget that you think should be increased?

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Response: Senator, I want front-line Interior employees to love their jobs and be committed to their mission. That will require attractive benefits, ensuring that staffing levels are commensurate with the need, and that those employees have the resources they need to do their jobs well. You can be assured that I will be an advocate for on-the-ground personnel.

Question 5: U.S. Department of Agriculture grant programs through the Natural Resources Conservation Service provide hundreds of millions of dollars around the country for on-farm conservation projects that improve water management. The Bureau of Reclamation, through its WaterSMART water efficiency grant program, provides around \$30 million annually for water conservation projects proposed by its beneficiaries and other water suppliers. In June, USDA and Reclamation agreed to coordinate these programs for on and off farm funding to maximize the benefits of both programs, specifically in the Colorado River Basin. If confirmed as Secretary of the Interior, would you commit to continue this cooperation and make it a funding priority in your budget?

Response: If I am confirmed, I will review the coordination between DOI and USDA on these programs, as well as the funding levels for those programs and work with Congress to set appropriate funding levels for them.

Question 6: Farmers and ranchers in the west receive substantial assistance from federal conservation initiatives to improve sagebrush ecosystem, consistent with state wildlife recommendations. A key driver of these resources are the sage grouse conservation plans, which were a factor for the Fish and Wildlife Service decision against an endangered species listing for the sage grouse last year. Can farmers and ranchers be certain that you will continue to support funding for these land management efforts?

Response: I have not been fully briefed on the conservation plans that have been put into place for the sagebrush ecosystem. If I am confirmed, I will review those plans and work with Congress to set appropriate funding levels for them.

Questions for the Record from Senator Jeff Flake

Question 1: The Indian Gaming Regulatory Act, or “IGRA,” was intended to provide an economic engine for tribes on their traditional tribal lands. In Arizona, tribal casinos in the Phoenix metropolitan area have created some controversy. Late last year, the State of Arizona and the tribes agreed to amendments to their gaming compacts. Previous Secretaries of the Interior have rejected these compacts negotiated in good faith between tribes and states. Shouldn’t the Secretary foster the tribes’ collective rights to self-determination by giving deference to the compacts they negotiate?

Response: I am an advocate for tribal sovereignty and self-determination. In general, if a tribe and a state have reached an agreement, it should be given meaning, but I will have

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to learn more about specific instances such as the one to which you refer and I look forward to doing so.

Question 2: The Department's Colorado River Basin study identified a growing gap between water supply and demand in the basin. One of the options identified by the Department and the State of Arizona is desalination of seawater. Israel has been a world leader in desalination and there are a number of partnerships developing with Israel on water. These include the participation of Arizona Governor Ducey in a recent trade mission and water conference in Israel. What role do you see the Department playing in desalination technology and cooperation with Israel in the water field?

Response: Israel is our ally, and cooperation with Israel will be an important part of President Trump's foreign policy. Your question highlights one of the many ways that our country's cooperation with Israel can provide a benefit here at home. Finding new water supplies and securing existing supplies is important to all western state economies and desalination is one of the possible options. If confirmed, I look forward to learning more about this and working with you moving forward.

Questions for the Record from Senator Al Franken

Question 1: If you are confirmed as Secretary of Interior, you will be responsible for overseeing the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). With the multitude of problems in Indian Country today, from disturbingly high rates of youth suicide to a lack of sufficient economic opportunity and many others, we need a bipartisan commitment to address the living conditions on tribal lands. One of the most frustrating issues with the BIA has been the chronic underfunding of important programs and general lack of support from the federal government.

- a. As Secretary of Interior, would you advocate for strong funding for federal programs that support American Indians?

Response: Yes, as appropriate.

- b. Do you have a timeline for filling BIA positions?

Response: If confirmed, the timeline for filling positions at the BIA is the same as it is for all other positions – as quickly as possible.

- c. Will expand on your ideas for improving living conditions in Indian Country?

Response: I believe we need to listen to the tribes and we need to work to empower them, recognizing that each Tribe's situation is different.

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Question 2: Economic development is vital for improving Indian Country, and one area of opportunity is the energy sector. For example, there is significant potential for clean energy development in Indian Country—like wind, solar, and biomass.

- a. Will you commit to working with me to boost renewable energy generation on tribal lands, which would bring important funds and jobs to these communities?

Response: Yes. If confirmed, I will work with you.

- b. I have been working to fund the Tribal Energy Loan Guarantee Program (TIELGP), which was included in the Energy Policy Act of 2005 but has never been funded. This program would allow the DOE to guarantee up to 90 percent of the principal and interest of a loan issued to an Indian tribe for energy development. By leveraging federal resources, this program would encourage borrowers to partner with the private sector to develop energy projects. While I know that this program falls outside of the purview of the DOI, would you commit to working with me to get this program funded?

Response: I will commit to learning more about the program. I would be happy to work with the Secretary of Energy and you as appropriate.

Question 3: Many of the communities in my home state of Minnesota cannot safely rely on the water currently supplied to their homes. These communities and my state have worked tirelessly, investing millions of dollars, in a tristate water system known as the Lewis & Clark Regional Water System. A successful state and federal partnership, Lewis & Clark is funded by local communities, states and expected annual funds from the federal government. Like two water projects in your home state of Montana, federal funding for Lewis & Clark is allocated through the Department of Interior's Bureau of Reclamation. Nearly completed, all communities and states involved have paid their share of the project and in numerous cases, prefunded the necessary dollars to complete this critical water project. However, the federal share of the project has fallen short year-after-year, putting the project far behind construction schedule causing an increase in cost to the project. Will you support prioritizing the Lewis & Clark Regional Water System through the water funds allocated by the Bureau of Reclamation?

Response: I am unaware of the specifics regarding the funding for the referenced project, but I will look into it as the budget for the Department is developed, if I am confirmed.

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Question 4: I appreciate your support for the Land and Water Conservation Fund. In April of 2015, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and the Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board received one of 8 new Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership grants administered through the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) state and local assistance program for Sheridan Veteran’s Memorial Park. This grant is helping to connect low income communities to trail networks, an environmentally restored riverfront, and other outdoor recreation opportunities near Minneapolis’ newest war memorial. If confirmed as Secretary, will you commit to ensuring LWCF dollars continue to foster partnerships that connect people, particularly those in underserved communities, to safe, accessible places to enjoy the great outdoors and establish meaningful relationships with their communities and public lands?

Response: Senator, growing up in Whitefish, Montana, Glacier Park was the sort of national park I learned about as a kid. But I recognize that lots of kids don’t have the opportunity to visit parks like Glacier, and for them an urban park may be their gateway to our great national parks. I want our parks to serve and inspire all Americans, and I will work with you to accomplish that goal.

Question 5: Under what circumstances would support or oppose the transfer of public land to state governments? For example, if Congress passed a bill transferring large sections of public lands to the states, would you recommend that the President veto it?

Response: I generally oppose the sale or transfer of federal lands, and President-elect Trump shares that view. There are some situations in which commitments have previously been made, inholdings need to be swapped or exchanged, or land banks are well situated to address the needs of growing urban areas, where limited transfer is appropriate. However, to your question, while I would wait to evaluate any legislation based on its specifics, I am inclined to oppose legislation that would transfer “large sections of public lands to the states.”

Question 6: Do you support allowing state and local governments to manage federal public lands? From a practical standpoint, how is this different from transferring federal lands to states?

Response: Yes.

Federal lands belong to all Americans, but they need to be managed with particular consideration of the people in local communities whose lives and livelihoods depend on the land. Implicit in the notion of allowing local and state governments to manage federal lands is the belief that local and state officials will be more aware and respectful of the interests of their local constituents and that land will be managed differently based on local considerations. I believe that

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federal ownership and local management can provide the proper balance among interests and be a viable model for management of certain federal lands.

Question 7: According to the Bureau of Land Management’s statistics for Fiscal Year 2015, there are 32.1 million acres of public lands (approximately the size of Alabama) currently under lease for oil and gas activities. However, merely one-third of these acres are actually producing fuel. In fact, the United States has a record high 7,500 approved drilling permits that industry has yet to put to use. In light of this overcapacity, do you believe it is necessary for United States to open up additional public land for oil and gas production? If so, why?

Response: If I am confirmed, I will fully review the oil and gas leasing program at BLM and evaluate whether the acreage levels are appropriate.

Question 8: The United States has been chronically underfunding our National Parks for years. As you know, the parks currently face a more than \$12 billion backlog in deferred maintenance, including \$47 million in Minnesota. I appreciate that you have committed to working with Congress to solve this unacceptable deferred maintenance backlog.

- a. What do you feel would be the best way to approach this issue?
- b. Will you advocate including deferred maintenance in any infrastructure package the new administration is planning?

Response: As I said yesterday, I want to work to make our park system great again. In doing so, I look forward to working with you to find ways to address the maintenance backlog and enhance our parks’ infrastructure.

Question 9: Recently, there has been a lot of discussion about increasing coal production in the United States. Much of this discussion has centered around a supposed “war on coal” being launched by the Obama administration. However, rather than regulation, the decrease in coal jobs has been largely due to the steady progression of automation technology in coal mining, and that fact natural gas is now cheaper than coal due to innovations in hydraulic fracturing and horizontal drilling. One industry expert was quoted in the Wall Street Journal in December saying, “the truth is, gas has already made coal uneconomic.”

- a. If you are confirmed, you will be tasked with oversight of energy production on federal lands—including about 40 percent of our nation’s coal production. Given the current economic reality of energy what do you see as the future of coal?

Response: The Energy Information Administration has projected that coal will remain an important part of the American fuel mix for decades.

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a.b. The Obama Administration put a moratorium on new coal leasing on public lands while it assessed whether taxpayers were receiving a fair return for publically-owned resources. If you are confirmed, will you continue this process?

Response: I have not personally reviewed the Federal Coal Programmatic EIS scoping report published by the Bureau of Land Management, which I believe is the document you are referencing. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that decisions are based on objective science and transparency. I will examine the scoping document and visit with the Bureau of Land Management and determine the appropriate next steps to be taken as part of the NEPA process.

b.c. For a century DOI has managed all aspects of oil and gas development on federal lands. Do you believe it should exercise the same authority involving wells that are hydraulically fractured? For example, do you support the current requirement that wells on federal lands capture methane—rather than waste a valuable public resource by releasing a potent greenhouse gas?

Response: I have not been fully briefed on all the regulatory regimes for coal or for oil and natural gas development on federal lands. If I am confirmed, I will review both of these programs in order to determine what changes may be appropriate in the oil and natural gas leasing program.

Question 10: If confirmed, you will oversee the National Parks which currently has a major problem with sexual harassment in its workforce. As I understand it, Park Service employees with sexual harassment claims are forced to deal with a complex and opaque complaint process and are often afraid to come forward for fear of retaliation. How will you address the culture at the National Park Service that deters abused workers from coming forward with their claims? What steps will you take to ensure our national parks are safe for visitors and workers alike?

Response: If confirmed, as I described in yesterday's hearing, I will work to ensure we have zero tolerance policy for the sexual harassment in the workforce. In addition, if confirmed, I will need to learn more about the specific problems that exist and then address them in the context of a zero tolerance policy.

Question 11: With a changing climate, we are seeing longer wildfire seasons and more extreme fires. At the same time, more and more people in the United States are living in and around forests, grasslands, shrublands, and other vegetated natural areas – places commonly referred to as the wildland-urban interface (WUI). Approximately 70,000 communities nationwide are considered to be at

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high risk from wildland fire, including some in Minnesota. Defense of private property – much of which is located in the WUI – accounts for a large percentage of fire suppression costs. How will you work with the United States Forest Service to mitigate the costs of these fires while ensuring the safety of vulnerable communities?

Response: The issues surrounding the prevention of forest fires and funding for fire suppression efforts are tremendously important. If I am confirmed, I will fully evaluate the Department's current role in fire prevention and suppression and work closely with USDA, the Forest Service, the States and Congress to ensure that these programs are appropriately funded and managed.

Question 12: Do you believe that climate change impacts should be included in environmental reviews under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)?

Response: I have been informed that the Council on Environmental Quality has published guidance for all federal agencies, which requires them to include climate change impacts in environmental reviews under the National Environmental Policy Act. I have not studied the issue.

Question 13: Do you believe that climate change has a cost to society and that this social cost of carbon should be used in regulatory analyses?

Response: I have been informed that the Council on Environmental Quality has published guidance for all federal agencies which requires them to include the social cost of carbon in environmental reviews under the National Environmental Policy Act and other major federal rulemaking analyses.

Question 14: If confirmed, what will do you do to promote renewable electricity generation—including wind and solar—on public lands?

Response: Senator, I am a supporter of an all-of-the-above energy policy, and that includes the development of renewable energy projects and transmission projects on federal lands. That development should be conducted in accordance with the principles of multiple use and fully consider and preserve hunting, fishing and recreating on federal lands.

Question 15: One of the many impacts of climate change has been the increasingly difficult problem of invasive species. Large areas of public lands and waters managed by the Department of the Interior have been damaged by invasions of non-native plants and wildlife. This problem both significantly threatens our most valued ecosystems and places a difficult financial burden on federal and state wildlife management programs, which detracts from their other important duties. Minnesotans are on the frontlines of this problem with the onset

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harmful invasive species in our state such as emerald ash borer, zebra mussels, Asian carp, and Eurasian watermilfoil.

- a. What actions would you take to enhance effectiveness of invasive species control programs on public lands?
- b. The Lacey Act is the most important federal statute in addressing the spread of invasive species. If confirmed, would you enforce the Lacey Act in its current form and list potential invaders as injurious? Additionally, would you call for any legislative changes to be made to the Lacey Act?

Response: I share your concern, especially since my home state of Montana also has significant and numerous invasive species problems; most recently with a very worrisome invasion by zebra mussels. I think it is critical that federal land managers be encouraged and empowered to be good neighbors in controlling invasive species in cooperation with adjacent private land owners. We all need to work together if we are to succeed in defending our ecosystems, economy, and public health from the threats posed by invasive species. I will most definitely enforce the Lacey Act if confirmed, and I am aware that there is broad bipartisan frustration with the lack of an efficient process for listing injurious species under the Act. I will ask the Fish and Wildlife Service to provide me recommendations on how the Act's implementation may be approved, and if it seems that legislative changes may be helpful, I would be pleased to have that conversation with the Congress.

Questions for the Record from Senator Steve Daines

Question 1: You have been a strong partner in the House on improving treatment of our National Forests. As you know, in many ways, Montana is ground zero for obstructionist litigation which hold up common sense, collaboratively developed forest health projects. In the House, you introduced counterpart legislation to my *Litigation Relief for Forest Management Projects Act*. Senator Tester joined us in this effort as well as a cosponsor. This bill would avoid the effects of a disastrous 9th Circuit Court decision in *Cottonwood Environmental Law Center v. United States Forest Service (Cottonwood)* by codifying the Obama Administration's position into law.

In 2015, the Ninth Circuit Court ruled in *Cottonwood* that the U.S. Forest Service (FS) needed to reinitiate consultation with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) at the programmatic (plan) level following the 2009 designation of critical habitat for the Canada lynx. As a result of this ruling, courts have stopped projects during the consultation process throughout the 18 national forests inhabited by lynx. The Department of Justice (DOJ), advocating a view shared by the FS and FWS, argued that the Endangered Species Act does not require re-initiation of consultation on completed forest plans and that only project-level analysis is needed. The Tenth Circuit in 2007 ruled in favor of the FS/FWS' position in a similar case, *Forest Guardians v. Forsgren*.

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In May 2016, DOJ filed a writ of certiorari petition to the U.S. Supreme Court to ask for review of the Cottonwood ruling and resolve the conflicting circuit opinions. On October 11, 2016, the Supreme Court denied this request, allowing the Ninth Circuit’s *Cottonwood* decision to stand. As such, federal lands in the states of Montana, Idaho, Washington, Oregon, Nevada, California, and Arizona must operate according to the *Cottonwood* ruling, and the impacts could spread to other circuits as well. According to the Obama Administration, the *Cottonwood* ruling could “shutdown land management,” substantially increases unnecessary paperwork requirements without conservation benefits, delays much-needed management projects, and encourages more litigation against important management projects. At least two forest management projects in Montana have been held up in Court as a result of the *Cottonwood* ruling.

Congress must act to reverse this disastrous ruling. Congressional action will require leadership from your Department and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and other land management agencies.

Will you commit to work with me and other colleagues to enact a legislative solution and protect worthwhile land management projects?

Response: I share your concerns about this issue. You have my commitment that, if confirmed, we will work together to address this.

Question 2: If it was not for your personal attention to shepherding the *Blackfeet Water Rights Settlement Act* through the House of Representatives, we would not have succeeded in enacting that historic legislation last Congress. As you know, our work is not finished for the Blackfeet people. In order to effectively implement the Compact and uphold our commitments to the Tribe, our state, and other water users in the Golden Triangle of our state—we need to fully-fund this water settlement.

Will you work with me through the Budget and Appropriations process to ensure robust funding for the Blackfeet Water Rights Settlement?

Response: Whether in Congress or the Administration, I am and will remain dedicated to ensuring that our commitments to the Blackfeet are met.

Questions for the Record from Senator Joe Manchin III

Question 1: Addressing invasive species

Controlling and managing Invasive species is a wide-ranging and constantly evolving challenge. As you know, Congressman Zinke, invasive species decrease biodiversity, damage infrastructure and negatively impact ecosystems. Congress has not been able to address this issue in a meaningful way, as no comprehensive legislation to address the

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treatment, management, and repair of invasive species has been signed into law. However there is a patchwork of laws, regulations, policies and programs in place to mitigate the damage of invasive species. One of the reasons managing invasive species is challenging in a state like West Virginia is because we are a heavily forested state, with considerable amounts of public lands and many large private landowners, including Timber Investment Management Organizations, Real Estate Investments Trusts, coal companies, forest products companies, and family forest owners. This patchwork of Federal, state and private lands makes for a challenging landscape, however it is obvious to me that this is an issue that needs to be addressed by the Federal government. If you are confirmed as Secretary, you will co-chair the National Invasive Species Council (NISC) along with the Secretaries of the Agriculture and Commerce.

What measures do you intend to undertake to prevent, eradicate, and control invasive species?

What steps can Congress take to help you address the issue legislatively?

Response: I share your concern, especially since my home state of Montana also has significant and numerous invasive species problems; including a number of forest pests that threaten the health of our forests. I think it is critical that federal land managers be encouraged and empowered to be good neighbors in controlling invasive species in cooperation with adjacent private land owners. We all need to work together if we are to succeed in defending our ecosystems, economy, and public health from the threats posed by invasive species. If confirmed, I will explore ways to improve the operations of the National Invasive Species Council, and actively engage with the Secretaries of Commerce and Agriculture to get off to a strong start on this issue. One place to start will be to explore how we may work with the States to cooperatively implement the recent framework for early detection and rapid response to new invasive species introductions. Eliminating new invasive species introductions before they become firmly established is the most effective and efficient way to avoid serious and expensive long-term problems from invasive species. Once I have undertaken a review of this issue, I would be pleased to explore with the Congress any legislative changes that might be helpful to better protect our environment, economy, and public health.

Question 2: Developing energy infrastructure

I am a longtime supporter of our nation's sportsmen and sportswomen. West Virginia's natural resources provide us with incredible vistas and outdoor recreational opportunities. I believe in protecting these resources for future generations of West Virginians and for our guests from around the nation and the globe. But, I am also a pragmatist and I believe that we must balance the economy and the environment. West Virginia has a long tradition of being an energy exporting state. That's a tradition that we are determined to continue but – in order to do so - our nation's energy infrastructure must be modernized and expanded in an environmentally responsible way. I want to

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make sure that, when these projects cross public lands, federal agencies with permitting authority are doing their part. I'm sure you are aware that the National Park Service, the Bureau of Land Management and other agencies are engaged in permitting several pipeline projects in my state. And I'm sure you know that the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) is the lead federal agency on these matters. The Department of the Interior is a big agency and while you have stated that you are supportive of responsible energy production, I'd like to get a better understanding of how you plan to manage infrastructure permitting and clarify duplications in the permitting process for pipelines.

What specifically will you do to ensure that your agencies' regional offices are being responsive to and transparent with project developers?

Response: As someone who has led the development of an EIS, I know how frustrating it can be to have another federal agency fail to participate as a cooperating agency. I will work to ensure consistency within the bureaus.

Question 3: The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) is a critical tool to ensuring environmental reviews are comprehensive; our natural resources are preserved; and the mitigation of environmental impacts are minimal. There is certainly room for improvement but energy companies rely on the NEPA process to provide them certainty and a "roadmap" for their projects. And, yet there seems to be increasing uncertainty when it comes to these projects - particularly when a federal agency does not participate as a "cooperating agency".

How will you work to encourage agencies like the National Park Service to act as a cooperating agency on a NEPA review in order to prevent duplication? Because I believe that would ensure that the Park Service is using its financial and staffing resources prudently in a manner that is not redundant.

Response: I have not been fully briefed on the cooperation between all of the Department's agencies on NEPA reviews. If I am confirmed, I will review these procedures and ensure that coordination is appropriate.

Questions for the Record from Senator Cory Gardner

Question 1: Senator Shaheen and I passed the Outdoor Recreation Jobs and Economic Impact Act in December 2016, and President Obama signed it into law. The law requires the Secretary of the Interior to work with the Secretaries of Commerce and Agriculture to measure the outdoor recreation economy. This marks the first time that the federal government will measure the outdoor recreation industry's contribution to our economy.

Should you be confirmed to be Secretary of the Interior, will you commit to supporting an ongoing, annual report on the economic impact of the outdoor recreation economy?

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Response: It is my understanding that the Secretary of Commerce is required to submit the referenced report. I will work with the Secretary of Commerce to support his efforts as appropriate.

Question 2: Will you commit to providing at least \$3 million in funding in the President's budget request for FY18 to the Arkansas Valley Conduit in Southeast Colorado and look for all opportunities to direct additional discretionary funding in FY17 to the Conduit?

Response: Senator, as we discussed in your office, I understand the importance of the Arkansas Valley Conduit, but I cannot make a commitment on behalf of the President-elect about his future budget requests. The most I can do is pledge to work with you on this, and I am committed to do that.

Question 3: As Secretary of the Interior, will you make a renewed effort to work with Tribes no matter what kind of energy resources they have, or potential resources, so they can make their own decisions to develop their own resources for the benefit of their members and the country?

Response: If confirmed, this will be one of my highest priorities. As I said at yesterday's hearing on my designation, tribal sovereignty is meaningful and important. I believe tribes should be able to make their own resource decisions for the benefit of their members.

Questions for the Record from Senator Martin Heinrich

Question 1: Will you work with western senators to make sure that renewable energy development and associated transmission projects will remain a priority on public lands, while protecting the places where we all love to hunt, hike, and fish?

Response: Senator, I am a supporter of an all-of-the-above energy policy, and that includes the development of renewable energy projects and transmission projects on federal lands. That development should be conducted in accordance with the principles of multiple use and fully consider and preserve hunting, fishing and recreating on federal lands.

Question 2: As the new administration looks at hiring freezes or budget cuts, will you commit to protecting critical functions at Interior agencies, including fire management, law enforcement, realty, and permit processing?

Response: I agree with you that those are critical DOI responsibilities, and I will work to ensure funding for those programs are adequate.

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Question 3: Congress enacted the Indian Reorganization Act in 1934 to help restore homelands for tribal governments. Interior Secretaries of both parties worked to move tribal fee lands into trust for nearly 75 years before the Supreme Court struck down a portion of this law in 2009. Since 2009, the Interior Solicitor's office has worked to ensure that the Administrative land to trust process will continue to work for tribes. Can you please share your thoughts for continuing the Administrative Indian land to trust process?

Response: I understand that the land into trust process is very important to the tribes. I will meet with the Bureau of Indian Affairs to gain a greater appreciation of the specific administrative challenges caused by the referenced 2009 decision and the efforts taken by the Solicitor's office.

Question 4: As you know, many national forests, parks, and lands were carved out of the ancestral homelands of Indian tribes. Many tribes retain their connections to these sacred lands and places. What are your views about ensuring that these lands remain under federal control, and the need for the Interior Department and other federal land managers to protect tribal sacred places and access to these places for Native Americans?

Response: Senator, as I said at the hearing on my designation, I believe federal lands should remain under federal control, and I deeply respect the rights and heritage of Indian tribes. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that the Department of Interior's management practices respect sacred places and Native Americans.

Question 5: Tribal water rights settlements like the Taos and Aamodt Settlement Agreements promise to resolve long-standing conflicts and reduce uncertainty over water rights. Will you commit to transparently implementing water rights settlements in a way that protects water rights and the environment while ensuring adequate future water supplies?

Response: I appreciate how important these tribal water rights settlements are throughout the western states and to the tribes. I am not aware of the specific issues regarding a lack of transparency in the area of water rights, but as a general matter I believe Interior should act in a transparent manner.

Question 6: Across the West, our quality of life, tourism, and outdoor recreation are driving an economic resurgence and sustainable, healthy rivers and streams, lakes, and reservoirs are foundational to this economic growth. How do we protect and promote these resources while ensuring we have reliable water supplies for farms, industry and municipal use?

Response: I believe we need to recognize that everything needs to be on the table when it comes to our water resources from increased conservation to additional infrastructure. If

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confirmed, I believe the executive branch and congress need to work together to address the issue of water supply and reliability for the next century.

Question 7: Facing persistent drought in the West, Congress has boosted support for the WaterSmart program, the Bureau of Reclamation's primary tool in promoting water conservation and modern, efficient water infrastructure in agricultural and municipal uses. Will you work with us on increased funding and capacity for WaterSmart and federal leadership on efficient water infrastructure?

Response: In the West, water infrastructure is the backbone of local and regional economies, including the infrastructure on Indian Reservations. If confirmed I think it will be important for the Department of the Interior to explore many ways in which it can provide assistance to local and regional efforts to improve water certainty. I look forward to learning more about the WaterSmart Program and how it can be used to improve local economies in the West.

Question 8: You have talked about working with states on Antiquities Act monument proclamations and policies, but you have not mentioned collaboration with affected tribes. Will you commit to meeting with and working with tribes and tribal communities whose ancestral lands and sacred sites are protected by Antiquities Act proclamations before making any decisions about them?

Response: Yes, if confirmed.

Question 9: The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service just finalized revisions to the eagle conservation/take permit program in December. Will you commit to work with industry to ensure a practical and workable implementation, including incorporating the latest data and an appropriate consideration of low-risk projects?

Response: I am not familiar with the specifics of this program. As a general matter, any program needs to be workable and practical to be successful. If it is not, it needs to be improved.

Questions for the Record from Senator Mazie Hirono

Question 1: In Hawaii and the Pacific Region, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service works closely with the Department of Defense (DoD) in ensuring that they meet their environmental obligations including requirements under the Endangered Species Act, the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. This work is critical as our nation continues to strengthen our strategic interests in the Indo-Asia-Pacific region. Yet, this coordination takes up a large part of Fish and Wildlife Service's resources in the Pacific Island Office.

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As Secretary of Interior, you will be responsible for managing the Fish and Wildlife Service and as such, I want to make sure you are aware of this engagement between the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the DoD. I want to work with you to both ensure that this important work can continue as well as to address other important resource management issues under the responsibility of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Hawaii and the Pacific Region.

Response: Senator, I do not know much about the relationship between the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Department of Defense on these issues. Thank you for bringing this to my attention, and I look forward to learning more about this important issue as we work together.

Question 2: While in the House you voted in favor of an amendment that would have blocked funding for any listed species for which the Fish and Wildlife Service has failed to complete a 5-year review as required by the Endangered Species Act even though the Fish and Wildlife Service failure to do so is due to insufficient appropriations by Congress. This amendment would have devastated conservation and recovery efforts for as many as 850 species across the country, 137 of which are in Hawaii.

As Secretary, will you work with Congress to ensure that sufficient funding is provided to Fish and Wildlife Service so that they can fulfill their duties, including completing 5-year reviews, to protect and recover our nation's endangered species?

Response: If I am confirmed, I will work closely with Congress to ensure that conservation and recovery programs are appropriately funded.

Question 3: Despite Hawaii and the Pacific Islands being home to a large percentage of endangered species, we have suffered from a lack of funding. For example, in FY 16 the Fish and Wildlife Service's Recovery Fund was \$17.8 million for Region 1. The Pacific Islands received only 37% of the funding, despite being home to over 90% of Region 1's endangered species.

Can you commit to working with me to provide more federal resources to Hawaii and the Pacific Islands in recovery funding for our endangered species?

Response: Senator, I recognize that Hawaii is a special place with unique needs. If I am confirmed, I will work with you to ensure that funding for recovery and conservation programs in Hawaii are appropriate.

Question 4: Funding for Fish and Wildlife Service's State Wildlife Grants is based on a formula that takes into account human population and land area, with the added caveat that no state receives less than 1% of funding. As Hawaii does not have a large land area or large human population, we receive the minimum amount of funding, despite having a disproportionately large need to protect our threatened and endangered species.

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If confirmed, can I count on working with you to either adjust the formula to account for need (including number of endangered species) or raise the minimum amount of funding that states shall receive?

Response: If I am confirmed, I will commit to fully review the funding formulas for the Fish and Wildlife Service's State Wildlife Grant program to determine whether adjustments to the program are appropriate. I will also work with you and Congress to ensure that funding levels for the program are appropriate.

Question 5: As you know, the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) is a priority for Hawaii. It drives local economies and is the cornerstone federal program that provides access to public lands for all Americans, and helps protect our incredible diversity of plants and wildlife that make Hawaii so unique and special, as previously mentioned.

Getting into specifics, I understand you supported legislation that reflected the Senate energy bill compromise language that permanently reauthorized the LWCF. Will you carry over that support into your role as Secretary? Will you work to ensure that annual full funding for LWCF is provided in your budget proposal including robust funding for critical federal land acquisition priorities? Along those same lines, will you work with me and other members of Congress to find a reliable long-term funding solution for LWCF?

Response: LWCF has my full support. I have cosponsored two bipartisan pieces of legislation to permanently reauthorize the program, have opposed my own Chairman's reform proposals, and was the only member of the Montana delegation to vote in support of the program's reauthorization and funding. As a Montanan, I have personally witnessed the good work LWCF does for local communities, the sportsmen and recreation community, and conservation. As the budget process moves forward, I look forward to working the President-elect and Congress to support LWCF's critical work. That includes identifying stable, diverse and long-term funding mechanisms to keep the fund viable for generations to come.

Question 6: Water security is becoming increasingly important across the nation. As an island state, we in Hawaii are in a unique situation where we must be self-reliant for our freshwater needs. Just this past fall I hosted a Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee field hearing to examine opportunities for federal and non-federal partnerships in watershed protection and efforts to improve water security in Hawaii.

During the field hearing a couple of Federally-funded projects that target specific geographic locations, including the Forest Service's Watershed Improvement Program and the Bureau of Reclamation's Western Watershed Enhancement Partnership, were mentioned. Due to Hawaii's limited endangered species resources and invasive species threat, coupled with the importance of maintaining the health of our forested watersheds,

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can I count on working with you to identify opportunities for similar DOI initiatives to focus on the Pacific Islands?

Response: Water security is important. I will work with you on opportunities for initiatives that could benefit the Pacific Islands.

Question 7: DOI's stated mission is as follows: "The Department of Interior protects and manages the Nation's natural resources and cultural heritage; provides scientific and other information about those resources; and honors its trust responsibilities or special commitments to American Indians, Alaska Natives, and affiliated island communities."

As Secretary, how do you plan to carry out the Department's mission? What will the Department look like in, say 2 years, compared to now? What parts of the Department do you seek to change or enhance?

Response: If confirmed, I intend to restore trust and strong management to America's public lands and resources. In our meeting in your office and at the hearing this week, I shared the impact that attending the ceremony at Yellowstone National Park commemorating the 100 year anniversary of the National Park Service had on me. I believe we need to ensure that our approach to responsibly managing America's public lands will make our children's children proud in the next century. If confirmed, I will review agency policies, resources, and priorities and look forward to the opportunity to meet with you to discuss areas that would benefit from changes or enhancements.

Question 8: In an op-ed that you wrote last spring you noted that it's our responsibility to "ensure our children and grandchildren's children enjoy the same outdoor opportunities that we have." In Hawaii a lot of our native species are found only in Hawaii and are under constant threat from invasive species, climate change, development, etc.

As Secretary of Interior, what will you do to ensure that our grandchildren's children in Hawaii get to enjoy our native species?

Response: Senator, during the hearing on my designation, you know that I referred on several occasions to my two granddaughters sitting behind me. I am committed to looking at issues facing the Department with a 100-year perspective. I want to ensure that our grandchildren's children look back and think, "They did right by us." Frankly, I don't know all that can be done to address the threat of non-native species, but, if confirmed, I will consult with you and Hawaiian officials, and we will work together to find the best possible solutions.

Question 9: The Senate Environment and Public Works Committee held a successful bipartisan hearing last year on the issue of marine debris. The Fish and Wildlife Service testified on how marine debris is harming wildlife and fouling coastal National Wildlife Refuges.

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Coming from a non-coastal state, what steps will you take to familiarize yourself with this global problem? Will you support the Fish and Wildlife Service and Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement to continue their participation in the Interagency Marine Debris Coordinating Committee? What other steps could the DOI take to help find global solutions to this growing problem?

Response: I am familiar with marine debris, given my 23 years in the Navy and I recognize that it is a serious problem. However, I will need to learn more about the specific role the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement have with the interagency committee.

Question 10: Many of our National parks are suffering severe damage by invasive species. Examples include pythons and other invasive wildlife in Everglades, wild boars and tree-killing insects in Great Smoky Mountains, and saltcedar and invasive grasses in Joshua Tree National Park. The parks in Hawai'i are particularly invaded. The forests of Hawai'i Volcanoes are under threat from many invasive plants, feral pigs, and the plant disease rapid o' hia death. The Park's unique birds are being decimated by mongooses, rats, and avian malaria.

What steps will you take to protect our National parks from invasive species?

Response: I share your concern, especially since my home state of Montana also has significant and numerous invasive species problems in our national parks. I think it is critical that federal land managers be encouraged and empowered to be good neighbors in controlling invasive species in cooperation with adjacent private land owners. We all need to work together if we are to succeed in defending our ecosystems, economy, and public health from the threats posed by invasive species. I am especially concerned that Hawaii's unique flora and fauna are vulnerable to invasive species. I would not want to see invasive species push any of these unique plants and animals onto the Endangered Species list. Once confirmed, I will ask the National Park Service to present me with options for better protecting our national parks from invasive species.

Question 11: I'm sure you are familiar with visitor concerns about noise from park overflights. I understand Glacier National Park deals with issue. Since the passage of the National Parks Air Tour Management Act of 2000 every national park unit with significant air tour operations (50 or more air tours annually) has been required to prepare an air tour management plan or agreement. This is a joint responsibility of the National Park Service and Federal Aviation Administration. There are 27 national park units that qualify for plans including two in my state, Haleakala and Hawai'i Volcanoes national parks. Yet only two parks have had plans completed thus far (Biscayne and Big Cypress) and both of those just last year.

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What will you do to protect the environment and visitor experience at our national parks from air tour noise?

Response: I hope to work to enhance the visitor experience in our Nation's National Parks across the board. Frankly, I have not given a lot of thought to the issue of air tour noise, but, if confirmed, I will, and I would appreciate your recommendations on how best to address the issue.

Question 12: Last Congress I cosponsored a bill introduced by Senators Murkowski and Cantwell called the "National Volcano Early Warning and Monitoring Program Act." As you know, we have a number of volcanoes in Hawaii and this bill would provide important updates as well as unify the monitoring systems of volcano observatories, including the Hawaiian Volcano Observatory.

As Secretary will you support this bill? Will you make volcano monitoring a priority for the Department and commit to working with myself and other members of Congress to advance this legislation?

Response: If confirmed as Secretary, I will fully support the mission and intent of the "National Volcano Early Warning and Monitoring Program Act". Advancing our technological capabilities in this area is important. Volcanos are an important applied science focus of USGS' Natural Hazards Mission Area. As a geologist, I am aware and fully appreciative of the natural hazards that we face, and will continue to support USGS's efforts to address these risks.

Question 13: When we had our courtesy meeting you said that what is important to me is important to you. In Hawaii there are a number of priorities affecting the state that are important to me and that fall within the purview of the Department. These include:

- securing our freshwater resources,
- Compact of Free Association,
- permanent reauthorization of and full funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund,
- protecting and recovering endangered species, and
- preventing and eradicating invasive species.

As Secretary of Interior, will you commit to working with me on these issues?

Response: Senator, I appreciate you taking the time to meet with me prior to the hearing on my designation. What is important to you is important to me. If confirmed, I look forward to working together to address these issues.

Question 14: Hawaii is the state most impacted by the three compacts of free association that the United States has entered into with the Republic of Palau, Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Federated States of Micronesia. I have worked in the past on a

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number of items, including fulfilling our financial commitments to Palau, working to restore Medicaid reimbursements for citizens of the Freely Associated States (FAS), and establishing a one-stop resource center to facilitate the resettlement needs of FAS citizens residing in Hawaii.

If confirmed, can Hawaii, Guam, the Northern Marianas, and American Samoa continue counting on your department—and enlist your assistance in dealing with other departments as well—to assist us in working to support U.S. states and territories with large FAS citizen populations?

Response: This is an important issue to me. The relationship between the US, our territories, and the Freely Associated States is significant and deserves special focused attention. If I am confirmed, I look forward to learning more and working with you on finding appropriate solutions to the issues they face.

Question 15: Protecting our freshwater resources is becoming increasingly important across the nation as well as to our national security. As an island state, we in Hawaii are in a unique situation where we must be self-reliant for our freshwater needs. Just this past fall I hosted a Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee field hearing to examine opportunities for federal and non-federal partnerships in watershed protection and efforts to improve water security in Hawaii.

During this Congress I will be working to identify and provide federal resources to address water security both in Hawaii and across the nation. Will you make finding solutions to protect our water resources a priority at the department? How will you prioritize funding resources for USGS streamgages and other observational equipment that we rely on? Can I count on you as Secretary to work with me on this issue?

Response: As I mentioned in my opening testimony at my confirmation hearing, water resource security is of critical importance to our nation. I understand and appreciate your concerns related to the complex interaction between fresh groundwater “lens” and saltwater and the critical need to prioritize self-reliance and freshwater security for Hawaii and the country as a whole. I support your efforts to identify potential opportunities for federal and non-federal partnerships related to watershed protection and water security, and look forward to working with Congress in developing its funding priorities for developing and protecting our freshwater resources.

Question 16: As our military focuses on the strategic importance of the Indo-Asia-Pacific region, we expect an increase in traffic throughout the Pacific region. With that traffic comes an increased threat of invasive species in Hawaii, which is the gateway to the mainland U.S. from Asia.

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As Secretary, what resources will your department provide to assist the Pacific island communities in protecting against this threat? Do you agree with the proverb that “an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure?” If so, can I count on working with you to protect our environment from existing and anticipated threats?

Response: If confirmed, I will work to enhance coordination with the Department of Defense and the Pacific island communities to reduce the risks posed by invasive species. I definitely agree that “an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.” One place to start will be to explore how we may implement the recent framework for early detection and rapid response to new invasive species introductions. Eliminating new invasive species introductions before they become firmly established is the most effective and efficient way to avoid serious and expensive long-term problems from invasive species.

Question 17: As Secretary, you will be responsible for managing over 500 million acres of public lands.

What are your priorities for utilization of these lands for the public good?

Response: Senator, as I said at the hearing on my designation, I am inspired by the inscription on the Roosevelt Arch in the Yosemite National Park that reads, “For the Benefit and Enjoyment of the People.” I believe the public good is best met if we keep both of those goals in mind. That means that different portions of our federal lands will be managed differently; that our priorities will vary depending on the land. In some cases, we should honor the Muir model in which man has a light footprint and simply observes nature. In other areas, lands should be managed in accordance with the Pinchot principles of best-practices and allow for greater impact and management by man including the production of resources to benefit our lives and the economy.

Question 18: As Secretary, you will be making decisions that impact our water, air, land, and oceans. You have a record of questioning the scientific consensus on climate change and have alluded to our nation’s energy independence being more important than addressing climate change.

Energy independence does not necessarily have to come at the cost of our nation’s environment. Do you see opportunities for advancing our nation’s energy independence in tandem with mitigating climate change?

Response: Yes. From my years in the Navy, when I observed energy production around the world, I know that energy production in accordance with reasonable regulation here in the United States is preferable to energy production with little or no regulation elsewhere. As a result, I believe the production of domestic energy can both reduce our Nation’s dependence on energy imports and benefit the environment.

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Question 19: The Department of Energy, Department of Interior, and Bureau of Ocean Energy Management released their 2016 National Offshore Wind Strategy Report and discussed several important improvements to BOEM’s regulatory review process. The report recommended that BOEM’s existing regulatory process could be improved and made more efficient. This may include establishing more predictable review timelines and maintaining a reasonable level of flexibility given the early stage of the industry’s development.

Do you agree to work with the DOE to ensure the regulations and process that govern offshore wind development should be both efficient and fair to help facilitate the growth of infrastructure projects under the DOI’s jurisdiction?

Response: Yes, if confirmed.

Question 20: With the first offshore wind turbines currently spinning off the coast of Rhode Island, the potential for offshore wind development in the United States is finally starting to be realized. Part of the reason for the Block Island Wind Farm’s success is the extensive ocean planning process and corresponding stakeholder engagement process that helped identify an area for the wind farm that provided the least conflict with other users, and kept the broader ocean community well-informed of the project as it developed.

Do you agree ocean planning on a broader regional and national scale could also support other offshore renewable energy projects? Other areas that are also being considered for offshore wind energy development have not benefited from this level of community involvement and conflict identification prior to being bid. How will you direct BOEM to take into consideration the concerns of the fishing, shipping, and other pertinent industries early on in the lease sale process?

Response: President Obama issued an Executive Order entitled Stewardship of the Ocean, Our Coasts, and the Great Lakes in June 2010. If I am confirmed, I will review the Department’s compliance with this Executive Order and determine what steps the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management is taking to address the concerns of the fishing, shipping and other pertinent industries within the lease sale process.

Question 21: The Department of Interior is charged with managing the nation’s wildlife, natural resources, and public lands. All of these are threatened by climate change. Whether it be sea level rise stealing protected land from coastal National Wildlife Refuges, increased drought threatening migratory bird habitat, or milder winters allowing parasites, like ticks, to overburden large game animals like moose – the wildlife and habitats under the Department of Interior’s charge are at the frontline of the negative consequences of climate change. USGS, FWS, National Park Service, and other DOI agencies have all concluded that the science behind climate change is well established and have for years issued rules and followed policies consistent with this position. In 2014 you stated climate change “[is not a hoax, but it’s not proven science either.](#)”

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Will you direct DOI agencies to reconsider their decisions to act in accordance with climate science?

Response: Senator, as I said at the hearing, the Department's decisions in the past and future should be based on sound science. As I review past decisions and make new decisions, I will keep sound science in mind.

Question 22: The U.S. Geological Survey is an agency wholly dedicated to scientific research and advancement. Its talented and well-respected researchers have authored more than 130,000 publications since the agency's founding in 1879 and are looked to as national experts in the natural sciences.

Do you accept the scientific research and other products that have been produced by USGS? Further, the top mission area listed on [USGS's website](#) is currently "climate and land use change." Will you in any way try to limit USGS's work on climate change issues?

Response: As a student of geology, the USGS has a rich history and a proud tradition. I have been told various, sometimes inconsistent, things about the current work at the USGS labs, and I need to learn more. If confirmed, I will look at those issues. I will try to ensure that priorities are appropriately addressed. I anticipate that I will learn more about the USGS's role in climate change research versus the other the role of other agencies and departments if I am confirmed.

Question 23: How will you navigate the dual responsibilities of overseeing the protection of the nation's environment (including working to mitigate the effects of human-driven climate change) with managing extractive energy projects that are producing the fuel that is driving climate change?

Response: Managing these responsibilities in a balanced and appropriate manner is an essential duty for the Secretary of the Interior. If I am confirmed, I will work closely with the officers of the Department, the public, stakeholders and Congress to develop and execute Departmental policies in an appropriate manner.

Question 24: The Obama Administration was a leader in accelerating the deployment of clean energy on federal lands. Powering Our Future, through the Department of Interior, looks to permit gigawatts of renewable energy on public lands by 2020.

Do you support siting renewable energy projects on public lands? What will you do, if confirmed, to keep in place existing programs like Powering our Future?

Response: If I am confirmed, I will review these programs and work closely with Congress to ensure the appropriate funding levels for the Powering our Future program.

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Question 25: Some examples of invasive species that threaten our native habitat include mammals, birds, reptiles, plants, insects, and worms. These bioinvaders threaten all kinds of ecosystems across the country, ranging from swamps to deserts, seacoasts to mountain tops. Countering these threats would seem to require coordination across many players – federal and state agencies, Tribes, landowners, and other private entities. The National Invasive Species Council was created to facilitate this coordination. As you know, the Secretary of the Interior co-chairs the Council, and provides its staff.

How would you strengthen the Council’s leadership in these areas?

Response: If confirmed, I will explore ways to improve the operations of the National Invasive Species Council, and actively engage with the Secretaries of Commerce and Agriculture to get off to a strong start on this issue. I agree that we need to cooperatively engage with States, tribes, local governments, and private landowners to make progress on invasive species. One place to start will be to explore how we may work with the States and others to cooperatively implement the recent framework for early detection and rapid response to new invasive species introductions. We also need to create a more effective linkage between the National Invasive Species Council policy operation in Washington DC and the on-the-ground federal land managers across the country who deal with invasive species on a daily basis.

Question 26: Many people think that detecting invasive species as soon as possible and taking effective action to eradicate or contain them is a crucial component of an effective invasive species program. The Department (of Interior) and Council recently published a national “early detection and rapid response” strategy.

What steps would you take to implement this strategy?

Response: I agree that early detection and rapid response to new invasive species introductions is the most effective and cost-efficient way to protect our environment, and economy and public health from invasive species. If confirmed, I will direct my staff to quickly analyze the new framework for early detection and rapid response to new invasive species introductions, and provide me with recommendations on how we might work cooperatively with the States and others to more effectively and efficiently deal with new invasive species introductions.

Question 27: When President Richard Nixon signed the Endangered Species Act (ESA) into law on December 28, 1973, it had already passed the U.S. House of Representatives by an overwhelmingly vote of 355 to four. Over the last 42 years, the ESA has become one of our bedrock environmental laws. Among other things, it helped to save the American bald eagle, the whooping crane, and the black-footed ferret from extinction. The ESA has prevented the extinction of 99% of species placed under its protection and remains the most important law our nation has ever passed to protect imperiled species.

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Polling shows that the ESA continues to have overwhelming support from the American public (90% of Americans support the ESA).

Will you continue to enforce and strengthen this law that has proved so vital in preventing species extinction?

Response: If confirmed, I will swear an oath to uphold all of the laws of the United States, which includes the implementation of the Endangered Species Act.

Question 28: During our courtesy meeting you mentioned that one of your top priorities as Secretary will be to build trust. In the past you have come out on different sides of some very important issues. For example, in 2010 you sent a letter to President Obama urging him to take action on climate change but then later questioned the science that supports climate change. You also support keeping public lands public but just recently voted in favor of a rule that allows the House to consider federal land transfers cost-free and budget-neutral.

When you talk about building trust what do you mean? Do you mean within the Department of Interior, between the Department and the public, or between the Department and Members of Congress? Also, given your support for conflicting actions in the past, how do you specifically plan for people within the Department, the public, and Members of Congress trust you to maintain the priorities you note today throughout your term as Secretary?

Response: If confirmed as Secretary of the Interior, I intend to be a listening advocate and promote openness and transparency within the Department and its 70,000 talented employees as well as with local, state and federal elected officials, other experts and organizations, and the American public. 20 percent of U.S. land is managed by the Department and, if confirmed, I intend to work with Congress throughout my tenure to meet the priorities of the Trump Administration and those outlined for you today.

Question 29: During our meeting you mentioned that your three priorities for the Department are establishing trust, addressing DOI's infrastructure needs, and reorganizing the Department. Along the lines of infrastructure, you had mentioned not wanting to use the Land and Water Conservation fund to pay for the \$12.5 billion maintenance backlog within the National Park Service.

What specifically will you do as Secretary to address our infrastructure needs and how will you pay for it? What specific steps are needed to "grow our economy?"

Response: Senator, if confirmed, I am going to work with and on behalf of President-elect Trump to include funding to address our national parks' infrastructure backlog in

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infrastructure legislation. That package is envisioned to address national needs of which the backlog in the national parks is only a part, and I do not know how the administration will propose to pay for the entire package.

As to growing the economy, there are many steps that need to be taken, but a sound energy policy is one of the underpinnings of a strong and growing economy, and I am dedicated to ensuring that our federal resources are available in accordance with best management practices to support that goal.

Question 30: During our meeting you mentioned that one of your three priorities for the Department is to reorganize.

How would you go about reorganizing the Department? Can you elaborate on the specific steps you will take in reorganizing and the expertise you will take into consideration during the process?

Response: Senator, if confirmed, I intend to undertake a 100-year review of the Department's structure and management. I don't know what conclusions that review will reach, but I can imagine they will touch on fundamental issues about the manner in which the Department is structured, where its functions are located, and changes that should be made in resource allocation.

Question 31: If confirmed as Secretary, what would your top three policy objectives be for the Department? For example, one of Secretary Jewell's priorities for the Department was "ensuring healthy watersheds and sustainable, secure water supplies." In carrying out those three policy objectives how much consideration would you give to public and community input? What resources do you intend to rely upon to inform these policy objectives?

Response: Senator, as I said at the hearing on my designation, if confirmed, my three highest priorities are:

1. Restoring trust by working with rather than against local communities and states;
2. Prioritize the estimated \$12.5 billion backlog in maintenance at our national parks, and;
3. To ensure that the professionals on the front line, our rangers and field managers, have the right tools, right resources, and flexibility to make the right decisions that give a voice to the people they serve.

As to the amount of public and community input I will consider, I will say that public and community input is key to my highest priority of restoring trust. The Department must be a good listener.

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Question 32: During our courtesy meeting you mentioned the issue of sexual harassment within the National Park Service (NPS), that you have discussed it with Secretary Jewell, and that you have a zero tolerance policy.

What specifically will you do to prevent further occurrence of this within NPS? What steps will you take to hold employees accountable for reports of sexual harassment? How will you address retaliation? Will you institute reporting mechanisms that make it easier for victims to come forward with reports?

Response: Senator, I have zero tolerance for sexual harassment. If confirmed, I will ensure that the leadership at all levels of the Department understands how seriously I take the issue, and the issue will be addressed. In fact, I take this issue so seriously that, rather than give you a complete answer today, I would ask for you to give me some time, if confirmed, to better understand exactly what needs to be done and then to discuss with you my findings and the steps I will take to address the issue.

Questions for the Record from Senator Bill Cassidy

Question 1: Congressman, the President-Elect has talked many times about his desire to create jobs—a message well received in my state. In fact, he’s talked about “big league” jobs and establishing American energy dominance. The outgoing Administration will point to the declining unemployment rate (4.7 percent in December). Yet the Labor Participation Rate, now at 62.7 percent, has also steadily declined since President Obama took office, and that is not a positive trend. The Labor Participation Rate when President Obama took office in January 2009, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, was 65.7 percent. As I just mentioned, it has steadily declined and has remained at 62 percent since April 2014.

In my state, the oil and gas industry is one of our largest employers. The industry not only employs thousands of hard working men and women but the dollars my home state of Louisiana receives from energy development goes towards rebuilding our coastline. Due to the Obama Administration’s regulatory tactic of “death by one thousand cuts” as well as the decline in the price of oil, folks in my state have been losing their jobs and struggling to find adequate employment to

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provide for themselves and their families. Just last week there was a headline in one of my state's local newspapers that read "Baker Hughes to close Crowley facility." Another headline last month read "Shreveport near top for U.S. job losses".

According to the website 24/7WallStreet.com which analyzed data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Lafayette, Houma and Shreveport, Louisiana all rank at or near the top for job loss in 2016.

While I recognize that oil prices are one of the key drivers for development, regulations also play a pivotal role for the industry.

Congressman, how will you, if confirmed, work to fulfill the President-Elect's commitment to create a regulatory climate that encourages both American energy dominance and job creation while at the same time honoring the Department's mission to protect natural resources?

The departing Interior Department leadership repeatedly used oil prices and lack of industry interest as rationale for rescinding planned lease sales in the Atlantic and Artic.

- i. Do you believe that the current regulatory environment contributed to "lack of interest" in the prospect of OCS lease sales?
- ii. Considering these leases take several years to develop, do you believe temporary low oil and gas prices are an adequate reason to withhold lease acreage?

Response: Senator, I believe that an uncertain regulatory environment in which companies have reason to doubt whether permits will be issued causes potential lease bidders to reduce the price they are willing to pay. Regulatory uncertainty is reflected in bid prices. I believe reforms are necessary if we want to ensure both that production will be done in accordance with reasonable regulation and our taxpayers will receive true fair value for lease sales.

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Question 2: Last Congress, the committee passed my legislation that opened up access to the Eastern Gulf of Mexico and expanded the scope of Outer Continental Shelf state revenue sharing. At the end of last Congress, a majority of Senators, with a bi-partisan vote, supported a later iteration of my legislation that would expand revenue sharing for Gulf and Mid-Atlantic States as well as Alaska. In my opening statement, I mentioned that federal revenues from energy developed in the Gulf go to rebuild Louisiana's coast, which is vital to my state's future.

Unfortunately, the Obama Administration's 5-year OCS plan and aggressive effort to name new or expand current national monument areas means that states such as mine or Virginia where they have large budget deficits are missing out on additional or new dollars that could flow to states.

- iii. What are your thoughts on the most recent 5-year OCS plan proposed by the Interior Department, and will you pledge to work with myself and others in Congress to ensure the next five year plan pursues the goals of energy independence and robust job growth?
- iv. What are your thoughts on increasing and expanding the ability for coastal states to receive revenue payments from the federal leases on the OCS?

Response: If I am confirmed, I will work to implement President-elect Trump's energy independence policy. That will certainly require a require a review of our OCS lease plans, and I commit to working closely with Congress, the States, local governments and stakeholders to develop a comprehensive policy towards OCS leasing.

Questions for the Record from Senator Catherine Cortez Masto

Question 1: Minute 319 provides important guidelines for both Western States and Mexico regarding the management of the Colorado River's water, but expires at the end of 2017. The Upper and Lower Basin states have been working on a new agreement with Mexico, Minute 3 2X, which has been proposed based on Minute 319 and evolving basin conditions. What steps can the Department take to ensure the process is smooth and timely? Can you commit to working closely with the Western States to ensure their concerns are addressed before Minute 319 expires?

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Response: I understand there is a longstanding tradition of collaboration on Colorado River between the Secretary of the Interior and the Colorado River basin states. That's a tradition I intend to maintain. I will ensure that we work closely with basin states over the course of the year.

Question 2: Will you commit to strong tribal consultation when it comes to decisions, activities, and land management on Bureau of Land Management land?

Response: I have proudly represented the tribes of Montana in Congress. I appreciate the importance of tribal consultation and will work to implement a culture that ensures opportunities for consultation.

Question 3: In 2014, Department of Interior employees were under threat in Nevada during a standoff over BLM land use. As you are aware, the danger facing Interior employees has increased over the past several years, and we have seen an rise in similar incidents. If you are confirmed as Secretary of the Interior, you have an obligation to protect your employees from harm. What are your plans to protect the health and welfare of your employees? How will the Department provide the training and resources necessary to handle these kinds of situations in the future?

Response: If confirmed, and as someone who has spent 23 years in the Navy, nothing will be more important than ensuring Interior's employees have a safe place to work. I will learn more about the specific challenges the agency faces. If confirmed, I will work to free up some of the decision-making on the front lines and collaborate with local law enforcement, which I believe will foster greater trust.

ZINKE'S RECORD ON CONSERVATION AND PUBLIC LANDS

Op-eds & LTE

- [October 9, 2015](#): Op-ed in Montana papers about the previous day's markup, entitled 'LWCF foes need to take a hike,' was published.
- [November 22, 2015](#): LTE to the Washington Post about the importance of LWCF.
- [December 2, 2015](#): Billings Gazette op-ed urges Republicans to return to their conservation roots to support LWCF.

Leading Conservation Legislation

- [January 26, 2015](#): Became an original cosponsor of H.R.528, the Recreational Fishing and Hunting Heritage and Opportunities Act.
- [February 24, 2015](#): Cosponsored H.R.845, the National Forest System Trails Stewardship Act.
- [April 30, 2015](#): Voted against S.Con.Res. 11 – FY2016 Budget, which included a provision to sell federal lands.
- [June 15, 2015](#): Introduced H.R.2787, the East Rosebud Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.
- [July 14, 2015](#): Cosponsored H.R.1814, to permanently reauthorize the Land and Water Conservation Fund.
- [October 8, 2015](#): In a full Committee markup, voted in support of Rep. Huffman's amendment to H.R.2406, the SHARE Act, which would have permanently authorized LWCF. Rep. Zinke was the only Republican to support.
- [April 15, 2016](#): Cosponsored H.R.3173, the Sportsmen's Conservation and Outdoor Recreation Enhancement Act.
- [April 29, 2016](#): Cosponsored H.R.5114, the 21st Century Conservation Service Corps Act of 2016.
- [July 8, 2016](#): Cosponsored H.R.4151, to amend chapter 2003 of title 54, United States Code, to fund the Land and Water Conservation Fund and provide for the use of such funds, and for other purposes.
- [July 13, 2016](#): Introduced H.R.5778, the Alex Diekmann Peak Designation Act of 2016.

Congressman Zinke on public lands ownership

- In July, 2016, Zinke [resigned as a delegate](#) to the RNC because of a platform plank to sell public lands.

- In June 2016, Zinke [voted against a bill](#) offered by former Committee Chairman Don Young (R-AK), H.R. 3650, the State National Forest Management Act of 2015. This bill would permit up to two million acres of public lands owned by the U.S. Forest Service to be transferred to state ownership.
- In July of 2015, Zinke [again voted](#) for a Polis amendment to the Department of Interior Appropriations bill that would have prohibited the Department from using funding in violation of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976. Zinke was one of eight Republicans joining Democrats in support.
- In May 2015, Zinke [voted against the GOP budget](#) because it included vaguely-written language that would allow the sale of public lands.

Congressman Zinke has been a loyal and fierce advocate of LWCF since entering Congress:

- March 23, 2015: Signed appropriations request, led by Reps. Thompson and Meehan, advocating for ‘robust funding’ of the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) in Fiscal Year (FY) 2016.
- [April 15, 2015](#): First challenged Chairman Bishop’s concerns about LWCF at a hearing focused on LWCF and land acquisition, also reiterated our federal lands are not for sale.
- [July 14, 2015](#): Cosponsored H.R.1814, to permanently reauthorize the Land and Water Conservation Fund.
- September 22, 2015: Signed a bipartisan letter to Speaker John Boehner urging immediate reauthorization of the LWCF prior to its expiration on September 30.
- [October 8, 2015](#): In a full Committee markup, voted in support of Rep. Huffman’s amendment to H.R.2406, the SHARE Act, which would have permanently reauthorized LWCF. Rep. Zinke was the only Republican to support.
- [October 9, 2015](#): Op-ed about the previous day’s markup, entitled ‘LWCF foes need to take a hike,’ was published.
- [November 18, 2015](#): Directly challenged Chairman Bishop’s LWCF reform discussion draft, entered into the official Committee record over 19 letters from Montana groups about why this bill won’t work for the state.
- [November 22, 2015](#): Submitted an LTE to the Washington Post about the importance of LWCF.
- [December 2, 2015](#): Crafted Billings Gazette op-ed urging Republicans to return to their conservation roots to support LWCF.
- December 12, 2015: Sent letter to Chairman Hal Rogers urging funding of the Holland Ranch and Little Sheep properties in Beaverhead County.
- [December 18, 2015](#): Was the only Member of the Montana delegation to vote in support of the H.R.2029, the omnibus package, which included a three year

reauthorization of the program (after the program had lapsed in September) and an increase in funding, up to \$450 million, for FY2016.

- March 22, 2016: Signed appropriations request, led by Reps. Thompson and Meehan, advocating for 'robust funding' of LWCF in FY2017.
- May 20, 2016: Joined the Montana delegation in sending a letter to Director Dan Ashe, USFWS, in support of the Whitefish Lake Watershed Project.
- [May 25, 2016](#): Voted with Democrats on the House floor on a Motion to Instruct Conferees to include permanent reauthorization of LWCF in the conference of the House and Senate energy bills.
- [July 8, 2016](#): Cosponsored H.R.4151, to permanently reauthorize the Land and Water Conservation Fund

Conservation & Sportsmen support Zinke

- "We applaud Rep. Zinke's leadership on behalf of Montana's sportsmen and women and thank him." – **Land Tawney, President and CEO Backcountry Hunters and Anglers**
- "We appreciate Congressman Zinke's commitment to hunting and fishing through his support of the SCORE Act." – **Joel Webster, Director of Western Lands, Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership**
- "Montana Outfitters and Guides Association thanks Congressman Zinke for his vote and willingness to stand behind Montana's prized conservation and recreation values." – **Mac Minard, Montana Outfitters and Guides Association**
- "RMEF has learned Congressman Ryan Zinke (R-MT) is meeting with President-elect Trump today about possible appointment as Secretary of Interior, Secretary of Energy or Secretary of Veterans Affairs. Congressman Zinke's appointment to any of these cabinet posts would of course be important for Montana, but we'd really like to see him at Interior, given his understanding of and support for sportsmen, public lands and natural resource issues." - **David Allen, President and CEO of Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation**
- "Montana is fortunate to have a representative like Ryan Zinke in Congress," **said K.C. Walsh, president and owner of Bozeman-based Simms Fishing Products.** "Whether in Washington, D.C., or here at home, he fights for our land, water and people and supports Montana's thriving outdoor recreation economy. I am proud to join Outdoor Industry Association in support of Congressman Zinke's reelection."

- “Congressman Zinke understands the importance of Montana’s and our nation’s public lands and knows the benefits that outdoor recreation businesses bring to the economy of one of the most naturally beautiful states in the country,” said **OIA Executive Director Amy Roberts**. “His ability to find common sense solutions to protect our lands and waters and growing Montana’s outdoor recreation economy is why we are supporting his reelection this year.”

ZINKE'S RECORD ON ENERGY AND MINERAL RESOURCES

Op-eds

- [April 10, 2015](#): Don't let Gateway Pacific become next Keystone
- [July 10, 2015](#): Montana coal workers deserve a fighting chance

Oil, coal and gas legislation

- [January 6, 2015](#): Cosponsored H.R.161, the Natural Gas Pipeline Permitting Reform Act
- [January 6, 2015](#): Cosponsored H.R.3, the Keystone XL Pipeline Act
- [January 13, 2015](#): Cosponsored H.R.287, the American Job Creation and Strategic Alliances LNG Act
- [February 4, 2015](#): Cosponsored H.R.702, to adapt to changing crude oil market conditions.
- [March 25, 2015](#): Cosponsored H.R.1616, the Natural Gas Gathering Enhancement Act
- [March 26, 2015](#): Cosponsored H.R.1644, the Supporting Transparent Regulatory and Environmental Actions in Mining Act
- [October 9, 2015](#): Cosponsored H.R.3734, the Mining Schools Enhancement Act
- [December 3, 2015](#): Voted for H.R. 8, the North American Energy Security and Infrastructure Act, which included Zinke's H.R. 2358, the Electricity Reliability and Forest Protection Act
- [December 18, 2015](#): Zinke Makes History: Lifts the Ban on Crude Oil Exports
- [May 17, 2016](#): Daines, Zinke Introduce Legislation to Give States & Tribes Say in Energy Development
- [September 8, 2016](#): In Historic Vote, House Committee Passes Two Zinke Bills: Recognition of Little Shell and Certainty for States and Tribes Act

Congressman Zinke is a vocal and active supporter for coal, oil, and gas development

- [February 10, 2015](#): Zinke: The EPA Is Causing Montana to Bleed Jobs
- [February 24, 2015](#): Ryan Zinke Blasts Obama Veto of the bipartisan Keystone CL Pipeline
- [March 15, 2015](#): Zinke Calls for DoD Investigation into Col. Buck of Army Corps of Engineers
- [April 9, 2015](#): Rep Zinke presses BLM on fracking inexperience

- [July 28, 2015](#): Ryan Zinke and Bipartisan Coalition Urges Army Corps of Engineers to Complete Environmental Study on Gateway Pacific Terminal
- [August 3, 2015](#): Zinke on EPA Plan: Montana Knows Best
- [September 22, 2015](#): Zinke to DOI: "Sage Grouse Listing Clearly 'Not Warranted'"
- [October 23, 2015](#): Rep Zinke Supports AG Fox's Challenge of EPA
- [January 29, 2016](#): Zinke Urges President Obama to Meet Montanans And Understand What's At Stake
- [February 5, 2016](#): Zinke Statement on Obama's Oil Tax
- [March 16, 2015](#): Rep. Ryan Zinke Announces Permanent Indian Coal Production Tax Credit
- [April 20, 2016](#): Rep. Ryan Zinke's Statement on the Senate Energy Bill
- [May 9, 2016](#): Zinke: Crow Coal Terminal Killed by Army Corps of Engineers Political Actions
- [June 14, 2016](#): Rep. Zinke & Billing's Union Leader, Mike Johnson, hold hearing fighting for Montana coal jobs
- [June 30, 2016](#): Zinke & Daines Defend Montana Coal Country, Blast DOI Regulations
- [July 14, 2016](#): Zinke Applauds Passage of Department of Interior Appropriations, which includes Zinke's provisions to end Obama's federal coal moratorium and blocks new coal, gas and oil regulations
- [November 15, 2016](#): Zinke weighs in on new BLM rule against oil and gas development on federal and tribal land

Pro-Energy Groups and Tribal leaders support Zinke and his Certainty for States and Tribes Act

- "Tribes have long been cut out of the conversation when it comes to our own land. We want and need to develop our coal in order to provide jobs, services, and education to our people, but the federal government is making it near impossible. Congressman Zinke's leadership has been critical for the Crow to develop our coal," – **Dana Wilson, Vice Chairman of the Crow Tribe**
- "As a Montanan it makes me proud to know that Senator Daines and Representative Zinke are working for a better relationship with the Department of the Interior. I hope that this will save coal towns like mine, and give us the opportunity to prosper and keep Montana an energy exporter for many years to come." – **Ashley Dennehy, Colstrip United Co-Founder**
- "The State of Montana and the Musselshell County's fiscal health and stability are directly tied to the coal industry. Musselshell County is very dependent on the

health and vitality of the coal industry. The legislation Senator Daines and Congressman Zinke are proposing will ensure the voices of our communities, state and industry are being heard and good policy is being made.” –

Musselshell County Commissioners

- “The legislation introduced by Senator Daines and Congressman Zinke brings fairness, stakeholder input, and transparency to the Department of the Interior’s activities related to the Mineral Leasing Act. Balancing the use of our natural resources with environmental protections that are second to none is a far better approach than simply keeping valuable resources in the ground.” – **National Mining Association President and CEO, Hal Quinn**

ZINKE'S RECORD ON TRIBAL ISSUES

Legislation

- [January 12, 2015](#): Introduced H.R. 286, the Little Shell Tribe of Chippewa Indians Restoration Act of 2015
- [January 14, 2015](#): Was an original co-sponsor for H.R. 360, the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Reauthorization Act of 2015
- [January 22, 2015](#): Co-sponsored H.R. 511, the Tribal Labor Sovereignty Act of 2015
- [March 19, 2015](#): Introduced H.R. 1522, the Indian Coal Production Tax Credit
- [April 16, 2015](#): Co-sponsored H.R. 1842, the Indian Health Service Health Professions Tax Fairness Act of 2015
- [July 15, 2015](#): Co-sponsored H.R. 3080, the Tribal Employment and Jobs Protection Act
- [March 2, 2016](#): Co-sponsored H.Con.Res122, the PROTECT Patrimony Resolution
- [May 17, 2016](#): Introduced H.R. 5259, the Certainty for States and Tribes Act
- [June 12, 2016](#): Was an original co-sponsor for H.R. 2760, the American Indian Trust Responsibility Review Act of 2015
- [July 5, 2016](#): Introduced H.Res.807, Expressing support for designation of May 5, 2017, as "National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Native Women and Girls"
- [July 6, 2016](#): Introduced H.R. 5633, the Blackfeet Water Rights Settlement Act, which was signed into law by President Obama on December 16, 2016, as part of the S.612, the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation.

Letters

- [March 2, 2015](#): Sent a letter in support of funding for State and Tribal Wildlife Grants.
- [April 21, 2015](#): Strongly urged the Department of the Interior and Department of Justice to work expeditiously within the confines of Chairman Rob Bishop's new tribal water compact requirements to review, assess, and advance the Blackfeet Water Rights Settlement.
- [October 14, 2015](#): Requested Chairman Bishop include of H.R.286, the Little Shell Federal Recognition Bill, in a future markup following a successful subcommittee hearing vetting the legislation.
- [December 4, 2015](#): Following up with the Department of the Interior about ensuring the Blackfeet Water Settlement continues to include important language and funding as established in the Birch Creek Agreement.

- [March 24, 2016](#): Sent a support letter on behalf of the Northern Cheyenne Tribe to assist in accessing grant funding to revise their tribal constitution.
- [April 7, 2016](#): Sent a follow up letter to Deputy Secretary Connor of the Department of the Interior, urging the agency to finish work on the Blackfeet Water Settlement so the bill could be considered in a subcommittee hearing.
- [April 7, 2016](#): Advised the Department of the Interior and the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau to engage in sufficient government-to-government consultation about new regulatory standards, which was previously not occurring.
- [April 18, 2016](#): Joined the Montana delegation in sending a letter of support for the Montana Attorney General's application for the National Sexual Assault Kit Initiative competitive grant.
- [July 6, 2016](#): Engaged the Department of the Interior and Department of Justice about following through on meeting Chairman Bishop's tribal water compact criteria in order to allow the bill to be passed out of Committee.
- [August 5, 2016](#): Joined the Montana delegation's efforts urging FEMA to grant the Fort Peck Tribes' request for a major disaster declaration.
- [September 30, 2016](#): Urged House Leadership to allow the Blackfeet Water Compact to continue to be included in a final conference Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) package.
- [November 28, 2016](#): Joined Western Members in urging the President-elect to continue to maintain the Special Assistant to the President for Native American Affairs position.

Press Releases

- [January 1, 2015](#): Zinke Introduces Legislation to Extend Federal Recognition to the Little Shell Tribe
- [March 16, 2015](#): Rep. Ryan Zinke Announces Permanent Indian Coal Production Tax Credit
- [March 18, 2015](#): Zinke Calls on House to Advance Little Shell Recognition
- [September 29, 2015](#): House Holds First Hearing for Little Shell Federal Recognition in Years
- [November 17, 2015](#): Ryan Zinke votes to return sovereignty to tribes
- [April 26, 2016](#): Zinke Announces More than a Million Dollars in Grants for Montana Tribes
- [May 9, 2016](#): Crow Coal Terminal Killed by Army Corps of Engineers Political Actions
- [May 17, 2016](#): Daines, Zinke Introduce Legislation to Give States & Tribes Say in Energy Development

- [May 24, 2016](#): Zinke, Barnes & House of Reps. Hold First Ever Hearing on Blackfeet Water Compact
- [June 14, 2016](#): Video: Rep. Zinke & Billing's Union Leader, Mike Johnson, hold hearing fighting for Montana coal jobs
- [June 30, 2016](#): Zinke & Daines Defend Montana Coal Country, Blast DOI Regulations
- [July 6, 2016](#): Zinke Introduces Blackfeet Water Compact
- [July 14, 2016](#): Zinke Applauds Passage of Department of Interior Appropriations
- [September 8, 2016](#): In Historic Vote, House Committee Passes Two Zinke Bills: Recognition of Little Shell and Certainty for States and Tribes Act
- [September 26, 2016](#): Rep. Zinke Announces More Than \$520,000 in Grants for Montana Tribes
- [September 26, 2016](#): Zinke Announces \$1.1 million in Funding for Tribal Law Enforcement
- [December 8, 2016](#): Zinke-led U.S. House Passes Blackfeet Water Compact, Calls on Daines & Tester to whip Senate Democrats
- [December 13, 2016](#): Zinke & Daines Hail Passage of Blackfeet Water Compact

Tribal leaders support Zinke Legislation

"Tribes have long been cut out of the conversation when it comes to our own land. We want and need to develop our coal in order to provide jobs, services, and education to our people, but the federal government is making it near impossible. Congressman Zinke's leadership has been critical for the Crow to develop our coal," – **Dana Wilson, Vice Chairman of the Crow Tribe**

"We appreciate all that Congressman Zinke has done to support us by introducing H.R. 286. He has tirelessly fought for our people and to restore our federal recognition. We hope that Congress will listen to the strong voices in the State of Montana and pass Mr. Zinke's legislation." – **Gerald Gray, Chairman of the Little Shell Tribal Council.**

"What a truly historic day for the Blackfeet Nation and the entire state of Montana. Congressman Zinke has proven himself to be a true champion of the Blackfeet Nation, and thanks to his leadership in the House, we are closer than ever before to victory." – **Chairman Harry Barnes of the Blackfeet Nation.**

From: Swift, Heather
To: [Domenech, Douglas](mailto:Domenech.Douglas)
Subject: Fwd: U.S. Department of the Interior News Briefing for Monday, January 30, 2017
Date: Monday, January 30, 2017 6:11:30 PM

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From: **Bulletin Intelligence** <Interior@bulletinintelligence.com>
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Subject: U.S. Department of the Interior News Briefing for Monday, January 30, 2017
To: Interior@bulletinintelligence.com

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NEWS BRIEFING

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DATE: MONDAY, JANUARY 30, 2017 7:00 AM EST

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DOI in the News:

TRUMP TEAM TO REVIEW MOST INTERIOR NOTICES, CORRESPONDENCE. [Politico Pro](#) (1/27) reports that a memo “requires all notices and most correspondence at Interior to be reviewed by Trump’s team.” The document states, “No correspondence should be cleared to go to Congress or any Governor until it has been reviewed by the Acting Chief of Staff and Senior White House Advisor.” According to the article, “once assembled, Trump’s Interior leadership will decide whether to maintain the restrictions.”

Trump’s Communications Strategy Causes Concern Among Scientists. The [Wall Street Journal](#) (1/27, Harder, Carlton, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) reports chaos among federal agencies over the transition of power has led to confusion over what agencies are allowed to display on their websites. However, an EPA spokesman denied reports that Trump would soon require the agency to delete its climate change website. In addition, experts say the Trump transition has not differed all that much from past transitions. Yet, Trump’s move to quiet communications has left scientists wondering whether Trump will clamp down on hot-button science issues.

Alternative NWS Twitter Account Created Wednesday Has 70,000 Followers. The [Washington Post](#) (1/27, Fritz, 11.43M) reports that dozens of alternative, unauthorized government accounts “have sprung up on Twitter in the past week, since the Badlands National Park Service went ‘went rogue’” and tweeted facts about greenhouse gases and climate change. The accounts include an alternative to the National Weather Service, @AlternativeNWS, which “was created Wednesday and has already acquired more than 70,000 followers.”

Additional coverage of “rogue” Twitter accounts was provided by [NPR](#) (1/27, 1.92M), the [Las Vegas \(NV\) Review-Journal](#) (1/27, 676K), [BuzzFeed](#) (1/27, 6.47M), and [Curbed](#) (1/27, 419K).

American Geophysical Union Urges Federal Agencies To Adhere To Scientific Integrity. [Politico Pro](#) (1/27) reports that the American Geophysical Union sent a letter to federal agencies Thursday “urging them to adhere to their own scientific integrity principles and not limit public access to information.” CEO Christine McEntee wrote, “We look forward to seeing the restrictions lifted soon so that critical, up-to-date scientific information remains readily available to the public.”

Egan: In Trump Era, Useful Information From Public Employees Silenced. In his [New York Times](#) (1/27, Egan, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) column, Timothy Egan says that at the inauguration it “seemed obvious that the crowd for President Trump was not nearly as large as that for Barack Obama in 2009.” Egan adds, “This small act of historical clarification by the keepers of our sacred sites and shared spaces would have been no big deal, had not the response from the new president sounded like an edict from the Dear Leader.” Pointing to the Badlands National Park tweet “about more carbon dioxide in the atmosphere than any time in the last 650,000 years,” Egan says that in the Trump era, “snippets of useful information from dedicated public employees are more like the signals that a survivor’s beacon sends out after being buried by an avalanche. In this case, the beeps represent science, history, facts.”

Editorial: Silencing NPS Doesn’t Serve The Public. The [Longmont \(CO\) Times-Call](#) (1/29, 1K) editorializes that “stifling the voices of the National Park Service and the science done in an effort to protect the parks will not serve the people who love our parks today, nor the generations for whom we must preserve them.”

ZINKE TO REVIEW NEW MONUMENT DESIGNATIONS. The [Las Vegas Review-Journal](#) (1/28, 676K) reports that at his confirmation hearing, Interior nominee Ryan Zinke said that he plans to review “Obama’s controversial new monuments – Gold Butte in Nevada and Bears Ears in Utah.” However,

“Zinke pledged to meet with officials in those states before weighing in on whether the Trump administration should try to rescind the designations.”

Hatch: Trump Eager To Undo Federal Protections For Bears Ears. The [Washington Post](#) (1/27, Eilperin, 11.43M) reports Sen. Orrin Hatch said that President Trump is “eager to work with” Republican lawmakers on undoing new federal protections for Bears Ears in Utah. Hatch, “who met with Trump Thursday, said Friday that he had spoken with Trump ‘and one of the issues I raised very strongly was Bears Ears.’” In a statement, he “noted the president’s interior secretary nominee, Rep. Ryan Zinke (R-Mont.), has already pledged ‘that his first trip after confirmation would be to Utah to get right to work with us on addressing this travesty.’”

Utah Legislators Advance Anti-Monument Resolutions. The [Deseret \(UT\) News](#) (1/27, 362K) reports members of Utah’s House Rules Committee met Friday to vote on “a pair of anti-monument resolutions that ask President Donald Trump to rescind the 2016 Bears Ears National Monument designation and Congress to drastically shrink the Grand Staircase-Escalante monument declared 20 years ago.” The committee voted “6-2 along partisan lines to move HCR11 and HCR12 directly to the floor for debate.”

ZINKE COULD MOVE FOREST SERVICE TO INTERIOR. [Politico Pro](#) (1/27, Subscription Publication) reports that Interior Secretary nominee Rep. Ryan Zinke, “who has criticized federal forest fire management, has privately floated the idea of asking Congress to transfer the Agriculture Department’s Forest Service to the Interior, according to sources.” However, Zinke “would face an uphill battle convincing lawmakers that transferring the authority over to the agency, altering the existing laws governing it and consolidating Interior and Forest Service regulations was worth the time and expense.”

ZINKE SOFTENS COMMITMENT TO COAL LEASING REVIEW. [Politico Pro](#) (1/27, Subscription Publication) reports that Interior nominee Rep. Ryan Zinke “weakened his position on the Bureau of Land Management’s review of its coal leasing program in written answers to lawmakers’ questions.” According to the article, “at his nomination hearing last week, Zinke said he believes the ‘review is good,’ although he admitted to not knowing the specifics.” However, “in response to a question about continuing the review, Zinke was less committal.” He wrote, “I have not personally reviewed the Federal Coal Programmatic EIS scoping report published by the Bureau of Land Management. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that decisions are based on objective science and transparency. I will examine the scoping document and visit with the Bureau of Land Management and determine the appropriate next steps to be taken as part of the NEPA process.”

ZINKE PLANS TO REVIEW ALL INTERIOR CLIMATE SCIENCE CENTERS. [Politico Pro](#) (1/27, Subscription Publication) reports that Interior nominee Rep. Ryan Zinke told the Senate Energy and Natural Resources committee “in his written answers that he plans to review the work of all eight of the Interior Department’s climate science centers.” Zinke wrote, “I value and support collaboration with public and private research institutions. As mentioned at the confirmation hearing, I believe that programs are most effective when they operate according to ‘clear and precise’ goals. I look forward to a complete review of the eight DOI Climate Science Centers and their results over the past six years as we develop an agenda for moving forward.”

ENVIRONMENTAL, ENERGY INITIATIVES EYED FOR BUDGET CUTS. [E&E](#) (1/27) reports that “President Trump and congressional Republicans are expected to take a hatchet to the federal budget — with major cuts likely coming soon for some of the Obama administration’s top environmental and energy initiatives.” An outline by the Heritage Foundation would “prevent the net addition of new public lands to the federal portfolio and would rev up energy production on existing federal properties.” However, “an effort to target the LWCF could see opposition from Interior Secretary-designee Ryan Zinke, whose support for the program has won him accolades from Democrats and environmentalists.”

GREEN GROUPS ORGANIZING TO CHALLENGE TRUMP, REPUBLICANS, IN COURT. The [AP](#) (1/29, Webber, Flesher) reports that advocacy groups nationwide are hiring more staff lawyers, coordinating with private attorneys and volunteers to defend against “what they fear will be a wave of unfavorable policies concerning climate change, wildlife protection, federal lands and pollution.” President Trump’s first week in office “only heightened their anxieties,” and donations to advocacy groups have begun

increasing. Doug Ericksen, communications director for Trump's transition team at EPA, said environmentalists are "stoking fear of Trump as a fundraising tool." The AP reports that House Republicans introduced a rules "barring coal mining companies from damaging streams and to remove some wolves from the endangered species list."

GRIJALVA VISITS NEW MEXICO IN FIGHT AGAINST ROLLBACK ATTEMPTS. [E&E](#) (1/27) reports that "as Republicans on Capitol Hill and the Trump administration contemplate how to roll back some of the national monuments created under the Antiquities Act, Democratic Rep. Raúl Grijalva of Arizona is urging voters in the Southwest to 'build a united front' to combat such efforts." Grijalva was set to address residents in New Mexico last Friday, "the final stop on a three-day tour of the state's national monuments that has included Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument, White Sands National Monument and Bandelier National Monument." Grijalva said, "The fight is going to be a localized fight as much as it is a nationalized fight. The more support and the more of a pushback we have from local communities to local delegations will protect these assets."

INTERIOR MAKING PLANS IN CASE ENTERPRISE INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES CONTRACT FALLS SHORT. [Federal Computer Week](#) (1/27, 263K) reports that the Interior Department "apparently is concerned that the General Services Administration's Enterprise Infrastructure Services contract might not be able to serve all the phone line needs of its far-flung operations." According to the article, "awards in the \$50 billion EIS contract are expected this spring." Interior stated in a new sources sought notice, "A primary concern to DOI is the fact that GSA EIS contract holders may not have the capability to provide coverage nationwide to every location where DOI has voice communication services."

FEDERAL WEBSITES SEE SPIKE IN DOWNLOADS RELATED TO CLIMATE CHANGE. The [Washington Post](#) (1/27, Kaplan, 11.43M) reports that according to data from [analytics.usa.gov](#), several pages related to climate change have seen a spike in traffic in the week since President Trump's inauguration. "As of Friday morning, a National Park Service report about the agency's 'Cultural Resources Climate Change Strategy' was the most downloaded document from a government website." At EPA, nine of the top ten downloads were related to climate change.

NYTIMES ANALYSIS: US HEARTLAND AVOIDS DISCUSSING CLIMATE CHANGE OPENLY. A more than 2,950 word [New York Times](#) (1/28, Tabuchi, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) analysis reports that climate change has become a "critical business issue" with the "economic realities of agriculture" in "America's breadbasket and conservative heartland." Farmers in the region "focus on practical issues like erosion or dwindling aquifers," but generally don't mention the term climate change. The Times says that "politics and social pressure make frank discussion complicated," with "conservative orthodoxy maintain[ing] that the science isn't settled."

ADDITIONAL COVERAGE: CHAFFETZ PROPOSES PUBLIC LAND SELL-OFFS. Additional coverage that Rep. Jason Chaffetz has introduced seeking the disposal of 3.368 million acres in 10 states was provided by the [Men's Journal](#) (1/27, 12.47M).

OBAMA THANKED FOR STEWARDSHIP OF PUBLIC LANDS. In an op-ed for the [Denver Post](#) (1/27, 778K), Jamie Williams, the president of The Wilderness Society, writes that "the American West should be grateful to President Barack Obama" for "his stewardship of land and waters" and "his conservation efforts in the Western United States." Williams also notes that Obama "took up long-overdue energy reforms on the public lands that are owned by all Americans, and he connected the dots between energy development and the greenhouse gases produced by it that contribute to climate change."

EXPANSION OF CASCADE-SISKIYOU NATIONAL MONUMENT DEFENDED. In an editorial, the [Medford \(OR\) Mail Tribune](#) (1/27, 92K) says that Jackson County commissioners, "smarting from the expansion of the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument, are turning to the new Donald Trump administration, hoping to win changes in the Antiquities Act that allowed President Barack Obama to expand the monument." While it acknowledges that "some changes in the Antiquities Act may be warranted," the paper argues that "there are good reasons to retain the monument and its expansion." It also argues that "if Congress wants to modify the Antiquities Act, say, to require public hearings, it should do so for the entire country, not carve out state-specific exemptions."

SENATE COMMITTEE CRITICIZED FOR DELAY ON ZINKE'S CONFIRMATION VOTE. In an editorial, the [Missoulian \(MT\)](#) (1/27, 114K) gave "chokecherries" to the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee for the "unnecessary delay on voting to confirm U.S. Rep. Ryan Zinke, R-Montana, as secretary of the Interior."

TRUMP ADMINISTRATION EXPECTED TO BE FRIENDLIER TO MINING INTERESTS. In an op-ed for the [Wyoming Tribune Eagle](#) (1/28, 44K), Annette Woofenden writes that "instead of being an ally to the soda ash industry and sharing in the pride of this special American export, in recent years our federal government became an adversary." According to Woofenden, the Interior Department "opposed multiple efforts to reduce royalty fees" and "outgoing Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell stated repeatedly that the department owed a duty to the public to 'maximize fair return to taxpayers.'" Woofenden expects Interior nominee Rep. Ryan Zinke will "likely take a more balanced approach to managing our nation's public resources, while keeping in mind our industries' needs to be competitive."

TRUMP ADMINISTRATION URGED TO IMPROVE MANAGEMENT OF FEDERAL FORESTS. For the "Congress" blog of [The Hill](#) (1/27, Smith, 1.25M), Nick Smith, executive director of Healthy Forests, Healthy Communities, writes that "by putting more Americans back to work on our federally-owned forests, the president can restore economic opportunity while protecting public lands for the future." Smith says that "the president is off to a good start by appointing Ryan Zinke and Sonny Perdue to lead the departments of Interior and Agriculture, respectively," because "both recognize the needs of our rural forested communities and their deep connection to federal forest lands. Both recognize we can responsibly utilize our natural resources while upholding important conservation values." Smith offers "a few steps the Trump administration and Congress can take to improve the management of our federal forests, while keeping our public lands healthy, productive and accessible." He urges them to give "the U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management the policy tools, legal tools and resources to actively manage more of our forest lands." Smith also calls for the end to "the so-called budgetary gimmick of 'fire borrowing' that forces agencies to raid non-fire accounts to pay for growing wildfire suppression costs." Finally, he writes that "the administration and Congress should modernize National Environmental Policy Act and other federal laws and regulations to make land management more efficient and to increase the pace and scale of forest projects."

America's Great Outdoors:

National Park Service:

NPS IN MIDDLE OF CROWD SIZE DEBATE. [E&E](#) (1/27) reports that "more than two decades ago, then-Park Police Chief Bob Langston made a decision: no more crowd counts from the National Park Service." The NPS director at the time, Roger Kennedy, "agreed, and NPS hasn't given a crowd estimate since." The park service "limits itself to the vague; it confirms that crowds were big or small but never delves into the realm of numbers." However, "now NPS finds itself back in the middle of the crowd size debate, an unwilling participant in a political tug of war."

Additional coverage as provided by the [Washington \(DC\) Times](#) (1/27, Daly, 272K), [NPR](#) (1/27, 1.92M), [CBS News](#) (1/27, 4.4M), [ABC News](#) (1/27, 3.09M), [MSNBC](#) (1/27, 8.33M), [Fox News](#) (1/26, 11.07M), [CNBC](#) (1/27, 2.17M), [Fortune](#) (1/27, 7.12M), [MarketWatch](#) (1/27, 767K), and [TIME](#) (1/27, 6.98M).

NPS RESPONSE TO SEXUAL HARASSMENT ISSUE CALLED "A MIXED BAG". The [Arizona Daily Sun](#) (1/29, 49K) reports after "a 13-page federal investigative report was released" on sexual harassment allegations at Grand Canyon National Park, the NPS "responded with a 18-item list of reforms and, a year later, it reports that it has completed or is at work on the majority of items." According to the article, "current and former employees, when asked about the park's progress, laud the agency for what it has accomplished." However, they also "point to federal disciplinary policies and ingrained agency attitudes that failed to halt the workplace misconduct and appear to be changing much more slowly."

BILL WOULD APPROVE SALE OF WYOMING LAND INSIDE GRAND TETON NATIONAL PARK. The

[Jackson Hole \(WY\) News & Guide](#) (1/29, 1K) reports that “state lawmakers have set their eyes on selling the last remaining tract of Wyoming property inside Grand Teton National Park to the federal government.” According to the article, “partly at the behest of Gov. Matt Mead, legislators have introduced a bill that would allow four years to come up with \$46 million for the 640-acre parcel located along the Teton park boundary near Kelly.” Senate File 119 is “restricted to a straight cash sale.”

The [Jackson Hole \(WY\) News & Guide](#) (1/28, 1K) reports that “the federal government will have to fork over only \$500,000 instead of \$4.6 million in a nonrefundable deposit to acquire a square mile of Wyoming-owned land near Kelly.” That was the result of “an amendment added to Senate File 119, which authorizes selling the 640-acre tract to the U.S. Department of Interior for no less than \$46 million.”

PUBLIC AGENCIES RESTRICT INFORMATION ABOUT GATLINBURG WILDFIRES. [USA Today](#) (1/29, Jacobs, 5.28M) reports that “less than three weeks after a firestorm struck Gatlinburg, the Sevier County prosecutor decided the public had gotten all the information it was going to get about the disaster.” According to the article, “all local, state and federal agencies involved in the disaster were asked to deny any further information or records to the public.” Fourth Judicial District Attorney General Jimmy Dunn “on Dec. 15 issued a two-page letter stating the prosecution of two juveniles accused of starting the fire could be jeopardized by the release of any more information.” As a result, “otherwise public records in any way connected to the investigation of the fires that started in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park and five days later swept into Gatlinburg were deemed off limits.”

LOS ANGELES FREEWAY CLAIMS THIRD MOUNTAIN LION IN TWO MONTHS. The [AP](#) (1/27, 1.27M) reports that “a vehicle struck and killed an orphaned mountain lion on the same stretch of Los Angeles-area freeway where her mother and one of her two siblings died separately in December, wildlife authorities said Friday.” According to the article, “the death of the 8-month-old lion this month again illustrated the hazards that cougars face living among urban sprawl and networks of roads that are barriers to territorial roaming and genetic diversity among the puma populations.” National Park Service researchers “who are studying lions in the region identified it as a kitten designated P-51.”

Coverage by the AP was also picked up by [Philly \(PA\)](#) (1/27, 942K), the [San Francisco \(CA\) Chronicle](#) (1/27, 2.2M), [U.S. News & World Report](#) (1/27, 1.02M), the [Washington \(DC\) Times](#) (1/27, 272K), and the [Daily Mail](#) (1/27, 4.59M).

ADDITIONAL COVERAGE: FUNDS AWARDED FOR UNDERREPRESENTED COMMUNITIES THROUGH HISTORIC PRESERVATION FUND. Additional coverage of the “\$500,000 in grants to help fund projects across the country to increase the number of listings associated with communities that are underrepresented in the National Register of Historic Places” was provided by the [Selma \(AL\) Times Journal](#) (1/27, 22K).

ADDITIONAL COVERAGE: EFFORT SEEKS TO REINTRODUCE CALIFORNIA CONDORS TO WILD. Additional coverage of the effort to reintroduce the California condor to the wild was provided by the [SFist](#) (1/27, 116K).

Fish and Wildlife Service:

TRUMP LIKELY TO REVERSE RESTRICTION ON LEAD BULLETS IN WILDLIFE REFUGES. The [Wall Street Journal](#) (1/27, Palazzolo, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) reports a January 19 regulation issued by the head of the US Fish and Wildlife Service would prohibit lead ammunition and fishing tackle from national wildlife refuges by 2022. However, the Journal says the regulation could provide Trump an early opportunity to weigh in on gun policy, noting that the Trump campaign received \$26 million in ad support from the NRA, an organization that has called on the swift nomination of Rep. Ryan Zinke as Interior Secretary so he can reverse government overreach.

Oversight Republicans Demand Documents On Ban. [E&E](#) (1/27) reports that Republicans on the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee are asking for documents from the Fish and Wildlife Service “about a controversial plan to phase out lead ammunition and fishing tackle on wildlife refuges.” In a letter to Jim Kurth, the acting director of FWS, Chairman Jason Chaffetz and Subcommittee

on the Interior, Energy and Environment Chairman Blake Farenthold wrote, “As I understand it, FWS issued this order abruptly with little or no input from interested parties on the last full day of the previous administration.” They continued, “The Committee questions the cost and burden that this order would place on sportsmen who recreate on FWS land. We are also interested in knowing the considerations weighed in the preparation of this order.”

Additional Coverage. Additional coverage of the ban was provided by [Fox News](#) (1/27, 11.07M), the [Pittsburgh \(PA\) Post-Gazette](#) (1/29, 493K), the [London \(KY\) Sentinel Echo](#) (1/27, 23K), the [Marshall \(MN\) Independent](#) (1/29, 17K), the [Pittsburgh \(PA\) Post-Gazette](#) (1/29, 493K), the [Yakima \(WA\) Herald-Republic](#) (1/29, 88K), [The East Oregonian](#) (1/27, 24K), the [Duluth \(MN\) News Tribune](#) (1/29, 134K), the [New Bedford \(MA\) Standard-Times](#) (1/28, 69K), [Outdoor Life Magazine](#) (1/27, 4.37M), [Florida Sportsman Magazine](#) (1/26, 21K), and [AmmoLand](#) (1/27, 15K).

ENDANGERED ANIMALS WOULD BE BLOCKED BY TRUMP’S BORDER WALL. The [Washington Post](#) (1/27, Fears, 11.43M) reports that the border wall proposed by President Trump would block “dozens of animal species that migrate freely across the international line in search of water, food and mates would be walled off.” The article says “at a time when the Trump administration has restricted communications from the Environmental Protection Agency and other agencies, federal agencies may be reluctant to weigh in on any topic in a way that appears critical of the president’s ambitions.” However, “outside the government, scientists who’ve studied how 670 miles of walls and fences erected as part of the Secure Fence Act under former president George W. Bush in 2006 tell stories of animals stopping in their tracks, staring at barriers they couldn’t cross.”

Additional coverage was provided by [Sputnik News](#) (1/28, 48K).

BOGUE CHITTO NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE TO CLOSE TEMPORARILY. The [AP](#) (1/27, 272K) reports that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service “says it’s closing Bogue Chitto National Wildlife Refuge due to high levels of the Pearl River.” The decision, “announced Thursday, will affect primitive-weapon and archery deer seasons on the federal tract, but not waterfowl season.”

FWS LIFTS BOATING WAKE RESTRICTIONS AT HAVASU NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE. The [AP](#) (1/27, 272K) reports that “federal wildlife officials say they will be reopening next month the half-mile of backwater in Lake Havasu Wildlife Refuge that was abruptly closed to boaters in May 2015.” The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announced that “it will lift wake restrictions in the secluded area north of Mesquite Bay on Feb. 1.”

KEY DEER OUTFITTED WITH RADIO COLLARS IN BATTLE AGAINST SCREWORM OUTBREAK. The [AP](#) (1/27, 272K) reports that “wildlife officials have fitted 30 female Key deer with radio tracking collars amid a screwworm infestation threatening the endangered herd.” According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, “the flexible vinyl collars were made specifically for the deer that only grow to the size of large dogs.” Officials say “the collars will help them monitor does and fawns that may be more vulnerable to screwworms during the fawning season.”

AVIAN CHOLERA KILLING BIRDS AT MCNARY NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE. The [AP](#) (1/27, 272K) reports that “an outbreak of avian cholera has killed about 500 birds at the McNary National Wildlife Refuge in south-central Washington this week.” Dan Haas of the Mid-Columbia River National Wildlife Refuge Complex “says the disease is not unusual in cold and wet weather but birds are susceptible this year because the cold and snow have left them stressed.”

FWS RELEASES FISH AT COLEMAN HATCHERY. The [Red Bluff \(CA\) Daily News](#) (1/28, 578) reports that rain “didn’t slow down the Coleman National Fish Hatchery’s scheduled week-long efforts to release 600,000 year-old steelhead into a Sacramento River location near Red Bluff.” Brett Galyean, project leader at Coleman, “directed efforts to load, truck and then release the fish in heavy rain at the Bend Bridge Boat Ramp in Red Bluff beginning Jan. 3.” According to Galyean, “stormy weather, high river flows and turbidity are excellent release conditions that help expedite the steelhead migration to the Pacific Ocean.”

REWARD INCREASED TO \$15,000 FOR MISSING ENDANGERED SALAMANDERS. The [AP](#) (1/28, 272K) reports that “a reward for the return hundreds of endangered salamanders missing for two months from a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service aquatic center in Central Texas has been boosted to \$15,000.”

Additional coverage was provided by [KSAT-TV](#) San Antonio (1/27, 96K).

ADDITIONAL COVERAGE: LESSER LONG-NOSED BAT COULD BE REMOVED FROM ENDANGERED LIST. Additional coverage that the lesser long-nosed bat is “proposed for removal from the endangered species list because the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service says its known population has skyrocketed in the past 30 years,” was provided by the [Arizona Daily Star](#) (1/28, 270K).

FATE OF ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT UNCERTAIN UNDER TRUMP. For the “Congress” blog of [The Hill](#) (1/27, Carmichael, 1.25M), Cassandra Carmichael, Executive Director of the National Religious Partnership for the Environment, is troubled by the use of the Endangered Species Act as “a political football.” Moreover, “in light of recent nominations to his administration and their track record,” Carmichael worries that President Trump is “going to establish a precedent of overlooking the best available science and stray even further from his party’s traditional values of conservation in favor of commercial gains.” She argues that “protecting the environment and strengthening the economy are not mutually exclusive – in fact, study after study has shown that permanent protection for our public lands actually drives economic growth.” Carmichael concludes that “if Trump truly plans to ‘Make America Great Again,’ he would be wise to embody his party’s values of common sense and tradition, and return to the days when Republicans stood for preserving our heritage – finned, feathered, four-legged and everything in between.”

Bureau of Land Management:

CHANGE IN BLM LEADERSHIP NOT LIKELY TO AFFECT CEMEX APPEAL OF DECISION. The [Santa Clarita Valley \(CA\) Signal](#) (1/27, 18K) reports that “a shakeup of BLM’s top posts will not likely affect Cemex’s appeal to the bureau’s having rescinded its long-standing permits to mine Soledad Canyon, state and local officials said.” Also, “a local official expects a decision to be made within the year.” BLM spokeswoman Martha Maciel said, “The project going through appeal with Cemex does not change with the change in administration.”

BLM TO HOST MEETINGS ON TARGET SHOOTING MANAGEMENT ON SONORAN DESERT NATIONAL MONUMENT. The [Mesa \(AZ\) Independent](#) (1/28) reports that the Bureau of Land Management will hold “two information meetings to seek input on recreational target shooting management alternatives for the Sonoran Desert National Monument.” The meetings are scheduled for Feb. 11 and Feb. 21.

ADDITIONAL COVERAGE: UTAH CONSERVATIONISTS CONDEMN POSSIBLE BLM CHIEF. Additional coverage of the controversy over the possibility that BLM critic Mike Noel could lead the agency was provided by [KSL-TV](#) Salt Lake City (1/29, 547K).

Securing America’s Energy Future:

Onshore Energy Development:

GOP RESOLUTIONS TO UNDO COAL, METHANE RULES “LIKELY TO PASS.” [The Hill](#) (1/27, Henry, 1.25M) reports House Republicans are preparing to vote next week on two resolutions that would “undo” two Interior Department rules from the Obama Administration – “one protecting streams from coal mining waste and another to cut methane emissions at oil and natural gas drilling sites.” House Natural Resources Committee Chairman Rep. Rob Bishop called the rules “abusive, last minute regulations.” Because President Trump “has said he would undo federal regulations on the fossil fuel industry,” both resolutions “are likely to pass.”

Additional coverage was provided by the [AP](#) (1/28, 1.27M), the [Morning Consult](#) (1/27), [Natural Gas](#)

[Intelligence](#) (1/27, Subscription Publication), the [Washington \(DC\) Examiner](#) (1/29, Drucker, 400K), and the [Santa Fe New Mexican](#) (1/27, 39K).

DPost: Effort To Ax Methane Rule Would Cancel Detection, Repair Measure. With regard to Bureau of Land Management methane rules, the [Denver Post](#) (1/28, 778K) editorializes that “Congress is getting ready to use an ax where it needs a scalpel by attempting to repeal federal methane rules that took years to develop.” Rep. Rob Bishop hopes to repeal the entire rule using the Congressional Review Act, which “would also throw out important rules on leak detection and repair” and “simultaneously [prohibit] the federal agency from adopting similar rules in the future.” The Post urges Bishop and others to “reconsider repealing the entire package.”

KEYSTONE XL PIPELINE APPLICATION RE-FILED, ECONOMIC BENEFITS ANALYZED. The [Financial Times](#) (1/27, Crooks, Subscription Publication, 1.39M) reports that TransCanada has filed a new application to build the rejected Keystone XL pipeline, hoping that President Trump will be more favorable to its construction. The [AP](#) (1/27, Koenig, Karnowski) outlines the possible benefits of the Keystone XL pipeline, now that TransCanada has filed a new application for its construction. While the pipeline will “support about 42,100 jobs including about 3,900 workers directly involved in construction,” it will only provide 35 permanent jobs once it is built. The construction would add \$3.4 billion to the US economy, as well as “\$70 million in additional state and local taxes.” Once built, it will provide up to \$55 million in property taxes annually.

WPost: Debating Pipelines Is “Wasted Energy.” In an editorial, the [Washington Post](#) (1/27, 11.43M) calls the debate around the Keystone and Dakota Access pipelines is “stale” and “mostly irrational.” The Post argues that multiple studies show that both lines “would have negligible effects” on the environment, and accuses opponents of being “misleading” with information. The Post also criticizes President Trump for renewing focus on the projects. It concludes that the pipelines will likely be built, despite the “wasted energy” of the debate.

TRIBES MOVE TO GAIN MORE CONTROL OVER TAXATION ON THEIR LANDS. [Reuters](#) (1/27, Volcovici) reports Native American tribes have renewed calls to gain more control over natural resources on their lands, and they will ask Congress and President Donald Trump to prohibit state taxation of energy and resource development on reservations. While states are not permitted to tax Indians on reservations, they are allowed to tax non-Indian companies that extract resources from tribal lands. Tribes, including the Mandan, Hidatsa, Navajo and Arikara Nation argue that they should have sole authority to levy taxes on such projects because additional state taxes drive away company investment and economic development. The tribes say the states get hundreds of millions in tax revenue, while the tribes get few state services in return. [Reuters](#) (1/27) reported the tribal leaders say regulatory approvals can take as many as 50 steps on reservation lands, compared to a half dozen for wells on private property. Reservations, while covering only two percent of the country’s land, may contain up to a fifth of all US oil and gas reserves, along with coal stockpiles.

PLAN TO RESTORE YELLOWSTONE RIVER OIL SPILL DAMAGE ANNOUNCED. [KXLO-FM](#) Lewiston, MT (1/29) reports that the Interior Department and the state of Montana have “issued the Final Programmatic Damage Assessment and Restoration Plan and Final Programmatic Environmental Assessment for the Exxonmobil Pipeline Company July 1, 2011 Yellowstone River Oil Spill.” Montana will be “implementing almost \$9.5 million in restoration projects on the Yellowstone River in the next few years.” A public meeting will be held on February 15 “to present the final plan and responses to comments from the community, and present more information about plan implementation.”

Additional coverage was provided by [KULR-TV](#) Billings, MT (1/27, 2K) and [KULR-TV](#) Billings, MT (1/27, 2K).

MINING OPERATIONS OF WEST VIRGINIA GOVERNOR OWE \$4.6 MILLION IN FINES, PENALTIES. The [AP](#) (1/27, Virtanen) reports mining operations controlled by West Virginia Gov. Jim Justice “haven’t paid \$4.6 million in safety fines and penalties,” according to the Mine Safety and Health Administration. Most of the unpaid balance is currently at the Treasury Department for collection.

THIRD EARTHQUAKE HITS NORTHERN OKLAHOMA FRIDAY. The [AP](#) (1/27) reported the USGS reported a 3.1 magnitude earthquake was recorded last week near Medford in Northern Oklahoma. The quake occurred at 3:51 am on Friday, joining the 3.4 magnitude quake near Enid on Thursday and a 2.7 magnitude quake on Wednesday near Medford. No injuries or damage were reported.

ADDITIONAL COVERAGE: BLM RELEASES SCOPING REPORT ON COAL LEASING REFORMS.

Additional coverage that the Bureau of Land Management on January 11 “released a scoping report analyzing a wide range of proposed reforms to the federal coal leasing program” was provided by [JD Supra](#) (1/27, 2K).

OP-ED: OIL LEASES THREATEN ZION NATIONAL PARK. In an op-ed for the [Salt Lake \(UT\) Tribune](#) (1/28, 426K), Brooke Williams writes that the BLM has “included three parcels within the view shed of Zion National Park for lease at their oil and gas auction in June.” According to Williams, “this sale is being opposed by an environmental community, concerned about the threats of carbon development on biodiversity, wilderness and air and water quality, and by local officials worried about how 4 million visitors to Zion will feel when they see, hear and smell oil wells if they choose to explore this wild and remote section of the park.” Williams is among those “concerned about how climate disruption is degrading our future” and who are “also opposed to this lease sale, realizing that carbon must be kept ‘in the ground’ to avoid its catastrophic impacts on our climate.”

Empowering Native American Communities:

UDALL NAMES JENNIFER ROMERO SENATE INDIAN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE DEMOCRATIC STAFF DIRECTOR. The [Los Alamos \(NM\) Daily Post](#) (1/27) reports that Sen. Tom Udall, vice chairman of the U.S. Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, “announced that he has named Jennifer Romero as the committee’s Democratic staff director and chief counsel, effective immediately.” Before joining the Senate Indian Affairs Committee, Romero served under Interior Secretary Sally Jewell as senior advisor for Native Hawaiian Affairs. Romero said, “I’m honored by the opportunity to lead Senator Udall’s team on the Indian Affairs committee and look forward to working with tribes from across the country to advance their interests under his leadership. I’m especially proud to serve Indian country in my new capacity and champion Senator Udall’s dedication to improving the lives of Native Americans.”

WINNEBAGO AND OMAHA INDIAN RESERVATIONS WANT TO BUY BACK LAND FROM TRIBE MEMBERS. The [Omaha \(NE\) World-Herald](#) (1/30, 544K) reports that “a full-bore publicity campaign is underway on the Winnebago and Omaha Indian Reservations as part of a \$2 billion effort nationally to persuade tribal members to sell property they personally own back to the tribe.” Tony Wood, head of the Winnebago Land Corp, said, “We want to consolidate these lands under tribal ownership for the betterment of the whole community. The whole idea is to get it back to communal use.” The article notes that “the Winnebago Tribe has been allocated \$18.5 million under the federal buy-back program, and the Omaha Tribe has been given \$7.1 million.”

ADDITIONAL COVERAGE OF LAUNCH OF CULTURE AND METH DON’T MIX PROGRAM. Additional coverage of the launch of the launch the Culture and Meth Don’t Mix program was provided by the [Char-Koosta News](#) (1/26, 12K).

ADDITIONAL COVERAGE MOHAWK TRIBE APPLIES TO PUT LAND PARCELS INTO TRUST.

Additional coverage that the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe “wants two parcels of land near their reservation put into trust status by the Bureau of Indian Affairs” was provided by the [Potsdam \(NY\) North Country Now](#) (1/27, 3K).

Office of Insular Affairs:

OIA TRANSMITS \$31.5M IN COMPACT FUNDING TO MARSHALL ISLANDS. [Marianas Variety](#) (1/30) reports that the Office of Insular Affairs has “released to the Government of the Republic of the Marshall Islands’ Ministry of Finance Compact of Free Association payments totaling \$31,503,897 for the period October 1, 2016 to December 31, 2016.” Acting Assistant Interior Secretary Nik Pula said, “The U.S. and

the Marshall Islands have a unique relationship that has been mutually beneficial for our respective people. As we in the U.S. transition to a new administration, we will look forward to continuing our work and making improvements as needed.”

ADDITIONAL COVERAGE: US VIRGIN ISLANDS AT “CRITICAL JUNCTURE”. Additional coverage that the U.S. Virgin Islands is at “a critical juncture,” according to O.I.A. Director Nikolao Pula, was provided by the [Virgin Islands Consortium \(VIR\)](#) (1/29).

Tackling America’s Water Challenges:

MEETING HELD ON LOWER KLAMATH RIVER DAM REMOVAL. [KTVL-TV](#) Medford, OR (1/26, 1K) reports that last Thursday was “the final night of discussions for removing dams on the Klamath River.” Residents met “to voice their opinions on the matter after arguing not enough notice was given for the meetings initially.”

The [Ashland \(OR\) Daily Tidings](#) (1/29, 42K) reports that “more than 100 people attended the last in a series of three meetings Thursday in Yreka seeking public comment on the planned removal of four dams along the Klamath River, and the overwhelming feeling expressed by Siskiyou County residents was outrage.” According to the article, “many stated that the majority of the county had spoken in favor of leaving the dams in place and believe that the government entities involved in the decision were not listening to them.” Also, “some threatened lawsuits if the dam-removal process moves forward without considering residents’ concerns.”

LEGISLATION TO EXPAND FONTENELLE RESERVOIR REINTRODUCED. The [AP](#) (1/29, 272K) reports that “Wyoming’s congressional delegation has reintroduced legislation to expand the water storage at Fontenelle Reservoir in the southwest part of the state.” Sens. John Barrasso and Mike Enzi and Rep. Liz Cheney “say expanding the reservoir’s storage is important to maintaining a reliable water supply in the region.” They claim that “the extra water will benefit farmers, ranchers and communities and help boost the local economy.”

COURT TO HEAR ARGUMENTS IN “TAKING” CASE. The [McClatchy](#) (1/27, 74K) reports that “Northern California and Oregon farmers who lost irrigation water in 2001 for the sake of fish are plunging into a climactic courtroom battle for tens of millions of dollars in compensation.” The trial set to start Monday in the U.S. Court of Federal Claims. The article notes that the case “can have broader implications, clarifying what the government may owe for water steered away from crops toward environmental protection.”

Additional coverage was provided by the [Klamath Falls \(OR\) Herald And News](#) (1/29, 45K).

JUDGE LIKELY TO ORDER BOR TO REDIRECT WATER FOR SALMON. [Courthouse News](#) (1/27, 2K) reports that “a federal judge said Friday he will likely order the federal government to reallocate water, some earmarked for commercial interests, to stave off a salmon die-off on the California-Oregon border.” the Yurok and Hoopa Valley Tribes sued the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation last year, claiming its bungled management of Klamath River waterways allowed a deadly parasite to infect 91 percent of endangered juvenile Coho and Chinook salmon.”” During a hearing Friday, U.S. District Judge William Orrick III “agreed the bureau should have reviewed the project when infection rates climbed to 81 percent in 2014 and 91 percent in 2015, well beyond the maximum 49 percent estimated in a 2013 biological opinion issued by co-defendant National Marine Fisheries Service.” Orrick “said he was ‘inclined’ to grant a preliminary injunction requiring the government take immediate action until it finalizes new water management guidelines to protect salmon.”

FRESNO APPROVES DEAL TO BUY FLOOD-RELEASE WATER FROM MILLERTON LAKE. The [Fresno \(CA\) Bee](#) (1/27, 282K) reports that “a plentiful winter of rain and snowfall in the mountains east of Fresno is creating the potential for generating more water than the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation can store behind Friant Dam.” As a result, “the city of Fresno is poised to take advantage of flood-control releases at a deep discount, compared to the city’s normal allocation of Millerton Lake water this spring.” The

Fresno City Council on Thursday “approved an agreement with the Bureau of Reclamation to buy flood flow releases from Millerton Lake starting March 1.”

Top National News:

ADMINISTRATION DEFENDS EXECUTIVE ORDERS AMID WORLDWIDE OUTRAGE. Coverage of President Trump’s executive orders barring refugees and travelers from seven predominantly Muslim nations continues to be extensive and extremely negative toward the Administration. Reports cast the policy as hastily implemented, leading to chaos at airports, and highlight condemnation from around the world and from prominent members of both parties. Feature stories on detained children, divided families, and Iraqis who provided support to the US during the war being refused entry also reflect negatively on the White House. Other pieces examine why those seven countries in particular were selected and others omitted, and on Rudy Giuliani’s statement that the President had sought a legal means to impose a “Muslim ban.”

On [ABC World News Tonight](#) (1/29, story 3, 2:25, Llamas, 14.63M), David Wright reported, “As the outrage reached the White House doorstep today, the Trump Administration is pushing back. A new statement tonight: ‘This is not about religion, this is about terror and keeping our country safe.’ ... Until today, the battle over the borders has been fiercely partisan, the Democrats voicing loud opposition.” But “now, a growing number of Republicans taking issue, too, some of them agreeing with the Democrats that the new executive order could be counterproductive, making America less safe.” Sen. John McCain: “I think the effect will probably, in some areas, give ISIS some more propaganda.” On the [CBS Weekend News](#) (1/29, story 2, 2:10, Quijano), Errol Barnett reported that the President “said Saturday it is something that should have been in place for a long time.”

The [AP](#) (1/29) reports that the President defended the order, saying “in a statement Sunday amid widespread protests that ‘America is a proud nation of immigrants.’ He says the country ‘will continue to show compassion to those fleeing oppression,’ but ‘while protecting our own citizens and border.’” [Reuters](#) (1/29, Holland, Chiacu) reports that Trump, “trying to quell a backlash,” said the US would resume issuing visas “to all countries once secure policies are put in place” over the next 90 days.

[USA Today](#) (1/29, Jackson, 5.28M) says Trump and aides “spent Sunday defending their ban on refugees...as a counter-terrorism measure, all in the face of lawsuits, congressional criticism, and mass protests.” The [Washington Post](#) (1/29, Dennis, Markon, 11.43M) reports under the headline “Trump Defends Executive Order: ‘This Is Not A Muslim Ban’” that Trump “compared his order to action taken by then-President Obama in 2011 to give new scrutiny to visas for Iraqi refugees, though by almost any measure Trump’s order was far more sweeping.”

[Politico](#) (1/29, Toosi, Kim, 2.46M) says Trump “doubled down” on his policy, though Chief of Staff Priebus “walked back one major element of the order, signaling a growing sense of confusion and fissures within the 10-day-old administration.” Politico says the Administration’s “mixed messages were abundant as global outrage grew over the order. ... Thousands gathered outside the White House to demand Trump rescind what they called the ‘Muslim ban,’” and “prominent Republicans and foreign leaders chided Trump, warning the order could backfire by inspiring terrorists.” [Bloomberg Politics](#) (1/29, Brody, 201K) and [The Hill](#) (1/29, Savransky, 1.25M) also cover Trump’s statement.

On [CBS’ Face The Nation](#) (1/29, Dickerson, 4.61M), Priebus said, “What people need to understand is 325,000 foreign travelers came into the United States. About 109 of those people were detained for further questioning. They came from the identified seven countries that harbor and train terrorists. They were asked questions. The vast majority of the people were released.” On [NBC’s Meet The Press](#) (1/29, Todd, 157K), Priebus said, “As far as green card holders moving forward, it doesn’t affect them.”

The [New York Times](#) (1/29, Shear, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) says Priebus “appeared to reverse a key part” of the order by saying green card holders from the affected countries would not be prevented from returning to the US, but “also said that border agents had ‘discretionary authority,’” which “seemed to add to the uncertainty” over the continued enforcement of the order. The [Washington Post](#) (1/29, Phillip,

Snell, 11.43M) also says Priebus “appeared to pull back one of the most controversial elements of the order.” The [Los Angeles Times](#) (1/29, Parsons, 4.52M) headlines its report on Priebus’ comments “White House Seems To Back Down On Part Of New Vetting Policy.”

The [AP](#) (1/29, Colvin) writes that Trump senior adviser Kellyanne Conway called the problems caused by the visa ban “a small price to pay’ to keep the nation safe, but it’s unclear whether the order...will accomplish that,” since it “does not address homegrown extremists already in America,” and omits Saudi Arabia, “where most of the Sept. 11 hijackers were from.” [Mic](#) (1/29, Durkee, 554K) reports that Conway “sharply dismissed the decision of the federal judge who granted a stay.” Conway said, “The stay of order doesn’t really affect the executive order at all, because the executive order is meant to be prospective, it’s preventing, not detaining.”

On [Fox News Sunday](#) (1/29, Wallace), Conway said, “If they’re not dangerous, if they are not a threat, then they will be disposed of – their situations will be handled on a case-by-case basis. I was stopped many times after 9/11, weren’t you? I didn’t resemble, or share a name with any kind of conspiracy, but this is what we do to keep the nation safe. I mean, this whole idea that they’re being separated and ripped from their families, it’s temporary.”

[USA Today](#) (1/29, 5.28M) says in an editorial, “In President Trump’s dark view of America, thousands of shadowy foreigners from the Middle East are infiltrating our neighborhoods and waiting for an opportunity to kill us. ... This kind of indiscriminate fear-mongering is bad enough as campaign rhetoric. It’s outright harmful to innocent people when ham-handedly translated into White House policy.” The order is also “strangely arbitrary. The 9/11 terrorists were from Egypt, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, all of which were exempted from the order. And since 9/11, no one has been killed in the USA as a result of a terrorist attack by an emigrant from the seven targeted nations.” The [Wall Street Journal](#) (1/29, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) is also critical, saying in an editorial that the policy was rushed and overly broad, and seemed designed to create chaos.

Kelly: Entry Of “Lawful Permanent Residents” Is In National Interest. [Reuters](#) (1/29, Raymond, Rosenberg, Stempel) reports that federal judges in at least five states have blocked enforcement of the order, and [ABC World News Tonight](#) (1/29, story 2, 2:10, Llamas, 14.63M) added that the “attorneys general of more than a dozen states [are] condemning the order.” The [Washington Times](#) (1/29, Dinan, 272K) reports that DHS said early Sunday that it is “following through on the executive order” despite the courts’ actions. However, [The Hill](#) (1/29, Master, 1.25M) reports that DHS Secretary Kelly “declared ‘the entry of lawful permanent residents to be in the national interest’ in a Sunday evening statement.”

Giuliani Says Trump Wanted A “Muslim Ban.” The [Washington Post](#) (1/29, Wang, 11.43M) reports that Rudy Giuliani, appearing on Fox News on Saturday evening, “said President Trump wanted a ‘Muslim ban’ and requested he assemble a commission to show him ‘the right way to do it legally.’” Giuliani said, “So when [Trump] first announced it, he said, ‘Muslim ban.’ He called me up. He said, ‘Put a commission together. Show me the right way to do it legally.’ ... We focused on, instead of religion, danger – the areas of the world that create danger for us. Which is a factual basis, not a religious basis. Perfectly legal, perfectly sensible.” [Mic](#) (1/29, Durkee, 554K) reports on the comments under the headline “Rudy Giuliani Admitted Trump’s ‘Extreme Vetting’ Is Actually Just A Muslim Ban.”

On [CBS’ Face The Nation](#) (1/29, Dickerson, 4.61M), Rep. Keith Ellison (D-MN), a Muslim and candidate for Democratic National Committee chair, said, “We’ve never have had a religious-based ban before. This is a Muslim ban, they can’t deny it. On the campaign trail he said he wanted a Muslim ban. He said on national television there would be other religious groups receiving priority. This is a Muslim ban. Rudy Giuliani, who helped him write it said they started with a Muslim ban, and then sort of languaged it up to avoid that label.”

Confusion Abounds In Wake Of Executive Orders And Court Responses. On its website, [CNN](#) (1/29, Perez, Brown, Liptak, 29.79M) examines the “confusion” surrounding the executive order, writing that when it was announced, “Administration officials weren’t immediately sure which countries’ citizens” would be affected, and DHS “was left making a legal analysis on the order after Trump signed it.” CNN says the confusion exposed “the pitfalls of an administration largely operated by officials with scant

federal experience.” The [Wall Street Journal](#) (1/29, Jordan, Hughes, Peterson, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) headlines a front-page report “Donald Trump’s Immigration Ban Sows Chaos,” writing that the policy was being followed differently at different airports, and that the court orders were being treated differently in different places as well.

The [New York Times](#) (1/29, Shear, Nixon, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) writes, “The global confusion that has since erupted is the story of a White House that rushed to enact, with little regard for basic governing, a core campaign promise that Mr. Trump made to his most fervent supporters.” Customs and border control officials “got instructions at 3 a.m. Saturday and some arrived at their posts later that morning still not knowing how to carry out the president’s orders.” Even Defense Secretary Mattis “did not see a final version of the order until Friday morning, only hours before Mr. Trump arrived to sign it at the Pentagon.” The [Wall Street Journal](#) (1/29, A1, Nicholas, Paletta, Barrett, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) says on its front page that the policy was in the works even before Election Day, but remained a close-held secret within Trump’s inner circle.

The [Washington Post](#) (1/29, Selk, 11.43M) profiles Judge Ann Donnelly of the US District Court for the Eastern District of New York, who “after a year and a week on the federal bench...became known across the world as the first judge to block Trump’s order.” The [Daily Caller](#) (1/29, Pfeiffer, 898K) says Donnelly was appointed by President Obama in 2015.

NYTimes Analysis: Litigation Could Last For Years. Adam Liptak of the [New York Times](#) (1/29, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) writes that though the judicial branch responded “with what by legal standards was lightning speed,” the court orders “were just the initial steps in litigation that may last for years.” The courts “did not rule on the larger question of whether Mr. Trump’s executive order was lawful” and “gave only the most preliminary hints” about whether the courts will strike down the order. But the ACLU and other civil liberties groups “were savoring their victories in these early skirmishes.”

Senate Democrats To Introduce Legislation To Reverse Executive Orders. The [Washington Post](#) (1/29, O’Keefe, 11.43M) reports that Senate Minority Leader Schumer said Democrats will introduce legislation to reverse the executive orders. Schumer “choked up as he described the chaos the orders had caused” and said, “We will fight this. Many of you may not know this – my middle name is Ellis. I was named after Uncle Ellis who was named after Ellis Island. This fight’s in my bones. It’s on my birth certificate.” Sen. Christopher Murphy suggested that the President’s action violate the 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act, and said Democrats “must now ‘force a debate’ this week on Trump’s orders by slowing the consideration of all of his remaining Cabinet nominees, especially” Secretary of State-designate Tillerson.

[The Hill](#) (1/29, Shelbourne, 1.25M) reports that Sen. Dianne Feinstein, ranking Democrat on the Judiciary Committee, [said via Twitter](#) that she will introduce two bills today to rescind the order and limit Trump’s authority on the matter. [Politico](#) (1/29, Kim, Romm, 2.46M) reports on the coming legislation.

Senate Minority Whip Durbin said on [Fox News Sunday](#) (1/29, Wallace), “First, it was an impulsive move by the President, without follow-through to the Department of Homeland Security. ... Number two, going after these refugees, these are the most carefully vetted visitors to anyone who comes to our airports, including this ban on Syrian refugees when we have had no examples, not one, of a Syrian refugees engaging in terrorism in the United States. And the third point...was the suggestion by the President that somehow we are going to favor Christians, and in some cases banning Muslims in the future. That is exactly the opposite message we will send to our allies and those who want to do us harm around the world.”

Some “Top Republicans” Criticize Policy. The [New York Times](#) (1/29, Fandos, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) reports, “Some top Republicans stepped up their criticism of President Trump’s newly enacted refugee policy,” though “party leaders in Congress continued to show restraint.” In addition to McCain, Sens. Susan Collins, Lindsey Graham, Orrin Hatch, Rob Portman, and Ben Sasse have been somewhat critical. Senate Majority Leader McConnell “did not criticize the order itself but said the country needed to ‘be careful’ with how it is carried out.”

On [ABC's This Week](#) (1/29, Raddatz, 6.61M), McConnell said, "To the extent they're trying to improve the vetting process, I think that's in order. We need to bear in mind that we don't have religious tests in this country and we also need to remember that some of our best allies in the war against Islamic terrorism are Muslims." The [Washington Post](#) (1/29, Snell, Phillip, 11.43M) says McConnell "strongly opposed the concept of a Muslim ban when Trump touted the idea during the campaign."

[Reuters](#) (1/29, Cornwell) reports that McCain and Graham said the order "may do more to help recruit terrorists than improve US security." In a joint statement, they said, "This executive order sends a signal, intended or not, that America does not want Muslims coming into our country. That is why we fear this executive order may do more to help terrorist recruitment than improve our security." McCain said on [CBS' Face The Nation](#) (1/29, Dickerson, 4.61M), "It is a confused process, which the good news is it's only got to do with a pause. The bad news is, obviously this process and conclusions were not vetted." The [Daily Caller](#) (1/29, Collins, 898K) reports that Trump criticized McCain and Graham, [tweeting](#) that they "are sadly weak on immigration."

[Reuters](#) (1/29, Wroughton) reports that Senate Foreign Relations Chairman Bob Corker said in statement, "We all share a desire to protect the American people, but this executive order has been poorly implemented, especially with respect to green card holders." [USA Today](#) (1/29, Singer, 5.28M) reports that Rep. Charlie Dent (R-PA) said of the order, "This is ridiculous. I guess I understand what his intention is, but unfortunately the order appears to have been rushed through without full consideration." Even Rep. Raúl Labrador (R-ID), who "strongly supported the intent of Trump's order," criticized its implementation, saying, "The Administration...could have done a better job of implementing this executive order." [McClatchy](#) (1/29, Lightman, 574K) and [Politico](#) (1/29, Everett, Bresnahan, 2.46M) also report on the GOP response.

Protesters Turn Out In Large Numbers Across Nation And At Airports. Both ABC and CBS – NBC did not air – led their Sunday evening newscasts with demonstrations against the ban across the nation. [ABC World News Tonight](#) (1/29, lead story, 3:30, Llamas, 14.63M) reported on the "major backlash" and "outrage," with "large demonstrations" in Boston, Los Angeles, New York, Philadelphia, Washington, and other cities. ABC's Eva Pilgrim: "Protests erupting from coast to coast over President Trump's immigration crackdown. ... At airports, so many emotional scenes; in Dallas, a five-year-old boy back with his mother after being detained for hours." The [CBS Weekend News](#) (1/29, lead story, 5:35, Quijano) reported that the President's "travel and immigration crackdown on people from seven Muslim majority countries has caused chaos and confusion and sparked intense protests. The ACLU says 4,000 attorneys are working in shifts at the airports to get people released." CBS' Kenneth Craig: "At airports across the country, international travelers detained by authorities received a warm welcome as they stepped on to US soil. For some, there were tears, like this Iraqi woman who was reunited with her son, a US Army Ranger, after hours of uncertainty at JFK."

The [AP](#) (1/29, Hajela, Tarm) says the "immigration order sowed more chaos and outrage across the country Sunday, with travelers detained at airports, panicked families searching for relatives and protesters registering opposition to the sweeping measure." Demonstrators "gathered outside the White House," and "more than 100 protesters also gathered at the international terminal at Dulles International Airport outside Washington, cheering people arriving from Muslim countries. At the main Dallas-Fort Worth airport, some 200 people held signs and chanted, 'Let them go!'"

The [Washington Post](#) (1/29, Siddiqui, Laris, Chandler, 11.43M) quotes Shohreh Rahnama, whose young son was detained for several hours at Dulles. She said, "How can a five-year old be banned? Just because his parents are Iranian? We are American too." She joined the demonstration at the White House, and said to Trump, "You cannot do this. You are our servant. The people elected you. Other countries are thirsty for the rights we have in America. We can't become a dictatorship."

The [New York Times](#) (1/29, Martin, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) reports, "The swelling anger over Mr. Trump's week-old administration is fueling a surge of spontaneous activism that some Democrats say they have not seen since the Vietnam War." Senators including Cory Booker, Bob Casey, and Elizabeth Warren joined protests at airports, as did candidates to lead the Democratic National Committee. The Times says the "growing and seemingly organic energy offers Democrats a prime opportunity to ride a

backlash to electoral success this year and next, the same way Republicans capitalized on Tea Party rage” against President Obama seven years ago.

The [Los Angeles Times](#) (1/29, Queally, Panzar, Hamilton, 4.52M) says “thousands of protesters converged on Los Angeles International Airport,” while the [Boston Globe](#) (1/29, Wangsness, 1.08M) reports that some immigration lawyers are advising green card holders from the affected countries to fly back to the US through Boston “because a Massachusetts judge’s order blocking the enforcement of President Trump’s executive order offers them more protection than similar judicial orders elsewhere.” The [New York Times](#) (1/29, Bromwich, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) reports that lawyers have also been presenting themselves at airports to offer emergency legal assistance; the [Chicago Tribune](#) (1/29, Clair, Wong, 2.54M) profiles some Chicago-area attorneys who have done so.

The [Huffington Post](#) (1/29, Gordts, Miller, Abbey-Lambertz, Wing, 237K) headlined its lead story “RELENTLESS RESISTANCE,” later updated to “AMERICA ON THE BRINK.”

Policy Comes Under Harsh International Criticism. [Reuters](#) (1/29, Chmaytelli, Noueihed) reports that the “global backlash...gathered strength on Sunday as several countries including long-standing American allies criticized the measures as discriminatory and divisive. Governments from London and Berlin to Jakarta and Tehran spoke out” against Trump’s policy. German Chancellor Angela Merkel’s spokesperson said she believes that “the global fight against terrorism was no excuse for the measures and ‘does not justify putting people of a specific background or faith under general suspicion.’” British Foreign Minister Boris Johnson [tweeted](#), “Divisive and wrong to stigmatize because of nationality.”

The [New York Times](#) (1/29, Smale, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) reports that after British Prime Minister Theresa May’s “response to a question about the issue on Saturday at a news conference in Turkey prompted sharp criticism of her unwillingness to criticize Mr. Trump, her spokesman said that the British government did ‘not agree with this kind of approach and it is not one we will be taking.’” [USA Today](#) (1/29, Hjelmgaard, 5.28M) reports that French President François Hollande said, “When [Trump] refuses the arrival of refugees, while Europe has done its duty, we have to respond.” The [Wall Street Journal](#) (1/29, Troianovski, Douglas, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) reports that German Foreign Minister Sigmar Gabriel and Dutch counterpart Bert Koenders were also among the European critics.

The [Washington Post](#) (1/29, Raghavan, 11.43M) headlines a feature on the impact of people around the world “Nations Condemn Trump’s Travel Ban, As The Fallout Infects People’s Lives.” [ABC World News Tonight](#) (1/29, story 5, 1:40, Llamas, 14.63M) reported on the global “ripple effect from the executive order is only starting to make some impact.” ABC’s Jim Avila reported that the US Olympic Committee is “worried that its bid to host 2020 game could be jeopardized by President Trump’s immigration policies.” NBA player Thon Maker “is a Sudanese refugee, concerned that he won’t be able to get back after games in Canada. And the Academy Award-nominated Iranian director for ‘The Salesman’ saying he won’t come [to the Oscars] because there are too many questions about his ability to return, condemning what he calls ‘unjust conditions’ in President Trump’s order.”

The [New York Times](#) (1/29, Walsh, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) reports that while the response for Europe was loud, “in Cairo and Riyadh, in the heart of the Muslim world,” Trump’s policy “was met with a conspicuous silence.” The Times says “the silence in the capitals of Muslim-majority countries unaffected by the order reflected a lack of solidarity and an enduring uncertainty” about Trump’s foreign policy. The [Washington Post](#) (1/29, Miller, Ryan, 11.43M) writes, “Through inflammatory rhetoric and hastily drawn executive orders, the administration has alienated allies, including Iraq, provided propaganda fodder to terror networks that frequently portray US involvement in the Middle East as a religious crusade, and endangered critical cooperation from often hidden US partners.” ISIS has already “claimed the travel ban as a victory.”

On [ABC’s This Week](#) (1/29, Raddatz, 6.61M), White House press secretary Sean Spicer said, “We are working through all the diplomatic channels necessary to make sure our friends and allies around the globe understand that our position is to protect our borders and to make sure – again, this is about slowing the process down. Those 109 people are being processed through the system to make sure that the vetting is applied, that they didn’t do anything nefarious when they were overseas.”

In a [Washington Post](#) (1/29, 11.43M) op-ed, Hadi Ghaemi of the International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran calls the travel ban on Iranians “a gift to the Islamic republic and its hard-line rulers. It will not deter terrorism on US soil...and will ironically serve the purposes of Iran’s hard-line rulers.” [Bloomberg Politics](#) (1/29, Geimann, 201K) also covers the international response.

CREW: Ban Does Not Affect Countries Where Trump’s “Company Has Done Business.” Norman Eisen and Richard Painter of Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington write in the [New York Times](#) (1/29, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) that “overlooked in the furor is another troubling aspect of the situation: President Trump omitted from his ban a number of other predominantly Muslim nations where his company has done business,” which “adds further illegitimacy to one of the most arbitrary executive actions in our recent history.” Some Muslim countries like Saudi Arabia “are not on the list, even though some of their citizens pose just as great a risk – if not greater – of exporting terrorism to the United States.” But these “are ones where Donald Trump has done business.”

Christian Leaders Reject Giving Preference To Christian Immigrants. The [New York Times](#) (1/29, Goodstein, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) reports under the headline “Christian Leaders Denounce Trump’s Plan To Favor Christian Immigrants” that though “over the last decade, Christians in the United States have grown increasingly alarmed about the persecution of other Christians overseas, especially in the Middle East,” if Trump “had hoped for Christian leaders to break out in cheers” about his executive orders, that is “not what he has heard so far. A broad array of clergy members has strongly denounced Mr. Trump’s order as discriminatory, misguided and inhumane,” with religious leaders saying that “by giving preference to Christians over Muslims,” Trump is pitting “one faith against another.”

Koch Network Calls Policy “The Wrong Approach.” The [Washington Post](#) (1/29, Gold, Hohmann, 11.43M) reports, “Leaders of the influential Koch network on Sunday expressed opposition” to the policy, “saying the executive order is not in keeping with their aims to build a free and open society.” Charles Koch Foundation President Brian Hooks said, “The travel ban is the wrong approach and will likely be counterproductive. Our country has benefited tremendously from a history of welcoming people from all cultures and backgrounds.” While Charles Koch himself did not comment, he last year “called the suggestion that Trump might require Muslims to register ‘reminiscent of Nazi Germany.’” [USA Today](#) (1/29, Schouten, 5.28M) adds that Charles Koch “did not refer to either Trump or his immigration order during public remarks Sunday afternoon to the more than 550 ultra-wealthy donors” attending “the network’s annual winter summit.”

Veterans “Dumbfounded And Furious” Over Exclusion Of Military Interpreters. [McClatchy](#) (1/29, Bergengruen, 74K) reports, “Military veterans were dumbfounded and furious when it became clear over the weekend” that the policy “keeps out interpreters who’d risked their lives helping US forces in Iraq.” Former Marine Sgt. Andrew Biggio, who voted for Trump, said, “They better make a damn exception, because we are here because of them.” Scott Cooper, also a Marine veteran, said, “We asked them to risk their lives for us and they’re being threatened because they worked alongside us.”

The [Washington Post](#) (1/29, Raghavan, 11.43M) profiles Fuad Sharef, who “once worked for a US government subcontractor in post-invasion Iraq as a translator and a program manager.” He and his family got valid visas “after two years of vetting, through a special US resettlement program for Iraqi employees of the American government” before being taken off their plane this weekend while on their way to New York. His family is being sent back to Iraq, where they have sold their house and property. He said, “Donald Trump destroyed my life. How can he do this to people who risked their lives to help America?”

Sen. Tim Kaine said on [NBC’s Meet The Press](#) (1/29, Todd, 157K), “It does affect green card holders and they’re being caught up in it. It affects people on special immigrant visas like interpreters who helped the US military in foreign countries and now their lives are at risk and we’ve given them a special status to come to this country. Who would help the United States if they knew we would abandon them when they’re trying to come here?”

Silicon Valley, Previously Ambivalent About Trump, Heads “To The Barricades.” The [New York](#)

[Times](#) (1/29, Streitfeld, Isaac, Benner, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) writes that as of Friday morning, “Silicon Valley was largely ambivalent about President Trump,” but “by Saturday night, much of that optimism had yielded to anger and determination.” The executive orders “struck at the heart of Silicon Valley’s cherished values,” and “a significant part of the tech community went to the barricades.” Google co-founder Sergey Brin, who came to the US from the Soviet Union as a child, joined protesters at San Francisco International Airport, saying, “I’m here because I’m a refugee.” The heads of Airbnb, Facebook, and Netflix were also among the critics. [Business Insider](#) (1/29, Heath, 3.42M) samples some of the reaction.

Starbucks To Hire 10,000 Refugees Over Next Five Years. The [AP](#) (1/29, Boak) reports that Starbucks CEO Howard Schultz said in a letter to employees on Saturday that the company will hire 10,000 refugees over the next five years. Schultz said the hiring “would apply to stores worldwide and the effort would start in the United States where the focus would be on hiring immigrants ‘who have served with US troops as interpreters and support personnel.’”

Michigan Muslims Cope With New Policy. On its front page, the [Washington Post](#) (1/29, A1, Friess, 11.43M) looks at the ban from Dearborn, Michigan, which has one of the largest Muslim populations in the US. Nearby Hamtramck “has the country’s only majority-Muslim city council. Over the past two years, Michigan has taken in more refugees from war-torn Syria than any state except California.” Many are now worried about the safety of family members who had hoped to join them in the US.

DeBlasio Defends New York’s Sanctuary City Status. On [CNN’s State Of The Union](#) (1/29, Tapper, 420K), New York Mayor Bill DeBlasio explained his city’s definition as a sanctuary city. He said, “There are 170 offenses that list serious and violent crimes that lead to automatic cooperation between the City of New York and the federal partners. So any serious and violent crime, we’re going to work with them. Someone commits a minor offense, for example, right now if you don’t have clear definitions like we have, someone went through a stop sign and they could be deported for that. ... We are not going to see with half a million undocumented people here...the vast majority are law-abiding, we are not going to see families torn apart over a minor offense.”

New Citizens Take Oath Amid National Uproar. The [Washington Post](#) (1/29, A1, McCrummen, 11.43M) has a front-page feature on a citizenship ceremony in Fairfax County, Virginia on Saturday, “where the official photo of former president Barack Obama had been taken down and that of President Trump had yet to go up.” The President’s executive orders were a prime topic of discussion.

ACLU Raised Nearly Five Times As Much Online On Saturday As It Usually Does In A Year. [USA Today](#) (1/29, Dastagir, 5.28M) reports, “The American Civil Liberties Union shattered fundraising records this weekend after taking the White House to court” over the executive orders. The ACLU “received roughly 290,000 online donations totaling \$19.4 million since Saturday morning.” It “typically raises about \$4 million online in a year, according to Executive Director Anthony Romero.”

In Last-Minute Change, 60 Minutes Re-Airs Piece On Syria. [The Hill](#) (1/29, Shelbourne, 1.25M) reports that CBS changed its lineup for 60 Minutes on Sunday to “re-air an October [story](#) about refugees from the war-torn country of Syria.” The change was announced late Sunday afternoon.

TRUMP COULD ANNOUNCE SUPREME COURT NOMINEE MONDAY. The [AP](#) (1/29, Pace) cites “a White House official” who said President Trump could announce his nominee to fill the vacancy on the Supreme Court as soon as Monday. While Trump “originally said the announcement would come on Thursday,” the official said that “timeframe could be sped up.” On [Fox News Sunday](#) (1/29, Wallace), White House senior adviser Kellyanne Conway said of the pending nomination, “I can guarantee that the promise that candidate Trump made will continue as President, that he is a pro-life President, and he has promised that he will appoint pro-life judges including to the Supreme Court.”

On [ABC’s This Week](#) (1/29, Raddatz, 6.61M), Senate Majority Leader McConnell said of the nomination, “Let me tell you what I do think we’ll get. A really outstanding nominee who will be very hard to argue against because the President has been working on this for some time. I’m privy to some of the information about what’s been happening and I think we’re going to get a great nominee who will be very

difficult to explain to the American people we're not even going to let them have an up-or-down vote in the Senate."

In an op-ed for the [Washington Post](#) (1/29, 11.43M), Ron Klain, who served as chief counsel for the Senate Judiciary Committee, an associate counsel to former President Bill Clinton, and an assistant to former President Barack Obama, writes that "to win the real battle for the future of the high court, the nomination and the messaging around it should be aimed" at Justice Anthony Kennedy. Klain argues that while the current nomination "will probably not change the court's balance of power," the balance could be changed if Trump is able to select another justice. Klain says Justices Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Stephen Breyer are unlikely to retire during the Trump presidency, so "the question of whether a court-shifting pick is willingly handed to Trump rests with Kennedy" and the current battle "could influence Kennedy's decision." Klain concludes that "as this nomination battle unfolds, all players should keep an eye on the even more significant fight that could lie ahead – and the man who will decide whether it comes or not."

WHITE HOUSE DEFENDS BANNON'S INCLUSION IN NSC MEETINGS. After President Trump "took steps Saturday to begin restructuring the White House National Security Council," adding chief strategist Steve Bannon to the principals committee, "which includes the secretaries of state and defense," and saying that the director of national intelligence and the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff would attend "where issues pertaining to their responsibilities and expertise are to be discussed," the White House defended the move on Sunday, saying Bannon's addition to the regular meetings "was essential to the commander in chief's decision-making process," the [AP](#) (1/29) reports.

The [CBS Weekend News](#) (1/29, story 2, 2:10, Quijano) reported that press secretary Sean Spicer "describes the move as essential." Appearing on [ABC's This Week](#), Spicer said "having the chief strategist for the President in those meetings who has a significant military background to help make – guide what the President's final analysis is going to be is crucial."

The [New York Times](#) (1/29, Sanger, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) says Spicer argued that Bannon's "past service as a Navy officer merited his attendance at all meetings, as part of a 'streamlining' of decision-making." Spicer said, "Well, he is a former naval officer. ... He's got a tremendous understanding of the world and the geopolitical landscape that we have now." Spicer "did not explain the downgrading of the four-star general who heads the Joint Chiefs, Joseph F. Dunford Jr., who rose through the Marine Corps and served in Iraq and Afghanistan," but "when pressed on General Dunford's role," he said, "The president gets plenty of information from the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff."

[USA Today](#) (1/29, Jackson, 5.28M) reports White House chief of staff Priebus denied that the "revamped National Security Council will be restricted, saying intelligence and Pentagon chiefs are welcome at any meeting." Priebus told NBC's "Meet the Press" that "they're invited to be attendees of the Security Council at any time that they want to." The [Washington Times](#) (1/29, Muñoz, 272K) describes Priebus' exchange with host Chuck Todd as "heated," as Priebus "pushed back...against claims the nation's top military and intelligence leaders are barred from participating in the National Security Council."

A front-page story in the [Washington Post](#) (1/29, A1, DeYoung, 11.43M) cites "a senior NSC official," who said Bannon "is a trusted adviser. ... He's got substantial policy responsibilities, and I think it's very important that he is there to hear and to provide context to what is going on." Trump "sees Bannon as a generational peer who shares his anti-establishment instincts and confrontational style," and "several people familiar with their relationship," said Bannon "has cultivated a rapport with Trump over security issues in recent months, and impressed Trump with his grasp of policy in talks they have held together with top intelligence and military officials." However, "many outside the White House," say "the optics of Bannon's NSC appointment were bad, regardless of the motivation or the substance of his participation."

Trump's decision drew fire from both sides of the political spectrum. [Politico](#) (1/29, Everett, 2.46M) reported that Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman John McCain "harshly criticiz[ed]" Bannon's elevation to Trump's National Security Council, "calling the move 'radical' because it minimizes the role of the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff." McCain told CBS' "Face the Nation," "I am worried about the National Security Council. Who are the members of it and who are the permanent members? The appointment of Mr. Bannon is something which is a radical departure from any National Security Council

in history. ... The role of the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff has been diminished, I understand, with this reorganization. The one person who is indispensable would be the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, in my view. ... So it's of concern, this 'reorganization.'"

[Breitbart](#) (1/29, Spiering, 2.02M) reported that former National Security Adviser Susan Rice "lashed out" at Trump over the decision, writing in a [tweet](#), "This is stone cold crazy. ... After a week of crazy. Who needs military advice or intel to make policy on ISIL, Syria, Afghanistan, DPRK?" David Wright said on [ABC World News Tonight](#) (1/29, story 4, 1:00, Llamas, 14.63M) that the White House is "not happy" about Rice's tweet. Wright added that the White House says "the reorganization is about streamlining the process, making it easy for the President to make tough and intelligence decisions. And they say they're fortunate to have someone experienced like General Flynn to lead the NSC." The [Washington Times](#) (1/29, Richardson, 272K) said that Spicer "fired back by calling Ms. Rice's comments 'clearly inappropriate language from a former ambassador' and took a swipe at the Obama administration's track record on national security."

[Bloomberg Politics](#) (1/29, Sink, 201K) says that former Defense Secretary Robert Gates told ABC "that while he wasn't concerned about Bannon's inclusion, he did believe pushing the DNI and military out of meetings was a 'big mistake.'" Said Gates, "They both bring a perspective and judgement [sic] and experience to bear that every president, whether they like it or not, finds useful."

In an op-ed for the [Washington Post](#) (1/29, 11.43M), David J. Rothkopf, chief executive and editor of the FP Group, which publishes Foreign Policy magazine, calls Trump's actions with the NSC "deeply worrisome," arguing that after "essentially demot[ing] the highest-ranking military officer in the United States, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the highest-ranking intelligence officer in the United States, the director of national intelligence," Trump "compounded this error of structure with an error of judgment" by making Bannon a permanent member of the NSC. Bannon, he argues, "is the precisely wrong person for this wrong role" as his "national security experience consists of a graduate degree and seven years in the Navy" and his "role as chairman of Breitbart.com...suggests this is someone who not only has no business being a permanent member of the most powerful consultative body in the world — he has no business being in a position of responsibility in any government." In a column for [USA Today](#) (1/29, 5.28M), Ray Locker, the paper's Washington enterprise editor, is also critical of Trump's move, saying it "invites another valid comparison" with former President Richard Nixon, who "like Trump" had "real and imagined gripes with the nation's intelligence community."

Editorial Wrap-Up:

NEW YORK TIMES. *"Sorry, Rules Don't Dissolve By Decree."* In an editorial, the [New York Times](#) (1/29, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) takes issue with the "flurry of executive orders" issued by President Trump, saying his "blanket federal hiring freeze is a proven loser tried by presidents of both parties, and his talk of slashing most regulations is pure fantasy." Trump, the Times argues, "appears to have little understanding of how the federal government is organized and functions, and his skeletal staff is still trying to learn." Trump has been "signing his executive orders on TV, holding them up and explaining them aloud, like story hour in the Oval Office." While "these pledges [may] actually streamline government in a positive way, instead of undermining it, as the ideologues around the president seem to want," so far, "they are mainly show."

"Drilling And Dirty Air In Los Angeles." In an editorial, the [New York Times](#) (1/30, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) laments the health toll oil wells have taken on the poorer neighborhoods of Los Angeles. The Times acknowledges proposed reforms from a lawsuit settlement in which "the city would hold a public hearing and conduct an evaluation of potential health and environmental consequences for each new drilling project, and require oil companies to mitigate any health hazards." However, the Times criticizes the moves for failing to measure up to "the specific steps other cities and states have taken" and calls for "a buffer zone law" to protect poor residents' health.

WASHINGTON POST. *"Mr. Pruitt's Tepid Commitment To Clean Up The Chesapeake Bay."* A [Washington Post](#) (1/29, 11.43M) editorial raises questions about EPA Administrator-designate Scott

Pruitt's commitment to cleaning up the Chesapeake Bay. According to the Post, during his hearing before the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee this month, Pruitt "seemed to embrace the bay cleanup effort," but when Sen. Ben Cardin "pressed him further in written questions, Mr. Pruitt's commitment to the cleanup deal got murkier." The Post argues that "a strong federal hand" is needed in the cleanup effort and it will "hold Mr. Pruitt to his encouraging tone during his in-person questioning."

"Mr. Trump Is Picking A Fight With Urban America Over Sanctuary Cities." In an editorial, the [Washington Post](#) (1/29, 11.43M) says President Trump "has triggered a showdown with large swaths of urban America," over sanctuary cities, and argues that he is "unwise to pick a divisive fight impelled by the fiction that the nation's 11 million illegal immigrants constitute a community of predatory and violent criminals." The Post says it is unclear "which federal funding Mr. Trump would or legally could try to suspend as a means of coercing jurisdictions to cooperate with federal officials, and whether such a threat would amount to much leverage." Moreover, he "stands to gain very little by declaring what amounts to a culture war on huge swaths of urban America that, with good reason, would defy his attempts to deport millions of productive and largely law-abiding immigrants."

"Can Slurs Be Trademarked? In This Case, The Supreme Court Should Say Yes." In an editorial, the [Washington Post](#) (1/29, 11.43M) says that while it has called on "Washington's pro football team to abandon its offensive nickname," the Supreme Court is currently considering whether "business owners who think differently have the same right to federal intellectual property protection as everyone else." The government "will not register a trademark if it 'may disparage...persons, living or dead, institutions, beliefs, or national symbols, or bring them into contempt or disrepute.'" The case at hand involves Simon Tam, who "sought to register his all-Asian American dance band's name — The Slants," and was denied. The Post argues that "existing law is too vague" and the High Court "should strike the 'may disparage'" because that is "what the First Amendment requires," even if it means the Washington area must "rely on community pressure, and a stubborn owner's sense of decency — not a lawsuit — to get rid of the team's offensive name."

WALL STREET JOURNAL. "Trump's Refugee Bonfire." The [Wall Street Journal](#) (1/29, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) is critical of President Trump's executive order on refugees, saying in an editorial that the policy was rushed and overly broad, and seemed designed to create chaos.

"Scott Walker's School Bonus." A [Wall Street Journal](#) (1/29, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) editorial praises Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker's collective-bargaining reforms, known as Act 10, for saving taxpayer money and cites a Stanford University study by allowing school districts to negotiate teacher pay based on merit instead of seniority, they have improved student learning.

"Big Labor's Membership Pains." In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (1/29, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) highlights the annual report from the Bureau of Labor Statistics which shows that in 2016, the unionized share of the US workforce fell to 10.7% from 11.1% the year before. Pointing out that in the 25 states that had right-to-work laws, union membership fell by about 290,000, while membership grew by 50,000 in the other 25, the Journal says workers have a right to decide whether to join a union, and more often than not they are deciding against it.

Big Picture:

HEADLINES FROM TODAY'S FRONT PAGES.

Wall Street Journal:

[Trump Immigration Ban Sows Chaos](#)

[Trump Team Kept Plan For Travel Ban Quiet](#)

[The Rally's Next Test: Can Earnings Keep Up With Stock Prices?](#)

[Oil Firms Plot Divergent Spending Paths](#)

New York Times:

[Travelers Stranded And Protests Swell Over Trump Order](#)

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Washington Post:

[Trump Stands By Order As Confusion, Dissent Swirl](#)
[Officials Fear Move Will Set Back Efforts To Fight Terrorism](#)
[Questions Multiply Over Bannon's Role In Decision](#)
[In A Muslim Enclave, Torn Families And Trump Supporters At Odds](#)
[As They Become Americans, A Mix Of Elation And Worry](#)

Financial Times:

[Federer Beats Nadal To Win 18th Slam Title](#)
[Trump Defiant As World Leaders Criticise Travel Ban](#)
[Bloody Philippine Drugs War Sparks Rush For Rehab](#)

Washington Times:

[White House Says Trump Orders On 'Extreme Vetting' Still In Effect](#)
[Republicans Miss Own Deadline To Begin Repeal Of Obamacare](#)
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[Islamic State Finds Success Infiltrating Its Terrorists Into Refugee Flows To West](#)
[Green Groups Target Trump With Guerrilla Warfare Campaign](#)
[Conservative Groups Press States To Overhaul Voter Lists, Combat Fraud](#)

Story Lineup From Last Night's Network News:

ABC: Travel Ban Reactions; Travel Ban-Legal Challenge; Trump-Travel Ban; Trump-National Security Council; Travel Ban Impact; US SEAL Casualty-Yemen; Weather Forecast; 40-Year Murder Mystery; Phone Voice Scam; Audi Recall; Colorado Avalanche; MBA Long-shot; Military Academy Grand-slam.

CBS: Travel Ban Reactions; Trump-Travel Ban, National Security Council, Diplomacy; US SEAL Casualty-Yemen; War in Iraq; Israel-US Embassy Move; Chicago Police Chief Health; NFL News; Tennis News; Aleppo Soccer Match; Princess Diana Statue.

Network TV At A Glance:

Travel Ban Reactions – 9 minutes, 5 seconds
Trump-Travel Ban – 4 minutes, 35 seconds
US SEAL Casualty-Yemen – 2 minutes, 35 seconds

Story Lineup From This Morning's Radio News Broadcasts:

ABC: Quebec City Mosque Attack; Delta Flight Delays; Travel Ban Reactions; US SEAL Casualty-Yemen.

CBS: Travel Ban Reactions; Quebec City Mosque Attack; Delta Flight Delays; SAG Awards; Miss Universe.

FOX: Quebec City Mosque Attack; Trump-Travel Ban; Travel Ban Reactions; Confirmation Hearings; Princess Diana Statue.

NPR: Travel Ban Reactions; Travel Ban-Interview; Travel Ban-Canadian Response; Quebec City Mosque Attack.

Washington Schedule:

TODAY'S EVENTS IN WASHINGTON.

White House:

PRESIDENT TRUMP — Holds breakfast and listening session with small business leaders; signs Executive Order; meets with Chief of Staff, Reince Priebus; has lunch with the Vice President; meets with Director of the Domestic Policy Council, Andrew Bremberg; meets with presidential personnel; meets with

staff from the National Economic Council.

VICE PRESIDENT PENCE — Host a breakfast meeting with King Abdullah II of Jordan; has lunch with the President.

US Senate: 3:00 PM Senate aims to end debate on Secretary of State-nominee Rex Tillerson – Senate convenes and, following a period of morning business, holds cloture vote on the nomination of Rex Tillerson to be Secretary of State Location: Washington, DC <http://www.senate.gov/>

5:00 PM Senate Foreign Relations Committee organizational meeting – Business Meeting, with agenda including ‘Subcommittee Membership and Jurisdiction for the 115th Congress’, ‘The Committee Rules for the 115th Congress’, and ‘S. Res. XXXX, Authorizing expenditures by the Committee on Foreign Relations during the 115th Congress’ Location: S-116, U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC <http://foreign.senate.gov/>

Senate Small Business Committee votes on Linda McMahon to be SBA administrator – Business Meeting, to consider the nomination of Linda McMahon to be Small Business Administration Administrator * President-elect Donald Trump announced the nomination of the former WWE president and CEO last month Location: S-216, U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC <http://sbc.senate.gov/>

US House: 2:00 PM House Small Business Committee holds staff briefing ahead of organizational meeting – House Committee on Small Business staff briefing, to discuss the committee’s rules and authorization and oversight plan, ahead of an organizational meeting Wednesday Location: Rm 2360, Rayburn House Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://smallbusiness.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/SmallBizGOP>

5:00 PM House Rules Committee hearing – Hearing on ‘H.J. Res. XXX – Disapproving the rule submitted by the Department of the Interior known as the Stream Protection Rule’, ‘H.J. Res. XXX – Providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of a rule submitted by the Securities and Exchange Commission relating to ‘Disclosure of Payments by Resource Extraction Issuers’, and ‘H.J. Res. XXX – Providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Social Security Administration relating to Implementation of the NICS Improvement Amendments Act of 2007’ Location: H-313, U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC <http://www.rules.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/RulesReps>

Other: 9:00 AM National Health Policy Conference – National Health Policy Conference, providing insider perspectives on critical health care issues and priorities for the upcoming year. Speakers include House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi Location: Washington Marriott Marquis, 901 Massachusetts Ave NW, Washington, DC <http://www.academyhealth.org/events/2017-01/2017-academyhealth-national-health-policy-conference> <https://twitter.com/AcademyHealth>

12:00 PM ‘How Washington Is Destroying American Indians’ book discussion at AEI – ‘The New Trail of Tears: How Washington Is Destroying American Indians’ book discussion at the American Enterprise Institute, with author Naomi Scafeher Riley speaking on how federal policy affects Native Americans. Followed by panel discussion with Schaefer Riley, Republican Rep. Rob Bishop, Chris Edwards (Cato Institute), and Keith Moore (formerly Bureau of Indian Education) Location: AEI, 1789 Massachusetts Ave., NW, Washington, DC <http://www.aei.org/> <https://twitter.com/AEI>

6:30 PM White House press secretary speaks at GW discussion on the media under President Trump – George Washington University hosts ‘Does Trump Need the News Media? Making and Shaping the News from 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue’ – a discussion on the Trump administration’s ‘war’ with the media, the role of the White House press corps, and the access journalists should have covering the White House. Speakers include White House Press Secretary Sean Spicer, former White House Press Secretary Ari Fleischer, CNN Senior White House Correspondent Jim Acosta, POLITICO Media Reporter Hadas Gold, The Wall Street Journal White House Correspondent Carol Lee, Reuters White House Correspondent and White House Correspondents’ Association President Jeff Mason, C-SPAN Senior Executive Producer Steve Scully, and GW School of Media and Public Affairs Director Frank Sesno Location: Cloyd Heck Marvin Center, GW, 800 21st St NW, Washington, DC <http://www.gwu.edu> <https://twitter.com/SMPAGWU> #TrumpMedia

Last Laughs:

LATE NIGHT POLITICAL HUMOR.

All late-night talk shows were in re-runs or had no political jokes.

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NEWS BRIEFING

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DATE: TUESDAY, JANUARY 31, 2017 7:00 AM EST

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DOI in the News:

SENATE COMMITTEE TO VOTE ON PERRY, ZINKE NOMINATIONS TODAY. [The Hill](#) (1/30, Henry, 1.25M) reports the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee today "will consider Ryan Zinke's nomination to lead the Interior Department and Rick Perry's nomination to be Energy Secretary." Originally, the votes were scheduled "for last Tuesday." Last week, a Senate aide indicated "the cancellation was due to a 'misunderstanding' between top committee lawmakers." [Public Power Daily](#) (1/31, Anderson) reports neither Perry nor Zinke's nomination "is viewed as particularly controversial." A separate piece by [The Hill](#) (1/30, Cama, Henry, 1.25M) notes that some Democrats have "expressed concerns" about the candidates' positions on a variety of issues.

Additional coverage was provided by the [Washington Post](#) (1/30, 11.43M), the "Morning Energy" blog of [Politico](#) (1/30, Adragna, 12K), [E&E Daily](#) (1/30, Subscription Publication), [CBS News](#) (1/30, 4.4M), and [KUIK-AM](#) Portland, OR (1/28).

Alaska Gov. Walker Praises Zinke. The [AP](#) (1/30, 2.2M) reports that Alaska Gov. Bill Walker on Monday "expressed renewed hope for working with the federal government on oil, gas and land issues, praising President Donald Trump's pick to head the Interior Department as 'just what we need.'" Walker said Zinke "understood the challenges Alaska has had with access to federal lands for things like resource development." He said, "I think we're going to have a very, very different relationship, certainly with the Department of Interior and what they oversee."

Cattlemen's Beef Association And Public Lands Council Support Confirmation Of Zinke. The [High Plains and Midwest AG \(KS\) Journal](#) (1/30) reports that the National Cattlemen's Beef Association and the Public Lands Council released a statement on Jan. 16 in support of the confirmation of Rep. Ryan

Zinke as secretary of interior. Tracy Brunner, NCBA president, said, "During his tenure in the U.S. House of Representatives, Rep. Zinke has consistently advocated for our western communities, economies, and ranchers. He has demanded transparency and the inclusion of stakeholders when it comes to land management decisions, and has a strong understanding of the challenges that come with stewarding the West." Dave Eliason, PLC president, added, "The current leadership of the Department of Interior refuses to stand up for the very people who have invested their time and livelihoods into the management and improvement of public lands. Having a Secretary of Interior who understands public lands, and who values true cooperation with stakeholders is in the best interest of all Americans. We are excited for Representative Zinke to refocus the agency's efforts to their core mission, and to have someone in this role that understands the unique challenges we face in the West."

ZINKE ELABORATES ON ETHICS, ENERGY, PUBLIC LANDS POSITIONS. [E&E](#) (1/30) report that ahead of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee's vote Tuesday on Interior secretary nominee Ryan Zinke, "the Montana Republican lawmaker disclosed to the committee that a super political action committee he was once affiliated with is under investigation and reaffirmed his opposition to turning federal lands over to states." Zinke also "told Sen. Debbie Stabenow that he supports transferring the Forest Service from the Agriculture Department to Interior — a position that he noted the Michigan Democrat had 'concerns' with when they met privately." Zinke also "elaborated on his views on energy development, climate change and science, fire management, endangered species, and other hot-button issues in his responses to questions for the record submitted by committee members."

BERNHARDT SEEN AS FRONT-RUNNER TO BECOME INTERIOR DEPUTY SECRETARY. [E&E](#) (1/30) reports that "a high-ranking George W. Bush administration Interior Department lawyer could soon be making a comeback as the agency's No. 2 official." David Bernhardt, "who served as the department's top attorney under Bush and worked on the Trump transition team, is the front-runner to become Interior's next deputy secretary, according to a source close to the Trump administration." Bernhardt was "in charge of Trump's Interior transition team for a short time after the November presidential election but was replaced as that team's leader later that month by Doug Domenech, another Bush-era Interior Department staffer."

TRUMP ORDERS ELIMINATION OF TWO REGULATIONS FOR EVERY NEW ONE. [USA Today](#) (1/30, Korte, 5.28M) reports that President Trump on Monday signed an executive action he said will "knock out two regulations for every new regulation" federal agencies adopt. Trump called the action "the largest cut by far, in terms of regulation," in history and said the policy was targeted at small business. Trump said, "There will be regulation, there will be control, but there will be normalized control where you can open your business and expand your business." USA Today adds that directive's text "was not immediately available, and it was unclear how the two-for-one mechanism would work." [Reuters](#) (1/30, Rascoe) says Trump's action "will prepare a process for the White House to set an annual cap on the cost of new regulations." For the remainder of the fiscal year, "the cap will require that the cost of any additional regulations be completely offset by undoing existing rules." Trump [tweeted](#), "The American dream is back. We're going to create an environment for small business like we haven't had in many, many decades!" He [re-tweeted](#) the post on the @POTUS Twitter account.

While a [Wall Street Journal](#) (1/30, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) editorial praises the order, arguing that it will it could lead to job creation and new investment, a number of reports highlights the difficulty Trump may face in putting it into action. For example, [Politico](#) (1/30, Restuccia, 2.46M) said that while Trump's aides cast the move as "the most significant regulatory reform effort in decades," implementing it "isn't as simple as Trump's flashy 'one in, two out' slogan suggests." According to Politico, the order "could take months, if not years, to implement and likely faces costly court challenges." [Bloomberg Politics](#) (1/30, Dlouhy, 201K) similarly says that "fulfilling the promise...may prove more difficult than signing an order." Eliminating a regulation "involves months of work that can include vetting multiple rule drafts and reacting to thousands or even millions of comments from industries, trade groups and individuals." Moreover, the process "can be challenged with a lawsuit by aggrieved parties."

Trumps Two For One Regulation Rule Concerns Policy Experts. The [Minneapolis Star Tribune](#) (1/30, 1.27M) reports Trump's executive order mandating the repeal of two regulations for every new one instituted has concerned policy experts. "There's no logic to this," says William Gale, a tax and fiscal

policy expert at the Brookings Institution. The order also caused concerns among environmental groups who fear the order will be used to roll back environment and climate regulations. Trump claims the rollback will help small and medium sized business. He further stated he would like to remove 75 percent of existing regulations

Trump's Two-For-One Order Could Put Endangered Species At Risk. The [Idaho Statesman](#) (1/30, 197K) reports Trump's executive two for one order could delist the Yellowstone grizzly from the endangered species list. The order forces the Office of Management and Budget to calculate the cost of each regulation and for new rules to create a "net economic benefit." Brett Hartl, director of Government Affairs at the Center for Biological Diversity, says, "Every time you repeal a rule, you are passing a rule." The Trump White House also told employees not to issue new regulations without having an Administration official review the rule first-- a difficult task when many posts have yet to be filled or even nominated.

HOUSE TO VOTE ON PUBLIC LAND, CYBERSECURITY BILLS THIS WEEK. [E&E](#) (1/30) reports that the House this week will "vote on a series of bills addressing land and cybersecurity concerns, including a measure authorizing research into adding Fort Ontario to the National Park System." According to the article, "the special resource study called for in H.R. 46 would evaluate the national significance of the site, which was destroyed by French forces in 1756 and rebuilt." The bill orders "the Interior secretary to issue a report no later than three years after funding becomes available that would include the costs of alternative means for preservation of the area, which is on the National Register of Historic Places."

FEDERAL HIRING FREEZE SPARKS CONCERNS ABOUT SEASONAL FIREFIGHTERS. The [Idaho Statesman](#) (1/30, 197K) reports that President Trump's federal hiring freeze "does have national security and public safety exceptions that appear to cover firefighters." However, "it's been a week, and federal agencies are still looking for details." The Statesman notes that "agencies are compiling lists of what positions meet the national security and public safety exemptions, and most expect firefighting to easily fall into that category, said sources in the Department of Agriculture and Interior."

HUNDREDS RALLY FOR PUBLIC LANDS IN MONTANA. The [Bozeman \(MT\) Daily Chronicle](#) (1/30, 52K) reports that "about 700 people" gathered Monday at a rally for public lands in Helena, Montana. According to the article, "speakers railed against land transfer and talked about how important public lands are to both the state's economy and everyday life." Interior nominee Ryan Zinke, "was also on the menu at the rally, as some of the speakers called on him to ensure public lands in Montana remain public under his watch."

Additional coverage was provided by the [Billings \(MT\) Gazette](#) (1/30, 208K).

FELBAB-BROWN: TRUMP SHOULD BE QUESTIONED AT EVERY OPTION OVER CONSTRUCTING A WALL. For the "Pundits" blog of [The Hill](#) (1/30, Felbab-Brown, Contributor, 1.25M), Vanda Felbab-Brown, a senior fellow in foreign policy at The Brookings Institution, writes President Trump's rhetoric against Mexico demonstrated "the shallowness of his concept of the wall, its costs, and how they will be financed and borne." She argues the public, press, and members of Congress need to continuously ask the president about the cost of his proposed wall and all assumptions the plan is based on. She points out the cost of the wall ranges from a little as \$12 billion up to \$285 billion.

America's Great Outdoors:

National Park Service:

EX-NPS DIRECTOR ACCUSES ADMINISTRATION OF TRYING TO "SUPPRESS" AGENCY. The [Washington Post](#) (1/30, Rein, Eilperin, 11.43M) reports that ex-National Park Service Director Jonathan Jarvis, who retired earlier this month, "spoke out Monday against the Trump administration's efforts to 'suppress' the agency, posting a lengthy statement on a Facebook site for park rangers in support of employees." Writing on the Facebook page of the Association of National Park Rangers, Jarvis said, "I have been watching the Trump administration trying unsuccessfully to suppress the National Park Service

with a mix of pride and amusement.” Jarvis “was referring to the communications blackout the administration ordered last week at the Park Service and other agencies restricting what they should convey to the public about their work.”

“WOOFIELEAKS” LEADS TO DELAY OF DOG RULES AT GOLDEN GATE NATIONAL

RECREATION AREA. The [Washington Post](#) (1/30, Bittel, 11.43M) reports that “dog owners have been fighting the National Park Service for years over a proposal to restrict dog-walking” within the Golden Gate National Recreation Area. Recently, “one of the groups opposed to the new rules upped the ante, filing Freedom of Information Act requests for Park Service emails about the plan and posting them this month on a website.” According to Save Our Recreation, “the pro-dog group that created WoofieLeaks, the FOIA-ed communications show Park Service bias against dog enthusiasts.” Following the “leaks”, officials with the recreation area “announced this month that implementation of the new dog-walking rules would be delayed indefinitely” and “the Park Service also is planning an investigation.”

LOWELL NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK RECEIVES \$25,000 GRANT TO INCREASE TRAIL USAGE.

The [Lowell \(MA\) Sun](#) (1/30, 138K) reports that the Lowell National Historical Park has “received a \$25,000 grant in an initiative meant to get residents living near the park to use its trails.” The grant, from the National Park Foundation, will “engage more than 250 residents in activities like hiking, birding, photography, canal cleanups, learning about botany and ecology, and stress-reducing activities, such as yoga and meditation.”

NPS SEEKS PUBLIC COMMENTS ON ISLE ROYALE WOLVES. The [AP](#) (1/30, 272K) reports that “federal officials are inviting the public to learn more about options for dealing with the declining gray wolf population at Isle Royale National Park in Michigan.” The National Park Service has “scheduled open houses for Feb. 14 in Duluth, Minnesota, and Feb. 15 in Houghton, Michigan.” Also, “for those who can’t attend, webinars are scheduled for Feb. 16 and Feb. 21.”

Additional coverage was provided by [WWTV-TV](#) Cadillac, MI (1/30, 51K).

NPS SEEKS PUBLIC INPUT ON MONOCACY BATTLEFIELD ACCESS. The [AP](#) (1/30, 272K) reports that the National Park Service is “soliciting public comment on a plan to add eight miles of pedestrian trails and a kayak launch to the Monocacy (mah-NAH’-kah-see) National Battlefield near Frederick.” The environmental assessment, which was released Friday, is “open for review through Feb. 28.” According to park Superintendent Chris Stubbs, “the plan would enable more visitors to walk in the footsteps of soldiers who fought there on July 9, 1864.”

Fish and Wildlife Service:

TRUMP’S FORMER ADVISER CALLS FOR OVERHAUL OF ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT. The [Independent \(UK\)](#) (1/30, Batchelor, 1.28M) reports that “a senior member of Donald Trump’s now-defunct transition team has called for the US Endangered Species Act to be drastically watered down, claiming it doesn’t actually protect wildlife.” Myron Ebell, “who led a team tasked by the Republican billionaire with drafting an action plan to overhaul the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), said the legislation was being used as a ‘political weapon’ and many of its policies should be scrapped.” Speaking in London on Monday, Ebell said: “The endangered species act doesn’t do much for protecting endangered wildlife, but it does a huge amount to control private property land use, and it is enforced very selectively, so that some landowners are not affected but people with exactly the same habitat, their use is limited or eliminated.” He continued, “It is a political weapon and I am very interested in reforming, and I don’t know if we will see that any time in the next decade, but I hope so.”

ENVIRONMENTAL GROUP FILES SUIT OVER POLYMET LAND SWAP. The [Virginia \(MN\) Mesabi Daily Tribune](#) (1/30, 60) reports that “an environmental group officially filed a lawsuit to block the federal government’s land exchange with PolyMet, a crucial step in the company’s attempt to build a copper-nickel mine near Hoyt Lakes.” WaterLegacy filed the suit Monday in U.S. District Court, “seeking to overturn a 6,560-acre land swap, which the group says ‘violated the Federal Land Policy and Management Act because it failed to consider the highest and most profitable use of the lands for mining related uses, significantly undervalued the federal lands, and would result in a windfall for the PolyMet

foreign corporation at the expense of Minnesota taxpayers and public lands.” Meanwhile, the Center for Biological Diversity and Earthworks has “filed a formal 60-day notice of intent to sue the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and U.S. Forest Service under the Endangered Species Act, saying the project would disrupt lynx and wolf habitats.”

ADDITIONAL COVERAGE: LESSER LONG-NOSED BAT COULD BE REMOVED FROM ENDANGERED LIST. Additional coverage that the lesser long-nosed bat is proposed for removal from the endangered species list was provided by [Courthouse News](#) (1/30, 2K).

Bureau of Land Management:

BUNDY STANDOFF TRIAL PUTS SPOTLIGHT ON WESTERN LAND FIGHT. The [Reno \(NV\) Gazette-Journal](#) (1/30, 219K) reports that “the fight over America’s public lands is lurching back to the national spotlight.” Nevada rancher Cliven Bundy, his sons Ryan and Ammon Bundy and “compatriots will stand trial in February in federal court over their 2014 armed standoff with the U.S. Bureau of Land Management.” Meanwhile, in Congress, “legislative proposals could upend who’s in charge of tens of millions of acres of federal land across the West.” According to the article, “the trial will force participants to relive the tense moments when federal agents and armed Bundy sympathizers narrowly averted a shootout after the BLM tried to seize the Bundys’ cattle over unpaid grazing fees,” and “that tension will carry over into Congress, where conservationists, hunters, miners, energy developers, recreationists and rural communities are rallying behind the forces they believe will defend their version of the American West.”

AERIAL PROJECT WILL RESEED 10,000 ACRES OF BURNED RANGELAND. The [AP](#) (1/30, 272K) reports that “state and federal land managers launched an aerial reseedling effort to stabilize and rehabilitate more than 10,000 acres of public land burned by wildfires in eastern Nevada last year.” According to the article, “the work started last week and was expected to improve habitat for threatened sage grouse and other wildlife as well as boost the overall health of watersheds.” Officials with the U.S. Bureau of Land Management and Nevada Department of Wildlife were “concentrating the effort in Elko, Eureka and White Pine counties.”

Securing America’s Energy Future:

Onshore Energy Development:

CONGRESS POISED TO TARGET OBAMA-ERA ENVIRONMENTAL RULES. The [Washington Post](#) (1/30, Harvey, 11.43M) reports that Republicans in Congress this week may target “a regulation finalized in mid-November that seeks to curb fugitive methane emissions from oil and gas drilling operations on public lands” and a rule that “prohibits coal-mining companies from engaging in any activities that could permanently pollute streams.” Resolutions to disapprove of the two Obama actions are already scheduled for this week and the rules are poised for elimination under the Congressional Review Act.

The [AP](#) (1/30, Taylor) reports Congressional Republicans are moving swiftly, with the repeal measure “set for a House vote Wednesday and a Senate vote shortly thereafter.” [Politico Pro](#) (1/30) reports that “on Wednesday, the House is slated to vote on whether to nullify the Interior Department’s stream protection rule.” The Senate hasn’t “definitively said when it’ll take up the challenges, but Majority Leader Mitch McConnell plans to use time in between floor votes on Cabinet nomination to consider CRA resolutions.”

[E&E](#) (1/30) reports that Republican lawmakers are “calling on state leaders and the energy industry to craft alternative methane rules for oil and gas operations on public lands.” GOP legislators on Monday were set to “begin the process of repealing a pair of Interior Department regulations.” House Natural Resources Chairman Rob Bishop expected to introduce a joint resolution “that would use authority granted under the Congressional Review Act to undo federal regulations enacted within the last 60 legislative days.”

Additional coverage was provided by [The Hill](#) (1/30, Devaney, Wheeler, 1.25M), [NPR](#) (1/30, 1.92M), [Reuters](#) (1/30), [The Hill](#) (1/30, Henry, 1.25M), the [Washington \(DC\) Times](#) (1/30, Wolfgang, 272K), [PBS NewsHour](#) (1/30, 255K), the [Billings \(MT\) Gazette](#) (1/30, 208K), the [Casper \(WY\) Star-Tribune](#) (1/30, 93K), the [West Virginia MetroNews](#) (1/30, 6K), [WDTV-TV Bridgeport \(WV\)](#) Bridgeport, WV (1/30, 4K), and [WTVW-TV Evansville \(IN\)](#) Evansville, IN (1/30, 6K).

Colorado Methane Regulations Helped Grow Economy. [ClimateWire](#) (1/30, Subscription Publication) reports that House Republicans began to repeal an Interior Department directive to cut methane from oil and gas wells on federal lands, calling it a “bad rule” and “regulatory overreach.” However, a few years earlier, oil and gas companies sat down with environmentalists in Colorado to develop a set of regulations for methane. Proponents say that the similar rule in Colorado has led to reduced methane leaks and created economic growth for the state. Supporters, including industry and environmentalists, say the GOP move to repeal the similar federal regulations could halt the economic growth of the methane mitigation industry.

NORTH DAKOTA WARNS PAID PIPELINE PROTESTERS TO SUBMIT STATE INCOME TAXES. The [Washington Times](#) (1/30, Richardson, 272K) reports North Dakota Tax Commissioner Ryan Rauschenberger said his office expects to see state income tax submissions from activists paid to agitate the Dakota Access pipeline protest. Rauschenberger asserted that authorities are “looking at the entities that have potential paid contractors here on their behalf doing work.” He explained, “If an organization is directly paying someone to come and do activities on their behalf, even protesting,” or were “receiving income” while in “North Dakota performing activities for an organization, they owe income tax from Day One.” The state spent more than \$22 million in expenses related to the protest; meanwhile, “millions have been funneled into the six-month-old demonstration via crowdfunding websites” and at least 30 environmental organizations, including Greenpeace and the Sierra Club, are known to have supported the demonstration. If these environmental organizations paid protesters, however, they are “not saying so publicly.”

Empowering Native American Communities:

NATIVE AMERICANS CONCERNED ABOUT TRUMP ADMINISTRATION PLANS FOR RESERVATIONS. The [High Country \(CO\) News](#) (1/30, 77K) reports North Dakota lawmakers are pushing to have greater control over Native American reservations. With the new Trump Administration, some feel as if their services will be cut or eliminated. To survive the Trump Administration, some feel that they need to cozy up to state and local authorities as a way to fill gaps in services that may inevitably form.

CALIFORNIA COUNTY SUES OVER 1,400 TRUST ACRES FOR TRIBE. [Law360](#) (1/30, 23K) reports that “the county of Santa Barbara sued the Bureau of Indian Affairs in California federal court on Saturday to challenge a decision taking more than 1,400 acres of land into trust for the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians for tribal housing and economic development, claiming the decision flouted trust acquisition regulations and environmental law.”

FEDS CONTEST ARAPAHO CONTRACT CLAIMS IN SHOSHONE ROW. [Law360](#) (1/30, 23K) reports that “the federal government on Friday shot back at the Northern Arapaho Tribe’s claim that the Bureau of Indian Affairs improperly rejected proposals to operate a tribal court and offer counseling services under federally funded contracts, saying the tribe has submitted proposals for contracts without seeking the consent of another tribe that shares its Wyoming reservation.”

Office of Insular Affairs:

COURT APPROVES EXTENSION OF DEADLINE IN CUC AUTHORIZATION TO PROCEED. [Marianas Variety](#) (1/31) reports that “District Court for the NMI designated Judge David Carter granted the request of the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. and the federal government to extend the deadline for the CNMI government to file its notice of authorization to proceed with the \$5 million funding for stipulated order 2 projects on or before March 1, 2017.” According to the article, “the CNMI must deposit \$5million into the

court's registry or file a notice with the court regarding the Department of the Interior's authorization to proceed for funding SO2 projects by Feb. 1, 2017."

ADDITIONAL COVERAGE: OIA TRANSMITS \$31.5M IN COMPACT FUNDING TO MARSHALL ISLANDS. Additional coverage that the Office of Insular Affairs has "released to the Marshall Islands government's Ministry of Finance Compact payments totaling \$31,503,897 for the period Oct. 1, 2016, to Dec. 31, 2016" was provided by the [Saipan \(MNP\) Tribune](#) (1/31, 641).

Tackling America's Water Challenges:

DETERIORATING RELATIONS WITH MEXICO COULD THREATEN COLORADO WATER TALKS. [E&E](#) (1/30) reports that "President Trump's rocky relations with Mexico could have major consequences for the Colorado River and the 35 million Americans who rely on it for water." A bilateral agreement, which "specifies exactly how much water Mexico receives, as well as other important factors like how those deliveries are reduced in years of exceptional drought," is set to expire this year. The article says that "the seven Colorado River Basin states — and particularly Lower Basin states Nevada, Arizona and California — say it's pivotal that the new administration finalize a new agreement." However, "many are now worried that U.S.-Mexico relations have already deteriorated to the point where that may be impossible."

Top National News:

TRUMP FIRES ACTING ATTORNEY GENERAL AFTER SHE REFUSES TO DEFEND VISA BAN. President Trump's evening dismissal of Acting Attorney General Sally Yates, an Obama Administration holdover, over her defiance of his visa ban is being portrayed as the latest indicator of the fast-moving and chaotic nature of the ongoing story. The firing took place hours after Yates said she would not direct the DOJ to defend the ban, a highly unusual statement that was itself the focus of considerable coverage, which was quickly updated after Trump dismissed her from her job — which she was holding only until Sen. Jeff Sessions' Senate confirmation. With the acting head of Immigration and Customs Enforcement also dismissed late Monday, some outlets even reference the Watergate-era "Saturday Night Massacre," when Richard Nixon dismissed top DOJ officials — a comparison that was also [being made on Twitter](#).

[Reuters](#) (1/30) reports that Trump fired Yates "after she took the extraordinarily rare step of defying the White House and saying the Justice Department would not defend" his visa ban. US Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia Dana Boente was named acting attorney general and promptly reversed Yates' guidance. The [New York Times](#) (1/30, Landler, Sanger, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) said the firing was part of "an escalating crisis for his 10-day-old administration." In a statement, Trump said that Yates "had betrayed the administration."

[McClatchy](#) (1/30, Allam, 74K) reports that Boente was sworn in as acting attorney general at 9:00 p.m. Monday. In a statement, Boente said, "I am honored to serve President Trump in this role until [Attorney General-designate] Sessions is confirmed. I will defend and enforce the laws of our country to ensure that our people and our nation are protected." McClatchy says the "rapid late night developments recalled the 'Saturday Night Massacre' in 1973, when President Richard Nixon fired his attorney general and deputy attorney general over their refusal to dismiss Watergate prosecutor Archibald Cox."

[USA Today](#) (1/30, Johnson, 5.28M) says the "ouster came just hours after Yates said she would not defend" the executive order. A White House statement that USA Today says "appeared to be in Trump's own voice" said, "Ms. Yates is an Obama administration appointee who is weak on borders and very weak on illegal immigration." The [Los Angeles Times](#) (1/30, Lauter, Kaleem, 4.52M) says Trump had initially asked Yates, "a career prosecutor who served as the Obama administration's deputy attorney general," to "stay on as acting attorney general pending the confirmation" of Sessions. Earlier in the day Monday, Trump criticized the delay in confirming Sessions [on Twitter](#), calling Yates "an Obama A.G."

The [AP](#) (1/30, Pace) says that while Yates' directive was likely to have been temporary, it "deepened the chaos surrounding Trump's order. At least three top national security officials" — DHS Secretary Kelly, Defense Secretary Mattis, and Secretary of State-designate Tillerson — "have told associates they were

not aware of details of directive until around the time Trump signed it. Leading intelligence officials were also left largely in the dark,” and Senate Foreign Relations Chairman Bob Corker “said that despite White House assurances that congressional leaders were consulted, he learned about the order in the media.” The [Washington Post](#) (1/30, Zapotosky, Horwitz, Berman, 11.43M) says Yates’ refusal had marked “a stunning dissent to the president’s directive from someone who would be on the front lines of implementing it.”

The [Washington Post](#) (1/30, Horwitz, 11.43M) has a profile of Yates, who “began her tenure as an Obama appointee two years ago by saying that pursuing justice was more important to her than bringing federal cases in court.” The [Washington Post](#) (1/30, Rucker, Costa, 11.43M) also writes that Sessions’ “fingerprints” were “on nearly all” of Trump’s executive orders thus far, and “his influence in the administration extends far beyond the Justice Department.” Sessions “is the intellectual godfather of the president’s policies,” and is “reach extends throughout the White House.”

The [Boston Globe](#) (1/30, McGrane, Viser, 1.08M) calls Yates’ defiance and dismissal “an extraordinary series of events,” while the [Washington Times](#) (1/30, Dinan, 272K) says the firing “capp[ed] off a dramatic day.” Before the firing, Pete Williams reported on [NBC Nightly News](#) (1/30, story 3, 2:15, Holt, 16.61M), “Justice Department lawyers defended the orders in court over the weekend but tonight Acting Attorney General Sally Yates...tells them to stop defending it. She says the order is not consistent with justice or doing what’s right.” [ABC World News Tonight](#) (1/30, story 7, 1:20, Muir, 14.63M) and the [CBS Evening News](#) (1/30, story 12, 2:05, Pelley, 11.17M) also mentioned Yates’ stance as part of broader coverage. [Bloomberg Politics](#) (1/31, Strohm, 201K) and [Politico](#) (1/30, Gerstein, 2.46M) also have reports.

ICE Acting Director Also Replaced. [McClatchy](#) (1/30, Murphy, 74K) reports Trump “also replaced the acting director of the Immigration and Customs Enforcement on Monday.” The President “did not give a reason for replacing” Daniel Ragsdale. The [AP](#) (1/30) reports Ragsdale was replaced by Thomas Homan, who since 2013 has “served as the executive associate director of ICE Enforcement and Removal Operations.” The [Washington Times](#) (1/30, Morton, 272K) reports DHS Secretary Kelly said of Homan, “I am confident that he will continue to serve as a strong, effective leader for the men and women of ICE.” [The Hill](#) (1/30, Hensch, 1.25M) and the [Huffington Post](#) (1/30, 237K) also have brief reports.

Trump Names Duke DHS Deputy Secretary. In related news, the [Washington Times](#) (1/30, Dinan, 272K) reports Trump on Monday named Elaine Duke as the DHS deputy secretary. The Times says the selection of the “little-known bureaucrat,” who has “a long history in government management,” disappointed some “immigration crackdown advocates who’d been anticipating a more prominent figure.”

Massachusetts, Washington State Plan Legal Challenges. [Politico](#) (1/30, Dezenski, 2.46M) reports that Massachusetts Gov. Charlie Baker, a Republican, “said Monday that State Attorney General Maura Healey plans to file a brief in US federal court in Boston Tuesday arguing against President Donald Trump’s executive order restricting immigrants from seven Muslim-majority countries.” [Politico](#) (1/30, Conway, 2.46M) additionally reports that Washington State Attorney General Bob Ferguson will file a federal lawsuit against Trump, DHS, and Administration officials over the visa ban, “charging that the executive order is unconstitutional, his office announced Monday. In a separate motion, he will also request to halt the implementation immediately on the basis that it is harming the economy and families in Washington.”

WHITE HOUSE DEFENDS IMMIGRATION ORDER IN FACE OF VOCAL, WIDESPREAD OPPOSITION. President Trump’s executive order on immigration receives heavy media coverage including extensive coverage on the network news broadcasts and pervasive print and online reporting. The coverage is very negative toward the Administration – which is, nonetheless, described as standing firm (or “defiant,” as some news outlets put it) in the face of protests and criticism from lawmakers of both parties, the media, businesses, and others.

The lead story for [NBC Nightly News](#) (1/30, lead story, 3:10, Holt, 16.61M) described Trump as “defiant and digging in...amid a mounting firestorm over his travel ban.” Trump is “aiming to put a positive spin on a weekend of chaos and outrage” during which “protests erupted at airports all across the country as more than 100 people were detained.” The [Washington Post](#) (1/30, Berman, Zapotosky, 11.43M), which

also describes the White House as “defiant,” similarly reports that “despite mounting criticism, legal challenges and questions that stretched from Capitol Hill to the United Nations,” Trump continued to “adamantly defend” his immigration order. [USA Today](#) (1/30, Bacon, 5.28M) says the “massive protests that swept the nation” have “encouraged advocacy groups to press their case on other issues.”

[ABC World News Tonight](#) (1/30, lead story, 3:50, Muir, 14.63M) also reported in its lead story that Trump’s order sparked “protests coast to coast at airports across the country,” but added (Karl) that the Administration is “pushing back against stories of chaos and confusion. Families detained in airports. Customs and Border Patrol officials unclear on how to enforce the new policy. Terminals turned into makeshift legal aid clinics, with lawyers offering their services to travelers impacted by the ban.”

The [New York Post](#) (1/30, Moore, 3.82M) says Trump “stood firm” in the face of the criticism, and [USA Today](#) (1/30, Bacon, 5.28M) describes Trump as “unyielding...in his position that the ban was for the good of the country.” But the [AP](#) (1/30, Caldwell) says that while Trump “has staunchly defended his order,” in “a statement Sunday and tweets Monday, Trump misstated the facts multiple times.” The AP goes on to compare “what Trump said and how it compares with the facts.”

Under the headline “Sean Spicer Defends Trump’s Immigration Ban,” the [New York Post](#) (1/30, Moore, 3.82M) quotes the White House press secretary as saying, “We’re going to put the safety of Americans first. We’re not going to wait until we get attacked and figure out how it’s going to happen again. ... That’s the key point in this: How do we keep ahead of threats.” Spicer added, “This is why the majority of Americans agree with the president. ... These steps are frankly common-sense steps to make sure we’re never looking at the rear-view mirror asking, ‘We should have done something.’ ... His view is not to wait to get ahead of the curve. We don’t know when that hour comes. We don’t know when the individual comes to do us harm.” At the same time, [Reuters](#) (1/30) cites an internal DHS document which says the US “has granted waivers to let 872 refugees into the country this week,” despite Trump’s order. A DHS official confirmed the waivers, but Reuters says it “was not known if additional waivers would be granted, the official said.”

[Roll Call](#) (1/30, Bennett, 63K) said “chaos ensued” at US airports as Customs and Border Patrol agents “detained 109 individuals between late Friday afternoon and Sunday evening as they tried to enter the country after getting off international flights.” The White House argued that “being detained for a few hours during an intensive security check is outweighed by the possibility of getting to live in the United States for the rest of one’s life.” Meanwhile Trump “tried to deflect blame for weekend ‘problems’ at US airports by pointing the finger at Senate Minority Leader Charles E. Schumer,” who “appeared in New York over the weekend with refugees, at one point getting emotional.” Trump argued in a [two part](#) tweet that the “causes of the ‘big problems’ includes ‘the tears of Senator Schumer.’” In addition, he “seemed to defend the airport chaos by [tweeting](#) there’s ‘nothing nice’ about trying to stop ‘terrorists’ from entering the United States.” In its lead story, [NBC Nightly News](#) (1/30, lead story, 3:10, Holt, 16.61M) showed Trump saying, “Chuck Schumer yesterday with fake tears. I’m going to ask him who was his acting coach.”

Gerald F. Seib writes in the [Wall Street Journal](#) (1/30, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) that Sen. John McCain, who has shown a willingness to defy Trump, has called the order a recruiting boon for ISIS. Nancy Cordes reported on the [CBS Evening News](#) (1/30, story 2, 1:50, Pelley, 11.17M) that while Democrats “may have been the loudest...many Republicans like Pennsylvania’s Charlie Dent were just as critical.” Rep. Charlie Dent: “It was not well thought out. It was not properly considered.” Schumer “tried to capitalize on GOP discontent today by introducing a bill to reverse the travel ban,” but it was “quickly blocked by Republicans who support the executive order.” The [Washington Post](#) (1/30, O’Keefe, 11.43M) says that Senate Democrats on Monday “sought to quickly pass legislation that would rescind Trump’s ban, but there was insufficient GOP support.” [Reuters](#) (1/30, Zengerle) reports that while Sen. Dianne Feinstein “said she had 27 co-sponsors of a bill to rescind the order,” Sen. Tom Cotton “blocked consideration of the measure.” [Politico](#) (1/30, Caygle, Schor, 2.46M) said the failed effort “underscor[ed] the limits of the minority’s power to force substantive changes to the policy that sparked massive protests over the weekend.”

In a separate story, [Politico](#) (1/30, Caygle, 2.46M) said DHS Secretary Kelly will meet with House lawmakers on Tuesday. According to Democratic sources, “more than a dozen chief House lawmakers

are invited to the meeting,” including, “House Speaker Paul Ryan (R-Wis.), House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy (R-Calif.), House Minority Whip Steny Hoyer (D-Md.) and several other lawmakers who lead committees with ties to the refugee ban.”

The [Detroit Free Press](#) (1/30, Snavelly, Bomey, 1.01M) reports that while “other major automakers have largely remained silent so far,” Ford CEO Mark Fields and Ford Chairman Bill Ford “strongly rebuked” Trump’s order, saying in a joint statement Monday, “Respect for all people is a core value of Ford Motor Company, and we are proud of the rich diversity of our company here at home and around the world. ... That is why we do not support this policy or any other that goes against our values as a company.” The Free Press says that “a number of technology companies – including Apple, Alphabet, Facebook and Lyft – have issued statements or taken other action over the weekend in opposition to the travel ban,” but Ford “is the first major automaker to take a clear position.” [USA Today](#) (1/30, Bomey, 5.28M) says the statement from Ford “further complicates the on-again, off-again relationship between” the company and Trump.

The [CBS Evening News](#) (1/30, story 6, 0:20, Pelley, 11.17M) also said that “some of the largest tech companies have come out against the President’s immigration ban,” and the [New York Times](#) (1/30, Wingfield, Wakabayashi, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) reports that Amazon and Expedia on Monday “stepped up their opposition to the order with filings that were part of a lawsuit in federal court against the Trump administration, arguing that the order will hurt their businesses.” the tech firms’ move represents “an escalation of the technology industry’s efforts to push back on the order.”

[Politico](#) (1/30, White, 2.46M) said that following “a weekend of criticism from Silicon Valley, Wall Street chief executives began to join their tech colleagues in criticizing Trump’s move.” Goldman Sachs CEO Lloyd Blankfein said in a voicemail Monday to bank employees, “This is not a policy we support. ... I recognize that there is potential for disruption to the firm, and especially to some of our people and their families.” In an email to employees on Sunday, JPMorganChase chief executive Jamie Dimon, “reassured workers of the ‘unwavering commitment to the dedicated people working here’ including those on sponsored visas possibly hit by the executive order.” Politico also highlighted criticism of Trump’s order from GE CEO Jeffrey Immelt, Tesla CEO Elon Musk and Starbucks CEO Howard Schultz.

The Washington Post’s opinion page is also highly critical of Trump’s order. A [Washington Post](#) (1/30, 11.43M) editorial warns of the “grave potential consequences of an order that’s wrong ethically and strategically.” Richard Cohen writes in his [Washington Post](#) (1/30, 11.43M) column that the Trump Administration is “inept and indifferent to the suffering it might cause,” adding that “if a new policy is needed, Trump’s people have no idea of how to implement it and the White House seems similarly oblivious to the damage it is doing to the United States’ image.” Eugene Robinson takes a similar line in his [Washington Post](#) (1/30, 11.43M) column, calling the “refugee ban and travel restrictions” a “disgraceful exercise in cruelty” that “do nothing to make us safer — and may, in fact, make us less safe — but they punish Muslims, and that is his whole point.”

The reaction to Trump’s order was not universally negative, however. The [New York Times](#) (1/30, Tavernise, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) says that while the order “may be setting off protests around the country and raising eyebrows and objections among allies abroad,” a “large portion of the electorate is behind the president.” Trump supporters “say that the promise of tougher immigration policies is one of the main reasons they voted for him,” and the order, “along with an earlier one for building a wall, shows that he is serious, they say.”

A separate [New York Times](#) (1/30, Bromwich, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) story says that in “those precincts that Mr. Trump carried in the November election,” the order “was often met with satisfaction and approval,” and the protests “were viewed as misguided and a source of irritation.”

Quinnipiac, Rasmussen Polls Show Support For Trump’s Policy. The [CBS Evening News](#) (1/30, story 5, 1:45, Pelley, 11.17M) reported that a Quinnipiac University poll taken three weeks ago found that “by margin of 48 percent to 42 percent, American voters support suspending immigration from terror-prone regions, even if it means turning away refugees,” and “53 percent support requiring immigrants from Muslim countries to register with the government.” CBS (Reynolds) added that Trump supporters

gathered at Los Angeles International Airport over the weekend to “voic[e] their belief that the President’s immigration order is sensible and overdue.” In addition, the [Washington Times](#) (1/30, Dinan, 272K) reports that a new Rasmussen Reports [poll](#) released Monday found that a “majority of voters back the concept of halting admissions from seven terrorist-connected countries,” and “general broad support for the kind of executive order President Trump signed on Friday.” According to the poll 56 percent said that “a pause in visas for Syria, Sudan, Iraq, Iran, Yemen, Somalia and Libya makes sense.”

In his “Talking Points Memo” segment on [Fox News’ The O’Reilly Factor](#) (1/30, 767K), Bill O’Reilly said that Trump “is being responsible, setting up a new refugee standards” provided that the standards “are fully explained and expedited in a timely manner.” O’Reilly added that the Administration “must be willing to grant exceptions and above all, should help refugees that survived in the terror zones abroad.” While “protecting Americans is obviously priority number one,” the “nobility of our nation demands we help suffering, helpless people if we can.”

The controversy over Trump’s order comes as King Abdullah II of Jordan is visiting Washington this week, a situation the [AP](#) (1/30, Lederman) says is “testing” Trump’s “ability to maintain key Arab alliances while cracking down on immigration from some Muslim countries and possibly moving the American Embassy in Israel to Jerusalem.” Abdullah met Monday with Defense Secretary Mattis and Vice President Pence. He and Trump will “come face-to-face on Thursday at the National Prayer Breakfast.” The AP cites “officials” who said the embassy “was a prime topic of discussion in Abdullah’s meeting with Pence.”

Border Patrol, ICE Agents Voice Support For Trump’s Order. Trump’s order drew praise from “the men and women on the front lines of protecting America’s borders,” [Western Journalism](#) (1/30, Davis, 802K) reports. A joint statement from the Border Patrol and Immigration and Customs Enforcement Councils said, “As representatives of the nation’s Frontline immigration officers and agents responsible for enforcing our laws and protecting our borders, we fully support and appreciate President Trump’s swift and decisive action to keep the American people safe and allow law enforcement to do its job.” The statement added that Trump’s orders “will make America safer and more prosperous” and have “improved morale.”

Bannon Urged “A Hard Line” On Trump’s Immigration Order. [Reuters](#) (1/30, Walcott, Ainsley) reports that as the Trump Administration crafted the immigration order, Trump’s chief strategist Steve Bannon pushed “a hard line.” While senior DHS officials “interpreted the order to mean that lawful permanent residents – green card holders – who hailed from the seven Muslim-majority countries targeted in the immigration order would not face additional screening when they entered the country,” they “were quickly overruled by Bannon” and “White House senior policy adviser Stephen Miller, a close ally of Bannon’s, the officials said.” One official said, “They were in charge of this operation,” adding that “the experts were ‘almost immediately overruled by the White House, which means by Bannon and Miller.’” The [Los Angeles Times](#) (1/30, Bennett, Bierman, 4.52M) says Bannon and Miller “see themselves as launching a radical experiment to fundamentally transform how the US decides who is allowed into the country and to block a generation of people who, in their view, won’t assimilate into American society.” According to the Times, White House aides are weighing “new, onerous security checks that could effectively limit travel into the US by people from majority-Muslim countries to a trickle.”

The [Washington Post](#) (1/30, Parker, 11.43M) says the “fallout” from the order “exposed tender rifts within the Republican Party, alarmed members of his Cabinet, fueled suspicions among his top advisers — and left the defiant commander in chief stewing over who was to blame.” Inside the White House, “tensions flickered as differences in management style emerged between two factions: one led by” Bannon and Miller, “and the other composed of chief of staff Reince Priebus and his deputies, who are accustomed to operating with a more traditional chain of command.” Trump aides were “divided over who was at fault” for the “clumsy and dysfunctional” rollout of the order, “with some blaming Miller” and others saying Priebus “should have taken charge of better coordinating with the departments and communicating with lawmakers and the public.”

House Aides Helped Draft Trump’s Immigration Order. [Politico](#) (1/30, Bade, Sherman, Dawsey, 2.46M) reported that senior aides to the House Judiciary Committee helped Trump’s aides draft the order, “but the Republican committee chairman and party leadership were not informed, according to multiple

sources involved in the process.” Word of the House aides involvement “helps unlock the mystery of whether the White House consulted Capitol Hill about the executive order,” and “confirms that the small group of staffers were among the only people on Capitol Hill who knew of the looming controversial policy.”

While the [Wall Street Journal](#) (1/30, Paletta, Hong, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) casts the White House as being on the defensive, correspondent Major Garrett said in the lead story for the [CBS Evening News](#) (1/30, lead story, 3:30, Pelley, 11.17M) that the order was “rushed through the usual protocol.” Similarly, Jonathan Karl reported in the lead story for [ABC World News Tonight](#) (1/30, lead story, 3:50, Muir, 14.63M) the order “was rushed through so quickly on Friday, top officials on the President’s national security team were left in the dark.” Defense Secretary Mattis “was there when the President signed it, and even applauded, but he had no input whatsoever, and was surprised by its contents.” Likewise, DHS Secretary Kelly “was getting his first full briefing on the executive order right as the President was signing it.” In addition “top Republicans in Congress [were caught] by surprise.” Sens. Marco Rubio and Tim Scott “said the rush to implement the policy created confusion, anxiety and uncertainty.” Sens. John McCain and Lindsey Graham “went further, saying, ‘We fear this executive order will become a self-inflicted wound in the fight against terrorism.’”

California Lawmaker Calls On White House To Release Melania Trump’s Immigration Records.

[Politico](#) (1/30, Marinucci, 2.46M) reported that California state Sen. Nancy Skinner has called on the White House to release First Lady Melania Trump’s immigration. Skinner’s demand comes after an AP investigation “last November found Melania Trump lacked proper work visas when she was employed as a model after arriving in the US from her native Slovenia more than two decades ago.” Skinner told Politico, “No one in the Trump operation has released any of the documentation to indicate what was the circumstance, or whether she had full legal status. ... We only know they had a lawyer look at whatever papers she chose to give.”

MEDIA ANALYSES: “DISSENT MEMO” SHOWS DIVIDE BETWEEN CAREER DIPLOMATS, TRUMP.

More than 100 career diplomats at the State Department reportedly have signed a “dissent memo” opposing President Trump’s executive order that suspends refugee access to the US and blocks visas from specific countries. Media coverage characterizes the letter as revealing a sharp divide between State Department employees and Trump, with much reporting casting press secretary Sean Spicer’s comments as critical of government workers who do not support the President’s position.

[ABC World News Tonight](#) (1/30, story 5, 1:20, Muir, 14.63M) reported there is “word of growing dissent inside the State Department.” ABC’s Martha Raddatz said, “Dozens of career diplomats worldwide have drafted a rare formal letter of dissent” that [NBC Nightly News](#) (1/30, lead story, 3:10, Holt, 16.61M) and the [CBS Evening News](#) (1/30, lead story, 3:30, Pelley, 11.17M) reported was circulated throughout the Foreign Service. Even if the memo is “never formally submitted,” [Politico](#) (1/30, Toosi, 2.46M) says, it “represents a revolt from within the US bureaucracy.” The [Washington Times](#) (1/30, Taylor, 272K) explains the memo was submitted through the State Department’s “dissent channel,” which is “an established, albeit secretive, medium for Foreign Service officers to question US policy that dates back to the Vietnam War era.” The Times adds that the names of dissent cable authors and co-signers are “rarely revealed in public.”

The [Washington Post](#) (1/30, Morello, 11.43M) reports there are “several versions of the draft” being circulated throughout the State Department “as diplomats weigh in and ask for revisions.” More than 100 diplomats, according to diplomats “familiar with the matter,” have signed the letter. The Post says one draft, first reported by ABC News, contends the ban will not prevent attacks on the US and will lead to ill will toward Americans. The [AP](#) (1/30, Lee) says the memo argues, “A policy which closes our doors to over 200 million legitimate travelers in the hopes of preventing a small number of travelers who intend to harm Americans from using the visa system to enter the United States will not achieve its aim of making our country safer.” The memo adds, “This ban stands in opposition to the core American and constitutional values that we, as federal employees, took an oath to uphold.” Elise Labott reported on [CNN’s Situation Room](#) (1/30, 554K) that the diplomats compare the order “to the internment of Japanese-Americans during World War II.”

The [New York Times](#) (1/31, Landler, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) reports on its front page that the White House “warned State Department officials that they should leave their jobs if they did not agree” with the President’s policy, as part of what the Times says is “an extraordinary effort to stamp out a wave of internal dissent against” the visa ban. [Bloomberg Politics](#) (1/30, Wadhams, 201K) says Spicer – speaking after the dissent memo was circulated – “rebuked State Department officials who objected to” the executive order. Bloomberg quotes Spicer as saying government employees should “either get with the program or they can go.” Spicer said that Trump is “going to put the safety of this country first,” adding, “If somebody has a problem with that agenda, then that does call into question whether they should continue in that post or not.” Spicer said, according to the [Washington Post](#) (1/30, Phillip, 11.43M), that Trump “appreciates the people who serve this nation and the public servants.” Spicer added, “That’s up to them to question whether or not they want to stay.”

The [New York Times](#) (1/30, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) editorializes that the Administration “would be reckless to dismiss this warning from public servants who have spent their careers safeguarding American interests abroad.” The Times adds that the concerns of the diplomats “are shared by lawmakers from both parties, several European leaders and top United Nations officials.”

Editorial Wrap-Up:

NEW YORK TIMES. “President Bannon?” In an editorial, the [New York Times](#) (1/30, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) says it has never “witnessed a political aide move as brazenly to consolidate power as Stephen Bannon — nor have we seen one do quite so much damage so quickly to his putative boss’s popular standing or pretenses of competence.” The Times adds that Trump’s executive order “politicizing the process for national security decisions, suggests Mr. Bannon is positioning himself not merely as a Svengali but as the de facto president.” Trump, The Times adds, “has not simply broken with tradition but has embraced the risk of politicizing national security, or giving the impression of doing so.”

“Diplomats Decry Muslim Ban.” A [New York Times](#) (1/30, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) editorial cites a memorandum from more than 100 State Department employees voicing opposition to President Trump’s travel ban and says the Administration “would be reckless to dismiss this warning from public servants who have spent their careers safeguarding American interests abroad.” The Times adds that the concerns of the diplomats “are shared by lawmakers from both parties, several European leaders and top United Nations officials.”

“Protecting Birth Control Access In Oregon.” In an editorial, the [New York Times](#) (1/31, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) welcomes an Oregon bill to protect access to birth control and other reproductive healthcare services, including abortion, even if the Affordable Care Act is repealed. The Times adds that the bill’s sponsors recognize “that people need access to the full range of reproductive health care in order to participate fully in society and the economy,” and welcomes this “powerful defense...of necessary reproductive health care.”

WASHINGTON POST. “The White House’s Soft-Core Holocaust Denialism.” A [Washington Post](#) (1/30, 11.43M) editorial argues that while the “charitable explanations” for the White House’s decision to omit any mention of Jews from President Trump’s statement on the Holocaust would be “ignorance and incompetence,” another reading of the statement “is more sinister” – that by “stripping any reference to Jews from its brief statement, the Trump administration engaged in what Deborah Lipstadt, an Emory University historian, calls ‘soft-core Holocaust denial.’”

“Trump’s Executive Order On Immigration Is A Self-Inflicted Wound.” A [Washington Post](#) (1/30, 11.43M) editorial on President Trump’s immigration order warns of the “grave potential consequences of an order that’s wrong ethically and strategically.”

“Democrats Shouldn’t Go Scorched-Earth On Trump’s Supreme Court Nominee.” The [Washington Post](#) (1/30, 11.43M) argues in an editorial that while Sen. Jeff Merkley’s promise that he would call for a filibuster of anyone President Trump nominates to the Supreme Court might be “emotionally satisfying,” that approach “would be mistaken” because “provoking Republicans to resort to the filibuster-abolishing

'nuclear option' would leave Democrats disarmed of that weapon against a second Trump pick should another vacancy arise during his presidency." Moreover, "the Supreme Court confirmation process needs to be protected from partisan politics to the greatest extent possible and that a scorched-earth Democratic response to any nominee, regardless of the individual merits, would simply deepen that harmful politicization."

WALL STREET JOURNAL. "*Trump Dams The Regulatory Flood.*" A [Wall Street Journal](#) (1/30, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) editorial praises President Trump's executive order that for every new Federal regulation, two must be eliminated. arguing that it will it could lead to job creation and new investment, a number of reports highlights the difficulty Trump may face in putting it into action.

"Obama's Refugee Legacy." In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (1/30, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) cites President Obama's comment on President Trump's immigration orders and criticizes the former President for speaking out against Trump so quickly,

"The GOP's DeVos Doubters." The [Wall Street Journal](#) (1/30, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) editorializes that Republicans would provide teachers unions a significant victory by voting against Education Secretary-designate Betsy DeVos. The Journal says the unions are putting pressure on Republicans because DeVos would be the first Education Secretary that did not share their views since the Reagan Administration.

Big Picture:

HEADLINES FROM TODAY'S FRONT PAGES.

Wall Street Journal:

[White House Fires Acting Attorney General Sally Yates](#)
[Trump To Add CIA Director To National Security Council](#)
[Facebook Is Trying Everything To Re-Enter China—And It's Not Working](#)
[Investors Press For CEO's Ouster At Arconic. The Alcoa Spinoff](#)

New York Times:

[Trump Fires Acting Attorney General](#)
[State Dept. Officials Should Quit If They Disagree With Trump. White House Warns](#)
[In Ban On Migrants, Trump Supporters See A Promise Kept](#)
[For Leaders Of US Allies. Getting Close To Trump Can Sting](#)
[Questions Raised About Brain Centers Backed By Betsy DeVos](#)
[Republicans' Paths To Unraveling The Dodd-Frank Act](#)
[Boy Scouts. Reversing Century-Old Stance. Will Allow Transgender Boys](#)

Washington Post:

[University Student Charged In Quebec Mosque Rampage](#)
[Acting Attorney General Fired Over Ban](#)
[In A Long-sought Home. A Case Of Lead Poisoning](#)
[Sessions Helping Power Trump's Frenetic Start](#)
[Furor Over Ban Reveals White House. GOP Rifts](#)

Financial Times:

[Myanmar Killing Stokes Political Violence Fears](#)
[Backlash From Big Business Grows Over Trump Upheaval](#)

Washington Times:

[Trump Fires Acting Attorney General Sally Yates](#)
[Obama, Bush Didn't Feel The Same Pushback As Trump. White House Says](#)
[Supreme Court Nominee Has Both Sides Preparing For Battle](#)
[North Dakota Wants Hired Pipeline Protesters To Pay State Income Taxes](#)
[Canadian Man Charged In Deadly Shooting Spree At Quebec City Mosque](#)

[Extremist Links Undercut Chile's Image Of Stability](#)

Story Lineup From Last Night's Network News:

ABC: Travel Ban Reactions; Terrorist Origins; Travel Ban-Obama, May Responses; Quebec City Mosque Attack; Travel Ban-State Dept, Vet Responses; Trump-NSC Appointment; Travel Ban-Legal Challenge; Delta IT Errors; 40-Year-Old Murder Case; Severe Weather; Health-Lung Cancer Screening; GHW Bush Health; Disabled Swimmer.

CBS: Travel Ban Reactions; Travel Ban-Congress Responses; Travel Ban-Expert Comment; Travel Ban-Iraqi General Responses; Travel Ban-Trump Supporters; Travel Ban-IT Companies Responses; Quebec City Mosque Attack; US SEAL Casualty-Yemen; Trump-Media Criticism, NSC; Trump-Supreme Court Nominee; GHW Bush Health; Travel Ban-Legal Challenge, Detainees.

NBC: Trump-Travel Ban; Trump-NSC Appointment; Travel Ban-Legal Challenge; Travel Ban-Family Responses; Travel Ban-Iraqi Responses; Quebec City Mosque Attack; GHW Bush Health; Phone Scam; Traffic Pileups; Health-Hesitant Doctor Visits; Annual Dog Show; Former Homeless College Wrestler; Travel Ban-Holt Comment.

Network TV At A Glance:

Travel Ban Reactions – 10 minutes, 30 seconds

Travel Ban-Impacted Individual Responses – 8 minutes, 50 seconds

Quebec City Mosque Attack – 5 minutes, 45 seconds

Trump-NSC Appointment – 3 minutes, 45 seconds

Travel Ban-Legal Challenge – 3 minutes, 35 seconds

GHW Bush Health – 45 seconds

Story Lineup From This Morning's Radio News Broadcasts:

ABC: Acting Attorney General Sally Yates Fired; Quebec City Mosque Attack; Boy Scouts-Transgender; Wall Street News.

CBS: Acting Attorney General Sally Yates Fired; Confirmation Hearing; Quebec City Mosque Attack; Boy Scouts-Transgender; Wall Street News.

FOX: Acting Attorney General Sally Yates Fired; Confirmation Hearing; Travel Ban Reactions; Travel Ban-IT Companies Responses.

NPR: Acting Attorney General Sally Yates Fired; Confirmation Hearing; Trump DHS Appointment; Travel Ban-Legal Challenge; Health-Lung Cancer Screening; Wall Street News; Boy Scouts-Transgender; Sony Cutting Movie Business; Walgreen-Rite Aid Merger.

Washington Schedule:

TODAY'S EVENTS IN WASHINGTON.

White House:

PRESIDENT TRUMP — Meets with Pharma; meets with Chief of Staff, Reince Priebus; has lunch with Mayor Rudy Giuliani; holds a listening session with cyber security experts; signs Executive Order; announces his pick for SCOTUS justice.

VICE PRESIDENT PENCE — Joins THE PRESIDENT to meet with Pharma; participates in the Senate Republican Policy Lunch, followed by private meetings with individual lawmakers; joins THE PRESIDENT as he announces Supreme Court of the United States nominee.

US Senate: 9:30 AM Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee votes on energy and interior secretary nominees – Business Meeting, with agenda including nominations of Rick Perry to be Secretary of Energy and Ryan Zinke to be Secretary of the Interior, 'An original resolution authorizing expenditures by the committee for the 115th Congress', and 'Ratification of subcommittee assignments for the 115th Congress' * Then-President-elect Donald Trump announced the nominations of former Texas Governor Perry and Republican Rep. Zinke last month * During a Republican presidential candidate debate in November 2011, Perry forgot that the Department of Energy was one of the three federal govt agencies he would eliminate if elected, eventually saying 'oops' after naming the departments of commerce and education as the other two. He has since said he has changed his mind over wanting to eliminate the department Location: Rm 366, Dirksen Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://energy.senate.gov/public/>

9:30 AM Senate Judiciary Committee votes on GOP Sen. Jeff Sessions to be AG – Executive Business Meeting, with agenda including nomination of Jeff Sessions to be Attorney General, committee rules, and ‘S. 178, Elder Abuse Prevention and Prosecution Act’ * President Donald Trump announced the nomination of Republican Sen. Sessions in November Location: Rm 226, Dirksen Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://judiciary.senate.gov/>

10:00 AM Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing on North Korea – Hearing on ‘Confronting the North Korea Threat: Reassessing Policy Options’, with testimony from American Enterprise Institute Chair in Political Economy Dr Nicholas Eberstadt; and Council on Foreign Relations Senior Fellow for Korea Studies and Program on U.S.-Korea Policy Director Scott Snyder Location: Rm 419, Dirksen Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://foreign.senate.gov/>

10:00 AM Senate HELP Committee votes on nomination of Betsy DeVos to be education secretary – Executive Session, with agenda including nomination of Betsy DeVos to be Secretary of Education, ‘Adoption of Committee Rules for the 115th Congress’, and ‘Subcommittee Assignments for the 115th Congress’ * Then-President-elect Donald Trump announced the nomination of businesswoman DeVos in November Location: Rm 430, Dirksen Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://help.senate.gov/>

10:00 AM Senate Finance Committee votes on GOP Rep. Tom Price to be HHS secretary – Executive Session, to consider the nomination of Tom Price to be Secretary of Health and Human Services * Then-President-elect Donald Trump announced the nomination of the Republican congressman in November * Rep. Price has said that he will divest himself of stock in over 40 companies and resign a position with the American Medical Association if confirmed by the Senate, to avoid potential conflicts of interest Location: Rm 215, Dirksen Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://finance.senate.gov>

11:00 AM Senate Indian Affairs Committee organizational meeting – Business Meeting, with agenda including ‘Selection of the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Committee’, ‘Adoption of the rules of the Committee for the 115th Congress’, and ‘Adoption of the funding resolution for the Committee for the 115th Congress’ Location: Rm 628, Dirksen Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://indian.senate.gov>
<https://twitter.com/IndianCommittee>

US House: 10:00 AM HOUSE COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM Business meeting – Full Committee, business meeting on the committee’s oversight and authorization plan; and markup on H.R. 396, the “Tax Accountability Act of 2017”; H.R. 194, the “Federal Agency Mail Management Act of 2017”; the “Federal Employee Antidiscrimination Act of 2017”; H.R. 679, the “Construction Consensus Procurement Improvement Act of 2017”; H.R. 653, the “Federal Intern Protection Act of 2017”; and H.R. 657, the “Follow the Rules Act.” Location: 2154 Rayburn.
<http://oversight.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/GOPoversight>

10:00 AM House Commerce subcommittee hearing on Medicaid – Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee hearing on ‘Medicaid Oversight: Existing Problems and Ways to Strengthen the Program’, with testimony from Foundation for Government Accountability Senior Fellow Josh Archambault; Manhattan Institute Director of Health Policy Paul Howard; Department of Health and Human Services Assistant Inspector General for Evaluation and Inspections Ann Maxwell; Georgetown University Law Center Senior Scholar in Health Law Timothy Westmoreland; and Government Accountability Office Director of Health Care Carolyn Yocom Location: Rm 2123, Rayburn House Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://energycommerce.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/HouseCommerce>

10:00 AM House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Organizational Meeting Location: Rm 2167, Rayburn House Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://transportation.house.gov/>
<https://twitter.com/Transport>

10:00 AM House Oversight and Government Reform Committee Business Meeting – Business Meeting, with agenda including ‘The Committee’s Authorization and Oversight Plan for the 115th Congress’, ‘H.R. 657, Follow the Rules Act’, ‘H.R. 653, Federal Intern Protection Act of 2017’, ‘H.R. 679, Construction Consensus Procurement Improvement Act of 2017’, ‘H.R. XXX, Federal Employee Antidiscrimination Act of 2017’, ‘H.R. 194, Federal Agency Mail Management Act of 2017’, and ‘H.R. 396, Tax Accountability Act

of 2017' Location: U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC <http://oversight.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/GOPoversight>

10:30 AM Bipartisan Reps. Tom Reed and Tim Ryan keynote ITIF event – ‘What Should the Trump Administration’s Manufacturing Strategy Look Like?’ Information Technology and Innovation Foundation event. House Manufacturing Caucus co-chairs Tom Reed and Tim Ryan keynote, with panel including Deloitte Consulting Supply Chain Strategy Leader Principal Kelly Marchese, McKinsey Global Institute Partner Sree Ramaswamy, and Manufacturers Alliance for Productivity and Innovation Foundation Chief Economist Cliff Waldman Location: CVC-268, U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC www.itif.org <https://twitter.com/ITIFdc>

11:00 AM House Minority Whip Steny Hoyer regular pen-and-pad briefing Location: H-144, U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC www.democraticwhip.gov/ <https://twitter.com/WhipHoyer>

2:00 PM House Government Reform subcommittee hearing on ‘fraud, waste, and abuse under ‘Obamacare’ – Health Care, Benefits, and Administrative Rules Subcommittee hearing on ‘Fraud, Waste and Abuse under the Affordable Care Act’ * Earlier this month, President Donald Trump signed an executive order to ‘minimize the economic burden of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act pending repeal’, with Congress having passed a resolution to ease passage of further legislation to repeal the ACA. UPDATED to room 2247 Rayburn from 2154 Rayburn. Location: Rm 2247, Rayburn House Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://oversight.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/GOPoversight>

2:00 PM House meets for legislative business – House of Representatives meets for legislative business, with agenda including consideration of legislation including ‘H.R. 58 – FRIENDS Act’, as amended, ‘H.R. 666 – Department of Homeland Security Insider Threat and Mitigation Act of 2017’, ‘H.R. 642 – Fusion Center Enhancement Act of 2017’, ‘H.R. 526 – Counterterrorism Advisory Board Act of 2017’, as amended, ‘H.R. 665 – Airport Perimeter and Access Control Security Act of 2017’, ‘H.R. 366 – DHS SAVE Act’, ‘H.R. 549 – Transit Security Grant Program Flexibility Act’, ‘H.R. 687 – First Responder Access to Innovative Technologies Act’, ‘H.R. 584 – Cyber Preparedness Act of 2017’, ‘H.R. 655 – Securing the Cities Act of 2017’, ‘H.R. 437 – Medical Preparedness Allowable Use Act’, ‘H.R. 612 – United States-Israel Cybersecurity Cooperation Enhancement Act of 2017’, ‘H.R. 505 – Border Security Technology Accountability Act of 2017’, as amended, and ‘H.R. 677 – CBRN Intelligence and Information Sharing Act of 2017’ under suspension of the rules Location: Washington, DC <http://www.house.gov/>

3:00 PM House Rules Committee hearing – Hearing on ‘H.J. Res. XXX – Disapproving the final rule submitted by the Department of Defense, the General Services Administration, and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration relating to the Federal Acquisition Regulation’ and ‘H.J. Res. XXX – Providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the final rule of the Bureau of Land Management relating to ‘Waste Prevention, Production Subject to Royalties, and Resource Conservation’ Location: H-313, U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC <http://www.rules.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/RulesReps>

Other: 7:30 AM Council for Higher Education Accreditation Annual Conference continues – Council for Higher Education Accreditation Annual Conference and CHEA International Quality Group (CIQG) Annual Meeting continues, with day two speakers including Republican Rep. Virginia Foxx and University of Virginia Center for Politics Director Larry Sabato Location: Capital Hilton, 1001 16th St NW, Washington, DC www.chea.org <https://twitter.com/CHEAnews> #CHEA2017AC

8:00 AM Women in Government Relations task force hosts event with Dem Rep. Cheri Bustos – Women in Government Relations Transportation & Infrastructure Task Force hosts ‘20-to-1 Congressional Coffee’ with Democratic Rep. Cheri Bustos Location: Allstate Insurance Company, 444 N Capitol St NW, Washington, DC <http://www.wgr.org> <https://twitter.com/WGRDC>

12:00 PM GOP Rep. Sean Duffy keynotes U.S. Chamber of Commerce event on corporate disclosures – U.S. Chamber of Commerce Center for Capital Markets Competitiveness (CCMC) hosts lunch discussion on ‘what can be done to modernize corporate disclosures and make them useful for today’s investors’. Republican Rep. Sean Duffy keynotes and CCMC President and CEO David Hirschmann delivers remarks, both on ‘the importance of modernizing the corporate disclosure systems’; CCMC Executive

Vice President Tom Quaadman provides overview of a new white paper looking at ‘why materiality matters and should remain the guiding principle for public company disclosure’; and Vanguard Principal and Fund Treasurer Glenn Booream, University of Delaware Corporate Governance Professor Charles Elson, Hunton & Williams partner Scott Kimpel, and Sustainability Accounting Standards Board founder and CEO Jean Rogerson participate in panel presentation on the future of corporate disclosures Location: USCC, 1615 H St NW, Washington, DC www.uschamber.com <https://twitter.com/USChamber>

8:00 PM DNC chair candidate Rep. Keith Ellison speaks on Democracy for America call – Democracy for America live call with Democratic Rep. Keith Ellison, who has been endorsed by DFA in his campaign to become chair of the Democratic National Committee Location: TBD www.democracyforamerica.com <https://twitter.com/dfaaction>

Last Laughs:

LATE NIGHT POLITICAL HUMOR.

Jimmy Kimmel: “There’s a lot of passion because after like 60 years, we finally have a President who keeps his campaign promises, and it’s Donald Trump.”

Jimmy Kimmel: “You know how over the course of his time in office, over four years or eight years, the President gets old and his hair turns gray? During this administration, instead of him, that’s going to happen to all of us.”

Jimmy Kimmel: “There were demonstrations in just about every major city yesterday. People went to the airport to protest. That’s when you know people are mad. It’s Sunday, they have no travel plans, and they go to the airport.”

Jimmy Kimmel: “I don’t understand any of this. I mean, if Donald Trump, if he stops all the immigrants from coming into the country, where’s he going to find his next wife?”

Jimmy Kimmel: “[Trump] also spoke with Vladimir Putin for about an hour. Putin wanted to know if Trump liked the gift he got him. Donald told him, yes, he was enjoying the presidency very much.”

Stephen Colbert: “At Dulles Airport, a five-year-old Iranian boy was detained for hours and kept from his mother. Or as Kellyanne Conway calls it, ‘alternative daycare.’”

Stephen Colbert: “Do you have any idea how angry people have to be to voluntarily go to JFK?”

Stephen Colbert: “And there was outrage all over the world. A member of Iraq’s parliament said that following the ban, ‘it is very likely that Iraq will stop granting US citizens entry visas.’ Sorry kids, there goes spring break in Fallujah. Though, honestly, when did the US ever ask permission to enter Iraq?”

Trevor Noah: “Think about it, even the border officials didn’t understand the ban. They had to enforce it and didn’t understand it. They were probably asking the refugees to help them.”

Jimmy Fallon: “Here in New York, thousands of people showed up at JFK airport over the weekend to protest Trump’s immigration ban. People who were actually at the protest said, ‘This is awful,’ while the people out in LaGuardia were like, ‘You think you got it bad? We’re at LaGuardia.’”

Jimmy Fallon: “It’s reported President Obama could receive up to \$20 million for his upcoming memoir, which is more than any other President. I guess he’s already come up with a few options for the title. First there’s ‘Fifty Shades of Graying.’”

Jimmy Fallon: “Last night Miss Kenya said that she thinks President Trump has actually done a lot to unify the US. Trump was so happy with Miss Kenya, he started a rumor that she was born in America.”

Seth Meyers: “Former President Obama released his first public statement today since leaving the White House, and I have it here. Just let me read it to you in full. ‘Oh, hell no!’”

Seth Meyers: “President Trump said today that if he had announced his travel ban earlier, the ‘bad people would rush into our country.’ I don’t know how to tell you this, but dude, turn around.”

Seth Meyers: “Trump did accomplish something truly remarkable. He managed to spark yet another round of massive, nationwide protests for the second time in just the first week of his presidency. And people are willing to go to places to protest. Last week it was parks. This week it was airports. Next week people are going to march for gay rights at the DMV.”

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From: Downey Magallanes
To: [Swift, Heather](#)
Subject: Re: U.S. Department of the Interior News Briefing for Tuesday, January 31, 2017
Date: Tuesday, January 31, 2017 3:10:48 PM

Awesome should I email the address below to be added? Thanks a ton.

Sent from my iPhone

On Jan 31, 2017, at 3:09 PM, Swift, Heather <heather_swift@ios.doi.gov> wrote:

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Bulletin Intelligence** <Interior@bulletinintelligence.com>
Date: Tue, Jan 31, 2017 at 7:02 AM
Subject: U.S. Department of the Interior News Briefing for Tuesday, January 31, 2017
To: Interior@bulletinintelligence.com

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DOI in the News:

SENATE COMMITTEE TO VOTE ON PERRY, ZINKE NOMINATIONS TODAY. [The Hill](#) (1/30, Henry, 1.25M) reports the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee today "will consider Ryan Zinke's nomination to lead the Interior Department and Rick Perry's nomination to be Energy Secretary." Originally, the votes were scheduled "for last Tuesday." Last week, a Senate aide indicated "the cancellation was due to a 'misunderstanding' between top committee lawmakers." [Public Power Daily](#) (1/31, Anderson) reports neither Perry nor Zinke's nomination "is viewed as particularly controversial." A separate piece by [The Hill](#) (1/30, Cama, Henry, 1.25M) notes that some Democrats have "expressed concerns" about the candidates' positions on a variety of issues.

Additional coverage was provided by the [Washington Post](#) (1/30, 11.43M), the "Morning Energy" blog of [Politico](#) (1/30, Adragna, 12K), [E&E Daily](#) (1/30, Subscription Publication),

[CBS News](#) (1/30, 4.4M), and [KUIK-AM](#) Portland, OR (1/28).

Alaska Gov. Walker Praises Zinke. The [AP](#) (1/30, 2.2M) reports that Alaska Gov. Bill Walker on Monday “expressed renewed hope for working with the federal government on oil, gas and land issues, praising President Donald Trump’s pick to head the Interior Department as ‘just what we need.’” Walker said Zinke “understood the challenges Alaska has had with access to federal lands for things like resource development.” He said, “I think we’re going to have a very, very different relationship, certainly with the Department of Interior and what they oversee.”

Cattlemen’s Beef Association And Public Lands Council Support Confirmation Of Zinke. The [High Plains and Midwest AG \(KS\) Journal](#) (1/30) reports that the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association and the Public Lands Council released a statement on Jan. 16 in support of the confirmation of Rep. Ryan Zinke as secretary of interior. Tracy Brunner, NCBA president, said, “During his tenure in the U.S. House of Representatives, Rep. Zinke has consistently advocated for our western communities, economies, and ranchers. He has demanded transparency and the inclusion of stakeholders when it comes to land management decisions, and has a strong understanding of the challenges that come with stewarding the West.” Dave Eliason, PLC president, added, “The current leadership of the Department of Interior refuses to stand up for the very people who have invested their time and livelihoods into the management and improvement of public lands. Having a Secretary of Interior who understands public lands, and who values true cooperation with stakeholders is in the best interest of all Americans. We are excited for Representative Zinke to refocus the agency’s efforts to their core mission, and to have someone in this role that understands the unique challenges we face in the West.”

ZINKE ELABORATES ON ETHICS, ENERGY, PUBLIC LANDS POSITIONS. [E&E](#) (1/30) report that ahead of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee’s vote Tuesday on Interior secretary nominee Ryan Zinke, “the Montana Republican lawmaker disclosed to the committee that a super political action committee he was once affiliated with is under investigation and reaffirmed his opposition to turning federal lands over to states.” Zinke also “told Sen. Debbie Stabenow that he supports transferring the Forest Service from the Agriculture Department to Interior — a position that he noted the Michigan Democrat had ‘concerns’ with when they met privately.” Zinke also “elaborated on his views on energy development, climate change and science, fire management, endangered species, and other hot-button issues in his responses to questions for the record submitted by committee members.”

BERNHARDT SEEN AS FRONT-RUNNER TO BECOME INTERIOR DEPUTY SECRETARY. [E&E](#) (1/30) reports that “a high-ranking George W. Bush administration Interior Department lawyer could soon be making a comeback as the agency’s No. 2 official.” David Bernhardt, “who served as the department’s top attorney under Bush and worked on the Trump transition team, is the front-runner to become Interior’s next deputy secretary, according to a source close to the Trump administration.” Bernhardt was “in charge of Trump’s Interior transition team for a short time after the November presidential election but was replaced as that team’s leader later that month by Doug Domenech, another Bush-era Interior Department staffer.”

TRUMP ORDERS ELIMINATION OF TWO REGULATIONS FOR EVERY NEW ONE. [USA Today](#) (1/30, Korte, 5.28M) reports that President Trump on Monday signed an executive action he said will “knock out two regulations for every new regulation” federal agencies adopt. Trump called the action “the largest cut by far, in terms of regulation,” in history and said the policy was targeted at small business. Trump said, “There will be regulation, there will be control, but there will be normalized control where you can open your business and expand your business.” USA Today adds that directive’s text “was not immediately available, and it was unclear how the two-for-one mechanism would work.” [Reuters](#) (1/30, Rascoe) says Trump’s action “will prepare a process for the White House to set an annual

cap on the cost of new regulations.” For the remainder of the fiscal year, “the cap will require that the cost of any additional regulations be completely offset by undoing existing rules.” Trump [tweeted](#), “The American dream is back. We’re going to create an environment for small business like we haven’t had in many, many decades!” He [re-tweeted](#) the post on the @POTUS Twitter account.

While a [Wall Street Journal](#) (1/30, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) editorial praises the order, arguing that it will it could lead to job creation and new investment, a number of reports highlights the difficulty Trump may face in putting it into action. For example, [Politico](#) (1/30, Restuccia, 2.46M) said that while Trump’s aides cast the move as “the most significant regulatory reform effort in decades,” implementing it “isn’t as simple as Trump’s flashy ‘one in, two out’ slogan suggests.” According to Politico, the order “could take months, if not years, to implement and likely faces costly court challenges.” [Bloomberg Politics](#) (1/30, Dlouhy, 201K) similarly says that “fulfilling the promise...may prove more difficult than signing an order.” Eliminating a regulation “involves months of work that can include vetting multiple rule drafts and reacting to thousands or even millions of comments from industries, trade groups and individuals.” Moreover, the process “can be challenged with a lawsuit by aggrieved parties.”

Trumps Two For One Regulation Rule Concerns Policy Experts. The [Minneapolis Star Tribune](#) (1/30, 1.27M) reports Trump’s executive order mandating the repeal of two regulations for every new one instituted has concerned policy experts. “There’s no logic to this,” says William Gale, a tax and fiscal policy expert at the Brookings Institution. The order also caused concerns among environmental groups who fear the order will be used to roll back environment and climate regulations. Trump claims the rollback will help small and medium sized business. He further stated he would like to remove 75 percent of existing regulations

Trump’s Two-For-One Order Could Put Endangered Species At Risk. The [Idaho Statesman](#) (1/30, 197K) reports Trump’s executive two for one order could delist the Yellowstone grizzly from the endangered species list. The order forces the Office of Management and Budget to calculate the cost of each regulation and for new rules to create a “net economic benefit.” Brett Hartl, director of Government Affairs at the Center for Biological Diversity, says, “Every time you repeal a rule, you are passing a rule.” The Trump White House also told employees not to issue new regulations without having an Administration official review the rule first-- a difficult task when many posts have yet to be filled or even nominated.

HOUSE TO VOTE ON PUBLIC LAND, CYBERSECURITY BILLS THIS WEEK. [E&E](#) (1/30) reports that the House this week will “vote on a series of bills addressing land and cybersecurity concerns, including a measure authorizing research into adding Fort Ontario to the National Park System.” According to the article, “the special resource study called for in H.R. 46 would evaluate the national significance of the site, which was destroyed by French forces in 1756 and rebuilt.” The bill orders “the Interior secretary to issue a report no later than three years after funding becomes available that would include the costs of alternative means for preservation of the area, which is on the National Register of Historic Places.”

FEDERAL HIRING FREEZE SPARKS CONCERNS ABOUT SEASONAL FIREFIGHTERS. The [Idaho Statesman](#) (1/30, 197K) reports that President Trump’s federal hiring freeze “does have national security and public safety exceptions that appear to cover firefighters.” However, “it’s been a week, and federal agencies are still looking for details.” The Statesman notes that “agencies are compiling lists of what positions meet the national security and public safety exemptions, and most expect firefighting to easily fall into that category, said sources in the Department of Agriculture and Interior.”

HUNDREDS RALLY FOR PUBLIC LANDS IN MONTANA. The [Bozeman \(MT\) Daily](#)

[Chronicle](#) (1/30, 52K) reports that “about 700 people” gathered Monday at a rally for public lands in Helena, Montana. According to the article, “speakers railed against land transfer and talked about how important public lands are to both the state’s economy and everyday life.” Interior nominee Ryan Zinke, “was also on the menu at the rally, as some of the speakers called on him to ensure public lands in Montana remain public under his watch.”

Additional coverage was provided by the [Billings \(MT\) Gazette](#) (1/30, 208K).

FELBAB-BROWN: TRUMP SHOULD BE QUESTIONED AT EVERY OPTION OVER CONSTRUCTING A WALL. For the “Pundits” blog of [The Hill](#) (1/30, Felbab-Brown, Contributor, 1.25M), Vanda Felbab-Brown, a senior fellow in foreign policy at The Brookings Institution, writes President Trump’s rhetoric against Mexico demonstrated “the shallowness of his concept of the wall, its costs, and how they will be financed and borne.” She argues the public, press, and members of Congress need to continuously ask the president about the cost of his proposed wall and all assumptions the plan is based on. She points out the cost of the wall ranges from a little as \$12 billion up to \$285 billion.

America’s Great Outdoors:

National Park Service:

EX-NPS DIRECTOR ACCUSES ADMINISTRATION OF TRYING TO “SUPPRESS” AGENCY. The [Washington Post](#) (1/30, Rein, Eilperin, 11.43M) reports that ex-National Park Service Director Jonathan Jarvis, who retired earlier this month, “spoke out Monday against the Trump administration’s efforts to ‘suppress’ the agency, posting a lengthy statement on a Facebook site for park rangers in support of employees.” Writing on the Facebook page of the Association of National Park Rangers, Jarvis said, “I have been watching the Trump administration trying unsuccessfully to suppress the National Park Service with a mix of pride and amusement.” Jarvis “was referring to the communications blackout the administration ordered last week at the Park Service and other agencies restricting what they should convey to the public about their work.”

“WOOFIELEAKS” LEADS TO DELAY OF DOG RULES AT GOLDEN GATE NATIONAL RECREATION AREA. The [Washington Post](#) (1/30, Bittel, 11.43M) reports that “dog owners have been fighting the National Park Service for years over a proposal to restrict dog-walking” within the Golden Gate National Recreation Area. Recently, “one of the groups opposed to the new rules upped the ante, filing Freedom of Information Act requests for Park Service emails about the plan and posting them this month on a website.” According to Save Our Recreation, “the pro-dog group that created WoofieLeaks, the FOIA-ed communications show Park Service bias against dog enthusiasts.” Following the “leaks”, officials with the recreation area “announced this month that implementation of the new dog-walking rules would be delayed indefinitely” and “the Park Service also is planning an investigation.”

LOWELL NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK RECEIVES \$25,000 GRANT TO INCREASE TRAIL USAGE. The [Lowell \(MA\) Sun](#) (1/30, 138K) reports that the Lowell National Historical Park has “received a \$25,000 grant in an initiative meant to get residents living near the park to use its trails.” The grant, from the National Park Foundation, will “engage more than 250 residents in activities like hiking, birding, photography, canal cleanups, learning about botany and ecology, and stress-reducing activities, such as yoga and meditation.”

NPS SEEKS PUBLIC COMMENTS ON ISLE ROYALE WOLVES. The [AP](#) (1/30, 272K) reports that “federal officials are inviting the public to learn more about options for dealing with the declining gray wolf population at Isle Royale National Park in Michigan.” The National Park Service has “scheduled open houses for Feb. 14 in Duluth, Minnesota, and

Feb. 15 in Houghton, Michigan.” Also, “for those who can’t attend, webinars are scheduled for Feb. 16 and Feb. 21.”

Additional coverage was provided by [WWTV-TV](#) Cadillac, MI (1/30, 51K).

NPS SEEKS PUBLIC INPUT ON MONOCACY BATTLEFIELD ACCESS. The [AP](#) (1/30, 272K) reports that the National Park Service is “soliciting public comment on a plan to add eight miles of pedestrian trails and a kayak launch to the Monocacy (mah-NAH’-kah-see) National Battlefield near Frederick.” The environmental assessment, which was released Friday, is “open for review through Feb. 28.” According to park Superintendent Chris Stubbs, “the plan would enable more visitors to walk in the footsteps of soldiers who fought there on July 9, 1864.”

Fish and Wildlife Service:

TRUMP’S FORMER ADVISER CALLS FOR OVERHAUL OF ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT. The [Independent \(UK\)](#) (1/30, Batchelor, 1.28M) reports that “a senior member of Donald Trump’s now-defunct transition team has called for the US Endangered Species Act to be drastically watered down, claiming it doesn’t actually protect wildlife.” Myron Ebell, “who led a team tasked by the Republican billionaire with drafting an action plan to overhaul the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), said the legislation was being used as a ‘political weapon’ and many of its policies should be scrapped.” Speaking in London on Monday, Ebell said: “The endangered species act doesn’t do much for protecting endangered wildlife, but it does a huge amount to control private property land use, and it is enforced very selectively, so that some landowners are not affected but people with exactly the same habitat, their use is limited or eliminated.” He continued, “It is a political weapon and I am very interested in reforming, and I don’t know if we will see that any time in the next decade, but I hope so.”

ENVIRONMENTAL GROUP FILES SUIT OVER POLYMET LAND SWAP. The [Virginia \(MN\) Mesabi Daily Tribune](#) (1/30, 60) reports that “an environmental group officially filed a lawsuit to block the federal government’s land exchange with PolyMet, a crucial step in the company’s attempt to build a copper-nickel mine near Hoyt Lakes.” WaterLegacy filed the suit Monday in U.S. District Court, “seeking to overturn a 6,560-acre land swap, which the group says ‘violated the Federal Land Policy and Management Act because it failed to consider the highest and most profitable use of the lands for mining related uses, significantly undervalued the federal lands, and would result in a windfall for the PolyMet foreign corporation at the expense of Minnesota taxpayers and public lands.’” Meanwhile, the Center for Biological Diversity and Earthworks has “filed a formal 60-day notice of intent to sue the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and U.S. Forest Service under the Endangered Species Act, saying the project would disrupt lynx and wolf habitats.”

ADDITIONAL COVERAGE: LESSER LONG-NOSED BAT COULD BE REMOVED FROM ENDANGERED LIST. Additional coverage that the lesser long-nosed bat is proposed for removal from the endangered species list was provided by [Courthouse News](#) (1/30, 2K).

Bureau of Land Management:

BUNDY STANDOFF TRIAL PUTS SPOTLIGHT ON WESTERN LAND FIGHT. The [Reno \(NV\) Gazette-Journal](#) (1/30, 219K) reports that “the fight over America’s public lands is lurching back to the national spotlight.” Nevada rancher Cliven Bundy, his sons Ryan and Ammon Bundy and “compatriots will stand trial in February in federal court over their 2014 armed standoff with the U.S. Bureau of Land Management.” Meanwhile, in Congress, “legislative proposals could upend who’s in charge of tens of millions of acres of federal land across the West.” According to the article, “the trial will force participants to relive the tense moments when federal agents and armed Bundy sympathizers narrowly averted a shootout after the BLM tried to seize the Bundys’ cattle over unpaid grazing fees,” and “that

tension will carry over into Congress, where conservationists, hunters, miners, energy developers, recreationists and rural communities are rallying behind the forces they believe will defend their version of the American West.”

AERIAL PROJECT WILL RESEED 10,000 ACRES OF BURNED RANGELAND. The [AP](#) (1/30, 272K) reports that “state and federal land managers launched an aerial reseed effort to stabilize and rehabilitate more than 10,000 acres of public land burned by wildfires in eastern Nevada last year.” According to the article, “the work started last week and was expected to improve habitat for threatened sage grouse and other wildlife as well as boost the overall health of watersheds.” Officials with the U.S. Bureau of Land Management and Nevada Department of Wildlife were “concentrating the effort in Elko, Eureka and White Pine counties.”

Securing America’s Energy Future:

Onshore Energy Development:

CONGRESS POISED TO TARGET OBAMA-ERA ENVIRONMENTAL RULES. The [Washington Post](#) (1/30, Harvey, 11.43M) reports that Republicans in Congress this week may target “a regulation finalized in mid-November that seeks to curb fugitive methane emissions from oil and gas drilling operations on public lands” and a rule that “prohibits coal-mining companies from engaging in any activities that could permanently pollute streams.” Resolutions to disapprove of the two Obama actions are already scheduled for this week and the rules are poised for elimination under the Congressional Review Act.

The [AP](#) (1/30, Taylor) reports Congressional Republicans are moving swiftly, with the repeal measure “set for a House vote Wednesday and a Senate vote shortly thereafter.” [Politico Pro](#) (1/30) reports that “on Wednesday, the House is slated to vote on whether to nullify the Interior Department’s stream protection rule.” The Senate hasn’t “definitively said when it’ll take up the challenges, but Majority Leader Mitch McConnell plans to use time in between floor votes on Cabinet nomination to consider CRA resolutions.”

[E&E](#) (1/30) reports that Republican lawmakers are “calling on state leaders and the energy industry to craft alternative methane rules for oil and gas operations on public lands.” GOP legislators on Monday were set to “begin the process of repealing a pair of Interior Department regulations.” House Natural Resources Chairman Rob Bishop expected to introduce a joint resolution “that would use authority granted under the Congressional Review Act to undo federal regulations enacted within the last 60 legislative days.”

Additional coverage was provided by [The Hill](#) (1/30, Devaney, Wheeler, 1.25M), [NPR](#) (1/30, 1.92M), [Reuters](#) (1/30), [The Hill](#) (1/30, Henry, 1.25M), the [Washington \(DC\) Times](#) (1/30, Wolfgang, 272K), [PBS NewsHour](#) (1/30, 255K), the [Billings \(MT\) Gazette](#) (1/30, 208K), the [Casper \(WY\) Star-Tribune](#) (1/30, 93K), the [West Virginia MetroNews](#) (1/30, 6K), [WDTV-TV Bridgeport \(WV\)](#) Bridgeport, WV (1/30, 4K), and [WTVW-TV Evansville \(IN\)](#) Evansville, IN (1/30, 6K).

Colorado Methane Regulations Helped Grow Economy. [ClimateWire](#) (1/30, Subscription Publication) reports that House Republicans began to repeal an Interior Department directive to cut methane from oil and gas wells on federal lands, calling it a “bad rule” and “regulatory overreach.” However, a few years earlier, oil and gas companies sat down with environmentalists in Colorado to develop a set of regulations for methane. Proponents say that the similar rule in Colorado has led to reduced methane leaks and created economic growth for the state. Supporters, including industry and environmentalists, say the GOP move to repeal the similar federal regulations could halt the economic growth of the methane mitigation industry.

NORTH DAKOTA WARNS PAID PIPELINE PROTESTERS TO SUBMIT STATE INCOME TAXES. The [Washington Times](#) (1/30, Richardson, 272K) reports North Dakota Tax Commissioner Ryan Rauschenberger said his office expects to see state income tax submissions from activists paid to agitate the Dakota Access pipeline protest. Rauschenberger asserted that authorities are “looking at the entities that have potential paid contractors here on their behalf doing work.” He explained, “If an organization is directly paying someone to come and do activities on their behalf, even protesting,” or were “receiving income” while in “North Dakota performing activities for an organization, they owe income tax from Day One.” The state spent more than \$22 million in expenses related to the protest; meanwhile, “millions have been funneled into the six-month-old demonstration via crowdfunding websites” and at least 30 environmental organizations, including Greenpeace and the Sierra Club, are known to have supported the demonstration. If these environmental organizations paid protesters, however, they are “not saying so publicly.”

Empowering Native American Communities:

NATIVE AMERICANS CONCERNED ABOUT TRUMP ADMINISTRATION PLANS FOR RESERVATIONS. The [High Country \(CO\) News](#) (1/30, 77K) reports North Dakota lawmakers are pushing to have greater control over Native American reservations. With the new Trump Administration, some feel as if their services will be cut or eliminated. To survive the Trump Administration, some feel that they need to cozy up to state and local authorities as a way to fill gaps in services that may inevitably form.

CALIFORNIA COUNTY SUES OVER 1,400 TRUST ACRES FOR TRIBE. [Law360](#) (1/30, 23K) reports that “the county of Santa Barbara sued the Bureau of Indian Affairs in California federal court on Saturday to challenge a decision taking more than 1,400 acres of land into trust for the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians for tribal housing and economic development, claiming the decision flouted trust acquisition regulations and environmental law.”

FEDS CONTEST ARAPAHO CONTRACT CLAIMS IN SHOSHONE ROW. [Law360](#) (1/30, 23K) reports that “the federal government on Friday shot back at the Northern Arapaho Tribe’s claim that the Bureau of Indian Affairs improperly rejected proposals to operate a tribal court and offer counseling services under federally funded contracts, saying the tribe has submitted proposals for contracts without seeking the consent of another tribe that shares its Wyoming reservation.”

Office of Insular Affairs:

COURT APPROVES EXTENSION OF DEADLINE IN CUC AUTHORIZATION TO PROCEED. [Marianas Variety](#) (1/31) reports that “District Court for the NMI designated Judge David Carter granted the request of the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. and the federal government to extend the deadline for the CNMI government to file its notice of authorization to proceed with the \$5 million funding for stipulated order 2 projects on or before March 1, 2017.” According to the article, “the CNMI must deposit \$5million into the court’s registry or file a notice with the court regarding the Department of the Interior’s authorization to proceed for funding SO2 projects by Feb. 1, 2017.”

ADDITIONAL COVERAGE: OIA TRANSMITS \$31.5M IN COMPACT FUNDING TO MARSHALL ISLANDS. Additional coverage that the Office of Insular Affairs has “released to the Marshall Islands government’s Ministry of Finance Compact payments totaling \$31,503,897 for the period Oct. 1, 2016, to Dec. 31, 2016” was provided by the [Saipan \(MNP\) Tribune](#) (1/31, 641).

Tackling America’s Water Challenges:

DETERIORATING RELATIONS WITH MEXICO COULD THREATEN COLORADO WATER TALKS. [E&E](#) (1/30) reports that “President Trump’s rocky relations with Mexico could have major consequences for the Colorado River and the 35 million Americans who rely on it for water.” A bilateral agreement, which “specifies exactly how much water Mexico receives, as well as other important factors like how those deliveries are reduced in years of exceptional drought,” is set to expire this year. The article says that “the seven Colorado River Basin states — and particularly Lower Basin states Nevada, Arizona and California — say it’s pivotal that the new administration finalize a new agreement.” However, “many are now worried that U.S.-Mexico relations have already deteriorated to the point where that may be impossible.”

Top National News:

TRUMP FIRES ACTING ATTORNEY GENERAL AFTER SHE REFUSES TO DEFEND VISA BAN. President Trump’s evening dismissal of Acting Attorney General Sally Yates, an Obama Administration holdover, over her defiance of his visa ban is being portrayed as the latest indicator of the fast-moving and chaotic nature of the ongoing story. The firing took place hours after Yates said she would not direct the DOJ to defend the ban, a highly unusual statement that was itself the focus of considerable coverage, which was quickly updated after Trump dismissed her from her job – which she was holding only until Sen. Jeff Sessions’ Senate confirmation. With the acting head of Immigration and Customs Enforcement also dismissed late Monday, some outlets even reference the Watergate-era “Saturday Night Massacre,” when Richard Nixon dismissed top DOJ officials – a comparison that was also [being made on Twitter](#).

[Reuters](#) (1/30) reports that Trump fired Yates “after she took the extraordinarily rare step of defying the White House and saying the Justice Department would not defend” his visa ban. US Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia Dana Boente was named acting attorney general and promptly reversed Yates’ guidance. The [New York Times](#) (1/30, Landler, Sanger, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) said the firing was part of “an escalating crisis for his 10-day-old administration.” In a statement, Trump said that Yates “had betrayed the administration.”

[McClatchy](#) (1/30, Allam, 74K) reports that Boente was sworn in as acting attorney general at 9:00 p.m. Monday. In a statement, Boente said, “I am honored to serve President Trump in this role until [Attorney General-designate] Sessions is confirmed. I will defend and enforce the laws of our country to ensure that our people and our nation are protected.” McClatchy says the “rapid late night developments recalled the ‘Saturday Night Massacre’ in 1973, when President Richard Nixon fired his attorney general and deputy attorney general over their refusal to dismiss Watergate prosecutor Archibald Cox.”

[USA Today](#) (1/30, Johnson, 5.28M) says the “ouster came just hours after Yates said she would not defend” the executive order. A White House statement that USA Today says “appeared to be in Trump’s own voice” said, “Ms. Yates is an Obama administration appointee who is weak on borders and very weak on illegal immigration.” The [Los Angeles Times](#) (1/30, Lauter, Kaleem, 4.52M) says Trump had initially asked Yates, “a career prosecutor who served as the Obama administration’s deputy attorney general,” to “stay on as acting attorney general pending the confirmation” of Sessions. Earlier in the day Monday, Trump criticized the delay in confirming Sessions [on Twitter](#), calling Yates “an Obama A.G.”

The [AP](#) (1/30, Pace) says that while Yates’ directive was likely to have been temporary, it “deepened the chaos surrounding Trump’s order. At least three top national security officials” – DHS Secretary Kelly, Defense Secretary Mattis, and Secretary of State-designate Tillerson – “have told associates they were not aware of details of directive until around the time Trump signed it. Leading intelligence officials were also left largely in the

dark,” and Senate Foreign Relations Chairman Bob Corker “said that despite White House assurances that congressional leaders were consulted, he learned about the order in the media.” The [Washington Post](#) (1/30, Zapotosky, Horwitz, Berman, 11.43M) says Yates’ refusal had marked “a stunning dissent to the president’s directive from someone who would be on the front lines of implementing it.”

The [Washington Post](#) (1/30, Horwitz, 11.43M) has a profile of Yates, who “began her tenure as an Obama appointee two years ago by saying that pursuing justice was more important to her than bringing federal cases in court.” The [Washington Post](#) (1/30, Rucker, Costa, 11.43M) also writes that Sessions’ “fingerprints” were “on nearly all” of Trump’s executive orders thus far, and “his influence in the administration extends far beyond the Justice Department.” Sessions “is the intellectual godfather of the president’s policies,” and is “reach extends throughout the White House.”

The [Boston Globe](#) (1/30, McGrane, Viser, 1.08M) calls Yates’ defiance and dismissal “an extraordinary series of events,” while the [Washington Times](#) (1/30, Dinan, 272K) says the firing “capp[ed] off a dramatic day.” Before the firing, Pete Williams reported on [NBC Nightly News](#) (1/30, story 3, 2:15, Holt, 16.61M), “Justice Department lawyers defended the orders in court over the weekend but tonight Acting Attorney General Sally Yates...tells them to stop defending it. She says the order is not consistent with justice or doing what’s right.” [ABC World News Tonight](#) (1/30, story 7, 1:20, Muir, 14.63M) and the [CBS Evening News](#) (1/30, story 12, 2:05, Pelley, 11.17M) also mentioned Yates’ stance as part of broader coverage. [Bloomberg Politics](#) (1/31, Strohm, 201K) and [Politico](#) (1/30, Gerstein, 2.46M) also have reports.

ICE Acting Director Also Replaced. [McClatchy](#) (1/30, Murphy, 74K) reports Trump “also replaced the acting director of the Immigration and Customs Enforcement on Monday.” The President “did not give a reason for replacing” Daniel Ragsdale. The [AP](#) (1/30) reports Ragsdale was replaced by Thomas Homan, who since 2013 has “served as the executive associate director of ICE Enforcement and Removal Operations.” The [Washington Times](#) (1/30, Morton, 272K) reports DHS Secretary Kelly said of Homan, “I am confident that he will continue to serve as a strong, effective leader for the men and women of ICE.” [The Hill](#) (1/30, Hensch, 1.25M) and the [Huffington Post](#) (1/30, 237K) also have brief reports.

Trump Names Duke DHS Deputy Secretary. In related news, the [Washington Times](#) (1/30, Dinan, 272K) reports Trump on Monday named Elaine Duke as the DHS deputy secretary. The Times says the selection of the “little-known bureaucrat,” who has “a long history in government management,” disappointed some “immigration crackdown advocates who’d been anticipating a more prominent figure.”

Massachusetts, Washington State Plan Legal Challenges. [Politico](#) (1/30, Dezenski, 2.46M) reports that Massachusetts Gov. Charlie Baker, a Republican, “said Monday that State Attorney General Maura Healey plans to file a brief in US federal court in Boston Tuesday arguing against President Donald Trump’s executive order restricting immigrants from seven Muslim-majority countries.” [Politico](#) (1/30, Conway, 2.46M) additionally reports that Washington State Attorney General Bob Ferguson will file a federal lawsuit against Trump, DHS, and Administration officials over the visa ban, “charging that the executive order is unconstitutional, his office announced Monday. In a separate motion, he will also request to halt the implementation immediately on the basis that it is harming the economy and families in Washington.”

WHITE HOUSE DEFENDS IMMIGRATION ORDER IN FACE OF VOCAL, WIDESPREAD OPPOSITION. President Trump’s executive order on immigration receives heavy media coverage including extensive coverage on the network news broadcasts and pervasive print and online reporting. The coverage is very negative toward the Administration – which is, nonetheless, described as standing firm (or “defiant,” as some news outlets put it) in the face of protests and criticism from lawmakers of both parties, the media, businesses, and

others.

The lead story for [NBC Nightly News](#) (1/30, lead story, 3:10, Holt, 16.61M) described Trump as “defiant and digging in...amid a mounting firestorm over his travel ban.” Trump is “aiming to put a positive spin on a weekend of chaos and outrage” during which “protests erupted at airports all across the country as more than 100 people were detained.” The [Washington Post](#) (1/30, Berman, Zapotosky, 11.43M), which also describes the White House as “defiant,” similarly reports that “despite mounting criticism, legal challenges and questions that stretched from Capitol Hill to the United Nations,” Trump continued to “adamantly defend” his immigration order. [USA Today](#) (1/30, Bacon, 5.28M) says the “massive protests that swept the nation” have “encouraged advocacy groups to press their case on other issues.”

[ABC World News Tonight](#) (1/30, lead story, 3:50, Muir, 14.63M) also reported in its lead story that Trump’s order sparked “protests coast to coast at airports across the country,” but added (Karl) that the Administration is “pushing back against stories of chaos and confusion. Families detained in airports. Customs and Border Patrol officials unclear on how to enforce the new policy. Terminals turned into makeshift legal aid clinics, with lawyers offering their services to travelers impacted by the ban.”

The [New York Post](#) (1/30, Moore, 3.82M) says Trump “stood firm” in the face of the criticism, and [USA Today](#) (1/30, Bacon, 5.28M) describes Trump as “unyielding...in his position that the ban was for the good of the country.” But the [AP](#) (1/30, Caldwell) says that while Trump “has staunchly defended his order,” in “a statement Sunday and tweets Monday, Trump misstated the facts multiple times.” The AP goes on to compare “what Trump said and how it compares with the facts.”

Under the headline “Sean Spicer Defends Trump’s Immigration Ban,” the [New York Post](#) (1/30, Moore, 3.82M) quotes the White House press secretary as saying, “We’re going to put the safety of Americans first. We’re not going to wait until we get attacked and figure out how it’s going to happen again. ... That’s the key point in this: How do we keep ahead of threats.” Spicer added, “This is why the majority of Americans agree with the president. ... These steps are frankly common-sense steps to make sure we’re never looking at the rear-view mirror asking, ‘We should have done something.’ ... His view is not to wait to get ahead of the curve. We don’t know when that hour comes. We don’t know when the individual comes to do us harm.” At the same time, [Reuters](#) (1/30) cites an internal DHS document which says the US “has granted waivers to let 872 refugees into the country this week,” despite Trump’s order. A DHS official confirmed the waivers, but Reuters says it “was not known if additional waivers would be granted, the official said.”

[Roll Call](#) (1/30, Bennett, 63K) said “chaos ensued” at US airports as Customs and Border Patrol agents “detained 109 individuals between late Friday afternoon and Sunday evening as they tried to enter the country after getting off international flights.” The White House argued that “being detained for a few hours during an intensive security check is outweighed by the possibility of getting to live in the United States for the rest of one’s life.” Meanwhile Trump “tried to deflect blame for weekend ‘problems’ at US airports by pointing the finger at Senate Minority Leader Charles E. Schumer,” who “appeared in New York over the weekend with refugees, at one point getting emotional.” Trump argued in a [two part](#) tweet that the “causes of the ‘big problems’ includes ‘the tears of Senator Schumer.’” In addition, he “seemed to defend the airport chaos by [tweeting](#) there’s ‘nothing nice’ about trying to stop ‘terrorists’ from entering the United States.” In its lead story, [NBC Nightly News](#) (1/30, lead story, 3:10, Holt, 16.61M) showed Trump saying, “Chuck Schumer yesterday with fake tears. I’m going to ask him who was his acting coach.”

Gerald F. Seib writes in the [Wall Street Journal](#) (1/30, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) that Sen. John McCain, who has shown a willingness to defy Trump, has called the order a recruiting boon for ISIS. Nancy Cordes reported on the [CBS Evening News](#) (1/30, story 2,

1:50, Pelley, 11.17M) that while Democrats “may have been the loudest...many Republicans like Pennsylvania’s Charlie Dent were just as critical.” Rep. Charlie Dent: “It was not well thought out. It was not properly considered.” Schumer “tried to capitalize on GOP discontent today by introducing a bill to reverse the travel ban,” but it was “quickly blocked by Republicans who support the executive order.” The [Washington Post](#) (1/30, O’Keefe, 11.43M)says that Senate Democrats on Monday “sought to quickly pass legislation that would rescind Trump’s ban, but there was insufficient GOP support.” [Reuters](#) (1/30, Zengerle) reports that while Sen. Dianne Feinstein “said she had 27 co-sponsors of a bill to rescind the order,” Sen. Tom Cotton “blocked consideration of the measure.” [Politico](#) (1/30, Caygle, Schor, 2.46M) said the failed effort “underscor[ed] the limits of the minority’s power to force substantive changes to the policy that sparked massive protests over the weekend.”

In a separate story, [Politico](#) (1/30, Caygle, 2.46M) said DHS Secretary Kelly will meet with House lawmakers on Tuesday. According to Democratic sources, “more than a dozen chief House lawmakers are invited to the meeting,” including, “House Speaker Paul Ryan (R-Wis.), House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy (R-Calif.), House Minority Whip Steny Hoyer (D-Md.) and several other lawmakers who lead committees with ties to the refugee ban.”

The [Detroit Free Press](#) (1/30, Snavelly, Bomey, 1.01M) reports that while “other major automakers have largely remained silent so far,” Ford CEO Mark Fields and Ford Chairman Bill Ford “strongly rebuked” Trump’s order, saying in a joint statement Monday, “Respect for all people is a core value of Ford Motor Company, and we are proud of the rich diversity of our company here at home and around the world. ... That is why we do not support this policy or any other that goes against our values as a company.” The Free Press says that “a number of technology companies – including Apple, Alphabet, Facebook and Lyft – have issued statements or taken other action over the weekend in opposition to the travel ban,” but Ford “is the first major automaker to take a clear position.” [USA Today](#) (1/30, Bomey, 5.28M) says the statement from Ford “further complicates the on-again, off-again relationship between” the company and Trump.

The [CBS Evening News](#) (1/30, story 6, 0:20, Pelley, 11.17M) also said that “some of the largest tech companies have come out against the President’s immigration ban,” and the [New York Times](#) (1/30, Wingfield, Wakabayashi, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) reports that Amazon and Expedia on Monday “stepped up their opposition to the order with filings that were part of a lawsuit in federal court against the Trump administration, arguing that the order will hurt their businesses.” the tech firms’ move represents “an escalation of the technology industry’s efforts to push back on the order.”

[Politico](#) (1/30, White, 2.46M) said that following “a weekend of criticism from Silicon Valley, Wall Street chief executives began to join their tech colleagues in criticizing Trump’s move.” Goldman Sachs CEO Lloyd Blankfein said in a voicemail Monday to bank employees, “This is not a policy we support. ... I recognize that there is potential for disruption to the firm, and especially to some of our people and their families.” In an email to employees on Sunday, JPMorganChase chief executive Jamie Dimon, “reassured workers of the ‘unwavering commitment to the dedicated people working here’ including those on sponsored visas possibly hit by the executive order.” Politico also highlighted criticism of Trump’s order from GE CEO Jeffrey Immelt, Tesla CEO Elon Musk and Starbucks CEO Howard Schultz.

The Washington Post’s opinion page is also highly critical of Trump’s order. A [Washington Post](#) (1/30, 11.43M) editorial warns of the “grave potential consequences of an order that’s wrong ethically and strategically.” Richard Cohen writes in his [Washington Post](#) (1/30, 11.43M) column that the Trump Administration is “inept and indifferent to the suffering it might cause,” adding that “if a new policy is needed, Trump’s people have no idea of how to implement it and the White House seems similarly oblivious to the damage it is doing to the United States’ image.” Eugene Robinson takes a similar line in his [Washington Post](#) (1/30, 11.43M) column, calling the “refugee ban and travel restrictions” a “disgraceful exercise in

cruelty” that “do nothing to make us safer — and may, in fact, make us less safe — but they punish Muslims, and that is his whole point.”

The reaction to Trump’s order was not universally negative, however. The [New York Times](#) (1/30, Tavernise, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) says that while the order “may be setting off protests around the country and raising eyebrows and objections among allies abroad,” a “large portion of the electorate is behind the president.” Trump supporters “say that the promise of tougher immigration policies is one of the main reasons they voted for him,” and the order, “along with an earlier one for building a wall, shows that he is serious, they say.”

A separate [New York Times](#) (1/30, Bromwich, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) story says that in “those precincts that Mr. Trump carried in the November election,” the order “was often met with satisfaction and approval,” and the protests “were viewed as misguided and a source of irritation.”

Quinnipiac, Rasmussen Polls Show Support For Trump’s Policy. The [CBS Evening News](#) (1/30, story 5, 1:45, Pelley, 11.17M) reported that a Quinnipiac University poll taken three weeks ago found that “by margin of 48 percent to 42 percent, American voters support suspending immigration from terror-prone regions, even if it means turning away refugees,” and “53 percent support requiring immigrants from Muslim countries to register with the government.” CBS (Reynolds) added that Trump supporters gathered at Los Angeles International Airport over the weekend to “voic[e] their belief that the President’s immigration order is sensible and overdue.” In addition, the [Washington Times](#) (1/30, Dinan, 272K) reports that a new Rasmussen Reports [poll](#) released Monday found that a “majority of voters back the concept of halting admissions from seven terrorist-connected countries,” and “general broad support for the kind of executive order President Trump signed on Friday.” According to the poll 56 percent said that “a pause in visas for Syria, Sudan, Iraq, Iran, Yemen, Somalia and Libya makes sense.”

In his “Talking Points Memo” segment on [Fox News’ The O’Reilly Factor](#) (1/30, 767K), Bill O’Reilly said that Trump “is being responsible, setting up a new refugee standards” provided that the standards “are fully explained and expedited in a timely manner.” O’Reilly added that the Administration “must be willing to grant exceptions and above all, should help refugees that survived in the terror zones abroad.” While “protecting Americans is obviously priority number one,” the “nobility of our nation demands we help suffering, helpless people if we can.”

The controversy over Trump’s order comes as King Abdullah II of Jordan is visiting Washington this week, a situation the [AP](#) (1/30, Lederman) says is “testing” Trump’s “ability to maintain key Arab alliances while cracking down on immigration from some Muslim countries and possibly moving the American Embassy in Israel to Jerusalem.” Abdullah met Monday with Defense Secretary Mattis and Vice President Pence. He and Trump will “come face-to-face on Thursday at the National Prayer Breakfast.” The AP cites “officials” who said the embassy “was a prime topic of discussion in Abdullah’s meeting with Pence.”

Border Patrol, ICE Agents Voice Support For Trump’s Order. Trump’s order drew praise from “the men and women on the front lines of protecting America’s borders,” [Western Journalism](#) (1/30, Davis, 802K) reports. A joint statement from the Border Patrol and Immigration and Customs Enforcement Councils said, “As representatives of the nation’s Frontline immigration officers and agents responsible for enforcing our laws and protecting our borders, we fully support and appreciate President Trump’s swift and decisive action to keep the American people safe and allow law enforcement to do its job.” The statement added that Trump’s orders “will make America safer and more prosperous” and have “improved morale.”

Bannon Urged “A Hard Line” On Trump’s Immigration Order. [Reuters](#) (1/30, Walcott, Ainsley) reports that as the Trump Administration crafted the immigration order, Trump’s

chief strategist Steve Bannon pushed “a hard line.” While senior DHS officials “interpreted the order to mean that lawful permanent residents – green card holders – who hailed from the seven Muslim-majority countries targeted in the immigration order would not face additional screening when they entered the country,” they “were quickly overruled by Bannon” and “White House senior policy adviser Stephen Miller, a close ally of Bannon’s, the officials said.” One official said, “They were in charge of this operation,” adding that “the experts were ‘almost immediately overruled by the White House, which means by Bannon and Miller.’” The [Los Angeles Times](#) (1/30, Bennett, Bierman, 4.52M) says Bannon and Miller “see themselves as launching a radical experiment to fundamentally transform how the US decides who is allowed into the country and to block a generation of people who, in their view, won’t assimilate into American society.” According to the Times, White House aides are weighing “new, onerous security checks that could effectively limit travel into the US by people from majority-Muslim countries to a trickle.”

The [Washington Post](#) (1/30, Parker, 11.43M) says the “fallout” from the order “exposed tender rifts within the Republican Party, alarmed members of his Cabinet, fueled suspicions among his top advisers — and left the defiant commander in chief stewing over who was to blame.” Inside the White House, “tensions flickered as differences in management style emerged between two factions: one led by” Bannon and Miller, “and the other composed of chief of staff Reince Priebus and his deputies, who are accustomed to operating with a more traditional chain of command.” Trump aides were “divided over who was at fault” for the “clumsy and dysfunctional” rollout of the order, “with some blaming Miller” and others saying Priebus “should have taken charge of better coordinating with the departments and communicating with lawmakers and the public.”

House Aides Helped Draft Trump’s Immigration Order. [Politico](#) (1/30, Bade, Sherman, Dawsey, 2.46M) reported that senior aides to the House Judiciary Committee helped Trump’s aides draft the order, “but the Republican committee chairman and party leadership were not informed, according to multiple sources involved in the process.” Word of the House aides involvement “helps unlock the mystery of whether the White House consulted Capitol Hill about the executive order,” and “confirms that the small group of staffers were among the only people on Capitol Hill who knew of the looming controversial policy.”

While the [Wall Street Journal](#) (1/30, Paletta, Hong, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) casts the White House as being on the defensive, correspondent Major Garrett said in the lead story for the [CBS Evening News](#) (1/30, lead story, 3:30, Pelley, 11.17M) that the order was “rushed through the usual protocol.” Similarly, Jonathan Karl reported in the lead story for [ABC World News Tonight](#) (1/30, lead story, 3:50, Muir, 14.63M) the order “was rushed through so quickly on Friday, top officials on the President’s national security team were left in the dark.” Defense Secretary Mattis “was there when the President signed it, and even applauded, but he had no input whatsoever, and was surprised by its contents.” Likewise, DHS Secretary Kelly “was getting his first full briefing on the executive order right as the President was signing it.” In addition “top Republicans in Congress [were caught] by surprise.” Sens. Marco Rubio and Tim Scott “said the rush to implement the policy created confusion, anxiety and uncertainty.” Sens. John McCain and Lindsey Graham “went further, saying, ‘We fear this executive order will become a self-inflicted wound in the fight against terrorism.’”

California Lawmaker Calls On White House To Release Melania Trump’s Immigration Records. [Politico](#) (1/30, Marinucci, 2.46M) reported that California state Sen. Nancy Skinner has called on the White House to release First Lady Melania Trump’s immigration. Skinner’s demand comes after an AP investigation “last November found Melania Trump lacked proper work visas when she was employed as a model after arriving in the US from her native Slovenia more than two decades ago.” Skinner told Politico, “No one in the Trump operation has released any of the documentation to indicate what was the circumstance, or whether she had full legal status. ... We only know they had a lawyer look

at whatever papers she chose to give.”

MEDIA ANALYSES: “DISSENT MEMO” SHOWS DIVIDE BETWEEN CAREER

DIPLOMATS, TRUMP. More than 100 career diplomats at the State Department reportedly have signed a “dissent memo” opposing President Trump’s executive order that suspends refugee access to the US and blocks visas from specific countries. Media coverage characterizes the letter as revealing a sharp divide between State Department employees and Trump, with much reporting casting press secretary Sean Spicer’s comments as critical of government workers who do not support the President’s position.

[ABC World News Tonight](#) (1/30, story 5, 1:20, Muir, 14.63M) reported there is “word of growing dissent inside the State Department.” ABC’s Martha Raddatz said, “Dozens of career diplomats worldwide have drafted a rare formal letter of dissent” that [NBC Nightly News](#) (1/30, lead story, 3:10, Holt, 16.61M) and the [CBS Evening News](#) (1/30, lead story, 3:30, Pelley, 11.17M) reported was circulated throughout the Foreign Service. Even if the memo is “never formally submitted,” [Politico](#) (1/30, Toosi, 2.46M) says, it “represents a revolt from within the US bureaucracy.” The [Washington Times](#) (1/30, Taylor, 272K) explains the memo was submitted through the State Department’s “dissent channel,” which is “an established, albeit secretive, medium for Foreign Service officers to question US policy that dates back to the Vietnam War era.” The Times adds that the names of dissent cable authors and co-signers are “rarely revealed in public.”

The [Washington Post](#) (1/30, Morello, 11.43M) reports there are “several versions of the draft” being circulated throughout the State Department “as diplomats weigh in and ask for revisions.” More than 100 diplomats, according to diplomats “familiar with the matter,” have signed the letter. The Post says one draft, first reported by ABC News, contends the ban will not prevent attacks on the US and will lead to ill will toward Americans. The [AP](#) (1/30, Lee) says the memo argues, “A policy which closes our doors to over 200 million legitimate travelers in the hopes of preventing a small number of travelers who intend to harm Americans from using the visa system to enter the United States will not achieve its aim of making our country safer.” The memo adds, “This ban stands in opposition to the core American and constitutional values that we, as federal employees, took an oath to uphold.” Elise Labott reported on [CNN’s Situation Room](#) (1/30, 554K) that the diplomats compare the order “to the internment of Japanese-Americans during World War II.”

The [New York Times](#) (1/31, Landler, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) reports on its front page that the White House “warned State Department officials that they should leave their jobs if they did not agree” with the President’s policy, as part of what the Times says is “an extraordinary effort to stamp out a wave of internal dissent against” the visa ban. [Bloomberg Politics](#) (1/30, Wadhams, 201K) says Spicer – speaking after the dissent memo was circulated – “rebuked State Department officials who objected to” the executive order. Bloomberg quotes Spicer as saying government employees should “either get with the program or they can go.” Spicer said that Trump is “going to put the safety of this country first,” adding, “If somebody has a problem with that agenda, then that does call into question whether they should continue in that post or not.” Spicer said, according to the [Washington Post](#) (1/30, Phillip, 11.43M), that Trump “appreciates the people who serve this nation and the public servants.” Spicer added, “That’s up to them to question whether or not they want to stay.”

The [New York Times](#) (1/30, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) editorializes that the Administration “would be reckless to dismiss this warning from public servants who have spent their careers safeguarding American interests abroad.” The Times adds that the concerns of the diplomats “are shared by lawmakers from both parties, several European leaders and top United Nations officials.”

Editorial Wrap-Up:

NEW YORK TIMES. “President Bannon?” In an editorial, the [New York Times](#) (1/30, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) says it has never “witnessed a political aide move as brazenly to consolidate power as Stephen Bannon — nor have we seen one do quite so much damage so quickly to his putative boss’s popular standing or pretenses of competence.” The Times adds that Trump’s executive order “politicizing the process for national security decisions, suggests Mr. Bannon is positioning himself not merely as a Svengali but as the de facto president.” Trump, The Times adds, “has not simply broken with tradition but has embraced the risk of politicizing national security, or giving the impression of doing so.”

“Diplomats Decry Muslim Ban.” A [New York Times](#) (1/30, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) editorial cites a memorandum from more than 100 State Department employees voicing opposition to President Trump’s travel ban and says the Administration “would be reckless to dismiss this warning from public servants who have spent their careers safeguarding American interests abroad.” The Times adds that the concerns of the diplomats “are shared by lawmakers from both parties, several European leaders and top United Nations officials.”

“Protecting Birth Control Access In Oregon.” In an editorial, the [New York Times](#) (1/31, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) welcomes an Oregon bill to protect access to birth control and other reproductive healthcare services, including abortion, even if the Affordable Care Act is repealed. The Times adds that the bill’s sponsors recognize “that people need access to the full range of reproductive health care in order to participate fully in society and the economy,” and welcomes this “powerful defense...of necessary reproductive health care.”

WASHINGTON POST. “The White House’s Soft-Core Holocaust Denialism.” A [Washington Post](#) (1/30, 11.43M) editorial argues that while the “charitable explanations” for the White House’s decision to omit any mention of Jews from President Trump’s statement on the Holocaust would be “ignorance and incompetence,” another reading of the statement “is more sinister” – that by “stripping any reference to Jews from its brief statement, the Trump administration engaged in what Deborah Lipstadt, an Emory University historian, calls ‘soft-core Holocaust denial.’”

“Trump’s Executive Order On Immigration Is A Self-Inflicted Wound.” A [Washington Post](#) (1/30, 11.43M) editorial on President Trump’s immigration order warns of the “grave potential consequences of an order that’s wrong ethically and strategically.”

“Democrats Shouldn’t Go Scorched-Earth On Trump’s Supreme Court Nominee.” The [Washington Post](#) (1/30, 11.43M) argues in an editorial that while Sen. Jeff Merkley’s promise that he would call for a filibuster of anyone President Trump nominates to the Supreme Court might be “emotionally satisfying,” that approach “would be mistaken” because “provoking Republicans to resort to the filibuster-abolishing ‘nuclear option’ would leave Democrats disarmed of that weapon against a second Trump pick should another vacancy arise during his presidency.” Moreover, “the Supreme Court confirmation process needs to be protected from partisan politics to the greatest extent possible and that a scorched-earth Democratic response to any nominee, regardless of the individual merits, would simply deepen that harmful politicization.”

WALL STREET JOURNAL. “Trump Dams The Regulatory Flood.” A [Wall Street Journal](#) (1/30, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) editorial praises President Trump’s executive order that for every new Federal regulation, two must be eliminated. arguing that it will it could lead to job creation and new investment, a number of reports highlights the difficulty Trump may face in putting it into action.

“Obama’s Refugee Legacy.” In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (1/30, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) cites President Obama’s comment on President Trump’s immigration

orders and criticizes the former President for speaking out against Trump so quickly,

“The GOP’s DeVos Doubters.” The [Wall Street Journal](#) (1/30, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) editorializes that Republicans would provide teachers unions a significant victory by voting against Education Secretary-designate Betsy DeVos. The Journal says the unions are putting pressure on Republicans because DeVos would be the first Education Secretary that did not share their views since the Reagan Administration.

Big Picture:

HEADLINES FROM TODAY’S FRONT PAGES.

Wall Street Journal:

[White House Fires Acting Attorney General Sally Yates](#)
[Trump To Add CIA Director To National Security Council](#)
[Facebook Is Trying Everything To Re-Enter China—And It’s Not Working](#)
[Investors Press For CEO’s Ouster At Arconic. The Alcoa Spinoff](#)

New York Times:

[Trump Fires Acting Attorney General](#)
[State Dept. Officials Should Quit If They Disagree With Trump. White House Warns](#)
[In Ban On Migrants, Trump Supporters See A Promise Kept](#)
[For Leaders Of US Allies. Getting Close To Trump Can Sting](#)
[Questions Raised About Brain Centers Backed By Betsy DeVos](#)
[Republicans’ Paths To Unraveling The Dodd-Frank Act](#)
[Boy Scouts. Reversing Century-Old Stance. Will Allow Transgender Boys](#)

Washington Post:

[University Student Charged In Quebec Mosque Rampage](#)
[Acting Attorney General Fired Over Ban](#)
[In A Long-sought Home. A Case Of Lead Poisoning](#)
[Sessions Helping Power Trump’s Frenetic Start](#)
[Furor Over Ban Reveals White House. GOP Rifts](#)

Financial Times:

[Myanmar Killing Stokes Political Violence Fears](#)
[Backlash From Big Business Grows Over Trump Upheaval](#)

Washington Times:

[Trump Fires Acting Attorney General Sally Yates](#)
[Obama, Bush Didn’t Feel The Same Pushback As Trump. White House Says](#)
[Supreme Court Nominee Has Both Sides Preparing For Battle](#)
[North Dakota Wants Hired Pipeline Protesters To Pay State Income Taxes](#)
[Canadian Man Charged In Deadly Shooting Spree At Quebec City Mosque](#)
[Extremist Links Undercut Chile’s Image Of Stability](#)

Story Lineup From Last Night’s Network News:

ABC: Travel Ban Reactions; Terrorist Origins; Travel Ban-Obama, May Responses; Quebec City Mosque Attack; Travel Ban-State Dept, Vet Responses; Trump-NSC Appointment; Travel Ban-Legal Challenge; Delta IT Errors; 40-Year-Old Murder Case; Severe Weather; Health-Lung Cancer Screening; GHW Bush Health; Disabled Swimmer.

CBS: Travel Ban Reactions; Travel Ban-Congress Responses; Travel Ban-Expert Comment; Travel Ban-Iraqi General Responses; Travel Ban-Trump Supporters; Travel Ban-IT Companies Responses; Quebec City Mosque Attack; US SEAL Casualty-Yemen; Trump-Media Criticism, NSC; Trump-Supreme Court Nominee; GHW Bush Health; Travel Ban-Legal Challenge, Detainees.

NBC: Trump-Travel Ban; Trump-NSC Appointment; Travel Ban-Legal Challenge; Travel

Ban-Family Responses; Travel Ban-Iraqi Responses; Quebec City Mosque Attack; GHW Bush Health; Phone Scam; Traffic Pileups; Health-Hesitant Doctor Visits; Annual Dog Show; Former Homeless College Wrestler; Travel Ban-Holt Comment.

Network TV At A Glance:

Travel Ban Reactions – 10 minutes, 30 seconds
Travel Ban-Impacted Individual Responses – 8 minutes, 50 seconds
Quebec City Mosque Attack – 5 minutes, 45 seconds
Trump-NSC Appointment – 3 minutes, 45 seconds
Travel Ban-Legal Challenge – 3 minutes, 35 seconds
GHW Bush Health – 45 seconds

Story Lineup From This Morning's Radio News Broadcasts:

ABC: Acting Attorney General Sally Yates Fired; Quebec City Mosque Attack; Boy Scouts-Transgender; Wall Street News.

CBS: Acting Attorney General Sally Yates Fired; Confirmation Hearing; Quebec City Mosque Attack; Boy Scouts-Transgender; Wall Street News.

FOX: Acting Attorney General Sally Yates Fired; Confirmation Hearing; Travel Ban Reactions; Travel Ban-IT Companies Responses.

NPR: Acting Attorney General Sally Yates Fired; Confirmation Hearing; Trump DHS Appointment; Travel Ban-Legal Challenge; Health-Lung Cancer Screening; Wall Street News; Boy Scouts-Transgender; Sony Cutting Movie Business; Walgreen-Rite Aid Merger.

Washington Schedule:

TODAY'S EVENTS IN WASHINGTON.

White House:

PRESIDENT TRUMP — Meets with Pharma; meets with Chief of Staff, Reince Priebus; has lunch with Mayor Rudy Giuliani; holds a listening session with cyber security experts; signs Executive Order; announces his pick for SCOTUS justice.

VICE PRESIDENT PENCE — Joins THE PRESIDENT to meet with Pharma; participates in the Senate Republican Policy Lunch, followed by private meetings with individual lawmakers; joins THE PRESIDENT as he announces Supreme Court of the United States nominee.

US Senate: 9:30 AM Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee votes on energy and interior secretary nominees – Business Meeting, with agenda including nominations of Rick Perry to be Secretary of Energy and Ryan Zinke to be Secretary of the Interior, 'An original resolution authorizing expenditures by the committee for the 115th Congress', and 'Ratification of subcommittee assignments for the 115th Congress' * Then-President-elect Donald Trump announced the nominations of former Texas Governor Perry and Republican Rep. Zinke last month * During a Republican presidential candidate debate in November 2011, Perry forgot that the Department of Energy was one of the three federal govt agencies he would eliminate if elected, eventually saying 'oops' after naming the departments of commerce and education as the other two. He has since said he has changed his mind over wanting to eliminate the department Location: Rm 366, Dirksen Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://energy.senate.gov/public/>

9:30 AM Senate Judiciary Committee votes on GOP Sen. Jeff Sessions to be AG – Executive Business Meeting, with agenda including nomination of Jeff Sessions to be Attorney General, committee rules, and 'S. 178, Elder Abuse Prevention and Prosecution Act' * President Donald Trump announced the nomination of Republican Sen. Sessions in November Location: Rm 226, Dirksen Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://judiciary.senate.gov/>

10:00 AM Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing on North Korea – Hearing on 'Confronting the North Korea Threat: Reassessing Policy Options', with testimony from

American Enterprise Institute Chair in Political Economy Dr Nicholas Eberstadt; and Council on Foreign Relations Senior Fellow for Korea Studies and Program on U.S.-Korea Policy Director Scott Snyder Location: Rm 419, Dirksen Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://foreign.senate.gov/>

10:00 AM Senate HELP Committee votes on nomination of Betsy DeVos to be education secretary – Executive Session, with agenda including nomination of Betsy DeVos to be Secretary of Education, ‘Adoption of Committee Rules for the 115th Congress’, and ‘Subcommittee Assignments for the 115th Congress’ * Then-President-elect Donald Trump announced the nomination of businesswoman DeVos in November Location: Rm 430, Dirksen Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://help.senate.gov/>

10:00 AM Senate Finance Committee votes on GOP Rep. Tom Price to be HHS secretary – Executive Session, to consider the nomination of Tom Price to be Secretary of Health and Human Services * Then-President-elect Donald Trump announced the nomination of the Republican congressman in November * Rep. Price has said that he will divest himself of stock in over 40 companies and resign a position with the American Medical Association if confirmed by the Senate, to avoid potential conflicts of interest Location: Rm 215, Dirksen Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://finance.senate.gov>

11:00 AM Senate Indian Affairs Committee organizational meeting – Business Meeting, with agenda including ‘Selection of the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Committee’, ‘Adoption of the rules of the Committee for the 115th Congress’, and ‘Adoption of the funding resolution for the Committee for the 115th Congress’ Location: Rm 628, Dirksen Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://indian.senate.gov> <https://twitter.com/IndianCommittee>

US House: 10:00 AM HOUSE COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM Business meeting – Full Committee, business meeting on the committee’s oversight and authorization plan; and markup on H.R. 396, the “Tax Accountability Act of 2017”; H.R. 194, the “Federal Agency Mail Management Act of 2017”; the “Federal Employee Antidiscrimination Act of 2017”; H.R. 679, the “Construction Consensus Procurement Improvement Act of 2017”; H.R. 653, the “Federal Intern Protection Act of 2017”; and H.R. 657, the “Follow the Rules Act.” Location: 2154 Rayburn. <http://oversight.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/GOPoversight>

10:00 AM House Commerce subcommittee hearing on Medicaid – Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee hearing on ‘Medicaid Oversight: Existing Problems and Ways to Strengthen the Program’, with testimony from Foundation for Government Accountability Senior Fellow Josh Archambault; Manhattan Institute Director of Health Policy Paul Howard; Department of Health and Human Services Assistant Inspector General for Evaluation and Inspections Ann Maxwell; Georgetown University Law Center Senior Scholar in Health Law Timothy Westmoreland; and Government Accountability Office Director of Health Care Carolyn Yocom Location: Rm 2123, Rayburn House Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://energycommerce.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/HouseCommerce>

10:00 AM House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Organizational Meeting Location: Rm 2167, Rayburn House Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://transportation.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/Transport>

10:00 AM House Oversight and Government Reform Committee Business Meeting – Business Meeting, with agenda including ‘The Committee’s Authorization and Oversight Plan for the 115th Congress’, ‘H.R. 657, Follow the Rules Act’, ‘H.R. 653, Federal Intern Protection Act of 2017’, ‘H.R. 679, Construction Consensus Procurement Improvement Act of 2017’, ‘H.R. XXX, Federal Employee Antidiscrimination Act of 2017’, ‘H.R. 194, Federal Agency Mail Management Act of 2017’, and ‘H.R. 396, Tax Accountability Act of 2017’ Location: U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC <http://oversight.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/GOPoversight>

10:30 AM Bipartisan Reps. Tom Reed and Tim Ryan keynote ITIF event – ‘What Should the Trump Administration’s Manufacturing Strategy Look Like?’ Information Technology and Innovation Foundation event. House Manufacturing Caucus co-chairs Tom Reed and Tim Ryan keynote, with panel including Deloitte Consulting Supply Chain Strategy Leader Principal Kelly Marchese, McKinsey Global Institute Partner Sree Ramaswamy, and Manufacturers Alliance for Productivity and Innovation Foundation Chief Economist Cliff Waldman Location: CVC-268, U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC www.itif.org
<https://twitter.com/ITIFdc>

11:00 AM House Minority Whip Steny Hoyer regular pen-and-pad briefing Location: H-144, U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC www.democraticwhip.gov/ <https://twitter.com/WhipHoyer>

2:00 PM House Government Reform subcommittee hearing on ‘fraud, waste, and abuse under ‘Obamacare’ – Health Care, Benefits, and Administrative Rules Subcommittee hearing on ‘Fraud, Waste and Abuse under the Affordable Care Act’ * Earlier this month, President Donald Trump signed an executive order to ‘minimize the economic burden of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act pending repeal’, with Congress having passed a resolution to ease passage of further legislation to repeal the ACA. UPDATED to room 2247 Rayburn from 2154 Rayburn. Location: Rm 2247, Rayburn House Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://oversight.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/GOPoversight>

2:00 PM House meets for legislative business – House of Representatives meets for legislative business, with agenda including consideration of legislation including ‘H.R. 58 – FRIENDS Act’, as amended, ‘H.R. 666 – Department of Homeland Security Insider Threat and Mitigation Act of 2017’, ‘H.R. 642 – Fusion Center Enhancement Act of 2017’, ‘H.R. 526 – Counterterrorism Advisory Board Act of 2017’, as amended, ‘H.R. 665 – Airport Perimeter and Access Control Security Act of 2017’, ‘H.R. 366 – DHS SAVE Act’, ‘H.R. 549 – Transit Security Grant Program Flexibility Act’, ‘H.R. 687 – First Responder Access to Innovative Technologies Act’, ‘H.R. 584 – Cyber Preparedness Act of 2017’, ‘H.R. 655 – Securing the Cities Act of 2017’, ‘H.R. 437 – Medical Preparedness Allowable Use Act’, ‘H.R. 612 – United States-Israel Cybersecurity Cooperation Enhancement Act of 2017’, ‘H.R. 505 – Border Security Technology Accountability Act of 2017’, as amended, and ‘H.R. 677 – CBRN Intelligence and Information Sharing Act of 2017’ under suspension of the rules Location: Washington, DC <http://www.house.gov/>

3:00 PM House Rules Committee hearing – Hearing on ‘H.J. Res. XXX – Disapproving the final rule submitted by the Department of Defense, the General Services Administration, and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration relating to the Federal Acquisition Regulation’ and ‘H.J. Res. XXX – Providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the final rule of the Bureau of Land Management relating to ‘Waste Prevention, Production Subject to Royalties, and Resource Conservation’ Location: H-313, U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC <http://www.rules.house.gov/>
<https://twitter.com/RulesReps>

Other: 7:30 AM Council for Higher Education Accreditation Annual Conference continues – Council for Higher Education Accreditation Annual Conference and CHEA International Quality Group (CIQG) Annual Meeting continues, with day two speakers including Republican Rep. Virginia Foxx and University of Virginia Center for Politics Director Larry Sabato Location: Capital Hilton, 1001 16th St NW, Washington, DC www.chea.org
<https://twitter.com/CHEAnews> #CHEA2017AC

8:00 AM Women in Government Relations task force hosts event with Dem Rep. Cheri Bustos – Women in Government Relations Transportation & Infrastructure Task Force hosts ‘20-to-1 Congressional Coffee’ with Democratic Rep. Cheri Bustos Location: Allstate Insurance Company, 444 N Capitol St NW, Washington, DC <http://www.wgr.org>
<https://twitter.com/WGRDC>

12:00 PM GOP Rep. Sean Duffy keynotes U.S. Chamber of Commerce event on corporate disclosures – U.S. Chamber of Commerce Center for Capital Markets Competitiveness (CCMC) hosts lunch discussion on ‘what can be done to modernize corporate disclosures and make them useful for today’s investors’. Republican Rep. Sean Duffy keynotes and CCMC President and CEO David Hirschmann delivers remarks, both on ‘the importance of modernizing the corporate disclosure systems’; CCMC Executive Vice President Tom Quaadman provides overview of a new white paper looking at ‘why materiality matters and should remain the guiding principle for public company disclosure’; and Vanguard Principal and Fund Treasurer Glenn Booream, University of Delaware Corporate Governance Professor Charles Elson, Hunton & Williams partner Scott Kimpel, and Sustainability Accounting Standards Board founder and CEO Jean Rogerson participate in panel presentation on the future of corporate disclosures Location: USCC, 1615 H St NW, Washington, DC www.uschamber.com <https://twitter.com/USChamber>

8:00 PM DNC chair candidate Rep. Keith Ellison speaks on Democracy for America call – Democracy for America live call with Democratic Rep. Keith Ellison, who has been endorsed by DFA in his campaign to become chair of the Democratic National Committee Location: TBD www.democracyforamerica.com <https://twitter.com/dfaaction>

Last Laughs:

LATE NIGHT POLITICAL HUMOR.

Jimmy Kimmel: “There’s a lot of passion because after like 60 years, we finally have a President who keeps his campaign promises, and it’s Donald Trump.”

Jimmy Kimmel: “You know how over the course of his time in office, over four years or eight years, the President gets old and his hair turns gray? During this administration, instead of him, that’s going to happen to all of us.”

Jimmy Kimmel: “There were demonstrations in just about every major city yesterday. People went to the airport to protest. That’s when you know people are mad. It’s Sunday, they have no travel plans, and they go to the airport.”

Jimmy Kimmel: “I don’t understand any of this. I mean, if Donald Trump, if he stops all the immigrants from coming into the country, where’s he going to find his next wife?”

Jimmy Kimmel: “[Trump] also spoke with Vladimir Putin for about an hour. Putin wanted to know if Trump liked the gift he got him. Donald told him, yes, he was enjoying the presidency very much.”

Stephen Colbert: “At Dulles Airport, a five-year-old Iranian boy was detained for hours and kept from his mother. Or as Kellyanne Conway calls it, ‘alternative daycare.’”

Stephen Colbert: “Do you have any idea how angry people have to be to voluntarily go to JFK?”

Stephen Colbert: “And there was outrage all over the world. A member of Iraq’s parliament said that following the ban, ‘it is very likely that Iraq will stop granting US citizens entry visas.’ Sorry kids, there goes spring break in Fallujah. Though, honestly, when did the US ever ask permission to enter Iraq?”

Trevor Noah: “Think about it, even the border officials didn’t understand the ban. They had to enforce it and didn’t understand it. They were probably asking the refugees to help them.”

Jimmy Fallon: “Here in New York, thousands of people showed up at JFK airport over the weekend to protest Trump’s immigration ban. People who were actually at the protest said, ‘This is awful,’ while the people out in LaGuardia were like, ‘You think you got it bad? We’re at LaGuardia.’”

Jimmy Fallon: “It’s reported President Obama could receive up to \$20 million for his upcoming memoir, which is more than any other President. I guess he’s already come up with a few options for the title. First there’s ‘Fifty Shades of Graying.’”

Jimmy Fallon: “Last night Miss Kenya said that she thinks President Trump has actually done a lot to unify the US. Trump was so happy with Miss Kenya, he started a rumor that she was born in America.”

Seth Meyers: “Former President Obama released his first public statement today since leaving the White House, and I have it here. Just let me read it to you in full. ‘Oh, hell no!’”

Seth Meyers: “President Trump said today that if he had announced his travel ban earlier, the ‘bad people would rush into our country.’ I don’t know how to tell you this, but dude, turn around.”

Seth Meyers: “Trump did accomplish something truly remarkable. He managed to spark yet another round of massive, nationwide protests for the second time in just the first week of his presidency. And people are willing to go to places to protest. Last week it was parks. This week it was airports. Next week people are going to march for gay rights at the DMV.”

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From: Swift, Heather
To: [Downey Magallanes](mailto:Downey.Magallanes)
Subject: Re: U.S. Department of the Interior News Briefing for Tuesday, January 31, 2017
Date: Tuesday, January 31, 2017 3:11:40 PM

go to <http://interior.bulletinintelligence.com/subscribe>

On Tue, Jan 31, 2017 at 3:10 PM, Downey Magallanes <downey_magallanes@ios.doi.gov> wrote:

Awesome should I email the address below to be added? Thanks a ton.

Sent from my iPhone

On Jan 31, 2017, at 3:09 PM, Swift, Heather <heather_swift@ios.doi.gov> wrote:

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Bulletin Intelligence** <Interior@bulletinintelligence.com>
Date: Tue, Jan 31, 2017 at 7:02 AM
Subject: U.S. Department of the Interior News Briefing for Tuesday, January 31, 2017
To: Interior@bulletinintelligence.com

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NEWS BRIEFING

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DATE: TUESDAY, JANUARY 31, 2017 7:00 AM EST

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DOI in the News:

SENATE COMMITTEE TO VOTE ON PERRY, ZINKE NOMINATIONS TODAY. [The Hill](#) (1/30, Henry, 1.25M) reports the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee today "will consider Ryan Zinke's nomination to lead the Interior Department and Rick Perry's nomination to be Energy Secretary." Originally, the votes were scheduled "for last Tuesday." Last week, a Senate aide indicated "the cancellation was due to a

'misunderstanding' between top committee lawmakers." [Public Power Daily](#) (1/31, Anderson) reports neither Perry nor Zinke's nomination "is viewed as particularly controversial." A separate piece by [The Hill](#) (1/30, Cama, Henry, 1.25M) notes that some Democrats have "expressed concerns" about the candidates' positions on a variety of issues.

Additional coverage was provided by the [Washington Post](#) (1/30, 11.43M), the "Morning Energy" blog of [Politico](#) (1/30, Adragna, 12K), [E&E Daily](#) (1/30, Subscription Publication), [CBS News](#) (1/30, 4.4M), and [KUIK-AM](#) Portland, OR (1/28).

Alaska Gov. Walker Praises Zinke. The [AP](#) (1/30, 2.2M) reports that Alaska Gov. Bill Walker on Monday "expressed renewed hope for working with the federal government on oil, gas and land issues, praising President Donald Trump's pick to head the Interior Department as 'just what we need.'" Walker said Zinke "understood the challenges Alaska has had with access to federal lands for things like resource development." He said, "I think we're going to have a very, very different relationship, certainly with the Department of Interior and what they oversee."

Cattlemen's Beef Association And Public Lands Council Support Confirmation Of Zinke. The [High Plains and Midwest AG \(KS\) Journal](#) (1/30) reports that the National Cattlemen's Beef Association and the Public Lands Council released a statement on Jan. 16 in support of the confirmation of Rep. Ryan Zinke as secretary of interior. Tracy Brunner, NCBA president, said, "During his tenure in the U.S. House of Representatives, Rep. Zinke has consistently advocated for our western communities, economies, and ranchers. He has demanded transparency and the inclusion of stakeholders when it comes to land management decisions, and has a strong understanding of the challenges that come with stewarding the West." Dave Eliason, PLC president, added, "The current leadership of the Department of Interior refuses to stand up for the very people who have invested their time and livelihoods into the management and improvement of public lands. Having a Secretary of Interior who understands public lands, and who values true cooperation with stakeholders is in the best interest of all Americans. We are excited for Representative Zinke to refocus the agency's efforts to their core mission, and to have someone in this role that understands the unique challenges we face in the West."

ZINKE ELABORATES ON ETHICS, ENERGY, PUBLIC LANDS POSITIONS. [E&E](#) (1/30) report that ahead of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee's vote Tuesday on Interior secretary nominee Ryan Zinke, "the Montana Republican lawmaker disclosed to the committee that a super political action committee he was once affiliated with is under investigation and reaffirmed his opposition to turning federal lands over to states." Zinke also "told Sen. Debbie Stabenow that he supports transferring the Forest Service from the Agriculture Department to Interior — a position that he noted the Michigan Democrat had 'concerns' with when they met privately." Zinke also "elaborated on his views on energy development, climate change and science, fire management, endangered species, and other hot-button issues in his responses to questions for the record submitted by committee members."

BERNHARDT SEEN AS FRONT-RUNNER TO BECOME INTERIOR DEPUTY SECRETARY. [E&E](#) (1/30) reports that "a high-ranking George W. Bush administration Interior Department lawyer could soon be making a comeback as the agency's No. 2 official." David Bernhardt, "who served as the department's top attorney under Bush and worked on the Trump transition team, is the front-runner to become Interior's next deputy secretary, according to a source close to the Trump administration." Bernhardt was "in charge of Trump's Interior transition team for a short time after the November presidential election but was replaced as that team's leader later that month by Doug Domenech, another Bush-era Interior Department staffer."

TRUMP ORDERS ELIMINATION OF TWO REGULATIONS FOR EVERY NEW ONE.

[USA Today](#) (1/30, Korte, 5.28M) reports that President Trump on Monday signed an executive action he said will “knock out two regulations for every new regulation” federal agencies adopt. Trump called the action “the largest cut by far, in terms of regulation,” in history and said the policy was targeted at small business. Trump said, “There will be regulation, there will be control, but there will be normalized control where you can open your business and expand your business.” USA Today adds that directive’s text “was not immediately available, and it was unclear how the two-for-one mechanism would work.” [Reuters](#) (1/30, Rascoe) says Trump’s action “will prepare a process for the White House to set an annual cap on the cost of new regulations.” For the remainder of the fiscal year, “the cap will require that the cost of any additional regulations be completely offset by undoing existing rules.” Trump [tweeted](#), “The American dream is back. We’re going to create an environment for small business like we haven’t had in many, many decades!” He [re-tweeted](#) the post on the @POTUS Twitter account.

While a [Wall Street Journal](#) (1/30, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) editorial praises the order, arguing that it will it could lead to job creation and new investment, a number of reports highlights the difficulty Trump may face in putting it into action. For example, [Politico](#) (1/30, Restuccia, 2.46M) said that while Trump’s aides cast the move as “the most significant regulatory reform effort in decades,” implementing it “isn’t as simple as Trump’s flashy ‘one in, two out’ slogan suggests.” According to Politico, the order “could take months, if not years, to implement and likely faces costly court challenges.” [Bloomberg Politics](#) (1/30, Dlouhy, 201K) similarly says that “fulfilling the promise...may prove more difficult than signing an order.” Eliminating a regulation “involves months of work that can include vetting multiple rule drafts and reacting to thousands or even millions of comments from industries, trade groups and individuals.” Moreover, the process “can be challenged with a lawsuit by aggrieved parties.”

Trump’s Two For One Regulation Rule Concerns Policy Experts. The [Minneapolis Star Tribune](#) (1/30, 1.27M) reports Trump’s executive order mandating the repeal of two regulations for every new one instituted has concerned policy experts. “There’s no logic to this,” says William Gale, a tax and fiscal policy expert at the Brookings Institution. The order also caused concerns among environmental groups who fear the order will be used to roll back environment and climate regulations. Trump claims the rollback will help small and medium sized business. He further stated he would like to remove 75 percent of existing regulations

Trump’s Two-For-One Order Could Put Endangered Species At Risk. The [Idaho Statesman](#) (1/30, 197K) reports Trump’s executive two for one order could delist the Yellowstone grizzly from the endangered species list. The order forces the Office of Management and Budget to calculate the cost of each regulation and for new rules to create a “net economic benefit.” Brett Hartl, director of Government Affairs at the Center for Biological Diversity, says, “Every time you repeal a rule, you are passing a rule.” The Trump White House also told employees not to issue new regulations without having an Administration official review the rule first-- a difficult task when many posts have yet to be filled or even nominated.

HOUSE TO VOTE ON PUBLIC LAND, CYBERSECURITY BILLS THIS WEEK. [E&E](#) (1/30) reports that the House this week will “vote on a series of bills addressing land and cybersecurity concerns, including a measure authorizing research into adding Fort Ontario to the National Park System.” According to the article, “the special resource study called for in H.R. 46 would evaluate the national significance of the site, which was destroyed by French forces in 1756 and rebuilt.” The bill orders “the Interior secretary to issue a report no later than three years after funding becomes available that would include the costs of alternative means for preservation of the area, which is on the National Register of Historic Places.”

FEDERAL HIRING FREEZE SPARKS CONCERNS ABOUT SEASONAL

FIREFIGHTERS. The [Idaho Statesman](#) (1/30, 197K) reports that President Trump's federal hiring freeze "does have national security and public safety exceptions that appear to cover firefighters." However, "it's been a week, and federal agencies are still looking for details." The Statesman notes that "agencies are compiling lists of what positions meet the national security and public safety exemptions, and most expect firefighting to easily fall into that category, said sources in the Department of Agriculture and Interior."

HUNDREDS RALLY FOR PUBLIC LANDS IN MONTANA. The [Bozeman \(MT\) Daily Chronicle](#) (1/30, 52K) reports that "about 700 people" gathered Monday at a rally for public lands in Helena, Montana. According to the article, "speakers railed against land transfer and talked about how important public lands are to both the state's economy and everyday life." Interior nominee Ryan Zinke, "was also on the menu at the rally, as some of the speakers called on him to ensure public lands in Montana remain public under his watch."

Additional coverage was provided by the [Billings \(MT\) Gazette](#) (1/30, 208K).

FELBAB-BROWN: TRUMP SHOULD BE QUESTIONED AT EVERY OPTION OVER CONSTRUCTING A WALL. For the "Pundits" blog of [The Hill](#) (1/30, Felbab-Brown, Contributor, 1.25M), Vanda Felbab-Brown, a senior fellow in foreign policy at The Brookings Institution, writes President Trump's rhetoric against Mexico demonstrated "the shallowness of his concept of the wall, its costs, and how they will be financed and borne." She argues the public, press, and members of Congress need to continuously ask the president about the cost of his proposed wall and all assumptions the plan is based on. She points out the cost of the wall ranges from a little as \$12 billion up to \$285 billion.

America's Great Outdoors:

National Park Service:

EX-NPS DIRECTOR ACCUSES ADMINISTRATION OF TRYING TO "SUPPRESS" AGENCY. The [Washington Post](#) (1/30, Rein, Eilperin, 11.43M) reports that ex-National Park Service Director Jonathan Jarvis, who retired earlier this month, "spoke out Monday against the Trump administration's efforts to 'suppress' the agency, posting a lengthy statement on a Facebook site for park rangers in support of employees." Writing on the Facebook page of the Association of National Park Rangers, Jarvis said, "I have been watching the Trump administration trying unsuccessfully to suppress the National Park Service with a mix of pride and amusement." Jarvis "was referring to the communications blackout the administration ordered last week at the Park Service and other agencies restricting what they should convey to the public about their work."

"WOOFIELEAKS" LEADS TO DELAY OF DOG RULES AT GOLDEN GATE NATIONAL RECREATION AREA. The [Washington Post](#) (1/30, Bittel, 11.43M) reports that "dog owners have been fighting the National Park Service for years over a proposal to restrict dog-walking" within the Golden Gate National Recreation Area. Recently, "one of the groups opposed to the new rules upped the ante, filing Freedom of Information Act requests for Park Service emails about the plan and posting them this month on a website." According to Save Our Recreation, "the pro-dog group that created WoofieLeaks, the FOIA-ed communications show Park Service bias against dog enthusiasts." Following the "leaks", officials with the recreation area "announced this month that implementation of the new dog-walking rules would be delayed indefinitely" and "the Park Service also is planning an investigation."

LOWELL NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK RECEIVES \$25,000 GRANT TO INCREASE

TRAIL USAGE. The [Lowell \(MA\) Sun](#) (1/30, 138K) reports that the Lowell National Historical Park has “received a \$25,000 grant in an initiative meant to get residents living near the park to use its trails.” The grant, from the National Park Foundation, will “engage more than 250 residents in activities like hiking, birding, photography, canal cleanups, learning about botany and ecology, and stress-reducing activities, such as yoga and meditation.”

NPS SEEKS PUBLIC COMMENTS ON ISLE ROYALE WOLVES. The [AP](#) (1/30, 272K) reports that “federal officials are inviting the public to learn more about options for dealing with the declining gray wolf population at Isle Royale National Park in Michigan.” The National Park Service has “scheduled open houses for Feb. 14 in Duluth, Minnesota, and Feb. 15 in Houghton, Michigan.” Also, “for those who can’t attend, webinars are scheduled for Feb. 16 and Feb. 21.”

Additional coverage was provided by [WWTV-TV](#) Cadillac, MI (1/30, 51K).

NPS SEEKS PUBLIC INPUT ON MONOCACY BATTLEFIELD ACCESS. The [AP](#) (1/30, 272K) reports that the National Park Service is “soliciting public comment on a plan to add eight miles of pedestrian trails and a kayak launch to the Monocacy (mah-NAH’-kah-see) National Battlefield near Frederick.” The environmental assessment, which was released Friday, is “open for review through Feb. 28.” According to park Superintendent Chris Stubbs, “the plan would enable more visitors to walk in the footsteps of soldiers who fought there on July 9, 1864.”

Fish and Wildlife Service:

TRUMP’S FORMER ADVISER CALLS FOR OVERHAUL OF ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT. The [Independent \(UK\)](#) (1/30, Batchelor, 1.28M) reports that “a senior member of Donald Trump’s now-defunct transition team has called for the US Endangered Species Act to be drastically watered down, claiming it doesn’t actually protect wildlife.” Myron Ebell, “who led a team tasked by the Republican billionaire with drafting an action plan to overhaul the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), said the legislation was being used as a ‘political weapon’ and many of its policies should be scrapped.” Speaking in London on Monday, Ebell said: “The endangered species act doesn’t do much for protecting endangered wildlife, but it does a huge amount to control private property land use, and it is enforced very selectively, so that some landowners are not affected but people with exactly the same habitat, their use is limited or eliminated.” He continued, “It is a political weapon and I am very interested in reforming, and I don’t know if we will see that any time in the next decade, but I hope so.”

ENVIRONMENTAL GROUP FILES SUIT OVER POLYMET LAND SWAP. The [Virginia \(MN\) Mesabi Daily Tribune](#) (1/30, 60) reports that “an environmental group officially filed a lawsuit to block the federal government’s land exchange with PolyMet, a crucial step in the company’s attempt to build a copper-nickel mine near Hoyt Lakes.” WaterLegacy filed the suit Monday in U.S. District Court, “seeking to overturn a 6,560-acre land swap, which the group says ‘violated the Federal Land Policy and Management Act because it failed to consider the highest and most profitable use of the lands for mining related uses, significantly undervalued the federal lands, and would result in a windfall for the PolyMet foreign corporation at the expense of Minnesota taxpayers and public lands.’” Meanwhile, the Center for Biological Diversity and Earthworks has “filed a formal 60-day notice of intent to sue the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and U.S. Forest Service under the Endangered Species Act, saying the project would disrupt lynx and wolf habitats.”

ADDITIONAL COVERAGE: LESSER LONG-NOSED BAT COULD BE REMOVED FROM ENDANGERED LIST. Additional coverage that the lesser long-nosed bat is proposed for removal from the endangered species list was provided by [Courthouse News](#) (1/30, 2K).

Bureau of Land Management:

BUNDY STANDOFF TRIAL PUTS SPOTLIGHT ON WESTERN LAND FIGHT. The [Reno \(NV\) Gazette-Journal](#) (1/30, 219K) reports that “the fight over America’s public lands is lurching back to the national spotlight.” Nevada rancher Cliven Bundy, his sons Ryan and Ammon Bundy and “compatriots will stand trial in February in federal court over their 2014 armed standoff with the U.S. Bureau of Land Management.” Meanwhile, in Congress, “legislative proposals could upend who’s in charge of tens of millions of acres of federal land across the West.” According to the article, “the trial will force participants to relive the tense moments when federal agents and armed Bundy sympathizers narrowly averted a shootout after the BLM tried to seize the Bundys’ cattle over unpaid grazing fees,” and “that tension will carry over into Congress, where conservationists, hunters, miners, energy developers, recreationists and rural communities are rallying behind the forces they believe will defend their version of the American West.”

AERIAL PROJECT WILL RESEED 10,000 ACRES OF BURNED RANGELAND. The [AP](#) (1/30, 272K) reports that “state and federal land managers launched an aerial reseed effort to stabilize and rehabilitate more than 10,000 acres of public land burned by wildfires in eastern Nevada last year.” According to the article, “the work started last week and was expected to improve habitat for threatened sage grouse and other wildlife as well as boost the overall health of watersheds.” Officials with the U.S. Bureau of Land Management and Nevada Department of Wildlife were “concentrating the effort in Elko, Eureka and White Pine counties.”

Securing America’s Energy Future:

Onshore Energy Development:

CONGRESS POISED TO TARGET OBAMA-ERA ENVIRONMENTAL RULES. The [Washington Post](#) (1/30, Harvey, 11.43M) reports that Republicans in Congress this week may target “a regulation finalized in mid-November that seeks to curb fugitive methane emissions from oil and gas drilling operations on public lands” and a rule that “prohibits coal-mining companies from engaging in any activities that could permanently pollute streams.” Resolutions to disapprove of the two Obama actions are already scheduled for this week and the rules are poised for elimination under the Congressional Review Act.

The [AP](#) (1/30, Taylor) reports Congressional Republicans are moving swiftly, with the repeal measure “set for a House vote Wednesday and a Senate vote shortly thereafter.” [Politico Pro](#) (1/30) reports that “on Wednesday, the House is slated to vote on whether to nullify the Interior Department’s stream protection rule.” The Senate hasn’t “definitively said when it’ll take up the challenges, but Majority Leader Mitch McConnell plans to use time in between floor votes on Cabinet nomination to consider CRA resolutions.”

[E&E](#) (1/30) reports that Republican lawmakers are “calling on state leaders and the energy industry to craft alternative methane rules for oil and gas operations on public lands.” GOP legislators on Monday were set to “begin the process of repealing a pair of Interior Department regulations.” House Natural Resources Chairman Rob Bishop expected to introduce a joint resolution “that would use authority granted under the Congressional Review Act to undo federal regulations enacted within the last 60 legislative days.”

Additional coverage was provided by [The Hill](#) (1/30, Devaney, Wheeler, 1.25M), [NPR](#) (1/30, 1.92M), [Reuters](#) (1/30), [The Hill](#) (1/30, Henry, 1.25M), the [Washington \(DC\) Times](#) (1/30, Wolfgang, 272K), [PBS NewsHour](#) (1/30, 255K), the [Billings \(MT\) Gazette](#) (1/30, 208K), the [Casper \(WY\) Star-Tribune](#) (1/30, 93K), the [West Virginia MetroNews](#) (1/30,

6K), [WDTV-TV Bridgeport \(WV\)](#) Bridgeport, WV (1/30, 4K), and [WTVW-TV Evansville \(IN\)](#) Evansville, IN (1/30, 6K).

Colorado Methane Regulations Helped Grow Economy. [ClimateWire](#) (1/30, Subscription Publication) reports that House Republicans began to repeal an Interior Department directive to cut methane from oil and gas wells on federal lands, calling it a “bad rule” and “regulatory overreach.” However, a few years earlier, oil and gas companies sat down with environmentalists in Colorado to develop a set of regulations for methane. Proponents say that the similar rule in Colorado has led to reduced methane leaks and created economic growth for the state. Supporters, including industry and environmentalists, say the GOP move to repeal the similar federal regulations could halt the economic growth of the methane mitigation industry.

NORTH DAKOTA WARNS PAID PIPELINE PROTESTERS TO SUBMIT STATE INCOME TAXES. The [Washington Times](#) (1/30, Richardson, 272K) reports North Dakota Tax Commissioner Ryan Rauschenberger said his office expects to see state income tax submissions from activists paid to agitate the Dakota Access pipeline protest. Rauschenberger asserted that authorities are “looking at the entities that have potential paid contractors here on their behalf doing work.” He explained, “If an organization is directly paying someone to come and do activities on their behalf, even protesting,” or were “receiving income” while in “North Dakota performing activities for an organization, they owe income tax from Day One.” The state spent more than \$22 million in expenses related to the protest; meanwhile, “millions have been funneled into the six-month-old demonstration via crowdfunding websites” and at least 30 environmental organizations, including Greenpeace and the Sierra Club, are known to have supported the demonstration. If these environmental organizations paid protesters, however, they are “not saying so publicly.”

Empowering Native American Communities:

NATIVE AMERICANS CONCERNED ABOUT TRUMP ADMINISTRATION PLANS FOR RESERVATIONS. The [High Country \(CO\) News](#) (1/30, 77K) reports North Dakota lawmakers are pushing to have greater control over Native American reservations. With the new Trump Administration, some feel as if their services will be cut or eliminated. To survive the Trump Administration, some feel that they need to cozy up to state and local authorities as a way to fill gaps in services that may inevitably form.

CALIFORNIA COUNTY SUES OVER 1,400 TRUST ACRES FOR TRIBE. [Law360](#) (1/30, 23K) reports that “the county of Santa Barbara sued the Bureau of Indian Affairs in California federal court on Saturday to challenge a decision taking more than 1,400 acres of land into trust for the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians for tribal housing and economic development, claiming the decision flouted trust acquisition regulations and environmental law.”

FEDS CONTEST ARAPAHO CONTRACT CLAIMS IN SHOSHONE ROW. [Law360](#) (1/30, 23K) reports that “the federal government on Friday shot back at the Northern Arapaho Tribe’s claim that the Bureau of Indian Affairs improperly rejected proposals to operate a tribal court and offer counseling services under federally funded contracts, saying the tribe has submitted proposals for contracts without seeking the consent of another tribe that shares its Wyoming reservation.”

Office of Insular Affairs:

COURT APPROVES EXTENSION OF DEADLINE IN CUC AUTHORIZATION TO PROCEED. [Marianas Variety](#) (1/31) reports that “District Court for the NMI designated Judge David Carter granted the request of the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. and the

federal government to extend the deadline for the CNMI government to file its notice of authorization to proceed with the \$5 million funding for stipulated order 2 projects on or before March 1, 2017.” According to the article, “the CNMI must deposit \$5million into the court’s registry or file a notice with the court regarding the Department of the Interior’s authorization to proceed for funding SO2 projects by Feb. 1, 2017.”

ADDITIONAL COVERAGE: OIA TRANSMITS \$31.5M IN COMPACT FUNDING TO MARSHALL ISLANDS. Additional coverage that the Office of Insular Affairs has “released to the Marshall Islands government’s Ministry of Finance Compact payments totaling \$31,503,897 for the period Oct. 1, 2016, to Dec. 31, 2016” was provided by the [Saipan \(MNP\) Tribune](#) (1/31, 641).

Tackling America’s Water Challenges:

DETERIORATING RELATIONS WITH MEXICO COULD THREATEN COLORADO WATER TALKS. [E&E](#) (1/30) reports that “President Trump’s rocky relations with Mexico could have major consequences for the Colorado River and the 35 million Americans who rely on it for water.” A bilateral agreement, which “specifies exactly how much water Mexico receives, as well as other important factors like how those deliveries are reduced in years of exceptional drought,” is set to expire this year. The article says that “the seven Colorado River Basin states — and particularly Lower Basin states Nevada, Arizona and California — say it’s pivotal that the new administration finalize a new agreement.” However, “many are now worried that U.S.-Mexico relations have already deteriorated to the point where that may be impossible.”

Top National News:

TRUMP FIRES ACTING ATTORNEY GENERAL AFTER SHE REFUSES TO DEFEND VISA BAN. President Trump’s evening dismissal of Acting Attorney General Sally Yates, an Obama Administration holdover, over her defiance of his visa ban is being portrayed as the latest indicator of the fast-moving and chaotic nature of the ongoing story. The firing took place hours after Yates said she would not direct the DOJ to defend the ban, a highly unusual statement that was itself the focus of considerable coverage, which was quickly updated after Trump dismissed her from her job – which she was holding only until Sen. Jeff Sessions’ Senate confirmation. With the acting head of Immigration and Customs Enforcement also dismissed late Monday, some outlets even reference the Watergate-era “Saturday Night Massacre,” when Richard Nixon dismissed top DOJ officials – a comparison that was also [being made on Twitter](#).

[Reuters](#) (1/30) reports that Trump fired Yates “after she took the extraordinarily rare step of defying the White House and saying the Justice Department would not defend” his visa ban. US Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia Dana Boente was named acting attorney general and promptly reversed Yates’ guidance. The [New York Times](#) (1/30, Landler, Sanger, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) said the firing was part of “an escalating crisis for his 10-day-old administration.” In a statement, Trump said that Yates “had betrayed the administration.”

[McClatchy](#) (1/30, Allam, 74K) reports that Boente was sworn in as acting attorney general at 9:00 p.m. Monday. In a statement, Boente said, “I am honored to serve President Trump in this role until [Attorney General-designate] Sessions is confirmed. I will defend and enforce the laws of our country to ensure that our people and our nation are protected.” McClatchy says the “rapid late night developments recalled the ‘Saturday Night Massacre’ in 1973, when President Richard Nixon fired his attorney general and deputy attorney general over their refusal to dismiss Watergate prosecutor Archibald Cox.”

[USA Today](#) (1/30, Johnson, 5.28M) says the “ouster came just hours after Yates said she would not defend” the executive order. A White House statement that USA Today says “appeared to be in Trump’s own voice” said, “Ms. Yates is an Obama administration appointee who is weak on borders and very weak on illegal immigration.” The [Los Angeles Times](#) (1/30, Lauter, Kaleem, 4.52M) says Trump had initially asked Yates, “a career prosecutor who served as the Obama administration’s deputy attorney general,” to “stay on as acting attorney general pending the confirmation” of Sessions. Earlier in the day Monday, Trump criticized the delay in confirming Sessions [on Twitter](#), calling Yates “an Obama A.G.”

The [AP](#) (1/30, Pace) says that while Yates’ directive was likely to have been temporary, it “deepened the chaos surrounding Trump’s order. At least three top national security officials” – DHS Secretary Kelly, Defense Secretary Mattis, and Secretary of State-designate Tillerson – “have told associates they were not aware of details of directive until around the time Trump signed it. Leading intelligence officials were also left largely in the dark,” and Senate Foreign Relations Chairman Bob Corker “said that despite White House assurances that congressional leaders were consulted, he learned about the order in the media.” The [Washington Post](#) (1/30, Zapotosky, Horwitz, Berman, 11.43M) says Yates’ refusal had marked “a stunning dissent to the president’s directive from someone who would be on the front lines of implementing it.”

The [Washington Post](#) (1/30, Horwitz, 11.43M) has a profile of Yates, who “began her tenure as an Obama appointee two years ago by saying that pursuing justice was more important to her than bringing federal cases in court.” The [Washington Post](#) (1/30, Rucker, Costa, 11.43M) also writes that Sessions’ “fingerprints” were “on nearly all” of Trump’s executive orders thus far, and “his influence in the administration extends far beyond the Justice Department.” Sessions “is the intellectual godfather of the president’s policies,” and is “reach extends throughout the White House.”

The [Boston Globe](#) (1/30, McGrane, Viser, 1.08M) calls Yates’ defiance and dismissal “an extraordinary series of events,” while the [Washington Times](#) (1/30, Dinan, 272K) says the firing “capp[ed] off a dramatic day.” Before the firing, Pete Williams reported on [NBC Nightly News](#) (1/30, story 3, 2:15, Holt, 16.61M), “Justice Department lawyers defended the orders in court over the weekend but tonight Acting Attorney General Sally Yates...tells them to stop defending it. She says the order is not consistent with justice or doing what’s right.” [ABC World News Tonight](#) (1/30, story 7, 1:20, Muir, 14.63M) and the [CBS Evening News](#) (1/30, story 12, 2:05, Pelley, 11.17M) also mentioned Yates’ stance as part of broader coverage. [Bloomberg Politics](#) (1/31, Strohm, 201K) and [Politico](#) (1/30, Gerstein, 2.46M) also have reports.

ICE Acting Director Also Replaced. [McClatchy](#) (1/30, Murphy, 74K) reports Trump “also replaced the acting director of the Immigration and Customs Enforcement on Monday.” The President “did not give a reason for replacing” Daniel Ragsdale. The [AP](#) (1/30) reports Ragsdale was replaced by Thomas Homan, who since 2013 has “served as the executive associate director of ICE Enforcement and Removal Operations.” The [Washington Times](#) (1/30, Morton, 272K) reports DHS Secretary Kelly said of Homan, “I am confident that he will continue to serve as a strong, effective leader for the men and women of ICE.” [The Hill](#) (1/30, Hensch, 1.25M) and the [Huffington Post](#) (1/30, 237K) also have brief reports.

Trump Names Duke DHS Deputy Secretary. In related news, the [Washington Times](#) (1/30, Dinan, 272K) reports Trump on Monday named Elaine Duke as the DHS deputy secretary. The Times says the selection of the “little-known bureaucrat,” who has “a long history in government management,” disappointed some “immigration crackdown advocates who’d been anticipating a more prominent figure.”

Massachusetts, Washington State Plan Legal Challenges. [Politico](#) (1/30, Dezenski,

2.46M) reports that Massachusetts Gov. Charlie Baker, a Republican, “said Monday that State Attorney General Maura Healey plans to file a brief in US federal court in Boston Tuesday arguing against President Donald Trump’s executive order restricting immigrants from seven Muslim-majority countries.” [Politico](#) (1/30, Conway, 2.46M) additionally reports that Washington State Attorney General Bob Ferguson will file a federal lawsuit against Trump, DHS, and Administration officials over the visa ban, “charging that the executive order is unconstitutional, his office announced Monday. In a separate motion, he will also request to halt the implementation immediately on the basis that it is harming the economy and families in Washington.”

WHITE HOUSE DEFENDS IMMIGRATION ORDER IN FACE OF VOCAL, WIDESPREAD OPPOSITION. President Trump’s executive order on immigration receives heavy media coverage including extensive coverage on the network news broadcasts and pervasive print and online reporting. The coverage is very negative toward the Administration – which is, nonetheless, described as standing firm (or “defiant,” as some news outlets put it) in the face of protests and criticism from lawmakers of both parties, the media, businesses, and others.

The lead story for [NBC Nightly News](#) (1/30, lead story, 3:10, Holt, 16.61M) described Trump as “defiant and digging in...amid a mounting firestorm over his travel ban.” Trump is “aiming to put a positive spin on a weekend of chaos and outrage” during which “protests erupted at airports all across the country as more than 100 people were detained.” The [Washington Post](#) (1/30, Berman, Zapotosky, 11.43M), which also describes the White House as “defiant,” similarly reports that “despite mounting criticism, legal challenges and questions that stretched from Capitol Hill to the United Nations,” Trump continued to “adamantly defend” his immigration order. [USA Today](#) (1/30, Bacon, 5.28M) says the “massive protests that swept the nation” have “encouraged advocacy groups to press their case on other issues.”

[ABC World News Tonight](#) (1/30, lead story, 3:50, Muir, 14.63M) also reported in its lead story that Trump’s order sparked “protests coast to coast at airports across the country,” but added (Karl) that the Administration is “pushing back against stories of chaos and confusion. Families detained in airports. Customs and Border Patrol officials unclear on how to enforce the new policy. Terminals turned into makeshift legal aid clinics, with lawyers offering their services to travelers impacted by the ban.”

The [New York Post](#) (1/30, Moore, 3.82M) says Trump “stood firm” in the face of the criticism, and [USA Today](#) (1/30, Bacon, 5.28M) describes Trump as “unyielding...in his position that the ban was for the good of the country.” But the [AP](#) (1/30, Caldwell) says that while Trump “has staunchly defended his order,” in “a statement Sunday and tweets Monday, Trump misstated the facts multiple times.” The AP goes on to compare “what Trump said and how it compares with the facts.”

Under the headline “Sean Spicer Defends Trump’s Immigration Ban,” the [New York Post](#) (1/30, Moore, 3.82M) quotes the White House press secretary as saying, “We’re going to put the safety of Americans first. We’re not going to wait until we get attacked and figure out how it’s going to happen again. ... That’s the key point in this: How do we keep ahead of threats.” Spicer added, “This is why the majority of Americans agree with the president. ... These steps are frankly common-sense steps to make sure we’re never looking at the rear-view mirror asking, ‘We should have done something.’ ... His view is not to wait to get ahead of the curve. We don’t know when that hour comes. We don’t know when the individual comes to do us harm.” At the same time, [Reuters](#) (1/30) cites an internal DHS document which says the US “has granted waivers to let 872 refugees into the country this week,” despite Trump’s order. A DHS official confirmed the waivers, but Reuters says it “was not known if additional waivers would be granted, the official said.”

[Roll Call](#) (1/30, Bennett, 63K) said “chaos ensured” at US airports as Customs and

Border Patrol agents “detained 109 individuals between late Friday afternoon and Sunday evening as they tried to enter the country after getting off international flights.” The White House argued that “being detained for a few hours during an intensive security check is outweighed by the possibility of getting to live in the United States for the rest of one’s life.” Meanwhile Trump “tried to deflect blame for weekend ‘problems’ at US airports by pointing the finger at Senate Minority Leader Charles E. Schumer,” who “appeared in New York over the weekend with refugees, at one point getting emotional.” Trump argued in a [two part](#) tweet that the “causes of the ‘big problems’ includes ‘the tears of Senator Schumer.’” In addition, he “seemed to defend the airport chaos by [tweeting](#) there’s ‘nothing nice’ about trying to stop ‘terrorists’ from entering the United States.” In its lead story, [NBC Nightly News](#) (1/30, lead story, 3:10, Holt, 16.61M) showed Trump saying, “Chuck Schumer yesterday with fake tears. I’m going to ask him who was his acting coach.”

Gerald F. Seib writes in the [Wall Street Journal](#) (1/30, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) that Sen. John McCain, who has shown a willingness to defy Trump, has called the order a recruiting boon for ISIS. Nancy Cordes reported on the [CBS Evening News](#) (1/30, story 2, 1:50, Pelley, 11.17M) that while Democrats “may have been the loudest...many Republicans like Pennsylvania’s Charlie Dent were just as critical.” Rep. Charlie Dent: “It was not well thought out. It was not properly considered.” Schumer “tried to capitalize on GOP discontent today by introducing a bill to reverse the travel ban,” but it was “quickly blocked by Republicans who support the executive order.” The [Washington Post](#) (1/30, O’Keefe, 11.43M)says that Senate Democrats on Monday “sought to quickly pass legislation that would rescind Trump’s ban, but there was insufficient GOP support.” [Reuters](#) (1/30, Zengerle) reports that while Sen. Dianne Feinstein “said she had 27 co-sponsors of a bill to rescind the order,” Sen. Tom Cotton “blocked consideration of the measure.” [Politico](#) (1/30, Caygle, Schor, 2.46M) said the failed effort “underscor[ed] the limits of the minority’s power to force substantive changes to the policy that sparked massive protests over the weekend.”

In a separate story, [Politico](#) (1/30, Caygle, 2.46M) said DHS Secretary Kelly will meet with House lawmakers on Tuesday. According to Democratic sources, “more than a dozen chief House lawmakers are invited to the meeting,” including, “House Speaker Paul Ryan (R-Wis.), House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy (R-Calif.), House Minority Whip Steny Hoyer (D-Md.) and several other lawmakers who lead committees with ties to the refugee ban.”

The [Detroit Free Press](#) (1/30, Snavelly, Bomey, 1.01M) reports that while “other major automakers have largely remained silent so far,” Ford CEO Mark Fields and Ford Chairman Bill Ford “strongly rebuked” Trump’s order, saying in a joint statement Monday, “Respect for all people is a core value of Ford Motor Company, and we are proud of the rich diversity of our company here at home and around the world. ... That is why we do not support this policy or any other that goes against our values as a company.” The Free Press says that “a number of technology companies – including Apple, Alphabet, Facebook and Lyft – have issued statements or taken other action over the weekend in opposition to the travel ban,” but Ford “is the first major automaker to take a clear position.” [USA Today](#) (1/30, Bomey, 5.28M) says the statement from Ford “further complicates the on-again, off-again relationship between” the company and Trump.

The [CBS Evening News](#) (1/30, story 6, 0:20, Pelley, 11.17M) also said that “some of the largest tech companies have come out against the President’s immigration ban,” and the [New York Times](#) (1/30, Wingfield, Wakabayashi, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) reports that Amazon and Expedia on Monday “stepped up their opposition to the order with filings that were part of a lawsuit in federal court against the Trump administration, arguing that the order will hurt their businesses.” the tech firms’ move represents “an escalation of the technology industry’s efforts to push back on the order.”

[Politico](#) (1/30, White, 2.46M) said that following “a weekend of criticism from Silicon Valley, Wall Street chief executives began to join their tech colleagues in criticizing Trump’s move.” Goldman Sachs CEO Lloyd Blankfein said in a voicemail Monday to bank employees, “This is not a policy we support. ... I recognize that there is potential for disruption to the firm, and especially to some of our people and their families.” In an email to employees on Sunday, JPMorganChase chief executive Jamie Dimon, “reassured workers of the ‘unwavering commitment to the dedicated people working here’ including those on sponsored visas possibly hit by the executive order.” Politico also highlighted criticism of Trump’s order from GE CEO Jeffrey Immelt, Tesla CEO Elon Musk and Starbucks CEO Howard Schultz.

The Washington Post’s opinion page is also highly critical of Trump’s order. A [Washington Post](#) (1/30, 11.43M) editorial warns of the “grave potential consequences of an order that’s wrong ethically and strategically.” Richard Cohen writes in his [Washington Post](#) (1/30, 11.43M) column that the Trump Administration is “inept and indifferent to the suffering it might cause,” adding that “if a new policy is needed, Trump’s people have no idea of how to implement it and the White House seems similarly oblivious to the damage it is doing to the United States’ image.” Eugene Robinson takes a similar line in his [Washington Post](#) (1/30, 11.43M) column, calling the “refugee ban and travel restrictions” a “disgraceful exercise in cruelty” that “do nothing to make us safer — and may, in fact, make us less safe — but they punish Muslims, and that is his whole point.”

The reaction to Trump’s order was not universally negative, however. The [New York Times](#) (1/30, Tavernise, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) says that while the order “may be setting off protests around the country and raising eyebrows and objections among allies abroad,” a “large portion of the electorate is behind the president.” Trump supporters “say that the promise of tougher immigration policies is one of the main reasons they voted for him,” and the order, “along with an earlier one for building a wall, shows that he is serious, they say.”

A separate [New York Times](#) (1/30, Bromwich, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) story says that in “those precincts that Mr. Trump carried in the November election,” the order “was often met with satisfaction and approval,” and the protests “were viewed as misguided and a source of irritation.”

Quinnipiac, Rasmussen Polls Show Support For Trump’s Policy. The [CBS Evening News](#) (1/30, story 5, 1:45, Pelley, 11.17M) reported that a Quinnipiac University poll taken three weeks ago found that “by margin of 48 percent to 42 percent, American voters support suspending immigration from terror-prone regions, even if it means turning away refugees,” and “53 percent support requiring immigrants from Muslim countries to register with the government.” CBS (Reynolds) added that Trump supporters gathered at Los Angeles International Airport over the weekend to “voic[e] their belief that the President’s immigration order is sensible and overdue.” In addition, the [Washington Times](#) (1/30, Dinan, 272K) reports that a new Rasmussen Reports [poll](#) released Monday found that a “majority of voters back the concept of halting admissions from seven terrorist-connected countries,” and “general broad support for the kind of executive order President Trump signed on Friday.” According to the poll 56 percent said that “a pause in visas for Syria, Sudan, Iraq, Iran, Yemen, Somalia and Libya makes sense.”

In his “Talking Points Memo” segment on [Fox News’ The O’Reilly Factor](#) (1/30, 767K), Bill O’Reilly said that Trump “is being responsible, setting up a new refugee standards” provided that the standards “are fully explained and expedited in a timely manner.” O’Reilly added that the Administration “must be willing to grant exceptions and above all, should help refugees that survived in the terror zones abroad.” While “protecting Americans is obviously priority number one,” the “nobility of our nation demands we help suffering, helpless people if we can.”

The controversy over Trump's order comes as King Abdullah II of Jordan is visiting Washington this week, a situation the [AP](#) (1/30, Lederman) says is "testing" Trump's "ability to maintain key Arab alliances while cracking down on immigration from some Muslim countries and possibly moving the American Embassy in Israel to Jerusalem." Abdullah met Monday with Defense Secretary Mattis and Vice President Pence. He and Trump will "come face-to-face on Thursday at the National Prayer Breakfast." The AP cites "officials" who said the embassy "was a prime topic of discussion in Abdullah's meeting with Pence."

Border Patrol, ICE Agents Voice Support For Trump's Order. Trump's order drew praise from "the men and women on the front lines of protecting America's borders," [Western Journalism](#) (1/30, Davis, 802K) reports. A joint statement from the Border Patrol and Immigration and Customs Enforcement Councils said, "As representatives of the nation's Frontline immigration officers and agents responsible for enforcing our laws and protecting our borders, we fully support and appreciate President Trump's swift and decisive action to keep the American people safe and allow law enforcement to do its job." The statement added that Trump's orders "will make America safer and more prosperous" and have "improved morale."

Bannon Urged "A Hard Line" On Trump's Immigration Order. [Reuters](#) (1/30, Walcott, Ainsley) reports that as the Trump Administration crafted the immigration order, Trump's chief strategist Steve Bannon pushed "a hard line." While senior DHS officials "interpreted the order to mean that lawful permanent residents – green card holders – who hailed from the seven Muslim-majority countries targeted in the immigration order would not face additional screening when they entered the country," they "were quickly overruled by Bannon" and "White House senior policy adviser Stephen Miller, a close ally of Bannon's, the officials said." One official said, "They were in charge of this operation," adding that "the experts were 'almost immediately overruled by the White House, which means by Bannon and Miller.'" The [Los Angeles Times](#) (1/30, Bennett, Bierman, 4.52M) says Bannon and Miller "see themselves as launching a radical experiment to fundamentally transform how the US decides who is allowed into the country and to block a generation of people who, in their view, won't assimilate into American society." According to the Times, White House aides are weighing "new, onerous security checks that could effectively limit travel into the US by people from majority-Muslim countries to a trickle."

The [Washington Post](#) (1/30, Parker, 11.43M) says the "fallout" from the order "exposed tender rifts within the Republican Party, alarmed members of his Cabinet, fueled suspicions among his top advisers — and left the defiant commander in chief stewing over who was to blame." Inside the White House, "tensions flickered as differences in management style emerged between two factions: one led by" Bannon and Miller, "and the other composed of chief of staff Reince Priebus and his deputies, who are accustomed to operating with a more traditional chain of command." Trump aides were "divided over who was at fault" for the "clumsy and dysfunctional" rollout of the order, "with some blaming Miller" and others saying Priebus "should have taken charge of better coordinating with the departments and communicating with lawmakers and the public."

House Aides Helped Draft Trump's Immigration Order. [Politico](#) (1/30, Bade, Sherman, Dawsey, 2.46M) reported that senior aides to the House Judiciary Committee helped Trump's aides draft the order, "but the Republican committee chairman and party leadership were not informed, according to multiple sources involved in the process." Word of the House aides involvement "helps unlock the mystery of whether the White House consulted Capitol Hill about the executive order," and "confirms that the small group of staffers were among the only people on Capitol Hill who knew of the looming controversial policy."

While the [Wall Street Journal](#) (1/30, Paletta, Hong, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) casts

the White House as being on the defensive, correspondent Major Garrett said in the lead story for the [CBS Evening News](#) (1/30, lead story, 3:30, Pelley, 11.17M) that the order was “rushed through the usual protocol.” Similarly, Jonathan Karl reported in the lead story for [ABC World News Tonight](#) (1/30, lead story, 3:50, Muir, 14.63M) the order “was rushed through so quickly on Friday, top officials on the President’s national security team were left in the dark.” Defense Secretary Mattis “was there when the President signed it, and even applauded, but he had no input whatsoever, and was surprised by its contents.” Likewise, DHS Secretary Kelly “was getting his first full briefing on the executive order right as the President was signing it.” In addition “top Republicans in Congress [were caught] by surprise.” Sens. Marco Rubio and Tim Scott “said the rush to implement the policy created confusion, anxiety and uncertainty.” Sens. John McCain and Lindsey Graham “went further, saying, ‘We fear this executive order will become a self-inflicted wound in the fight against terrorism.’”

California Lawmaker Calls On White House To Release Melania Trump’s Immigration Records. [Politico](#) (1/30, Marinucci, 2.46M) reported that California state Sen. Nancy Skinner has called on the White House to release First Lady Melania Trump’s immigration. Skinner’s demand comes after an AP investigation “last November found Melania Trump lacked proper work visas when she was employed as a model after arriving in the US from her native Slovenia more than two decades ago.” Skinner told Politico, “No one in the Trump operation has released any of the documentation to indicate what was the circumstance, or whether she had full legal status. ... We only know they had a lawyer look at whatever papers she chose to give.”

MEDIA ANALYSES: “DISSENT MEMO” SHOWS DIVIDE BETWEEN CAREER DIPLOMATS, TRUMP. More than 100 career diplomats at the State Department reportedly have signed a “dissent memo” opposing President Trump’s executive order that suspends refugee access to the US and blocks visas from specific countries. Media coverage characterizes the letter as revealing a sharp divide between State Department employees and Trump, with much reporting casting press secretary Sean Spicer’s comments as critical of government workers who do not support the President’s position.

[ABC World News Tonight](#) (1/30, story 5, 1:20, Muir, 14.63M) reported there is “word of growing dissent inside the State Department.” ABC’s Martha Raddatz said, “Dozens of career diplomats worldwide have drafted a rare formal letter of dissent” that [NBC Nightly News](#) (1/30, lead story, 3:10, Holt, 16.61M) and the [CBS Evening News](#) (1/30, lead story, 3:30, Pelley, 11.17M) reported was circulated throughout the Foreign Service. Even if the memo is “never formally submitted,” [Politico](#) (1/30, Toosi, 2.46M) says, it “represents a revolt from within the US bureaucracy.” The [Washington Times](#) (1/30, Taylor, 272K) explains the memo was submitted through the State Department’s “dissent channel,” which is “an established, albeit secretive, medium for Foreign Service officers to question US policy that dates back to the Vietnam War era.” The Times adds that the names of dissent cable authors and co-signers are “rarely revealed in public.”

The [Washington Post](#) (1/30, Morello, 11.43M) reports there are “several versions of the draft” being circulated throughout the State Department “as diplomats weigh in and ask for revisions.” More than 100 diplomats, according to diplomats “familiar with the matter,” have signed the letter. The Post says one draft, first reported by ABC News, contends the ban will not prevent attacks on the US and will lead to ill will toward Americans. The [AP](#) (1/30, Lee) says the memo argues, “A policy which closes our doors to over 200 million legitimate travelers in the hopes of preventing a small number of travelers who intend to harm Americans from using the visa system to enter the United States will not achieve its aim of making our country safer.” The memo adds, “This ban stands in opposition to the core American and constitutional values that we, as federal employees, took an oath to uphold.” Elise Labott reported on [CNN’s Situation Room](#) (1/30, 554K) that the diplomats compare the order “to the internment of Japanese-Americans during World War II.”

The [New York Times](#) (1/31, Landler, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) reports on its front page that the White House “warned State Department officials that they should leave their jobs if they did not agree” with the President’s policy, as part of what the Times says is “an extraordinary effort to stamp out a wave of internal dissent against” the visa ban. [Bloomberg Politics](#) (1/30, Wadhams, 201K) says Spicer – speaking after the dissent memo was circulated – “rebuked State Department officials who objected to” the executive order. Bloomberg quotes Spicer as saying government employees should “either get with the program or they can go.” Spicer said that Trump is “going to put the safety of this country first,” adding, “If somebody has a problem with that agenda, then that does call into question whether they should continue in that post or not.” Spicer said, according to the [Washington Post](#) (1/30, Phillip, 11.43M), that Trump “appreciates the people who serve this nation and the public servants.” Spicer added, “That’s up to them to question whether or not they want to stay.”

The [New York Times](#) (1/30, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) editorializes that the Administration “would be reckless to dismiss this warning from public servants who have spent their careers safeguarding American interests abroad.” The Times adds that the concerns of the diplomats “are shared by lawmakers from both parties, several European leaders and top United Nations officials.”

Editorial Wrap-Up:

NEW YORK TIMES. “*President Bannon?*” In an editorial, the [New York Times](#) (1/30, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) says it has never “witnessed a political aide move as brazenly to consolidate power as Stephen Bannon — nor have we seen one do quite so much damage so quickly to his putative boss’s popular standing or pretenses of competence.” The Times adds that Trump’s executive order “politicizing the process for national security decisions, suggests Mr. Bannon is positioning himself not merely as a Svengali but as the de facto president.” Trump, The Times adds, “has not simply broken with tradition but has embraced the risk of politicizing national security, or giving the impression of doing so.”

“*Diplomats Decry Muslim Ban.*” A [New York Times](#) (1/30, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) editorial cites a memorandum from more than 100 State Department employees voicing opposition to President Trump’s travel ban and says the Administration “would be reckless to dismiss this warning from public servants who have spent their careers safeguarding American interests abroad.” The Times adds that the concerns of the diplomats “are shared by lawmakers from both parties, several European leaders and top United Nations officials.”

“*Protecting Birth Control Access In Oregon.*” In an editorial, the [New York Times](#) (1/31, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) welcomes an Oregon bill to protect access to birth control and other reproductive healthcare services, including abortion, even if the Affordable Care Act is repealed. The Times adds that the bill’s sponsors recognize “that people need access to the full range of reproductive health care in order to participate fully in society and the economy,” and welcomes this “powerful defense...of necessary reproductive health care.”

WASHINGTON POST. “*The White House’s Soft-Core Holocaust Denialism.*” A [Washington Post](#) (1/30, 11.43M) editorial argues that while the “charitable explanations” for the White House’s decision to omit any mention of Jews from President Trump’s statement on the Holocaust would be “ignorance and incompetence,” another reading of the statement “is more sinister” – that by “stripping any reference to Jews from its brief statement, the Trump administration engaged in what Deborah Lipstadt, an Emory University historian, calls ‘soft-core Holocaust denial.’”

“Trump’s Executive Order On Immigration Is A Self-Inflicted Wound.” A [Washington Post](#) (1/30, 11.43M) editorial on President Trump’s immigration order warns of the “grave potential consequences of an order that’s wrong ethically and strategically.”

“Democrats Shouldn’t Go Scorched-Earth On Trump’s Supreme Court Nominee.” The [Washington Post](#) (1/30, 11.43M) argues in an editorial that while Sen. Jeff Merkley’s promise that he would call for a filibuster of anyone President Trump nominates to the Supreme Court might be “emotionally satisfying,” that approach “would be mistaken” because “provoking Republicans to resort to the filibuster-abolishing ‘nuclear option’ would leave Democrats disarmed of that weapon against a second Trump pick should another vacancy arise during his presidency.” Moreover, “the Supreme Court confirmation process needs to be protected from partisan politics to the greatest extent possible and that a scorched-earth Democratic response to any nominee, regardless of the individual merits, would simply deepen that harmful politicization.”

WALL STREET JOURNAL. “Trump Dams The Regulatory Flood.” A [Wall Street Journal](#) (1/30, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) editorial praises President Trump’s executive order that for every new Federal regulation, two must be eliminated. arguing that it will it could lead to job creation and new investment, a number of reports highlights the difficulty Trump may face in putting it into action.

“Obama’s Refugee Legacy.” In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (1/30, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) cites President Obama’s comment on President Trump’s immigration orders and criticizes the former President for speaking out against Trump so quickly,

“The GOP’s DeVos Doubters.” The [Wall Street Journal](#) (1/30, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) editorializes that Republicans would provide teachers unions a significant victory by voting against Education Secretary-designate Betsy DeVos. The Journal says the unions are putting pressure on Republicans because DeVos would be the first Education Secretary that did not share their views since the Reagan Administration.

Big Picture:

HEADLINES FROM TODAY’S FRONT PAGES.

Wall Street Journal:

[White House Fires Acting Attorney General Sally Yates](#)
[Trump To Add CIA Director To National Security Council](#)
[Facebook Is Trying Everything To Re-Enter China—And It’s Not Working](#)
[Investors Press For CEO’s Ouster At Arconic, The Alcoa Spinoff](#)

New York Times:

[Trump Fires Acting Attorney General](#)
[State Dept. Officials Should Quit If They Disagree With Trump, White House Warns](#)
[In Ban On Migrants, Trump Supporters See A Promise Kept](#)
[For Leaders Of US Allies, Getting Close To Trump Can Sting](#)
[Questions Raised About Brain Centers Backed By Betsy DeVos](#)
[Republicans’ Paths To Unraveling The Dodd-Frank Act](#)
[Boy Scouts, Reversing Century-Old Stance, Will Allow Transgender Boys](#)

Washington Post:

[University Student Charged In Quebec Mosque Rampage](#)
[Acting Attorney General Fired Over Ban](#)
[In A Long-sought Home, A Case Of Lead Poisoning](#)
[Sessions Helping Power Trump’s Frenetic Start](#)
[Furor Over Ban Reveals White House, GOP Rifts](#)

Financial Times:

[Myanmar Killing Stokes Political Violence Fears](#)
[Backlash From Big Business Grows Over Trump Upheaval](#)

Washington Times:

[Trump Fires Acting Attorney General Sally Yates](#)
[Obama, Bush Didn't Feel The Same Pushback As Trump, White House Says](#)
[Supreme Court Nominee Has Both Sides Preparing For Battle](#)
[North Dakota Wants Hired Pipeline Protesters To Pay State Income Taxes](#)
[Canadian Man Charged In Deadly Shooting Spree At Quebec City Mosque](#)
[Extremist Links Undercut Chile's Image Of Stability](#)

Story Lineup From Last Night's Network News:

ABC: Travel Ban Reactions; Terrorist Origins; Travel Ban-Obama, May Responses; Quebec City Mosque Attack; Travel Ban-State Dept, Vet Responses; Trump-NSC Appointment; Travel Ban-Legal Challenge; Delta IT Errors; 40-Year-Old Murder Case; Severe Weather; Health-Lung Cancer Screening; GHW Bush Health; Disabled Swimmer.

CBS: Travel Ban Reactions; Travel Ban-Congress Responses; Travel Ban-Expert Comment; Travel Ban-Iraqi General Responses; Travel Ban-Trump Supporters; Travel Ban-IT Companies Responses; Quebec City Mosque Attack; US SEAL Casualty-Yemen; Trump-Media Criticism, NSC; Trump-Supreme Court Nominee; GHW Bush Health; Travel Ban-Legal Challenge, Detainees.

NBC: Trump-Travel Ban; Trump-NSC Appointment; Travel Ban-Legal Challenge; Travel Ban-Family Responses; Travel Ban-Iraqi Responses; Quebec City Mosque Attack; GHW Bush Health; Phone Scam; Traffic Pileups; Health-Hesitant Doctor Visits; Annual Dog Show; Former Homeless College Wrestler; Travel Ban-Holt Comment.

Network TV At A Glance:

Travel Ban Reactions – 10 minutes, 30 seconds
Travel Ban-Impacted Individual Responses – 8 minutes, 50 seconds
Quebec City Mosque Attack – 5 minutes, 45 seconds
Trump-NSC Appointment – 3 minutes, 45 seconds
Travel Ban-Legal Challenge – 3 minutes, 35 seconds
GHW Bush Health – 45 seconds

Story Lineup From This Morning's Radio News Broadcasts:

ABC: Acting Attorney General Sally Yates Fired; Quebec City Mosque Attack; Boy Scouts-Transgender; Wall Street News.

CBS: Acting Attorney General Sally Yates Fired; Confirmation Hearing; Quebec City Mosque Attack; Boy Scouts-Transgender; Wall Street News.

FOX: Acting Attorney General Sally Yates Fired; Confirmation Hearing; Travel Ban Reactions; Travel Ban-IT Companies Responses.

NPR: Acting Attorney General Sally Yates Fired; Confirmation Hearing; Trump DHS Appointment; Travel Ban-Legal Challenge; Health-Lung Cancer Screening; Wall Street News; Boy Scouts-Transgender; Sony Cutting Movie Business; Walgreen-Rite Aid Merger.

Washington Schedule:

TODAY'S EVENTS IN WASHINGTON.

White House:

PRESIDENT TRUMP — Meets with Pharma; meets with Chief of Staff, Reince Priebus; has lunch with Mayor Rudy Giuliani; holds a listening session with cyber security experts; signs Executive Order; announces his pick for SCOTUS justice.

VICE PRESIDENT PENCE — Joins THE PRESIDENT to meet with Pharma; participates in the Senate Republican Policy Lunch, followed by private meetings with individual lawmakers; joins THE PRESIDENT as he announces Supreme Court of the United

States nominee.

US Senate: 9:30 AM Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee votes on energy and interior secretary nominees – Business Meeting, with agenda including nominations of Rick Perry to be Secretary of Energy and Ryan Zinke to be Secretary of the Interior, ‘An original resolution authorizing expenditures by the committee for the 115th Congress’, and ‘Ratification of subcommittee assignments for the 115th Congress’ * Then-President-elect Donald Trump announced the nominations of former Texas Governor Perry and Republican Rep. Zinke last month * During a Republican presidential candidate debate in November 2011, Perry forgot that the Department of Energy was one of the three federal govt agencies he would eliminate if elected, eventually saying ‘oops’ after naming the departments of commerce and education as the other two. He has since said he has changed his mind over wanting to eliminate the department Location: Rm 366, Dirksen Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://energy.senate.gov/public/>

9:30 AM Senate Judiciary Committee votes on GOP Sen. Jeff Sessions to be AG – Executive Business Meeting, with agenda including nomination of Jeff Sessions to be Attorney General, committee rules, and ‘S. 178, Elder Abuse Prevention and Prosecution Act’ * President Donald Trump announced the nomination of Republican Sen. Sessions in November Location: Rm 226, Dirksen Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://judiciary.senate.gov/>

10:00 AM Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing on North Korea – Hearing on ‘Confronting the North Korea Threat: Reassessing Policy Options’, with testimony from American Enterprise Institute Chair in Political Economy Dr Nicholas Eberstadt; and Council on Foreign Relations Senior Fellow for Korea Studies and Program on U.S.-Korea Policy Director Scott Snyder Location: Rm 419, Dirksen Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://foreign.senate.gov/>

10:00 AM Senate HELP Committee votes on nomination of Betsy DeVos to be education secretary – Executive Session, with agenda including nomination of Betsy DeVos to be Secretary of Education, ‘Adoption of Committee Rules for the 115th Congress’, and ‘Subcommittee Assignments for the 115th Congress’ * Then-President-elect Donald Trump announced the nomination of businesswoman DeVos in November Location: Rm 430, Dirksen Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://help.senate.gov/>

10:00 AM Senate Finance Committee votes on GOP Rep. Tom Price to be HHS secretary – Executive Session, to consider the nomination of Tom Price to be Secretary of Health and Human Services * Then-President-elect Donald Trump announced the nomination of the Republican congressman in November * Rep. Price has said that he will divest himself of stock in over 40 companies and resign a position with the American Medical Association if confirmed by the Senate, to avoid potential conflicts of interest Location: Rm 215, Dirksen Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC http://finance.senate.gov

11:00 AM Senate Indian Affairs Committee organizational meeting – Business Meeting, with agenda including ‘Selection of the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Committee’, ‘Adoption of the rules of the Committee for the 115th Congress’, and ‘Adoption of the funding resolution for the Committee for the 115th Congress’ Location: Rm 628, Dirksen Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://indian.senate.gov>
<https://twitter.com/IndianCommittee>

US House: 10:00 AM HOUSE COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM Business meeting – Full Committee, business meeting on the committee’s oversight and authorization plan; and markup on H.R. 396, the “Tax Accountability Act of 2017”; H.R. 194, the “Federal Agency Mail Management Act of 2017”; the “Federal Employee Antidiscrimination Act of 2017”; H.R. 679, the “Construction Consensus Procurement Improvement Act of 2017”; H.R. 653, the “Federal Intern Protection Act of 2017”; and H.R. 657, the “Follow the Rules Act.” Location: 2154 Rayburn.
<http://oversight.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/GOPoversight>

10:00 AM House Commerce subcommittee hearing on Medicaid – Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee hearing on ‘Medicaid Oversight: Existing Problems and Ways to Strengthen the Program’, with testimony from Foundation for Government Accountability Senior Fellow Josh Archambault; Manhattan Institute Director of Health Policy Paul Howard; Department of Health and Human Services Assistant Inspector General for Evaluation and Inspections Ann Maxwell; Georgetown University Law Center Senior Scholar in Health Law Timothy Westmoreland; and Government Accountability Office Director of Health Care Carolyn Yocom Location: Rm 2123, Rayburn House Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://energycommerce.house.gov/>
<https://twitter.com/HouseCommerce>

10:00 AM House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Organizational Meeting Location: Rm 2167, Rayburn House Office Bldg, Washington, DC
<http://transportation.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/Transport>

10:00 AM House Oversight and Government Reform Committee Business Meeting – Business Meeting, with agenda including ‘The Committee’s Authorization and Oversight Plan for the 115th Congress’, ‘H.R. 657, Follow the Rules Act’, ‘H.R. 653, Federal Intern Protection Act of 2017’, ‘H.R. 679, Construction Consensus Procurement Improvement Act of 2017’, ‘H.R. XXX, Federal Employee Antidiscrimination Act of 2017’, ‘H.R. 194, Federal Agency Mail Management Act of 2017’, and ‘H.R. 396, Tax Accountability Act of 2017’ Location: U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC <http://oversight.house.gov/>
<https://twitter.com/GOPoversight>

10:30 AM Bipartisan Reps. Tom Reed and Tim Ryan keynote ITIF event – ‘What Should the Trump Administration’s Manufacturing Strategy Look Like?’ Information Technology and Innovation Foundation event. House Manufacturing Caucus co-chairs Tom Reed and Tim Ryan keynote, with panel including Deloitte Consulting Supply Chain Strategy Leader Principal Kelly Marchese, McKinsey Global Institute Partner Sree Ramaswamy, and Manufacturers Alliance for Productivity and Innovation Foundation Chief Economist Cliff Waldman Location: CVC-268, U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC www.itif.org
<https://twitter.com/ITIFdc>

11:00 AM House Minority Whip Steny Hoyer regular pen-and-pad briefing Location: H-144, U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC www.democraticwhip.gov/
<https://twitter.com/WhipHoyer>

2:00 PM House Government Reform subcommittee hearing on ‘fraud, waste, and abuse under ‘Obamacare’ – Health Care, Benefits, and Administrative Rules Subcommittee hearing on ‘Fraud, Waste and Abuse under the Affordable Care Act’ * Earlier this month, President Donald Trump signed an executive order to ‘minimize the economic burden of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act pending repeal’, with Congress having passed a resolution to ease passage of further legislation to repeal the ACA. UPDATED to room 2247 Rayburn from 2154 Rayburn. Location: Rm 2247, Rayburn House Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://oversight.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/GOPoversight>

2:00 PM House meets for legislative business – House of Representatives meets for legislative business, with agenda including consideration of legislation including ‘H.R. 58 – FRIENDS Act’, as amended, ‘H.R. 666 – Department of Homeland Security Insider Threat and Mitigation Act of 2017’, ‘H.R. 642 – Fusion Center Enhancement Act of 2017’, ‘H.R. 526 – Counterterrorism Advisory Board Act of 2017’, as amended, ‘H.R. 665 – Airport Perimeter and Access Control Security Act of 2017’, ‘H.R. 366 – DHS SAVE Act’, ‘H.R. 549 – Transit Security Grant Program Flexibility Act’, ‘H.R. 687 – First Responder Access to Innovative Technologies Act’, ‘H.R. 584 – Cyber Preparedness Act of 2017’, ‘H.R. 655 – Securing the Cities Act of 2017’, ‘H.R. 437 – Medical Preparedness Allowable Use Act’, ‘H.R. 612 – United States-Israel Cybersecurity Cooperation Enhancement Act

of 2017', 'H.R. 505 – Border Security Technology Accountability Act of 2017', as amended, and 'H.R. 677 – CBRN Intelligence and Information Sharing Act of 2017' under suspension of the rules Location: Washington, DC <http://www.house.gov/>

3:00 PM House Rules Committee hearing – Hearing on 'H.J. Res. XXX – Disapproving the final rule submitted by the Department of Defense, the General Services Administration, and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration relating to the Federal Acquisition Regulation' and 'H.J. Res. XXX – Providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the final rule of the Bureau of Land Management relating to 'Waste Prevention, Production Subject to Royalties, and Resource Conservation' Location: H-313, U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC <http://www.rules.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/RulesReps>

Other: 7:30 AM Council for Higher Education Accreditation Annual Conference continues – Council for Higher Education Accreditation Annual Conference and CHEA International Quality Group (CIQG) Annual Meeting continues, with day two speakers including Republican Rep. Virginia Foxx and University of Virginia Center for Politics Director Larry Sabato Location: Capital Hilton, 1001 16th St NW, Washington, DC www.chea.org <https://twitter.com/CHEAnews> #CHEA2017AC

8:00 AM Women in Government Relations task force hosts event with Dem Rep. Cheri Bustos – Women in Government Relations Transportation & Infrastructure Task Force hosts '20-to-1 Congressional Coffee' with Democratic Rep. Cheri Bustos Location: Allstate Insurance Company, 444 N Capitol St NW, Washington, DC <http://www.wgr.org> <https://twitter.com/WGRDC>

12:00 PM GOP Rep. Sean Duffy keynotes U.S. Chamber of Commerce event on corporate disclosures – U.S. Chamber of Commerce Center for Capital Markets Competitiveness (CCMC) hosts lunch discussion on 'what can be done to modernize corporate disclosures and make them useful for today's investors'. Republican Rep. Sean Duffy keynotes and CCMC President and CEO David Hirschmann delivers remarks, both on 'the importance of modernizing the corporate disclosure systems'; CCMC Executive Vice President Tom Quaadman provides overview of a new white paper looking at 'why materiality matters and should remain the guiding principle for public company disclosure'; and Vanguard Principal and Fund Treasurer Glenn Booream, University of Delaware Corporate Governance Professor Charles Elson, Hunton & Williams partner Scott Kimpel, and Sustainability Accounting Standards Board founder and CEO Jean Rogerson participate in panel presentation on the future of corporate disclosures Location: USCC, 1615 H St NW, Washington, DC www.uschamber.com <https://twitter.com/USChamber>

8:00 PM DNC chair candidate Rep. Keith Ellison speaks on Democracy for America call – Democracy for America live call with Democratic Rep. Keith Ellison, who has been endorsed by DFA in his campaign to become chair of the Democratic National Committee Location: TBD www.democracyforamerica.com <https://twitter.com/dfaaction>

Last Laughs:

LATE NIGHT POLITICAL HUMOR.

Jimmy Kimmel: "There's a lot of passion because after like 60 years, we finally have a President who keeps his campaign promises, and it's Donald Trump."

Jimmy Kimmel: "You know how over the course of his time in office, over four years or eight years, the President gets old and his hair turns gray? During this administration, instead of him, that's going to happen to all of us."

Jimmy Kimmel: “There were demonstrations in just about every major city yesterday. People went to the airport to protest. That’s when you know people are mad. It’s Sunday, they have no travel plans, and they go to the airport.”

Jimmy Kimmel: “I don’t understand any of this. I mean, if Donald Trump, if he stops all the immigrants from coming into the country, where’s he going to find his next wife?”

Jimmy Kimmel: “[Trump] also spoke with Vladimir Putin for about an hour. Putin wanted to know if Trump liked the gift he got him. Donald told him, yes, he was enjoying the presidency very much.”

Stephen Colbert: “At Dulles Airport, a five-year-old Iranian boy was detained for hours and kept from his mother. Or as Kellyanne Conway calls it, ‘alternative daycare.’”

Stephen Colbert: “Do you have any idea how angry people have to be to voluntarily go to JFK?”

Stephen Colbert: “And there was outrage all over the world. A member of Iraq’s parliament said that following the ban, ‘it is very likely that Iraq will stop granting US citizens entry visas.’ Sorry kids, there goes spring break in Fallujah. Though, honestly, when did the US ever ask permission to enter Iraq?”

Trevor Noah: “Think about it, even the border officials didn’t understand the ban. They had to enforce it and didn’t understand it. They were probably asking the refugees to help them.”

Jimmy Fallon: “Here in New York, thousands of people showed up at JFK airport over the weekend to protest Trump’s immigration ban. People who were actually at the protest said, ‘This is awful,’ while the people out in LaGuardia were like, ‘You think you got it bad? We’re at LaGuardia.’”

Jimmy Fallon: “It’s reported President Obama could receive up to \$20 million for his upcoming memoir, which is more than any other President. I guess he’s already come up with a few options for the title. First there’s ‘Fifty Shades of Graying.’”

Jimmy Fallon: “Last night Miss Kenya said that she thinks President Trump has actually done a lot to unify the US. Trump was so happy with Miss Kenya, he started a rumor that she was born in America.”

Seth Meyers: “Former President Obama released his first public statement today since leaving the White House, and I have it here. Just let me read it to you in full. ‘Oh, hell no!’”

Seth Meyers: “President Trump said today that if he had announced his travel ban earlier, the ‘bad people would rush into our country.’ I don’t know how to tell you this, but dude, turn around.”

Seth Meyers: “Trump did accomplish something truly remarkable. He managed to spark yet another round of massive, nationwide protests for the second time in just the first week of his presidency. And people are willing to go to places to protest. Last week it was parks. This week it was airports. Next week people are going to march for gay rights at the DMV.”

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From: Swift, Heather
To: [Micah Chambers](#); [Amanda Kaster](#)
Subject: Fwd: Legislative Summary, Friday, February 3, 2017
Date: Thursday, February 02, 2017 6:19:41 PM
Attachments: [Legislative Summary-02-03-17.doc](#)

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Heather Swift
Press Secretary
Department of the Interior
@DOIPressSec
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----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Moody, Joan** <joan_moody@ios.doi.gov>
Date: Thu, Feb 2, 2017 at 6:08 PM
Subject: Fwd: Legislative Summary, Friday, February 3, 2017
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Date: Thu, Feb 2, 2017 at 4:58 PM
Subject: Legislative Summary, Friday, February 3, 2017
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Legislative Summary, Friday, February 3, 2017

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Legislative Summary
from
the Legislative Counsel
Friday, February 3, 2017
To: All Interested Interior Offices

Attached for your information is today's Legislative Summary.

In order to keep the Summary as up-to-date as possible, we request that any bureau or office contacted directly regarding hearings or markups notify this office immediately.

New information about scheduled hearings and business meetings appears shaded in yellow. Hearings printed in *bold italic* type indicate DOI involvement.

If you have any questions or corrections, please contact Joseph Nevils on (202) 208-4580, or via E-Mail (Joseph_Nevils@ios.doi.gov).

2017 Congressional Recess Schedule

<i>Senate</i>	<i>Holidays & Special Days</i>	<i>House</i>
State Work Period Feb. 20 – Feb. 24	President's Day Feb. 20	District Work Week Feb. 20 – Feb. 24
		District Work Week Mar. 7 – Mar. 10
		District Work Week Mar. 14 – Mar. 23
State Work Period Mar. 16 – Mar. 17	St. Patrick's Day Mar. 17	
State Work Period Apr. 10 – Apr. 21	Easter Apr. 16	District Work Week Apr. 10 – Apr. 21
		District Work Week May 8 – May 12
State Work Period May 29 – Jun. 2	Memorial Day May 29	
		District Work Week May 30 – Jun. 2
State Work Period Jul. 3 – Jul. 7	Independence Day Jul. 4	District Work Week Jul. 3 – Jul. 7
		District Work Week Aug. 1 – Sep. 1
State Work Period Jul. 31 – Sep. 4	Labor Day Sep. 4	Labor Day Sep. 4
		District Work Week Sep. 18 – Sep. 22
State Work Period Sep. 21 – Sep. 22		
State Work Period Oct. 9 – Oct. 13	Columbus Day Oct. 9	Columbus Day Oct. 9
		District Work Week Oct. 16 – Oct. 20
	Veterans Day Nov. 10 (Observed)	
State Work Period Nov. 20 – Nov. 24	Thanksgiving Day Nov. 23	District Work Week Nov. 20 – Nov. 24
State Work Period Dec. 18 – Dec. 29	Christmas Day Dec. 25	Christmas Day Dec. 25

Scheduled Floor Action

House

Friday, Feb. 3, 9 a.m.

The House reconvenes at 9 a.m. for legislative business. The chamber is expected to consider a measure (H J Res 36) that would disapprove of the Interior Department's Venting and Flaring Rule.

Agenda

H J Res 36 — A joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the final rule of the Bureau of Land Management relating to "Waste Prevention, Production Subject to Royalties, and Resource Conservation" (official title to be confirmed).

Recent Legislative Activity of Interest

Senate

By Mr. UDALL (for himself and Mr. HEINRICH):

S. 249. A bill to provide that the pueblo of Santa Clara may lease for 99 years certain restricted land, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

By Mr. UDALL (for himself, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mr. TESTER, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. HEINRICH, and Mr. SCHATZ):

S. 254. A bill to amend the Native American Programs Act of 1974 to provide flexibility and reauthorization to ensure the survival and continuing vitality of Native American languages; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

By Mr. SCHATZ (for himself, Mr. BROWN, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. CARDIN, and Mr. VAN HOLLEN):

S. 255. A bill to increase the rates of pay under the General Schedule and other statutory pay systems and for prevailing rate employees by 3.2 percent, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. KING (for himself and Ms. COLLINS):

S. 257. A bill to clarify the boundary of Acadia National Park, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Ms. BALDWIN (for herself, Ms. WARREN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, and Mr. MERKLEY):

S. 265. A bill to prevent conflicts of interest that stem from executive Government employees receiving bonuses or other compensation arrangements from nongovernment sources, from the revolving door that raises concerns about the independence of financial services regulators, and from the revolving door that casts aspersions over the awarding of Government contracts and other financial benefits; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. SULLIVAN (for himself and Ms. MURKOWSKI):

S. 267. A bill to provide for the correction of a survey of certain land in the State of Alaska; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself and Mr. SULLIVAN):

S. 269. A bill to provide for the conveyance of certain property to the Tanana Tribal Council located in Tanana, Alaska, and to the Bristol Bay Area Health Corporation located in Dillingham, Alaska, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

By Mrs. FISCHER:

S. 271. A bill to strengthen highway funding in the near term, to offer States additional financing tools, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. RISCH (for himself, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. HATCH, Mr. HELLER, Mr. LEE, Mr. DAINES, and Mr. ENZI):

S. 273. A bill to provide for the protection and recovery of the greater sage-grouse by facilitating State recovery plans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. SULLIVAN (for himself and Ms. MURKOWSKI):

S.J. Res. 18. A joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the final rule submitted by the Department of the Interior relating to Non-Subsistence Take of Wildlife, and Public Participation and Closure Procedures, on National Wildlife Refuges in Alaska; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

House

By Mr. YARMUTH (for himself, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. CONNOLLY, Ms. DEGETTE, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. TONKO, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. NORTON, Mr. BEYER, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. DEFAZIO, Ms. LEE, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. BLUMENAUER, and Mr. MCNERNEY):

H.R. 786. A bill to place a moratorium on permitting for mountaintop removal coal mining until health studies are conducted by the Department of Health and Human Services, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committees on Transportation and Infrastructure, and Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. HUNTER (for himself, Ms. CHENEY, Mr. WITTMAN, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. WALZ, Mr. KINZINGER, Mr. PALAZZO, Mr. WESTERMAN, Mr. ABRAHAM, Mr. COMER, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. MARSHALL, Mr. LATTA, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. MAST, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. WELCH, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. PEARCE, and Mr. POLIS):

H.R. 788. A bill to amend the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act to facilitate the establishment of additional or expanded public target ranges in certain States; to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania (for himself and Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania):

H.R. 792. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend and modify the section 45 credit for refined coal from steel industry fuel, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. DESANTIS:

H.R. 796. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to establish a uniform 5-year post-employment ban on the lobbying of any officer or employee of the executive branch or any Member, officer, or employee of Congress by former executive branch officials and former Members, officers, and employees of Congress, to establish a lifetime post-employment ban on lobbying on behalf of foreign governments by former senior executive branch officials, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on House Administration, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Miss GONZA' LEZ-COLO' N OF PUERTO RICO:

H.R. 797. A bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to remove the matching requirement for a territory to use specially allocated Federal funds for Medicare covered part D drugs for low-income individuals; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Miss GONZA' LEZ-COLO' N OF PUERTO RICO:

H.R. 798. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide equitable treatment for residents of Puerto Rico with respect to the refundable portion of the child tax credit and to provide the same treatment to families in Puerto Rico with one child or two children that is currently provided to island families with three or more children; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. LAHOOD (for himself, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. SCHIFF, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mrs. TORRES, and Mr. KINZINGER):

H.R. 801. A bill to amend the National Trails System Act to designate the Route 66 National Historic Trail, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. NUNES (for himself and Mr. VALADAO):

H.R. 805. A bill to authorize the conveyance of and remove the reversionary interest of the United States in certain lands in the City of Tulare, California; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. PEARCE (for himself, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. STEWART, Mrs. RADEWAGEN, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. NEWHOUSE, Mr. BIGGS, Mr. WESTERMAN, and Mr. LAMBORN):

H.J. Res. 56. A joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the final rule of the Bureau of Land Management relating to “Onshore Oil and Gas Operations; Federal and Indian Oil and Gas Leases; Site Security”; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mrs. BEATTY (for herself, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Ms. NORTON, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. MEEKS, Ms. MOORE, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. CLAY, and Mr. RYAN of Ohio):

H. Con. Res. 16. Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that a commemorative postage stamp should be issued in honor of the Buffalo Soldiers; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

The Following Scheduled Hearings are Related to Departmental Programs or Equities:

Tues., Feb. 7 Business Meeting

House Natural Resources Committee (Bishop)

Full Committee organizational meeting for the 115th Congress, to consider Committee rules, oversight plan, and to appoint Committee staff

11:00 a.m.; Room 1324 Longworth

No request for DOI witness

Tentative Hearings:

N/A

POSTPONEMENTS

N/A

Hearings of Interest:

Tues., Feb. 7 Cyber Threats

Senate Armed Services Committee (McCain)

Full Committee oversight hearing on Cyber Threats

9:30 a.m.; Room SVC-217, U.S. Capitol

No request for DOI witness

Tues., Feb. 7 VA's Information Technology Landscape

House Veterans' Affairs Committee (Miller)

Full Committee oversight hearing on Assessing the VA IT Landscape: Progress and Challenges

10:00 a.m.; Room 334 Cannon

No request for DOI witness

Tues., Feb. 7 Securing America's Borders

House Homeland Security Subcommittee on Border and Maritime Security (McSally)

Subcommittee oversight hearing on Ending the Crisis: America's Borders and the Path to Security

10:00 a.m.; Room CVC-210 Capitol

No request for DOI witness

Tues., Feb. 7 Higher Education

House Education and the Workforce Committee (Foxx)

Full Committee oversight hearing on Challenges and Opportunities in Higher Education

10:00 a.m.; Room 2175 Rayburn

No request for DOI witness

Tues., Feb. 7 Making EPA Great Again

House Science, Space and Technology Committee (Smith)

Full Committee oversight hearing on Making EPA Great Again

11:00 a.m.; Room 2318 Rayburn

No request for DOI witness

Tues., Feb. 7 **Emerging Nat'l Security Challenges**
(Postponed)

House Armed Services S/C on Emerging Threats and Capabilities (Wilson)

Subcommittee oversight hearing on Emerging National Security Challenges, Threats, and Opportunities: Key Issues for the 115th Congress and the Emerging Threats and Capabilities Subcommittee

3:30 p.m.; Room 2118 Rayburn
 No request for DOI witness

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Wed., Feb. 8 **Infrastructure Modernization**

Senate Environment and Public Works Committee (Barrasso)

Full Committee oversight hearing on Modernizing our Nation's Infrastructure

10:00 a.m.; Room 406 Dirksen
 No request for DOI witness

Wed., Feb. 8 **FEMA's Federal-Tribal Relationship**

Senate Committee on Indian Affairs (Hoeven)

Full Committee oversight hearing on "Emergency Management in Indian Country: Improving FEMA's Federal-Tribal Relationship with Indian Tribes."

2:30 p.m.; Room 628 Dirksen
 No request for DOI witness

Status of DOI Testimony
December 4, 2017

<u>Bureau/Preparer</u>	<u>Witness</u>	<u>Committee</u>	<u>Subject/Bill Number/Sponsor</u>	<u>OCL Attorney</u>	<u>Date of Hearing</u>	<u>Date OCL Notified</u>	<u>Due to OMB</u>	<u>Bureau Notified</u>	<u>Date Due to OCL</u>	<u>Date Rec'd in OCL</u>
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**The following requests for comments have been received
Thursday, February 2, 2017**

HRG #2 DHS Oversight Testimony 2/8/17
Re: Emergency Management in Indian Country: Improving FEMA's Federal-
Tribal Relationship with Indian Tribes
(8 pages)
DUE 2/3/17 Atty: Tracy Goodluck

From: Heather Swift
To: paul_ross@ios.doi.gov
Subject: Fwd: U.S. Department of the Interior News Briefing for Friday, February 3, 2017
Date: Friday, February 03, 2017 8:46:38 AM

FYI, they haven't updated format yet

Sent from my iPhone

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DATE: FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2017 7:00 AM EST

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DOI in the News:

MURKOWSKI STILL NOT SURE WHEN VOTE FOR ZINKE WILL TAKE PLACE. The “Morning Energy” blog of [Politico](#) (2/2, 12K) reported Senate Energy and Natural Resources Chairwoman Lisa Murkowski “still had no signs on when DOE nominee Rick Perry and Interior Department designee Ryan Zinke might get full votes.” Legislators “are currently working on Betsy DeVos’

Education Department nomination, which Murkowski and fellow Republican Sen. Susan Collins plan to vote against.” According to Murkowski, “Beyond that, there is no certainty to any line up, unfortunately because I really want to get these guys moved.”

[E&E Publishing](#) (2/2, Subscription Publication, 705) reports the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee has been “largely spared the nominee tussling” other committees have experienced, although votes on Perry and Zinke “were delayed for one week after ranking member Maria Cantwell (D-Wash.) raised objections to Perry’s response to the panel, scuttling a markup that had already been noticed.” Murkowski “told E&E News that she delayed the Zinke and Perry votes out of a desire to start off ‘on the right foot.’” Murkowski stated, “You saw how that played out. ... We were the one committee yesterday that moved through two nominees with no fireworks, no boycotts and a bipartisan vote, and I felt pretty darn proud of what we did.”

Zinke Wins Bipartisan Support For Stance On Public Lands. The [Reno \(NV\) Gazette-Journal](#) (2/2, 219K) reports that during a Jan. 17 Senate hearing, Interior nominee Ryan Zinke said he would review President Obama’s designation of the Gold Butte National Monument. When questioned by Sen. Catherine Cortez Masto, “Zinke said he would visit the area and meet with her personally as well as the local community.” On Tuesday, Cortez Masto was “one of four Democrats on the committee to vote in favor of his approval.” Cortez Masto said she was reassured by “Zinke’s stance against wholesale land transfers and his ‘values as an outdoorsman’.” She said in a statement, “I do have some concerns about Rep. Zinke’s positions on issues like designating national monuments under the Antiquities Act and preserving common-sense energy regulations for public lands, and I will be monitoring the Interior Secretary’s actions closely as a member of this committee and speaking out to ensure the Department is always acting in the best interest of Nevadans.”

Grand County Council Invites Zinke To Visit Moab, Utah. The [Moab \(UT\) Sun News](#) (2/2) reports that Grand County Council members “voted 5-1 on Tuesday, Jan. 31, to send a letter that invites” Interior Secretary nominee Ryan Zinke “to meet with them to discuss public lands issues.” Grand County Council member Chris Baird, “who drafted the letter to Zinke, said that as a rule, it’s wise to develop a working relationship with an Interior Department secretary any time that person happens to be in the region.” Baird said, “It’s always worth talking with those folks about how things work in Grand County, and to have a discussion about public lands issues, as they relate to Grand County.”

Spicer Takes Federal Lands, Energy Queries Via Skype. [E&E Publishing](#) (2/1, Subscription Publication, 705) reports “White House press secretary Sean Spicer took questions via Skype for the first time...during his daily briefing,” including public lands and energy questions from some known Trump supporters. In response to a question about federal lands from Lars Larson, a conservative talk radio show host, Spicer said, “I think the president has been very clear that as part of an overall comprehensive energy solution, that we’ve got to utilize the resources that we have that the federal government owns, whether that’s the forests or natural resources and minerals that exist above and below the ground,

that we have too infrequently looked at our own resources and counted too much on foreign sources of energy.” Spicer added that Perry and Zinke will be working together and individually “to look at those natural resources that we have to figure out how to best utilize them to benefit not just our energy but also economic growth opportunities with that.”

SOME REPUBLICAN LAWMAKERS IRKED BY DISSENTING CIVIL SERVANTS. [The Hill](#) (2/2, Kamisar, 1.25M) reports that Republican lawmakers are “frustrated with mounting dissent from civil servants over President Trump’s policies.” According to the article, “some of Trump’s allies in Congress want federal employees to quit it and do their jobs—or get out.” Rep. Pete Sessions said, “When someone works full time for the government, it should be no surprise to them that they serve at the pleasure of the [president].” However, “others in the GOP are looking to tamp down the tensions and go back to business as usual.” Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen believes “that things will ultimately ‘calm down’ once the new administration gets settled in.”

Trump Moves Invigorate Supporters. [McClatchy](#) (2/2, 74K) reports that “two weeks into the Trump presidency,” many federal employees are “resisting Trump policies and preparing for deep cuts to their ranks.” But “while there may be rebellious fires burning inside the Trump fortress, many of his supporters outside are pleased the new president is striking fear inside the bureaucracy.” The article notes that “Trump campaigned on reducing the federal workforce, and his base expects him not only to fulfill that promise but to reorient the government to serve a conservative agenda.”

More Than 60 Alternative Government Twitter Accounts Have Popped Up. The [Billings \(MT\) Gazette](#) (2/2, 208K) reports that “more than 60 alternative government Twitter accounts — including two for Yellowstone National Park and one for Glacier — have popped up across the United States in the wake of the Trump administration’s mid-January order that Interior Department employees stop making posts on a National Park Service account.” Jeff Ruch, executive director of Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility, said, “This whole dimension of communication didn’t exist before and hadn’t been controversial because it was used as a means to amplify talking points. But now all the talking points are thrown out the window.” According to Ruch, “the attempt to control information shows how much the political landscape has changed because of social media in just the past few years.”

Additional coverage was provided by [KCET-TV](#) Los Angeles (2/2, 15K).

Rocky Mountain National Park Denies Joining Alternative Social Media Effort. The [Estes Park \(CO\) Trail-Gazette](#) (2/2, 13K) reports that Rocky Mountain National Park is not “part of this movement.” Kyle Patterson, Rocky Mountain National Park’s Management Specialist/Public Affairs Officer, said, “Rocky Mountain National Park is not involved nor have we joined the group.”

Trump Urged To Pursue Civil Service Reform. For the “Pundits” blog of [The Hill](#) (2/2, Stepman, Contributor, 1.25M), Inez Feltscher Stepman, the Director of the Education and Workforce Development Task Force at the American

Legislative Exchange Council, writes that “the problem of agencies unresponsive to political will and elected representatives far predates the Trump phenomenon.” According to Stepman, “the civil service reforms over the past century have created a monster; a class of permanent, unelected bureaucrats given massive power to intrude into the affairs of the American people.” Stepman urges the President to take “action to reform a runaway agency class by instituting civil service reform.”

CHAFFETZ WITHDRAWS BILL TO TRANSFER FEDERAL LANDS TO STATE OWNERSHIP. The [Washington Post](#) (2/2, Eilperin, 11.43M) reports that Rep. Jason Chaffetz (R-UT) has withdrawn legislation “that would have transferred 3 million acres of land from federal to state ownership, citing objections from constituents who complained that the move would limit access to public hunting and fishing grounds.” In a letter to House Natural Resources Chairman Rob Bishop, also a Utahan, Chaffetz wrote, “As a proud gun owner, hunter and public lands enthusiast, I want to be responsive to my constituents who enjoy these lands.”

Additional coverage was provided by [The Hill](#) (2/2, Cama, 1.25M), [Reuters](#) (2/2, Volcovici), the [Salt Lake \(UT\) Tribune](#) (2/2, 426K), the [Denver \(CO\) Post](#) (2/2, 778K), the [Missoulian \(MT\)](#) (2/2, 114K), the [Idaho Statesman](#) (2/2, 197K), [The Guardian \(UK\)](#) (2/2, Enders, 4.07M), the [Huffington Post](#) (2/2, 237K), the [Huffington Post](#) (2/2, 237K), [Outside](#) (2/2, 17.02M), [The Verge](#) (2/2, 1.25M), [Vox](#) (2/2, 1.15M), and [Yahoo! News](#) (2/2, 8.62M).

BEARS EARS RESOLUTION DRAWS CROWD OF MONUMENT SUPPORTERS. The [Salt Lake \(UT\) Tribune](#) (2/2, 426K) reports that House Speaker Greg Hughes on Thursday made the case for HCR11 to the Senate Natural Resources, Agriculture and Environmental Quality Standing Committee, which passed the measure. According to the article, “at least 300 people, mostly monument supporters, packed two Senate hearing rooms to voice opposition to Hughes’ resolution calling on President Donald Trump to rescind the monument designation.” The article notes that “another committee on Thursday advanced a sister resolution to trim Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument.”

Additional coverage was provided by [Utah Political Capitol](#) (2/2).

FEDERAL WILDLIFE, LAND MANAGERS SAY THEY FEAR FOR THEIR SAFETY. [BuzzFeed](#) (2/2, 6.47M) reports that “one in five managers of federal wildlife refuges say that they, their staff, or their families have been threatened or harassed because of conflicts over government land management policies,” according to a new survey released on Thursday by Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility. PEER received “responses from more than 100 managers of the Fish and Wildlife Service’s National Wildlife Refuges, plus more than 350 land managers employed by the Bureau of Land Management, which controls vast tracts of the American West.” The article notes that “of the wildlife managers who reported being threatened, only half said they were encouraged to report the incident” and “more than 60% of wildlife managers disagreed with a statement that visitor safety is better protected now than it was five years ago.”

DOE, EPA, INTERIOR IGS NOT TARGETED FOR REPLACEMENT.

[E&E News PM](#) (2/1, Bogardus, Smith-Schoenwalder, Subscription Publication) reports that a “now-aborted wholesale purge of inspectors general by President Trump’s transition team did not affect watchdogs from U.S. EPA and the Interior and Energy departments.” Representatives for all three agencies told E&E “that the transition team did not contact their IGs to tell them they would eventually be replaced, as happened elsewhere in the government.”

America’s Great Outdoors:

National Park Service:

NATIONAL PARKS ALLOWED TO HIRE SEASONAL WORKERS. [CNN](#)

(2/2, Hetter, 29.79M) reports that national parks have received approval to hire seasonal and short-term temporary employees “necessary to meet traditionally recurring seasonal workloads,” under a list of exemptions to the federal hiring freeze issued Tuesday. The National Park Service, “which hosted a record-breaking 307.2 million visits in 2015, depends on some 8,000 temporary workers to keep the parks running during the summer high season, a park service spokesman confirmed.” Coalter Baker, a US Office of Management and Budget spokesman, said, “As long as the Department of Interior (which oversees the park service) gives advance notice to its OMB resource management office, the hiring of seasonal workers should be allowable.”

PANEL TO REVIEW NPS HANDLING OF CHIMNEY TOPS FIRE.

The [Knoxville \(TN\) News Sentinel](#) (2/2, 245K) reports that Joe Stutler, “a forester from Oregon, has been named to lead a panel that will review how the National Park Service handled the fires begun in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park that eventually burned 17,000-plus acres and resulted in the deaths of 14 people.” The panel has seven members, according to a list provided Thursday by the National Park Service Division of Fire and Aviation Management. According to Dan Buckley, NPS Wildland Fire Branch chief, “the panel likely will spend several weeks in the area reviewing how the fire was dealt with, then take 30 to 45 days to draft its report.”

DEAL ALLOWS YELLOWSTONE BISON SLAUGHTER. The [AP](#) (2/2, Brown, 272K) reports that “a deal disclosed Thursday will allow the mass slaughter of hundreds of wild bison migrating from Yellowstone National Park, while sparing 25 animals that American Indian tribes want to start new herds.” The deal between Montana, the park and the U.S. Department of Agriculture “resulted from two weeks of intensive negotiations and removes a political obstacle for the park after Montana Gov. Steve Bullock on Jan. 19 temporarily blocked Yellowstone’s plan to kill up to 1,300 of Yellowstone’s 5,500 bison this winter.” According to the article, “the terms are likely to dampen public outcry by averting slaughter for most of a small group of bison that had been earmarked for a conservation effort intended at establishing new herds elsewhere.”

Additional coverage was provided by [KPAX-TV](#) Missoula, MT (2/2, 2K).

NPS NAMES NEW CHIEF HISTORIAN. The [History News Network](#) (2/2,

569) reports that “effective January 8, 2017, Dr. Turkiya L. Lowe entered on duty as the National Park Service’s new Chief Historian.” Joy Beasley, Deputy Associate Director for Cultural Resources, Partnerships, and Science, said, “We are honored to have Dr. Lowe serving as the NPS Chief Historian. Her varied experiences in parks and regional offices in SER and PWR, as well as in the Washington Office, provide a thorough knowledge of NPS cultural resource programs and partnerships. She brings a combination of keen intelligence and positive energy to the Park History program and we are thrilled to have her.” Lowe said, “I look forward to the multiple and varied opportunities for collaboration, dynamic research and documentation projects, and the exciting challenges of leading the NPS’s Park History program.”

FOREST GLADE CEMETERY PLACED ON NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES. The [Foster’s Daily Democrat \(NH\)](#) (2/2, 26K) reports that the Forest Glade Cemetery in Somersworth has joined the National Register of Historic Places.

Fish and Wildlife Service:

JUDGE ASKED TO LIFT HOLD ON YELLOWSTONE DAM. The [AP](#) (2/2, Brown, 272K) reports that “U.S. officials are pressing a federal judge to lift his 2015 order blocking a proposed irrigation dam and fish passage on the Yellowstone River, warning that a rapidly-disappearing, ancient fish species faces a grim future with further delays to construction.” While “fisheries biologists have questioned if the \$57 million project near Glendive, Montana would indeed save the 125 wild pallid sturgeon that survive in the Yellowstone,” federal wildlife officials “contend the fish passage around the site is the sturgeons’ best hope.” In a court document filed late Wednesday, Michael Thabault, assistant regional director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, said that “putting off the project any longer means it will likely lose funding, ‘costing the lives of many of the last wild pallids.’”

Additional coverage was provided by [ABC News](#) (2/2, 3.09M), [U.S. News & World Report](#) (2/2, Brown, 1.02M), the [Bristol \(VA\) Herald Courier](#) (2/2), the [Minneapolis \(MN\) Star Tribune](#) (2/2, 1.27M), [Philly \(PA\)](#) (2/2, 942K), the [Flathead \(MT\) Beacon](#) (2/2, 15K), the [Great Falls \(MT\) Tribune](#) (2/2, 85K), and the [Daily Mail](#) (2/2, 4.59M).

KANSAS OFFICIALS OPPOSE LISTING OF LESSER PRAIRIE CHICKEN. The [AP](#) (2/2, 197K) reports that Kansas officials are insisting that “relisting the lesser prairie chicken as threatened or endangered would negatively affect the state’s economy and agricultural industry.” Gov. Sam Brownback, state Attorney General Derek Schmidt and state Department of Agriculture Secretary Jackie McClaskey are “asking government officials to consider having Kansas landowners implement efforts to protect the lesser prairie chicken.” In a letter to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, “the officials noted that categorizing the chicken as threatened or endangered would unduly affect the state’s primary interest in controlling how the land within its borders is used.”

LEAD AN OBSTACLE IN CALIFORNIA CONDOR REINTRODUCTION.

The [Sacramento \(CA\) Bee](#) (2/2, 574K) reports that the Yurok tribe, the National Park Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service have “launched a formal review of a project that could” return California condors to “the North Coast’s redwoods as early as next year.” Since 2003, “scientists have been testing the lead levels in vultures and ravens to determine how safe California’s northwest region will be for condors.” They “found lead” and “they found that lead levels spike in the fall, when the forested mountains east of Redwood National Park are rife with hunters.” According to the article, “to minimize exposure before any birds are released, condor advocates are reaching out to hunters in an education program that emphasizes the effects of lead ammunition on condors and wildlife generally, and has given away non-lead ammunition.”

D.C. BOOTH HISTORIC NATIONAL FISH HATCHERY HAS NEW CURATOR. The [AP](#) (2/2, 856K) reports that “after more than two years without anyone in the position, the D.C. Booth Historic National Fish Hatchery and Archives in Spearfish has a new curator: April Gregory, former Booth Society executive director, started in her new role last month.” Carlos Martinez, hatchery director, said, “Gregory has had an association with D.C. Booth for over seven years, and the institutional knowledge she possess will allow her to benefit” the station immediately. He added, “Her business acumen while dealing with partners and the public is excellent. She enjoys working with people of all ages and backgrounds and does so in a professional and courteous manner.”

PUBLIC SUPPORT SEEN AS CRITICAL IN FIGHT AGAINST WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING. [One Green Planet](#) (2/2) reports that a recent study supported by the U.S. Wildlife Trafficking Alliance “found 80 percent of Americans aren’t aware of the illegal wildlife trade in their own country.” While the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and “others are working hard to stop the trafficking of illegal wildlife products, public outcry against the illicit trade is what will ultimately tip the scales, and the legal system, in wildlife’s favor.”

Bureau of Land Management:

DEMONSTRATORS PROTEST MINING NEAR BOUNDARY WATERS . [KSJR-FM](#) Colleagueville, MN (2/2, 96K) reports that “more than 50 protesters rallied outside the Duluth office of U.S. Rep. Rick Nolan Thursday, condemning the Democratic congressman’s letter earlier this week calling on the Trump administration to overturn a decision that called for a potential 20-year ban on mining on national forest land within the watershed of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness.” In a letter to the protesters, “Nolan wrote that he supported responsible mining and a thorough environmental review process. But he argued an environmental review of mining in the watershed should wait until a specific mining plan is submitted.” However, his letter was “sharply criticized” by Rep. Betty McCollum, who said the Obama Administration’s decision “was a victory for every Minnesotan who cares about preserving clean water, clean air, and pristine wild lands.”

Additional coverage was provided by the [Minneapolis \(MN\) Star Tribune](#) (2/2, 1.27M).

Securing America's Energy Future:

Onshore Energy Development:

SENATE APPROVES ROLLBACK OF STREAM PROTECTION RULE.

In the first of what [USA Today](#) (2/2, Collins, 5.28M) says will likely be “many rollbacks of environmental regulations,” the Senate voted 54-45 Thursday to roll back the Stream Protection Rule, which was “designed to limit the dumping of mining waste in local waterways.” [Politico](#) (2/2, Guillén, 2.46M) reported that Democratic Sens. Joe Manchin, Claire McCaskill, Joe Donnelly, and Heidi Heitkamp “joined every Republican except Maine’s Susan Collins in voting for the measure.” The [Washington Times](#) (2/2, Dinan, 272K) says the Senate vote followed House passage on Wednesday. The two votes marked “just the second time Congress has successfully flexed the Congressional Review Act.”

The [New York Times](#) (2/2, Tabuchi, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) calls the vote a first step toward “officially dismantl[ing] Obama-era environmental regulations.” [Reuters](#) (2/2, Lambert) says the rule is “the first of a number of Obama-era regulations congressional Republicans are aiming to kill,” and the [Washington Post](#) (2/2, Eilperin, Mufson, 11.43M) says this is “the first of nearly half-a-dozen rule reversals headed to President Trump’s desk for his signature this month.”

A separate [Politico](#) (2/2, Schor, 2.46M) story said that as Democrats “grind the Senate to a crawl” over Trump’s Cabinet nominees, Senate Republican leaders “hope to call up several more rifle-shot repeals of Obama regulations as they come over from the House – giving the chamber the appearance of progress even amid the confirmations standstill and with the Republicans seemingly paralyzed over what to do with Obamacare.” Republicans, the [AP](#) (2/2, Freking, Daly) reports, are “counting on a new ally in the White House to help reverse years of what the GOP calls excessive regulation.”

Additional coverage was provided by [The Hill](#) (2/2, Henry, 1.25M), [Bloomberg News](#) (2/2, Natter, Traywick, 2.41M), [TIME](#) (2/2, 6.98M), [Fortune](#) (2/2, 7.12M), [CNN](#) (2/2, Watkins, 29.79M), [CNN International](#) (2/2, 598K), [Reuters](#) (2/2, Gardner), the [Chicago \(IL\) Tribune](#) (2/2, 2.54M), the [Richmond \(VA\) Times-Dispatch](#) (2/2, 324K), the [Tampa Bay \(FL\) Times](#) (2/2, 785K), the [Durango \(CO\) Herald](#) (2/2, 31K), the [Free Press \(ME\)](#) (2/2, 32K), the [West Virginia Record](#) (2/2, 313), the [West Virginia MetroNews](#) (2/2, 6K), the [Telegraph \(UK\)](#) (2/3, Press, 1.04M), [Vox](#) (2/2, 1.15M), and [KGWN-TV Cheyenne \(WY\)](#) Cheyenne, WY (2/2, 519).

HOUSE TO VOTE ON METHANE RULE AS EARLY AS FRIDAY. The [Denver Post](#) (2/2, Finley, 778K) reports House Republicans are set to overturn a rule limiting oil and gas companies from flaring on federal lands. Republicans invoked the Congressional Review Act in an effort to reveal the BLM rule. US Rep. Bob Bishop initiated an energy-industry backed bill that would kill the methane rule. The House is expected to vote on the bill Friday, and then it would move on to the Senate. Republicans argued that emissions have decreased, even as production increased, and that the rule would delay permits for companies

seeking to access public land for drilling.

Additional coverage as provided by [Natural Gas Intelligence](#) (2/2, Subscription Publication) and [KRWG-FM](#) Las Cruces, NM (2/2, 1K).

Congress Urged Not To Repeal Methane Emissions Rule. The [Durango \(CO\) Herald](#) (2/1, 31K) editorializes that the methane regulations were “crafted with broad stakeholder input from industry, environmentalists, tribes and regulators.” It argues that the rules “make good economic and environmental sense, and protect our public health.” According to the editorial, “they mitigate the loss of \$330 million annually in taxpayer-owned gas lost to venting and flaring, gas that through royalties could otherwise go to local communities and tribes to pay for schools and infrastructure, and to supply natural gas to up to 740,000 households each year.”

DAKOTA ACCESS PIPELINE PROTESTERS ARRESTED AT NEW CAMP. [ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/2, story 7, 0:15, Muir, 14.63M) reported that there were “new clashes” over the Dakota Access Pipeline on Thursday. Authorities say “76 protesters were arrested at a new camp on private land owned by the pipeline developer, Energy Transfer Partners. The new showdown comes after President Trump’s push to expedite the project.”

TRIBES PLEAD WITH BLM FOR PROTECTION OF CHACO. The [Durango \(CO\) Herald](#) (2/2, 31K) reports that on Thursday, tribal members “made their case to stop drilling in the greater Chaco area at the Bureau of Land Management’s 10th and final public meeting regarding energy development in the region.” According to the article, “the nearly 100 tribal members in attendance were given several hours to speak their minds, drawing a near unanimous opposition to any future drilling in the region.” However, Mark Ames, BLM project manager, “said despite the overwhelming sentiment from the local Navajo tribe to cease all future oil and gas operations in the area, the BLM has a congressional obligation to recover federal resources.” Ames “said public comments will at least aid regulators in addressing some of the more feasible concerns – such as traffic, noise or light disturbances – when the remaining 10 percent of unleased acres are eventually sold off.”

Empowering Native American Communities:

DEMOCRATS RAISE CONCERNS ABOUT FEDERAL HIRING FREEZE ON INDIAN HEALTH CARE, SERVICES. The [Billings \(MT\) Gazette](#) (2/2, 208K) reports that “after a temporary federal hiring freeze, concerns have arisen over filling jobs at long-understaffed Native American health care facilities, although an official exemption for some hiring could be on the way.” Sen. Jon Tester said, “Any freeze in hiring for Indian initiatives, whether temporary or permanent, threatens to make the challenges facing Indian Country worse.” He was “among the seven Democrats on the U.S. Senate Committee on Indian Affairs who sent a letter Tuesday to President Donald Trump advocating against the hiring freeze for services for Native Americans, including Indian Health Service, the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Bureau of Indian Education.”

Additional coverage was provided by the [Helena \(MT\) Independent Record](#) (2/2, 38K) and the [Ravalli \(MT\) Republic](#) (2/2, 19K).

FEDERAL FUNDS PAY FOR REPAIR OF BUSY FLETCHER ROAD.

According to [KSWO-TV](#) Lawton, OK (2/2, Turner, 45K), \$250,000 in Federal Highway Administration funds paid for the repair of 1.3 miles of road in Fletcher, Oklahoma. A gathering of the Comanche nation Department of Transportation, The Bureau of Indian Affairs, and The County Commissioners office Thursday inspected the finished project that replaced a road that was “just so rough people were knocking their cars out of alignment and blowing tires out it was that rough,” according to Comanche Nation Director for the Department of Transportation Adrian Tehauno.

Tackling America’s Water Challenges:

IRRIGATORS RECALLED TO TESTIFY IN “TAKINGS” CASE. The [Klamath Falls \(OR\) Herald And News](#) (2/2, 45K) reports that “Klamath Basin witnesses in the so-called ‘takings’ trial, some of whom who thought they were free from further testimony, were recalled to testify Wednesday in Federal Claims Court.” According to the article, “the recall of the irrigators means the defense is able to ask direct questions of the irrigators for the use of their case, specifically if and when they received reimbursement from the government to compensate for the irrigation water shutoff in 2001.” Federal Judge Marian Blank Horn did comment “on the inconvenience to recalling farmers, but both the U.S government defense team and attorneys for the plaintiffs — representing the Klamath area irrigators — agreed on direct questioning of irrigators by the defense.”

EXCEPTIONALLY WET WINTER MEANS DELTA PUMPS ARE AT FULL THROTTLE. The [Sacramento \(CA\) Bee](#) (2/2, 574K) reports that “one month into an exceptionally stormy 2017, river flows though the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta have been so powerful that the massive pumps that ship north state water to Southern California and the San Joaquin Valley have roared at full throttle for weeks.” However, “pump operators probably will have to dial back, because they’re starting to run out of space in key reservoirs south of the Delta, said John Leahigh, who oversees day-to-day water management for the State Water Project, which delivers supplies to water agencies throughout California.”

Top National News:

TRUMP VOWS TO “DESTROY” BAN ON POLITICAL ENDORSEMENTS BY TAX-EXEMPT CHURCHES. Coverage of President Trump’s remarks at the National Prayer Breakfast is straightforward, focusing on his vow to “destroy” the so-called Johnson Amendment, the IRS rule barring tax-exempt churches from formally backing political candidates. Almost every report also includes coverage of the President’s remarks about Arnold Schwarzenegger, his successor as host of NBC’s “Celebrity Apprentice.” At the same time, the White House revealed that an executive order on religious freedom that some say would permit discrimination is under consideration.

[ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/2, story 2, 3:20, Muir, 14.63M) reported that Trump “came with a promise to, in his words, ‘destroy’ a law that bars most churches from endorsing political candidates. ... And while in that room, the President also brought up something else: ratings for ‘The Celebrity Apprentice,’ the show he used to host.” ABC’s Cecilia Vega: “Many in the room, the evangelicals who helped propel him to the White House, and the President giving them a gift so many had wanted: a promise to ‘destroy’ a law that bars tax-exempt churches from endorsing political candidates. ... Just this week, the White House said the President would continue to enforce workplace protection for gays and lesbians implemented by President Obama,” but “there is a proposed draft executive order on religious freedom circulating inside” the White House that “would weaken protections for the LGBT community.” Vega said that Trump also “took a shot at his old show” and its new host. Trump: “They hired a big movie star, Arnold Schwarzenegger, to take my place. ... It has been a total disaster, and I want to just pray for Arnold if we can, for those ratings, okay?”

Nancy Cordes reported on the [CBS Evening News](#) (2/2, story 4, 2:00, Pelley, 11.17M) that Trump’s promise to get rid of the endorsement restriction “delighted the religious leaders gathered at the annual breakfast.” Trump: “I will get rid of and totally destroy the Johnson Amendment and allow our representatives of faith to speak freely and without fear of retribution. I will do that.” Cordes said that the law “prevents tax-exempt nonprofits, notably churches, from donating to candidates.” Cordes added, “Religious freedom wasn’t the only thing on Mr. Trump’s mind at the prayer breakfast,” then showing Trump’s remarks about Schwarzenegger. Cordes: “The White House said that Mr. Trump only joked about the ‘Apprentice’ because he was introduced at the breakfast by show’s creator Mark Burnett. In a video, Schwarzenegger responded that if the President knows so much about ratings, he’s happy to switch jobs with him.”

[NBC Nightly News](#) (2/2, story 2, 2:10, Holt, 16.61M) said Trump made “waves by taking a detour from his prepared remarks to taunt his reality show successor.” NBC’s Kristen Welker said Trump also offered “his most defensive defense yet of his controversial order halting travel from seven predominantly Muslim countries.” Trump: “We will not allow a beachhead of intolerance to spread in our nation. We want people to come into our nation, but we want people to love us and to love our values, not to hate us and to hate our values.” Welker: “Today, the President vowing to repeal a regulation that prevents political endorsements from the pulpit – the Johnson Amendment, one of the clearest lines between church and state, and most Americans support it.”

NBC, like nearly every newspaper and online report, also mentioned the Schwarzenegger line. [Reuters](#) (2/2, Mason, Rampton) reports that “during his remarks at an event that typically is a solemn affair,” Trump “derided” the “actor and former politician...over TV viewership ratings.”

The [AP](#) (2/2, Lucey) reports that the President, “declaring that religious freedom is ‘under threat,’” vowed to repeal the “rarely enforced IRS rule that says pastors who endorse candidates from the pulpit risk losing their tax-exempt status.” He “did not detail how he might scrap the IRS rule, which he has previously pledged to do away with.” The [New York Times](#) (2/2, Landler, Subscription Publication,

13.9M) says Trump vowed to overturn the restriction on “political speech by tax-exempt churches, a potentially huge victory for the religious right and a gesture to his political base.” [USA Today](#) (2/2, Korte, 5.28M) says Trump’s promise “was met by enthusiastic applause from the religious leaders.”

The [Washington Post](#) (2/2, Zauzmer, 11.43M) says Trump presents the “ban on participating in politicking as a restriction on the freedom of faith groups to put their religion in action, if their religion calls on them to campaign for a candidate. At Thursday’s prayer breakfast, Trump said that his reason for opposing the Johnson Amendment is that it impinges on the American ‘right to worship according to our own beliefs’ – apparently describing campaign participation as a form of worship.”

The [Washington Times](#) (2/2, Boyer, 272K) reports that Sen. James Lankford introduced legislation to repeal the rule, while [The Hill](#) (2/2, Marcos, 1.25M) reports companion legislation was introduced by House Majority Whip Scalise and Rep. Jody Hice. However, [McClatchy](#) (2/2, Douglas, 74K) says Trump “has a big hurdle” to fulfilling the vow, since 60 Senate votes would be needed to end a near-certain Democratic filibuster “and Republicans have bigger priorities.”

Steven Waldman, author of “Founding Faith: Providence, Politics and the Birth of Religious Freedom in America,” writes in a [New York Times](#) (2/2, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) op-ed that a repeal of the Johnson Amendment “would be horrible for politics – and even worse for religion. ... Conservatives clamoring for this change should think hard: They don’t like their tax dollars going to support groups that perform abortions. Do they really want to pay for churches that push pro-choice candidates? They fear and distrust Islam. Do they really want their hard-earned money to back the preferred political candidates of the local Islamic center?”

The [Catholic Sentinel](#) (2/2) reports that “likely billionaire” Trump also told the crowd that “‘spiritual success’ is a more accurate measure for the United States than wealth. ... Compared to people to have money but no happiness, the people who have no money but happiness ‘are the successful people, let me tell you,’ Trump said.” The [Christian Post](#) (2/2, Smith, 171K) reports that Trump also said “there were five words that gave him solace and comfort” throughout his campaign and early presidency: “What I hear most often as I travel the country are five words that never fail to touch my heart. That’s ‘I am praying for you.’”

Spicer: Religious Freedom Executive Order Under Consideration. The [Washington Post](#) (2/2, Eilperin, Somashekhar, 11.43M) reports White House press secretary Sean Spicer said Thursday that the President “is considering how to allow Americans to opt out of complying with federal policies and regulations on the grounds of religion,” which critics say “could open the door to discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender or gender identity.” Spicer said, “There’s clearly a lot of evidence in the last couple of years of the government coming in with regulations and policies that have, frankly, denied people the ability to live according to their faith. People should be able to practice their religion, express their religion, express areas of their faith without reprisal. And I think that pendulum sometimes swings the other way, in the name of

political correctness.”

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/2, Lovett, Gershman, Radnofsky, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) says a draft executive order titled “Establishing a Government-Wide Initiative to Respect Religious Freedom” would expand legal protections on the grounds of religious belief, potentially allowing denial of services to the gay and transgender community, as well as contraception coverage for employees. The [Washington Times](#) (2/2, Boyer, 272K) reports that “several human-rights groups and progressive activists are sounding alarms about the draft order, saying it would sanction discrimination.” Human Rights Campaign President Chad Griffin said, “It reads like a wish-list from some of the most radical anti-equality activists.”

Catherine Rampell writes in her [Washington Post](#) (2/2, 11.43M) column, “Much-dreaded ‘sharia law,’ or something resembling it, may well be coming to the United States. Just not in the form many Americans expected.” She writes that “religiously motivated laws creeping into public policymaking aren’t based on the Koran. ... They’re coming from the White House, which wants to make it easier for hard-line Christians to impose their beliefs and practices on the rest of us.”

ADMINISTRATION PREPARING NEW SANCTIONS AGAINST IRAN.

One day after National Security Adviser Flynn warned that the US is “putting Iran on notice,” Administration sources said the White House is preparing to impose new sanctions on Tehran – according to some media outlets, as early as Friday. The President’s remarks Thursday that “nothing is off the table” are also receiving media attention.

[ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/2, lead story, 4:10, Muir, 14.63M) said Trump is “turning up the heat” on Iran after its most recent ballistic missile test, “reviewing new sanctions,” the [CBS Evening News](#) (2/2, lead story, 3:05, Pelley, 11.17M) reported. The President, asked about potential military action against Iran, said Thursday that “nothing is off the table.” The [New York Post](#) (2/2, Moore, 3.82M) reports the “aggressive comment” came just hours after Trump took to [Twitter](#) to say, “Iran has been formally PUT ON NOTICE for firing a ballistic missile. Should have been thankful for the terrible deal the US made with them.” The [Washington Times](#) (2/2, Sherfinski, 272K) reports that in a second [tweet](#), the President asserted, “Iran was on its last legs and ready to collapse until the US came along and gave it a life-line in the form of the Iran Deal: \$150 billion.”

[Fox News’ Special Report](#) (2/2, 1.53M) provided details of the draft sanctions, noting that they represent “the first punitive action that the newly minted administration has taken against another country.” The sanctions will reportedly target “more than 20 Iranian entities for terrorism and missile-related activities.” [Reuters](#) (2/2, Mohammed) reports sources said the sanctions could be announced as early as Friday, and are expected to target “about eight Iranian entities...for terrorism-related activities and about 17 for ballistic missile-related activities under separate existing US executive orders.”

The White House “had to get creative with the application of sanctions for fear of itself violating the nuclear agreement,” because, as [CNN’s Situation Room](#) (2/2,

554K) correspondent Elise Labott noted, “they’re trying to separate this from the Iran nuclear deal, because this missile test is not necessarily in violation” of that deal, but the Administration does believe it violates UN Security Council resolutions. The sanction, [Reuters](#) (2/2, Mohammed, Spetalnick, Landay) says, “may mark the opening shot in a more aggressive policy against Iran that Trump promised during the 2016 presidential campaign.” An [AP](#) (2/2, Schreck) analysis likewise says that by putting Iran “on notice,” the Administration “is laying the groundwork for a more confrontational approach toward the Islamic Republic.” But “what that means in practice is anyone’s guess, since the White House isn’t saying,” which is “in line with...Trump’s desire to keep America’s adversaries guessing and boost US leverage.”

A [Washington Post](#) (2/2, A1, Gearan, 11.43M) analysis says that while “Trump campaigned on blowing up business as usual in Washington...the administration’s tone has surprised allies and government employees who expected the new president to first spend time offering diplomatic niceties.”

A [USA Today](#) (2/2, Michaels, 5.28M) analysis warns that Trump’s stern warning “risks drawing the United States into a conflict or making Trump look weak if it doesn’t follow through with some retaliation should Iran take another provocative action,” foreign policy analysts said. “If you’re going to make a threat, you need to be prepared to carry through with it,” said Fred Kagan of the American Enterprise Institute. “The question is: Are they prepared to do carry through with it.” David Ignatius writes in his [Washington Post](#) (2/2, 11.43M) column that by putting Iran “on notice.” Trump has “taken aim at a country that’s opposed by many US allies. But he has begun this confrontation without much preparation or strategic planning, continuing the haphazard pattern of his first two weeks in office.”

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/2, Solomon, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) says Trump has staffed his National Security Council with current and former US military officers who support a more aggressive policy toward Iran, including National Security Adviser Flynn, and two of his top deputies, retired Army Col. Derek Harvey and Joel Rayburn.

Asked on [CNN’s Situation Room](#) (2/2, 554K) if he would support military action against Iran, Rep. Darrell Issa said, “I think it has to be, as the President said, on the table.” But [Fox News’ Special Report](#) (2/2, 1.53M) said military options against Iran may be limited “at the moment,” because the US does not have an aircraft carrier in the Persian Gulf for “only the second time since 2008.”

The [New York Times](#) (2/2, Erdbrink, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) reports Iran’s establishment is “treading carefully, with even most hard-liners concerned that the smallest provocation could lead to military conflict. But some question how long their caution will last in the face of a Trump administration that has brought a new level of hostility and confrontation.” On Thursday, Foreign Ministry spokesman Bahram Qassemi “gave a mild rejoinder,” saying, “It is a shame that the US government, instead of thanking the Iranian nation for their continued fight against terrorism, keeps repeating unfounded claims and adopts unwise policies that are effectively helping terrorist groups.”

The [Washington Times](#) (2/2, Taylor, 272K) says Iranian officials “responded defiantly,” vowing to advance their nation’s ballistic missile program. [ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/2, lead story, 4:10, Muir, 14.63M) reported that an advisor to Iranian Supreme Leader Khamenei said, “Iran does not need permission from any country to defend itself.”

German FM: No Sign US Wants To Cancel Nuclear Deal. [Reuters](#) (2/2, Siebold) reports German Foreign Minister Sigmar Gabriel, who was in Washington this week, “said it was necessary to do everything possible to make progress on the nuclear deal with Iran and that he did not see any indications” during his visit “that Washington would terminate it.”

MEDIA: TRUMP THREATENS UNIVERSITY’S FUNDING AFTER IT CANCELS YIANNOPOULOS SPEECH. Media coverage says President Trump threatened to pull federal funding from the University of California at Berkeley after university police canceled a speech by Breitbart writer Milo Yiannopoulos and placed the campus on lockdown following protests against the scheduled speech. Trump [tweeted](#), “If U.C. Berkeley does not allow free speech and practices violence on innocent people with a different point of view – NO FEDERAL FUNDS?” While the overwhelming majority of coverage assumes Trump is making a threat that he considers actionable, the [Los Angeles Times](#) (2/2, Hamilton, Watanabe, King, Mejia, 4.52M) says “it’s unclear whether Trump was actually threatening to cut funding or making some kind of rhetorical point.”

The [Washington Post](#) (2/2, Svrluga, Murphy, 11.43M) says Yiannopoulos “has a large following as a self-proclaimed ‘free-speech fundamentalist’ crusading against political correctness.” Other schools, according to the Post, also have canceled or indefinitely postponed events that included Yiannopoulos “because they often generate such intense responses.” [Politico](#) (2/2, Nelson, 2.46M) reports that a man was shot last month at a University of Washington demonstration opposing a speech by Yiannopoulos. [AFP](#) (2/2, Zablit) cites a Breitbart News story as saying Yiannopoulos was planning to use the Berkeley event to launch a campaign against sanctuary campuses.

A [New York Times](#) (2/2, Fuller, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) analysis says “protest has been synonymous” with the campus “from the earliest days of the free speech movement,” but “now the university is under siege” for its decision. The [Huffington Post](#) (2/2, Satlin, 237K) – in a story headlined “Donald Trump Defends Far-Right Troll Milo Yiannopoulos” – reports that senior adviser Kellyanne Conway told Fox News’ “Fox and Friends” on Thursday that Trump “has a point.” Conway said, “It’s like [Berkeley students] don’t welcome free speech.” Yiannopoulos responded to the cancellation, [The Hill](#) (2/2, Savransky, 1.25M) says, by calling it “an expression of political violence.” He said in a Facebook Live video, “I’m just stunned that hundreds of people...were so threatened by the idea that a conservative speaker might be persuasive, interesting, funny and might take some people with him, they have to shut it down at all costs.”

The [Los Angeles Times](#) (2/2, Hamilton, Watanabe, King, Mejia, 4.52M) reports that senior University of California officials “have generally said they believe

[Yiannopoulos] has a right to speak,” and UC Berkeley spokesman Dan Mogulof “said campus officials went to ‘extraordinary lengths’ over weeks of planning to help the Berkeley College Republicans prepare for the event.” Mogulof indicated that dozens of police officers were brought to the Berkeley campus from other university system schools to help, but it was not enough to prevent an “‘unprecedented’ assault” on Thursday. [ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/2, story 4, 1:55, Muir, 14.63M) reported that the originally peaceful protest “erupt[ed]” and “turn[ed] violent” and the school is “blaming more than 100 masked agitators for invading the campus.” Those people, according to the [New York Times](#) (2/1, Fuller, Mele, Subscription Publication, 13.9M), “set fires and threw objects at buildings” to protest Yiannopoulos’ appearance. The violence, the [CBS Evening News](#) (2/2, story 8, 0:25, Pelley, 11.17M) and [NBC Nightly News](#) (2/2, story 4, 2:05, Holt, 16.61M) reported, led to fires and broken windows. The [Washington Times](#) (2/2, Richardson, 272K) reports “videos widely disseminated on social media showed would-be attendees being assaulted.”

Local officials, according to the [San Francisco Chronicle](#) (2/2, Ravani, 2.2M), criticized Trump’s statement. The Chronicle says California Lt. Gov. Gavin Newsom “fired back at Trump” with a [Twitter](#) post that said, “As a UC Regent I’m appalled at your willingness to deprive over 38,000 students access to an education because of the actions of a few.” [Reuters](#) (2/2, Bernstein, Ingram) quotes Rep. Barbara Lee as promising to fight any effort to pull funding. Lee said, “President Trump’s empty threat to cut funding from UC Berkeley is an abuse of power.”

[Bloomberg News](#) (2/2, Nasiripour, 2.41M) reports experts say Trump’s comment “is largely harmless” as he does not “have the unilateral authority to carry it out.” Bloomberg adds that Congress “would have to pass a law altering the rules governing the provision of federal funds to colleges and universities” for Trump to directly impact the school’s funding. [USA Today](#) (2/2, Toppo, 5.28M) similarly reports experts indicated that Trump’s threat “may sound serious, but it is essentially toothless.” USA Today quotes Terry Hartle of the American Council on Education as saying there is “no federal law that would allow the federal government to deny funding to an institution of higher education because they prohibited someone from speaking on campus.” [TIME](#) (2/2, Reilly, 6.98M) says that if Trump “did take action, such a move would impact student financial aid, research funding and healthcare.” Time indicates that the full University of California system receives about \$8.5 billion in federal funding annually.

Anarchists Vowing To Confront Far-Right. The [New York Times](#) (2/2, Stockman, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) reports that “self-described anti-fascists and anarchists are vowing to confront” far-right groups that are “edging into the mainstream with the rise of President Trump.” The anarchists, according to the Times, are saying they will use “any means necessary – including violence.” The Times highlights the protests at Berkeley as an example and says the groups – which “often make up a small but disproportionately attention-getting portion of protesters” – “defend the mayhem they create as a necessary response to an emergency.” According to the Times, anarchists “say their recent efforts have been wildly successful” by focusing efforts on arguing that Trump “poses a fascist threat” and “by enticing others to join their movement.”

Editorial Wrap-Up:

NEW YORK TIMES. *“Wanted: One Republican With Integrity, To Defeat Betsy DeVos.”* The [New York Times](#) (2/2, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) says in an editorial that “this country needs a few good Republicans — one more would do — to rescue it from [Education Secretary-designate] Betsy DeVos, one of President Trump’s worst cabinet choices.” The Times concludes that “voters should remind Republican senators that if they surrender to Mr. Trump on appointees so clearly unfit, they will be relinquishing a historic obligation and tarnishing themselves.”

“New Tensions With Iran.” A [New York Times](#) (2/3, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) editorial says “it didn’t take long for tensions to flare” between Iran and Trump, and “both sides have to share the blame” – Iran for conducting a “dangerously provocative” ballistic missile test and the Trump Administration for failing to “discuss the missile issue with Iran privately.” The Times argues that it is “important...to find ways to manage tensions with Iran by exerting pressure when appropriate without creating a path toward confrontation.”

“Mr. Trump’s Bad Two-for-One Deal.” The [New York Times](#) (2/3, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) editorializes President Trump’s “two-for-one deal...sounds more like a fast-food ad than a plan for governing.” It argues that “there are sound ways to streamline regulations, but boxing in regulators this way is neither advisable nor necessary.”

WASHINGTON POST. *“Tillerson And Mattis Speak Up For The Right Values Of Leadership.”* A [Washington Post](#) (2/2, 11.43M) editorial says Secretary of State Tillerson’s remarks to State Department employees, “wise as they were...stood out for their rationality and evenhandedness only because they were uttered amid the rapid deterioration of such formerly commonplace standards of political culture.” The President, “in particular, continues to operate according to a different standard: insulting allies, intimidating civil servants, improperly threatening recipients of federal funds,” which “can only hurt the United States’ standing and undermine the peace abroad while damaging democratic norms at home.”

“An Activist Mysteriously Ill In Russia, And The US Needs To Speak Up.” The [Washington Post](#) (2/2, 11.43M) editorializes that the most recent offensive by Russian-backed forces in Ukraine and pro-Democracy activist Vladimir Karza-Murza’s hospitalization “most likely holds a message from [Russian President Vladimir] Putin to the new Trump administration.” The Post says Russia “hopes to establish that such crimes will be tolerated” by Trump “as part of a refounded relationship with Moscow.”

“One Step Forward For The Mentally Ill In Virginia.” A [Washington Post](#) (2/2, 11.43M) editorial praises Virginia Gov. Terry McAuliffe for “singl[ing] out mental-health care as the one major area for which he is seeking new funding this year” even as he faces “a projected budget deficit that prompted him to propose an array of spending cuts.”

WALL STREET JOURNAL. “*Betsy DeVos’s School Frenemies.*” In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/2, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) criticizes charter-school advocates for opposing [Education Secretary-designate Betsy] DeVos. The Journal takes issue with a letter from philanthropist Eli Broad to Senate leaders, which it casts as a regurgitation of teacher unions’ talking points about the nominee.

“*Travis Kalanick Drives Away.*” In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/2, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) faults Uber chief executive Travis Kalanick for leaving President Trump’s economic advisory council without facing Trump directly when the council meets on Friday.

“*Putin’s Bad Ukraine Deal.*” A [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/2, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) editorial welcomes Ambassador Haley’s comments blaming Russia for the recent surge of violence in eastern Ukraine, and urges the Administration to cooperate with lawmakers who want to stiffen sanctions.

Big Picture:

HEADLINES FROM TODAY’S FRONT PAGES.

Wall Street Journal:

[Trump White House Set To Impose Fresh Sanctions On Iran](#)
[Executive Order Draft Would Expand Religious Protections, Could Allow Denial Of Services To Gays](#)
[Snapchat Parent Files For IPO](#)
[The End Of Employees](#)

New York Times:

[Trump Embraces Pillars Of Obama’s Foreign Policy](#)
[Anarchists Respond To Trump’s Inauguration, By Any Means Necessary](#)
[GOP Campaign To Repeal Obamacare Stalls On The Details](#)
[Trump Vows To “Destroy” Law Banning Political Endorsements By Churches](#)
[Uber CEO To Leave Trump Advisory Council After Criticism](#)
[Pregnant Women Turn To Marijuana, Perhaps Harming Infants](#)

Washington Post:

[In Austin, Salvos In The “Sanctuary City” Battle](#)
[Us, Iran Trade Threats](#)
[President Targets Church-State Law](#)
[Trump Team Ditches Obama’s Plan To Take Raqqa](#)
[Democrats Spar In Va.’s Volatile Game Of Thrones](#)
[Tech Firms’ Opposition To Immigration Policies Rises](#)

Financial Times:

[“Don’t Worry” About Tough Calls, Trump Tells US](#)
[Deutsche Bank Fails To Capitalize On Trump Rally](#)
[Facebook Earnings Soar On Holiday Advertising](#)
[Larsson Leaves Ralph Lauren After Less Than Two Years](#)

Washington Times:

[Iran Defies Trump's Threat On Missiles, Puts US On Notice](#)
[Controversial Cabinet Picks Pass First Test In Senate](#)
[Have A Slice Of Super Bowl, Slathered In Protest](#)
[Berkeley Rioters Betray University's Historical Commitment To Free Speech](#)
[Trump Says He "Loves" Australia But Questioned Refugee Deal](#)

Story Lineup From Last Night's Network News:

ABC: Trump-Diplomacy; Trump-Prayer Breakfast; Yemen Raid; Trump-UC Berkeley Protest; Denver Transit Officer Shot; California School Shooting Foiled; Dakota Pipeline Protest; Swiss Flight Malfunction; Holocaust Survivor Suit Maker.

CBS: Trump-Diplomacy; Ukraine Conflict; Pelosi Comment-Bannon; Trump-Prayer Breakfast; Yemen Raid; Delaware Prison Seize; Samsung Phone Arbitration; Trump-UC Berkeley Protest; Sanctuary Cities Policy Reactions; Jazz Teaching Kids History.

NBC: Trump-Diplomacy; Trump-Prayer Breakfast; Yemen Raid; Trump-UC Berkeley Protest; Delaware Prison Seize; Health-Prostate Cancer; Houston Daycare; Detergent Pod Child Warning; Body Clock-Camping; Disabled Child Friendship.

Network TV At A Glance:

Trump-Diplomacy – 10 minutes, 35 seconds
Trump-Prayer Breakfast – 7 minutes, 30 seconds
Yemen Raid – 6 minutes, 25 seconds
Trump-UC Berkeley Protest – 4 minutes, 25 seconds
Delaware Prison Seize – 2 minutes, 10 seconds

Story Lineup From This Morning's Radio News Broadcasts:

ABC: New York Shops Protest; Travel Ban-Legal Challenge; Delaware Prison Seize; Smokeless Tobacco Recall; Wall Street News.

CBS: Trump-Diplomacy; Mattis South Korea Visit; Trump-Johnson Amendment; Snapchat IPO; NYU Protest; Wall Street News.

FOX: NYU Protest; UC Berkeley Protest; Iran Sanctions; Mattis South Korea Visit.

NPR: UN Ambassador-Russia Criticism; Iran Sanctions; Comcast Protest; New York Shops Protest.

Washington Schedule:

TODAY'S EVENTS IN WASHINGTON.

White House:

PRESIDENT TRUMP — Participates in a strategy and policy forum; signs Executive Orders; has lunch with Lt. Gen. Michael Flynn; departs White House for Joint Base Andrews to travel to his Florida property for a weekend of meetings.

VICE PRESIDENT PENCE — Joins the President to participate in a strategy and policy forum; joins the President as he signs Executive Orders; meets with the President of Hillsdale College, Larry Arnn.

US Senate: No public schedule announced.

US House: 9:00 AM House meets for legislative business – House of

Representatives meets for legislative business, with agenda including completion of consideration of ‘H.J.Res. 36 – Providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the final rule of the Bureau of Land Management relating to ‘Waste Prevention, Production Subject to Royalties, and Resource Conservation’ * Administration has said it strongly supports the resolution and that President Donald Trump would be expected to sign it if it reaches his desk Location: Washington, DC <http://www.house.gov/>

Other: 8:00 AM U.S. Chamber of Commerce hosts ‘The Shifting Paradigm of Retirement’ conference – U.S. Chamber of Commerce hosts ‘The Shifting Paradigm of Retirement: What it Means for Employers, Workers, and Retirees’ conference, highlighting the release of a policy solution roadmap and exploring ‘what retirement saving means for employers, workers, and retirees in today’s evolving landscape’. Participants include Investment Company Institute Chief Economist Brian Reid, Employee Benefit Research Institute Research Director Jack VanDerhei, American University Kogod School of Business Tax Policy Academic Fellow Jen Brown, and USCC Senior Vice President of Labor, Immigration and Employee Benefits Randy Johnson, Executive Director of Retirement Policy Aliya Wong, and Center for Capital Markets Competitiveness President and CEO David Hirschmann Location: USCC, 1615 H St NW, Washington, DC www.uschamber.com <https://twitter.com/USChamber>

8:30 AM Conference on Tax Competition with keynote from GOP Rep. Kevin Brady – Georgetown Law Institute of International Economic Law and the International Tax Policy Forum Conference on Tax Competition, examining international tax competition as the U.S. ‘stands on the brink of business tax reform’, with keynote by House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Rep. Kevin Brady Location: Gewirz Student Center, Georgetown Law, 600 New Jersey Ave., Washington, DC iielaw.org

9:30 AM Medellin, Colombia, mayor speaks – in Spanish – at Brookings – ‘Challenges and Opportunities in the U.S.-Colombia Relationship’: Brookings Institution Latin America Initiative and Center for 21st Century Security and Intelligence host Medellin, Colombia, Mayor Federico Gutierrez Zuluaga, who speaks (in Spanish, translation provided) on ‘the remarkable progress, challenges, and opportunities facing Medellin, as well as Colombia and the future of its relationship with the U.S. during the Trump administration’ Location: Brookings Institution, 1775 Massachusetts Ave NW, Washington, DC <http://www.brookings.edu> <https://twitter.com/BrookingsInst>

Last Laughs:

LATE NIGHT POLITICAL HUMOR.

Jimmy Kimmel: “When [Donald Trump] said he was going to get tough on foreign leaders, I didn’t realize he meant Arnold Schwarzenegger.”

Jimmy Kimmel: “ You know we have a problem when turning the country over to Arnold Schwarzenegger seems like a good idea to people.”

Jimmy Kimmel: [Referring to Trump’s phone call to the Australian Prime

Minister] “And from now on, the only Australian leader President Trump will deal with is Miss Australia.”

Stephen Colbert: “The President used the national prayer breakfast to insult Arnold Schwarzenegger. And tomorrow, he’s going to roast Rosie O’Donnell at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.”

James Corden: “The groundhog has been predicting weather since 1887 and has been wrong 61 percent of the time. And yet this is still front-page news every year. So I guess fake news isn’t a recent phenomenon. I mean, you guys, you know that this isn’t actually based on any science, right? And for that reason, that Donald Trump has just appointed the groundhog to a special committee on climate change.”

Trevor Noah: [Referring to Donald Trump’s message, ‘bad hombres down there’] “Hey, look on the bright side. Trump’s learning Spanish.”

Trevor Noah: [Referring to Trump’s phone call to the Australian Prime Minister] “So Trump damaged relations with a key strategic ally because he missed his nap time? That is the cutest, most terrifying excuse I have ever heard!”

Jimmy Fallon: “Trump is causing all kinds of trouble this week. In fact, I saw that Israel just had to apologize to Mexico, after their prime minister tweeted support for Trump’s border wall. So not only has Trump failed to solve the Middle East conflict, somehow he’s dragged Mexico in the middle of it.”

Seth Meyers: “Today is Groundhog Day, and Punxsutawney Phil came out of his burrow, and was immediately captured and detained for extreme vetting. Things have changed since last year, Phil.”

Seth Meyers: “President Trump spoke at the national prayer breakfast this morning. Of course, ever since he was elected, every breakfast is a prayer breakfast.”

Seth Meyers: “Hombres. I like how Trump thinks threats will go down better if he sprinkles in some sixth-grade Spanish.”

Seth Meyers: [Referring to Education Secretary nominee Betsy DeVos] “You want to be the Education Secretary, and you plagiarized someone else’s work? How do you expect students to behave while you’re in charge? ‘Brad, did you copy someone else’s homework?’ ‘So what if I did? Betsy DeVos does it.’ ‘Did you Brad?’ ‘I support accountability.’”

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From: Swift, Heather
To: [Ross, Paul](mailto:Ross.Paul)
Subject: Re: U.S. Department of the Interior News Briefing for Friday, February 3, 2017
Date: Friday, February 03, 2017 9:35:50 AM

No sweat.

-

Heather Swift
Press Secretary
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On Fri, Feb 3, 2017 at 8:51 AM, Ross, Paul <paul_ross@ios.doi.gov> wrote:

Our POC at Cision was out yesterday and their technical folks were supposed to contact me yesterday, but I haven't heard from them yet. As soon as this can get done, it'll be done.

Paul R. Ross
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On Fri, Feb 3, 2017 at 8:46 AM, Heather Swift <heather_swift@ios.doi.gov> wrote:

FYI, they haven't updated format yet

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Bulletin Intelligence <Interior@bulletinintelligence.com>
Date: February 3, 2017 at 7:06:16 AM EST
To: <Interior@BulletinIntelligence.com>
Subject: U.S. Department of the Interior News Briefing for Friday, February 3, 2017

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NEWS BRIEFING

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DATE: FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2017 7:00 AM EST

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DOI in the News:

MURKOWSKI STILL NOT SURE WHEN VOTE FOR ZINKE WILL TAKE PLACE. The “Morning Energy” blog of [Politico](#) (2/2, 12K) reported Senate Energy and Natural Resources Chairwoman Lisa Murkowski “still had no signs on when DOE nominee Rick Perry and Interior Department designee Ryan Zinke might get full votes.” Legislators “are currently working on Betsy DeVos’ Education Department nomination, which Murkowski and fellow Republican Sen. Susan Collins plan to vote against.” According to Murkowski, “Beyond that, there is no certainty to any line up, unfortunately because I really want to get these guys moved.”

[E&E Publishing](#) (2/2, Subscription Publication, 705) reports the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee has been “largely spared the nominee tussling” other committees have experienced, although votes on Perry and Zinke “were delayed for one week after ranking member Maria Cantwell (D-Wash.) raised objections to Perry’s response to the panel, scuttling a markup that had already been noticed.” Murkowski “told E&E News that she delayed the Zinke and Perry votes out of a desire to start off ‘on the right foot.’” Murkowski stated, “You saw how that played out. ... We were the one committee yesterday that moved through two nominees with no fireworks, no boycotts and a bipartisan vote, and I felt pretty darn proud of what we did.”

Zinke Wins Bipartisan Support For Stance On Public Lands. The [Reno \(NV\) Gazette-Journal](#) (2/2, 219K) reports that during a Jan. 17 Senate hearing, Interior nominee Ryan Zinke said he would review President Obama’s designation of the Gold Butte National Monument. When questioned by Sen. Catherine Cortez Masto, “Zinke said he would visit the area and meet with her personally as well as the local community.” On Tuesday, Cortez Masto was “one of four Democrats on the committee to vote in favor of his approval.” Cortez Masto said she was reassured by “Zinke’s stance against wholesale land transfers and his ‘values as an outdoorsman’.” She said in a statement, “I do have some concerns about Rep. Zinke’s positions on issues like designating national monuments under the Antiquities Act and preserving common-sense energy regulations for public lands, and I will be monitoring the Interior Secretary’s actions closely as a member of this

committee and speaking out to ensure the Department is always acting in the best interest of Nevadans.”

Grand County Council Invites Zinke To Visit Moab, Utah. The [Moab \(UT\) Sun News](#) (2/2) reports that Grand County Council members “voted 5-1 on Tuesday, Jan. 31, to send a letter that invites” Interior Secretary nominee Ryan Zinke “to meet with them to discuss public lands issues.” Grand County Council member Chris Baird, “who drafted the letter to Zinke, said that as a rule, it’s wise to develop a working relationship with an Interior Department secretary any time that person happens to be in the region.” Baird said, “It’s always worth talking with those folks about how things work in Grand County, and to have a discussion about public lands issues, as they relate to Grand County.”

Spicer Takes Federal Lands, Energy Queries Via Skype. [E&E Publishing](#) (2/1, Subscription Publication, 705) reports “White House press secretary Sean Spicer took questions via Skype for the first time...during his daily briefing,” including public lands and energy questions from some known Trump supporters. In response to a question about federal lands from Lars Larson, a conservative talk radio show host, Spicer said, “I think the president has been very clear that as part of an overall comprehensive energy solution, that we’ve got to utilize the resources that we have that the federal government owns, whether that’s the forests or natural resources and minerals that exist above and below the ground, that we have too infrequently looked at our own resources and counted too much on foreign sources of energy.” Spicer added that Perry and Zinke will be working together and individually “to look at those natural resources that we have to figure out how to best utilize them to benefit not just our energy but also economic growth opportunities with that.”

SOME REPUBLICAN LAWMAKERS IRKED BY DISSENTING CIVIL SERVANTS. [The Hill](#) (2/2, Kamisar, 1.25M) reports that Republican lawmakers are “frustrated with mounting dissent from civil servants over President Trump’s policies.” According to the article, “some of Trump’s allies in Congress want federal employees to quit it and do their jobs—or get out.” Rep. Pete Sessions said, “When someone works full time for the government, it should be no surprise to them that they serve at the pleasure of the [president].” However, “others in the GOP are looking to tamp down the tensions and go back to business as usual.” Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen believes “that things will ultimately ‘calm down’ once the new administration gets settled in.”

Trump Moves Invigorate Supporters. [McClatchy](#) (2/2, 74K) reports that “two weeks into the Trump presidency,” many federal employees are “resisting Trump policies and preparing for deep cuts to their ranks.” But “while there may be rebellious fires burning inside the Trump fortress, many of his supporters outside are pleased the new president is striking fear inside the bureaucracy.” The article notes that “Trump campaigned on reducing the federal workforce, and his base expects him not only to fulfill that promise but to reorient the government to serve a conservative agenda.”

More Than 60 Alternative Government Twitter Accounts Have Popped Up.

The [Billings \(MT\) Gazette](#) (2/2, 208K) reports that “more than 60 alternative government Twitter accounts — including two for Yellowstone National Park and one for Glacier — have popped up across the United States in the wake of the Trump administration’s mid-January order that Interior Department employees stop making posts on a National Park Service account.” Jeff Ruch, executive director of Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility, said, “This whole dimension of communication didn’t exist before and hadn’t been controversial because it was used as a means to amplify talking points. But now all the talking points are thrown out the window.” According to Ruch, “the attempt to control information shows how much the political landscape has changed because of social media in just the past few years.”

Additional coverage was provided by [KCET-TV](#) Los Angeles (2/2, 15K).

Rocky Mountain National Park Denies Joining Alternative Social Media Effort.

The [Estes Park \(CO\) Trail-Gazette](#) (2/2, 13K) reports that Rocky Mountain National Park is not “part of this movement.” Kyle Patterson, Rocky Mountain National Park’s Management Specialist/Public Affairs Officer, said, “Rocky Mountain National Park is not involved nor have we joined the group.”

Trump Urged To Pursue Civil Service Reform. For the “Pundits” blog of [The Hill](#) (2/2, Stepman, Contributor, 1.25M), Inez Feltscher Stepman, the Director of the Education and Workforce Development Task Force at the American Legislative Exchange Council, writes that “the problem of agencies unresponsive to political will and elected representatives far predates the Trump phenomenon.” According to Stepman, “the civil service reforms over the past century have created a monster; a class of permanent, unelected bureaucrats given massive power to intrude into the affairs of the American people.” Stepman urges the President to take “action to reform a runaway agency class by instituting civil service reform.”

CHAFFETZ WITHDRAWS BILL TO TRANSFER FEDERAL LANDS TO STATE OWNERSHIP.

The [Washington Post](#) (2/2, Eilperin, 11.43M) reports that Rep. Jason Chaffetz (R-UT) has withdrawn legislation “that would have transferred 3 million acres of land from federal to state ownership, citing objections from constituents who complained that the move would limit access to public hunting and fishing grounds.” In a letter to House Natural Resources Chairman Rob Bishop, also a Utahan, Chaffetz wrote, “As a proud gun owner, hunter and public lands enthusiast, I want to be responsive to my constituents who enjoy these lands.”

Additional coverage was provided by [The Hill](#) (2/2, Cama, 1.25M), [Reuters](#) (2/2, Volcovici), the [Salt Lake \(UT\) Tribune](#) (2/2, 426K), the [Denver \(CO\) Post](#) (2/2, 778K), the [Missoulian \(MT\)](#) (2/2, 114K), the [Idaho Statesman](#) (2/2, 197K), [The Guardian \(UK\)](#) (2/2, Enders, 4.07M), the [Huffington Post](#) (2/2, 237K), the [Huffington Post](#) (2/2, 237K), [Outside](#) (2/2, 17.02M), [The Verge](#) (2/2, 1.25M), [Vox](#) (2/2, 1.15M), and [Yahoo! News](#) (2/2, 8.62M).

BEARS EARS RESOLUTION DRAWS CROWD OF MONUMENT SUPPORTERS. The [Salt Lake \(UT\) Tribune](#) (2/2, 426K) reports that House Speaker Greg Hughes on Thursday made the case for HCR11 to the Senate Natural Resources, Agriculture and Environmental Quality Standing Committee, which passed the measure. According to the article, “at least 300 people, mostly monument supporters, packed two Senate hearing rooms to voice opposition to Hughes’ resolution calling on President Donald Trump to rescind the monument designation.” The article notes that “another committee on Thursday advanced a sister resolution to trim Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument.”

Additional coverage was provided by [Utah Political Capitol](#) (2/2).

FEDERAL WILDLIFE, LAND MANAGERS SAY THEY FEAR FOR THEIR SAFETY. [BuzzFeed](#) (2/2, 6.47M) reports that “one in five managers of federal wildlife refuges say that they, their staff, or their families have been threatened or harassed because of conflicts over government land management policies,” according to a new survey released on Thursday by Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility. PEER received “responses from more than 100 managers of the Fish and Wildlife Service’s National Wildlife Refuges, plus more than 350 land managers employed by the Bureau of Land Management, which controls vast tracts of the American West.” The article notes that “of the wildlife managers who reported being threatened, only half said they were encouraged to report the incident” and “more than 60% of wildlife managers disagreed with a statement that visitor safety is better protected now than it was five years ago.”

DOE, EPA, INTERIOR IGS NOT TARGETED FOR REPLACEMENT. [E&E News PM](#) (2/1, Bogardus, Smith-Schoenwalder, Subscription Publication) reports that a “now-aborted wholesale purge of inspectors general by President Trump’s transition team did not affect watchdogs from U.S. EPA and the Interior and Energy departments.” Representatives for all three agencies told E&E “that the transition team did not contact their IGs to tell them they would eventually be replaced, as happened elsewhere in the government.”

[America’s Great Outdoors:](#)

National Park Service:

NATIONAL PARKS ALLOWED TO HIRE SEASONAL WORKERS. [CNN](#) (2/2, Hetter, 29.79M) reports that national parks have received approval to hire seasonal and short-term temporary employees “necessary to meet traditionally recurring seasonal workloads,” under a list of exemptions to the federal hiring freeze issued Tuesday. The National Park Service, “which hosted a record-breaking 307.2 million visits in 2015, depends on some 8,000 temporary workers to keep the parks running during the summer high season, a park service spokesman confirmed.” Coalter Baker, a US Office of Management and Budget spokesman, said, “As long as the Department of Interior (which oversees the park service) gives advance notice to its OMB

resource management office, the hiring of seasonal workers should be allowable.”

PANEL TO REVIEW NPS HANDLING OF CHIMNEY TOPS FIRE.

The [Knoxville \(TN\) News Sentinel](#) (2/2, 245K) reports that Joe Stutler, “a forester from Oregon, has been named to lead a panel that will review how the National Park Service handled the fires begun in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park that eventually burned 17,000-plus acres and resulted in the deaths of 14 people.” The panel has seven members, according to a list provided Thursday by the National Park Service Division of Fire and Aviation Management. According to Dan Buckley, NPS Wildland Fire Branch chief, “the panel likely will spend several weeks in the area reviewing how the fire was dealt with, then take 30 to 45 days to draft its report.”

DEAL ALLOWS YELLOWSTONE BISON SLAUGHTER. The [AP](#) (2/2, Brown, 272K) reports that “a deal disclosed Thursday will allow the mass slaughter of hundreds of wild bison migrating from Yellowstone National Park, while sparing 25 animals that American Indian tribes want to start new herds.” The deal between Montana, the park and the U.S. Department of Agriculture “resulted from two weeks of intensive negotiations and removes a political obstacle for the park after Montana Gov. Steve Bullock on Jan. 19 temporarily blocked Yellowstone’s plan to kill up to 1,300 of Yellowstone’s 5,500 bison this winter.” According to the article, “the terms are likely to dampen public outcry by averting slaughter for most of a small group of bison that had been earmarked for a conservation effort intended at establishing new herds elsewhere.”

Additional coverage was provided by [KPAX-TV](#) Missoula, MT (2/2, 2K).

NPS NAMES NEW CHIEF HISTORIAN. The [History News Network](#) (2/2, 569) reports that “effective January 8, 2017, Dr. Turkiya L. Lowe entered on duty as the National Park Service’s new Chief Historian.” Joy Beasley, Deputy Associate Director for Cultural Resources, Partnerships, and Science, said, “We are honored to have Dr. Lowe serving as the NPS Chief Historian. Her varied experiences in parks and regional offices in SER and PWR, as well as in the Washington Office, provide a thorough knowledge of NPS cultural resource programs and partnerships. She brings a combination of keen intelligence and positive energy to the Park History program and we are thrilled to have her.” Lowe said, “I look forward to the multiple and varied opportunities for collaboration, dynamic research and documentation projects, and the exciting challenges of leading the NPS’s Park History program.”

FOREST GLADE CEMETERY PLACED ON NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES. The [Foster’s Daily Democrat \(NH\)](#) (2/2, 26K) reports that the Forest Glade Cemetery in Somersworth has joined the National Register of Historic Places.

Fish and Wildlife Service:

JUDGE ASKED TO LIFT HOLD ON YELLOWSTONE DAM. The [AP](#) (2/2, Brown, 272K) reports that “U.S. officials are pressing a federal judge to lift his 2015 order blocking a proposed irrigation dam and fish passage on the Yellowstone River, warning that a rapidly-disappearing, ancient fish species faces a grim future with further delays to construction.” While “fisheries biologists have questioned if the \$57 million project near Glendive, Montana would indeed save the 125 wild pallid sturgeon that survive in the Yellowstone,” federal wildlife officials “contend the fish passage around the site is the sturgeons’ best hope.” In a court document filed late Wednesday, Michael Thabault, assistant regional director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, said that “putting off the project any longer means it will likely lose funding, ‘costing the lives of many of the last wild pallids.’”

Additional coverage was provided by [ABC News](#) (2/2, 3.09M), [U.S. News & World Report](#) (2/2, Brown, 1.02M), the [Bristol \(VA\) Herald Courier](#) (2/2), the [Minneapolis \(MN\) Star Tribune](#) (2/2, 1.27M), [Philly \(PA\)](#) (2/2, 942K), the [Flathead \(MT\) Beacon](#) (2/2, 15K), the [Great Falls \(MT\) Tribune](#) (2/2, 85K), and the [Daily Mail](#) (2/2, 4.59M).

KANSAS OFFICIALS OPPOSE LISTING OF LESSER PRAIRIE CHICKEN. The [AP](#) (2/2, 197K) reports that Kansas officials are insisting that “relisting the lesser prairie chicken as threatened or endangered would negatively affect the state’s economy and agricultural industry.” Gov. Sam Brownback, state Attorney General Derek Schmidt and state Department of Agriculture Secretary Jackie McClaskey are “asking government officials to consider having Kansas landowners implement efforts to protect the lesser prairie chicken.” In a letter to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, “the officials noted that categorizing the chicken as threatened or endangered would unduly affect the state’s primary interest in controlling how the land within its borders is used.”

LEAD AN OBSTACLE IN CALIFORNIA CONDOR REINTRODUCTION. The [Sacramento \(CA\) Bee](#) (2/2, 574K) reports that the Yurok tribe, the National Park Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service have “launched a formal review of a project that could” return California condors to “the North Coast’s redwoods as early as next year.” Since 2003, “scientists have been testing the lead levels in vultures and ravens to determine how safe California’s northwest region will be for condors.” They “found lead” and “they found that lead levels spike in the fall, when the forested mountains east of Redwood National Park are rife with hunters.” According to the article, “to minimize exposure before any birds are released, condor advocates are reaching out to hunters in an education program that emphasizes the effects of lead ammunition on condors and wildlife generally, and has given away non-lead ammunition.”

D.C. BOOTH HISTORIC NATIONAL FISH HATCHERY HAS NEW CURATOR. The [AP](#) (2/2, 856K) reports that “after more than two years without anyone in the position, the D.C. Booth Historic National Fish Hatchery and Archives in Spearfish has a new curator: April Gregory, former Booth Society executive director, started in her new role last month.” Carlos

Martinez, hatchery director, said, “Gregory has had an association with D.C. Booth for over seven years, and the institutional knowledge she possess will allow her to benefit” the station immediately. He added, “Her business acumen while dealing with partners and the public is excellent. She enjoys working with people of all ages and backgrounds and does so in a professional and courteous manner.”

PUBLIC SUPPORT SEEN AS CRITICAL IN FIGHT AGAINST WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING. [One Green Planet](#) (2/2) reports that a recent study supported by the U.S. Wildlife Trafficking Alliance “found 80 percent of Americans aren’t aware of the illegal wildlife trade in their own country.” While the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and “others are working hard to stop the trafficking of illegal wildlife products, public outcry against the illicit trade is what will ultimately tip the scales, and the legal system, in wildlife’s favor.”

Bureau of Land Management:

DEMONSTRATORS PROTEST MINING NEAR BOUNDARY WATERS . [KSJR-FM](#) Colledgeville, MN (2/2, 96K) reports that “more than 50 protesters rallied outside the Duluth office of U.S. Rep. Rick Nolan Thursday, condemning the Democratic congressman’s letter earlier this week calling on the Trump administration to overturn a decision that called for a potential 20-year ban on mining on national forest land within the watershed of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness.” In a letter to the protesters, “Nolan wrote that he supported responsible mining and a thorough environmental review process. But he argued an environmental review of mining in the watershed should wait until a specific mining plan is submitted.” However, his letter was “sharply criticized” by Rep. Betty McCollum, who said the Obama Administration’s decision “was a victory for every Minnesotan who cares about preserving clean water, clean air, and pristine wild lands.”

Additional coverage was provided by the [Minneapolis \(MN\) Star Tribune](#) (2/2, 1.27M).

Securing America’s Energy Future:

Onshore Energy Development:

SENATE APPROVES ROLLBACK OF STREAM PROTECTION RULE. In the first of what [USA Today](#) (2/2, Collins, 5.28M) says will likely be “many rollbacks of environmental regulations,” the Senate voted 54-45 Thursday to roll back the Stream Protection Rule, which was “designed to limit the dumping of mining waste in local waterways.” [Politico](#) (2/2, Guillén, 2.46M) reported that Democratic Sens. Joe Manchin, Claire McCaskill, Joe Donnelly, and Heidi Heitkamp “joined every Republican except Maine’s Susan Collins in voting for the measure.” The [Washington Times](#) (2/2, Dinan, 272K) says the Senate vote followed House passage on Wednesday. The two votes marked “just the second time Congress has successfully flexed the

Congressional Review Act.”

The [New York Times](#) (2/2, Tabuchi, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) calls the vote a first step toward “officially dismantl[ing] Obama-era environmental regulations.” [Reuters](#) (2/2, Lambert) says the rule is “the first of a number of Obama-era regulations congressional Republicans are aiming to kill,” and the [Washington Post](#) (2/2, Eilperin, Mufson, 11.43M) says this is “the first of nearly half-a-dozen rule reversals headed to President Trump’s desk for his signature this month.”

A separate [Politico](#) (2/2, Schor, 2.46M) story said that as Democrats “grind the Senate to a crawl” over Trump’s Cabinet nominees, Senate Republican leaders “hope to call up several more rifle-shot repeals of Obama regulations as they come over from the House – giving the chamber the appearance of progress even amid the confirmations standstill and with the Republicans seemingly paralyzed over what to do with Obamacare.” Republicans, the [AP](#) (2/2, Freking, Daly) reports, are “counting on a new ally in the White House to help reverse years of what the GOP calls excessive regulation.”

Additional coverage was provided by [The Hill](#) (2/2, Henry, 1.25M), [Bloomberg News](#) (2/2, Natter, Traywick, 2.41M), [TIME](#) (2/2, 6.98M), [Fortune](#) (2/2, 7.12M), [CNN](#) (2/2, Watkins, 29.79M), [CNN International](#) (2/2, 598K), [Reuters](#) (2/2, Gardner), the [Chicago \(IL\) Tribune](#) (2/2, 2.54M), the [Richmond \(VA\) Times-Dispatch](#) (2/2, 324K), the [Tampa Bay \(FL\) Times](#) (2/2, 785K), the [Durango \(CO\) Herald](#) (2/2, 31K), the [Free Press \(ME\)](#) (2/2, 32K), the [West Virginia Record](#) (2/2, 313), the [West Virginia MetroNews](#) (2/2, 6K), the [Telegraph \(UK\)](#) (2/3, Press, 1.04M), [Vox](#) (2/2, 1.15M), and [KGWN-TV Cheyenne \(WY\)](#) Cheyenne, WY (2/2, 519).

HOUSE TO VOTE ON METHANE RULE AS EARLY AS FRIDAY.

The [Denver Post](#) (2/2, Finley, 778K) reports House Republicans are set to overturn a rule limiting oil and gas companies from flaring on federal lands. Republicans invoked the Congressional Review Act in an effort to reveal the BLM rule. US Rep. Bob Bishop initiated an energy-industry backed bill that would kill the methane rule. The House is expected to vote on the bill Friday, and then it would move on to the Senate. Republicans argued that emissions have decreased, even as production increased, and that the rule would delay permits for companies seeking to access public land for drilling.

Additional coverage as provided by [Natural Gas Intelligence](#) (2/2, Subscription Publication) and [KRWG-FM](#) Las Cruces, NM (2/2, 1K).

Congress Urged Not To Repeal Methane Emissions Rule. The [Durango \(CO\) Herald](#) (2/1, 31K) editorializes that the methane regulations were “crafted with broad stakeholder input from industry, environmentalists, tribes and regulators.” It argues that the rules “make good economic and environmental sense, and protect our public health.” According to the editorial, “they mitigate the loss of \$330 million annually in taxpayer-owned gas lost to venting and flaring, gas that through royalties could otherwise go to local communities and tribes to pay for schools and infrastructure, and to

supply natural gas to up to 740,000 households each year.”

DAKOTA ACCESS PIPELINE PROTESTERS ARRESTED AT NEW CAMP. [ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/2, story 7, 0:15, Muir, 14.63M) reported that there were “new clashes” over the Dakota Access Pipeline on Thursday. Authorities say “76 protesters were arrested at a new camp on private land owned by the pipeline developer, Energy Transfer Partners. The new showdown comes after President Trump’s push to expedite the project.”

TRIBES PLEAD WITH BLM FOR PROTECTION OF CHACO. The [Durango \(CO\) Herald](#) (2/2, 31K) reports that on Thursday, tribal members “made their case to stop drilling in the greater Chaco area at the Bureau of Land Management’s 10th and final public meeting regarding energy development in the region.” According to the article, “the nearly 100 tribal members in attendance were given several hours to speak their minds, drawing a near unanimous opposition to any future drilling in the region.” However, Mark Ames, BLM project manager, “said despite the overwhelming sentiment from the local Navajo tribe to cease all future oil and gas operations in the area, the BLM has a congressional obligation to recover federal resources.” Ames “said public comments will at least aid regulators in addressing some of the more feasible concerns – such as traffic, noise or light disturbances – when the remaining 10 percent of unleased acres are eventually sold off.”

Empowering Native American Communities:

DEMOCRATS RAISE CONCERNS ABOUT FEDERAL HIRING FREEZE ON INDIAN HEALTH CARE, SERVICES. The [Billings \(MT\) Gazette](#) (2/2, 208K) reports that “after a temporary federal hiring freeze, concerns have arisen over filling jobs at long-understaffed Native American health care facilities, although an official exemption for some hiring could be on the way.” Sen. Jon Tester said, “Any freeze in hiring for Indian initiatives, whether temporary or permanent, threatens to make the challenges facing Indian Country worse.” He was “among the seven Democrats on the U.S. Senate Committee on Indian Affairs who sent a letter Tuesday to President Donald Trump advocating against the hiring freeze for services for Native Americans, including Indian Health Service, the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Bureau of Indian Education.”

Additional coverage was provided by the [Helena \(MT\) Independent Record](#) (2/2, 38K) and the [Ravalli \(MT\) Republic](#) (2/2, 19K).

FEDERAL FUNDS PAY FOR REPAIR OF BUSY FLETCHER ROAD. According to [KSWO-TV](#) Lawton, OK (2/2, Turner, 45K), \$250,000 in Federal Highway Administration funds paid for the repair of 1.3 miles of road in Fletcher, Oklahoma. A gathering of the Comanche nation Department of Transportation, The Bureau of Indian Affairs, and The County Commissioners office Thursday inspected the finished project that replaced a road that was “just so rough people were knocking their cars out of alignment and blowing tires out it was that rough,” according to Comanche Nation

Director for the Department of Transportation Adrian Tehauno.

Tackling America's Water Challenges:

IRRIGATORS RECALLED TO TESTIFY IN “TAKINGS” CASE. The [Klamath Falls \(OR\) Herald And News](#) (2/2, 45K) reports that “Klamath Basin witnesses in the so-called ‘takings’ trial, some of whom who thought they were free from further testimony, were recalled to testify Wednesday in Federal Claims Court.” According to the article, “the recall of the irrigators means the defense is able to ask direct questions of the irrigators for the use of their case, specifically if and when they received reimbursement from the government to compensate for the irrigation water shutoff in 2001.” Federal Judge Marian Blank Horn did comment “on the inconvenience to recalling farmers, but both the U.S government defense team and attorneys for the plaintiffs — representing the Klamath area irrigators — agreed on direct questioning of irrigators by the defense.”

EXCEPTIONALLY WET WINTER MEANS DELTA PUMPS ARE AT FULL THROTTLE. The [Sacramento \(CA\) Bee](#) (2/2, 574K) reports that “one month into an exceptionally stormy 2017, river flows though the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta have been so powerful that the massive pumps that ship north state water to Southern California and the San Joaquin Valley have roared at full throttle for weeks.” However, “pump operators probably will have to dial back, because they’re starting to run out of space in key reservoirs south of the Delta, said John Leahigh, who oversees day-to-day water management for the State Water Project, which delivers supplies to water agencies throughout California.”

Top National News:

TRUMP VOWS TO “DESTROY” BAN ON POLITICAL ENDORSEMENTS BY TAX-EXEMPT CHURCHES. Coverage of President Trump’s remarks at the National Prayer Breakfast is straightforward, focusing on his vow to “destroy” the so-called Johnson Amendment, the IRS rule barring tax-exempt churches from formally backing political candidates. Almost every report also includes coverage of the President’s remarks about Arnold Schwarzenegger, his successor as host of NBC’s “Celebrity Apprentice.” At the same time, the White House revealed that an executive order on religious freedom that some say would permit discrimination is under consideration.

[ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/2, story 2, 3:20, Muir, 14.63M) reported that Trump “came with a promise to, in his words, ‘destroy’ a law that bars most churches from endorsing political candidates. ... And while in that room, the President also brought up something else: ratings for ‘The Celebrity Apprentice,’ the show he used to host.” ABC’s Cecilia Vega: “Many in the room, the evangelicals who helped propel him to the White House, and the President giving them a gift so many had wanted: a promise to ‘destroy’ a law that bars tax-exempt churches from endorsing political candidates. ... Just this week, the White House said the President would continue to enforce

workplace protection for gays and lesbians implemented by President Obama,” but “there is a proposed draft executive order on religious freedom circulating inside” the White House that “would weaken protections for the LGBT community.” Vega said that Trump also “took a shot at his old show” and its new host. Trump: “They hired a big movie star, Arnold Schwarzenegger, to take my place. ... It has been a total disaster, and I want to just pray for Arnold if we can, for those ratings, okay?”

Nancy Cordes reported on the [CBS Evening News](#) (2/2, story 4, 2:00, Pelley, 11.17M) that Trump’s promise to get rid of the endorsement restriction “delighted the religious leaders gathered at the annual breakfast.” Trump: “I will get rid of and totally destroy the Johnson Amendment and allow our representatives of faith to speak freely and without fear of retribution. I will do that.” Cordes said that the law “prevents tax-exempt nonprofits, notably churches, from donating to candidates.” Cordes added, “Religious freedom wasn’t the only thing on Mr. Trump’s mind at the prayer breakfast,” then showing Trump’s remarks about Schwarzenegger. Cordes: “The White House said that Mr. Trump only joked about the ‘Apprentice’ because he was introduced at the breakfast by show’s creator Mark Burnett. In a video, Schwarzenegger responded that if the President knows so much about ratings, he’s happy to switch jobs with him.”

[NBC Nightly News](#) (2/2, story 2, 2:10, Holt, 16.61M) said Trump made “waves by taking a detour from his prepared remarks to taunt his reality show successor.” NBC’s Kristen Welker said Trump also offered “his most defensive defense yet of his controversial order halting travel from seven predominantly Muslim countries.” Trump: “We will not allow a beachhead of intolerance to spread in our nation. We want people to come into our nation, but we want people to love us and to love our values, not to hate us and to hate our values.” Welker: “Today, the President vowing to repeal a regulation that prevents political endorsements from the pulpit – the Johnson Amendment, one of the clearest lines between church and state, and most Americans support it.”

NBC, like nearly every newspaper and online report, also mentioned the Schwarzenegger line. [Reuters](#) (2/2, Mason, Rampton) reports that “during his remarks at an event that typically is a solemn affair,” Trump “derided” the “actor and former politician...over TV viewership ratings.”

The [AP](#) (2/2, Lucey) reports that the President, “declaring that religious freedom is ‘under threat,’” vowed to repeal the “rarely enforced IRS rule that says pastors who endorse candidates from the pulpit risk losing their tax-exempt status.” He “did not detail how he might scrap the IRS rule, which he has previously pledged to do away with.” The [New York Times](#) (2/2, Landler, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) says Trump vowed to overturn the restriction on “political speech by tax-exempt churches, a potentially huge victory for the religious right and a gesture to his political base.” [USA Today](#) (2/2, Korte, 5.28M) says Trump’s promise “was met by enthusiastic applause from the religious leaders.”

The [Washington Post](#) (2/2, Zauzmer, 11.43M) says Trump presents the “ban on participating in politicking as a restriction on the freedom of faith groups to put their religion in action, if their religion calls on them to campaign for a candidate. At Thursday’s prayer breakfast, Trump said that his reason for opposing the Johnson Amendment is that it impinges on the American ‘right to worship according to our own beliefs’ – apparently describing campaign participation as a form of worship.”

The [Washington Times](#) (2/2, Boyer, 272K) reports that Sen. James Lankford introduced legislation to repeal the rule, while [The Hill](#) (2/2, Marcos, 1.25M) reports companion legislation was introduced by House Majority Whip Scalise and Rep. Jody Hice. However, [McClatchy](#) (2/2, Douglas, 74K) says Trump “has a big hurdle” to fulfilling the vow, since 60 Senate votes would be needed to end a near-certain Democratic filibuster “and Republicans have bigger priorities.”

Steven Waldman, author of “Founding Faith: Providence, Politics and the Birth of Religious Freedom in America,” writes in a [New York Times](#) (2/2, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) op-ed that a repeal of the Johnson Amendment “would be horrible for politics – and even worse for religion. ... Conservatives clamoring for this change should think hard: They don’t like their tax dollars going to support groups that perform abortions. Do they really want to pay for churches that push pro-choice candidates? They fear and distrust Islam. Do they really want their hard-earned money to back the preferred political candidates of the local Islamic center?”

The [Catholic Sentinel](#) (2/2) reports that “likely billionaire” Trump also told the crowd that “‘spiritual success’ is a more accurate measure for the United States than wealth. ... Compared to people to have money but no happiness, the people who have no money but happiness ‘are the successful people, let me tell you,’ Trump said.” The [Christian Post](#) (2/2, Smith, 171K) reports that Trump also said “there were five words that gave him solace and comfort” throughout his campaign and early presidency: “What I hear most often as I travel the country are five words that never fail to touch my heart. That’s ‘I am praying for you.’”

Spicer: Religious Freedom Executive Order Under Consideration. The [Washington Post](#) (2/2, Eilperin, Somashekhar, 11.43M) reports White House press secretary Sean Spicer said Thursday that the President “is considering how to allow Americans to opt out of complying with federal policies and regulations on the grounds of religion,” which critics say “could open the door to discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender or gender identity.” Spicer said, “There’s clearly a lot of evidence in the last couple of years of the government coming in with regulations and policies that have, frankly, denied people the ability to live according to their faith. People should be able to practice their religion, express their religion, express areas of their faith without reprisal. And I think that pendulum sometimes swings the other way, in the name of political correctness.”

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/2, Lovett, Gershman, Radnofsky, Subscription

Publication, 6.37M) says a draft executive order titled “Establishing a Government-Wide Initiative to Respect Religious Freedom” would expand legal protections on the grounds of religious belief, potentially allowing denial of services to the gay and transgender community, as well as contraception coverage for employees. The [Washington Times](#) (2/2, Boyer, 272K) reports that “several human-rights groups and progressive activists are sounding alarms about the draft order, saying it would sanction discrimination.” Human Rights Campaign President Chad Griffin said, “It reads like a wish-list from some of the most radical anti-equality activists.”

Catherine Rampell writes in her [Washington Post](#) (2/2, 11.43M) column, “Much-dreaded ‘sharia law,’ or something resembling it, may well be coming to the United States. Just not in the form many Americans expected.” She writes that “religiously motivated laws creeping into public policymaking aren’t based on the Koran. ... They’re coming from the White House, which wants to make it easier for hard-line Christians to impose their beliefs and practices on the rest of us.”

ADMINISTRATION PREPARING NEW SANCTIONS AGAINST IRAN. One day after National Security Adviser Flynn warned that the US is “putting Iran on notice,” Administration sources said the White House is preparing to impose new sanctions on Tehran – according to some media outlets, as early as Friday. The President’s remarks Thursday that “nothing is off the table” are also receiving media attention.

[ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/2, lead story, 4:10, Muir, 14.63M) said Trump is “turning up the heat” on Iran after its most recent ballistic missile test, “reviewing new sanctions,” the [CBS Evening News](#) (2/2, lead story, 3:05, Pelley, 11.17M) reported. The President, asked about potential military action against Iran, said Thursday that “nothing is off the table.” The [New York Post](#) (2/2, Moore, 3.82M) reports the “aggressive comment” came just hours after Trump took to [Twitter](#) to say, “Iran has been formally PUT ON NOTICE for firing a ballistic missile. Should have been thankful for the terrible deal the US made with them.” The [Washington Times](#) (2/2, Sherfinski, 272K) reports that in a second [tweet](#), the President asserted, “Iran was on its last legs and ready to collapse until the US came along and gave it a life-line in the form of the Iran Deal: \$150 billion.”

[Fox News’ Special Report](#) (2/2, 1.53M) provided details of the draft sanctions, noting that they represent “the first punitive action that the newly minted administration has taken against another country.” The sanctions will reportedly target “more than 20 Iranian entities for terrorism and missile-related activities.” [Reuters](#) (2/2, Mohammed) reports sources said the sanctions could be announced as early as Friday, and are expected to target “about eight Iranian entities...for terrorism-related activities and about 17 for ballistic missile-related activities under separate existing US executive orders.”

The White House “had to get creative with the application of sanctions for fear of itself violating the nuclear agreement,” because, as [CNN’s Situation](#)

[Room](#) (2/2, 554K) correspondent Elise Labott noted, “they’re trying to separate this from the Iran nuclear deal, because this missile test is not necessarily in violation” of that deal, but the Administration does believe it violates UN Security Council resolutions. The sanction, [Reuters](#) (2/2, Mohammed, Spetalnick, Landay) says, “may mark the opening shot in a more aggressive policy against Iran that Trump promised during the 2016 presidential campaign.” An [AP](#) (2/2, Schreck) analysis likewise says that by putting Iran “on notice,” the Administration “is laying the groundwork for a more confrontational approach toward the Islamic Republic.” But “what that means in practice is anyone’s guess, since the White House isn’t saying,” which is “in line with...Trump’s desire to keep America’s adversaries guessing and boost US leverage.”

A [Washington Post](#) (2/2, A1, Gearan, 11.43M) analysis says that while “Trump campaigned on blowing up business as usual in Washington...the administration’s tone has surprised allies and government employees who expected the new president to first spend time offering diplomatic niceties.”

A [USA Today](#) (2/2, Michaels, 5.28M) analysis warns that Trump’s stern warning “risks drawing the United States into a conflict or making Trump look weak if it doesn’t follow through with some retaliation should Iran take another provocative action,” foreign policy analysts said. “If you’re going to make a threat, you need to be prepared to carry through with it,” said Fred Kagan of the American Enterprise Institute. “The question is: Are they prepared to do carry through with it.” David Ignatius writes in his [Washington Post](#) (2/2, 11.43M) column that by putting Iran “on notice.” Trump has “taken aim at a country that’s opposed by many US allies. But he has begun this confrontation without much preparation or strategic planning, continuing the haphazard pattern of his first two weeks in office.”

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/2, Solomon, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) says Trump has staffed his National Security Council with current and former US military officers who support a more aggressive policy toward Iran, including National Security Adviser Flynn, and two of his top deputies, retired Army Col. Derek Harvey and Joel Rayburn.

Asked on [CNN’s Situation Room](#) (2/2, 554K) if he would support military action against Iran, Rep. Darrell Issa said, “I think it has to be, as the President said, on the table.” But [Fox News’ Special Report](#) (2/2, 1.53M) said military options against Iran may be limited “at the moment,” because the US does not have an aircraft carrier in the Persian Gulf for “only the second time since 2008.”

The [New York Times](#) (2/2, Erdbrink, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) reports Iran’s establishment is “treading carefully, with even most hard-liners concerned that the smallest provocation could lead to military conflict. But some question how long their caution will last in the face of a Trump administration that has brought a new level of hostility and confrontation.” On Thursday, Foreign Ministry spokesman Bahram Qassemi “gave a mild rejoinder,” saying, “It is a shame that the US government, instead of thanking

the Iranian nation for their continued fight against terrorism, keeps repeating unfounded claims and adopts unwise policies that are effectively helping terrorist groups.”

The [Washington Times](#) (2/2, Taylor, 272K) says Iranian officials “responded defiantly,” vowing to advance their nation’s ballistic missile program. [ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/2, lead story, 4:10, Muir, 14.63M) reported that an advisor to Iranian Supreme Leader Khamenei said, “Iran does not need permission from any country to defend itself.”

German FM: No Sign US Wants To Cancel Nuclear Deal. [Reuters](#) (2/2, Siebold) reports German Foreign Minister Sigmar Gabriel, who was in Washington this week, “said it was necessary to do everything possible to make progress on the nuclear deal with Iran and that he did not see any indications” during his visit “that Washington would terminate it.”

MEDIA: TRUMP THREATENS UNIVERSITY’S FUNDING AFTER IT CANCELS YIANNOPOULOS SPEECH. Media coverage says President Trump threatened to pull federal funding from the University of California at Berkeley after university police canceled a speech by Breitbart writer Milo Yiannopoulos and placed the campus on lockdown following protests against the scheduled speech. Trump [tweeted](#), “If U.C. Berkeley does not allow free speech and practices violence on innocent people with a different point of view – NO FEDERAL FUNDS?” While the overwhelming majority of coverage assumes Trump is making a threat that he considers actionable, the [Los Angeles Times](#) (2/2, Hamilton, Watanabe, King, Mejia, 4.52M) says “it’s unclear whether Trump was actually threatening to cut funding or making some kind of rhetorical point.”

The [Washington Post](#) (2/2, Svrluga, Murphy, 11.43M) says Yiannopoulos “has a large following as a self-proclaimed ‘free-speech fundamentalist’ crusading against political correctness.” Other schools, according to the Post, also have canceled or indefinitely postponed events that included Yiannopoulos “because they often generate such intense responses.” [Politico](#) (2/2, Nelson, 2.46M) reports that a man was shot last month at a University of Washington demonstration opposing a speech by Yiannopoulos. [AFP](#) (2/2, Zablit) cites a Breitbart News story as saying Yiannopoulos was planning to use the Berkeley event to launch a campaign against sanctuary campuses.

A [New York Times](#) (2/2, Fuller, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) analysis says “protest has been synonymous” with the campus “from the earliest days of the free speech movement,” but “now the university is under siege” for its decision. The [Huffington Post](#) (2/2, Satlin, 237K) – in a story headlined “Donald Trump Defends Far-Right Troll Milo Yiannopoulos” – reports that senior adviser Kellyanne Conway told Fox News’ “Fox and Friends” on Thursday that Trump “has a point.” Conway said, “It’s like [Berkeley students] don’t welcome free speech.” Yiannopoulos responded to the cancellation, [The Hill](#) (2/2, Savransky, 1.25M) says, by calling it “an expression of political violence.” He said in a Facebook Live video, “I’m just stunned that hundreds of people...were so threatened by the idea that a

conservative speaker might be persuasive, interesting, funny and might take some people with him, they have to shut it down at all costs.”

The [Los Angeles Times](#) (2/2, Hamilton, Watanabe, King, Mejia, 4.52M) reports that senior University of California officials “have generally said they believe [Yiannopoulos] has a right to speak,” and UC Berkeley spokesman Dan Mogulof “said campus officials went to ‘extraordinary lengths’ over weeks of planning to help the Berkeley College Republicans prepare for the event.” Mogulof indicated that dozens of police officers were brought to the Berkeley campus from other university system schools to help, but it was not enough to prevent an “‘unprecedented’ assault” on Thursday. [ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/2, story 4, 1:55, Muir, 14.63M) reported that the originally peaceful protest “erupt[ed]” and “turn[ed] violent” and the school is “blaming more than 100 masked agitators for invading the campus.” Those people, according to the [New York Times](#) (2/1, Fuller, Mele, Subscription Publication, 13.9M), “set fires and threw objects at buildings” to protest Yiannopoulos’ appearance. The violence, the [CBS Evening News](#) (2/2, story 8, 0:25, Pelley, 11.17M) and [NBC Nightly News](#) (2/2, story 4, 2:05, Holt, 16.61M) reported, led to fires and broken windows. The [Washington Times](#) (2/2, Richardson, 272K) reports “videos widely disseminated on social media showed would-be attendees being assaulted.”

Local officials, according to the [San Francisco Chronicle](#) (2/2, Ravani, 2.2M), criticized Trump’s statement. The Chronicle says California Lt. Gov. Gavin Newsom “fired back at Trump” with a [Twitter](#) post that said, “As a UC Regent I’m appalled at your willingness to deprive over 38,000 students access to an education because of the actions of a few.” [Reuters](#) (2/2, Bernstein, Ingram) quotes Rep. Barbara Lee as promising to fight any effort to pull funding. Lee said, “President Trump’s empty threat to cut funding from UC Berkeley is an abuse of power.”

[Bloomberg News](#) (2/2, Nasiripour, 2.41M) reports experts say Trump’s comment “is largely harmless” as he does not “have the unilateral authority to carry it out.” Bloomberg adds that Congress “would have to pass a law altering the rules governing the provision of federal funds to colleges and universities” for Trump to directly impact the school’s funding. [USA Today](#) (2/2, Toppo, 5.28M) similarly reports experts indicated that Trump’s threat “may sound serious, but it is essentially toothless.” USA Today quotes Terry Hartle of the American Council on Education as saying there is “no federal law that would allow the federal government to deny funding to an institution of higher education because they prohibited someone from speaking on campus.” [TIME](#) (2/2, Reilly, 6.98M) says that if Trump “did take action, such a move would impact student financial aid, research funding and healthcare.” Time indicates that the full University of California system receives about \$8.5 billion in federal funding annually.

Anarchists Vowing To Confront Far-Right. The [New York Times](#) (2/2, Stockman, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) reports that “self-described anti-fascists and anarchists are vowing to confront” far-right groups that are “edging into the mainstream with the rise of President Trump.” The

anarchists, according to the Times, are saying they will use “any means necessary – including violence.” The Times highlights the protests at Berkeley as an example and says the groups – which “often make up a small but disproportionately attention-getting portion of protesters” – “defend the mayhem they create as a necessary response to an emergency.” According to the Times, anarchists “say their recent efforts have been wildly successful” by focusing efforts on arguing that Trump “poses a fascist threat” and “by enticing others to join their movement.”

Editorial Wrap-Up:

NEW YORK TIMES. “*Wanted: One Republican With Integrity, To Defeat Betsy DeVos.*” The [New York Times](#) (2/2, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) says in an editorial that “this country needs a few good Republicans — one more would do — to rescue it from [Education Secretary-designate] Betsy DeVos, one of President Trump’s worst cabinet choices.” The Times concludes that “voters should remind Republican senators that if they surrender to Mr. Trump on appointees so clearly unfit, they will be relinquishing a historic obligation and tarnishing themselves.”

“*New Tensions With Iran.*” A [New York Times](#) (2/3, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) editorial says “it didn’t take long for tensions to flare” between Iran and Trump, and “both sides have to share the blame” – Iran for conducting a “dangerously provocative” ballistic missile test and the Trump Administration for failing to “discuss the missile issue with Iran privately.” The Times argues that it is “important...to find ways to manage tensions with Iran by exerting pressure when appropriate without creating a path toward confrontation.”

“*Mr. Trump’s Bad Two-for-One Deal.*” The [New York Times](#) (2/3, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) editorializes President Trump’s “two-for-one deal...sounds more like a fast-food ad than a plan for governing.” It argues that “there are sound ways to streamline regulations, but boxing in regulators this way is neither advisable nor necessary.”

WASHINGTON POST. “*Tillerson And Mattis Speak Up For The Right Values Of Leadership.*” A [Washington Post](#) (2/2, 11.43M) editorial says Secretary of State Tillerson’s remarks to State Department employees, “wise as they were...stood out for their rationality and evenhandedness only because they were uttered amid the rapid deterioration of such formerly commonplace standards of political culture.” The President, “in particular, continues to operate according to a different standard: insulting allies, intimidating civil servants, improperly threatening recipients of federal funds,” which “can only hurt the United States’ standing and undermine the peace abroad while damaging democratic norms at home.”

“*An Activist Mysteriously Ill In Russia, And The US Needs To Speak Up.*” The [Washington Post](#) (2/2, 11.43M) editorializes that the most recent offensive by Russian-backed forces in Ukraine and pro-Democracy activist Vladimir Karza-Murza’s hospitalization “most likely holds a message from

[Russian President Vladimir] Putin to the new Trump administration.” The Post says Russia “hopes to establish that such crimes will be tolerated” by Trump “as part of a refounded relationship with Moscow.”

“One Step Forward For The Mentally Ill In Virginia.” A [Washington Post](#) (2/2, 11.43M) editorial praises Virginia Gov. Terry McAuliffe for “singl[ing] out mental-health care as the one major area for which he is seeking new funding this year” even as he faces “a projected budget deficit that prompted him to propose an array of spending cuts.”

WALL STREET JOURNAL. “Betsy DeVos’s School Frenemies.” In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/2, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) criticizes charter-school advocates for opposing [Education Secretary-designate Betsy] DeVos. The Journal takes issue with a letter from philanthropist Eli Broad to Senate leaders, which it casts as a regurgitation of teacher unions’ talking points about the nominee.

“Travis Kalanick Drives Away.” In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/2, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) faults Uber chief executive Travis Kalanick for leaving President Trump’s economic advisory council without facing Trump directly when the council meets on Friday.

“Putin’s Bad Ukraine Deal.” A [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/2, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) editorial welcomes Ambassador Haley’s comments blaming Russia for the recent surge of violence in eastern Ukraine, and urges the Administration to cooperate with lawmakers who want to stiffen sanctions.

Big Picture:

HEADLINES FROM TODAY’S FRONT PAGES.

Wall Street Journal:

[Trump White House Set To Impose Fresh Sanctions On Iran](#)
[Executive Order Draft Would Expand Religious Protections, Could Allow Denial Of Services To Gays](#)
[Snapchat Parent Files For IPO](#)
[The End Of Employees](#)

New York Times:

[Trump Embraces Pillars Of Obama’s Foreign Policy](#)
[Anarchists Respond To Trump’s Inauguration, By Any Means Necessary](#)
[GOP Campaign To Repeal Obamacare Stalls On The Details](#)
[Trump Vows To “Destroy” Law Banning Political Endorsements By Churches](#)
[Uber CEO To Leave Trump Advisory Council After Criticism](#)
[Pregnant Women Turn To Marijuana, Perhaps Harming Infants](#)

Washington Post:

[In Austin, Salvos In The “Sanctuary City” Battle](#)

[Us, Iran Trade Threats](#)
[President Targets Church-State Law](#)
[Trump Team Ditches Obama's Plan To Take Raqqa](#)
[Democrats Spar In Va.'s Volatile Game Of Thrones](#)
[Tech Firms' Opposition To Immigration Policies Rises](#)

Financial Times:

["Don't Worry" About Tough Calls, Trump Tells US](#)
[Deutsche Bank Fails To Capitalize On Trump Rally](#)
[Facebook Earnings Soar On Holiday Advertising](#)
[Larsson Leaves Ralph Lauren After Less Than Two Years](#)

Washington Times:

[Iran Defies Trump's Threat On Missiles, Puts US On Notice](#)
[Controversial Cabinet Picks Pass First Test In Senate](#)
[Have A Slice Of Super Bowl, Slathered In Protest](#)
[Berkeley Rioters Betray University's Historical Commitment To Free Speech](#)
[Trump Says He "Loves" Australia But Questioned Refugee Deal](#)

Story Lineup From Last Night's Network News:

ABC: Trump-Diplomacy; Trump-Prayer Breakfast; Yemen Raid; Trump-UC Berkeley Protest; Denver Transit Officer Shot; California School Shooting Foiled; Dakota Pipeline Protest; Swiss Flight Malfunction; Holocaust Survivor Suit Maker.

CBS: Trump-Diplomacy; Ukraine Conflict; Pelosi Comment-Bannon; Trump-Prayer Breakfast; Yemen Raid; Delaware Prison Seize; Samsung Phone Arbitration; Trump-UC Berkeley Protest; Sanctuary Cities Policy Reactions; Jazz Teaching Kids History.

NBC: Trump-Diplomacy; Trump-Prayer Breakfast; Yemen Raid; Trump-UC Berkeley Protest; Delaware Prison Seize; Health-Prostate Cancer; Houston Daycare; Detergent Pod Child Warning; Body Clock-Camping; Disabled Child Friendship.

Network TV At A Glance:

Trump-Diplomacy – 10 minutes, 35 seconds
Trump-Prayer Breakfast – 7 minutes, 30 seconds
Yemen Raid – 6 minutes, 25 seconds
Trump-UC Berkeley Protest – 4 minutes, 25 seconds
Delaware Prison Seize – 2 minutes, 10 seconds

Story Lineup From This Morning's Radio News Broadcasts:

ABC: New York Shops Protest; Travel Ban-Legal Challenge; Delaware Prison Seize; Smokeless Tobacco Recall; Wall Street News.

CBS: Trump-Diplomacy; Mattis South Korea Visit; Trump-Johnson Amendment; Snapchat IPO; NYU Protest; Wall Street News.

FOX: NYU Protest; UC Berkeley Protest; Iran Sanctions; Mattis South Korea Visit.

NPR: UN Ambassador-Russia Criticism; Iran Sanctions; Comcast Protest; New York Shops Protest.

Washington Schedule:

TODAY'S EVENTS IN WASHINGTON.

White House:

PRESIDENT TRUMP — Participates in a strategy and policy forum; signs Executive Orders; has lunch with Lt. Gen. Michael Flynn; departs White House for Joint Base Andrews to travel to his Florida property for a weekend of meetings.

VICE PRESIDENT PENCE — Joins the President to participate in a strategy and policy forum; joins the President as he signs Executive Orders; meets with the President of Hillsdale College, Larry Arnn.

US Senate: No public schedule announced.

US House: 9:00 AM House meets for legislative business – House of Representatives meets for legislative business, with agenda including completion of consideration of ‘H.J.Res. 36 – Providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the final rule of the Bureau of Land Management relating to ‘Waste Prevention, Production Subject to Royalties, and Resource Conservation’ * Administration has said it strongly supports the resolution and that President Donald Trump would be expected to sign it if it reaches his desk Location: Washington, DC

<http://www.house.gov/>

Other: 8:00 AM U.S. Chamber of Commerce hosts ‘The Shifting Paradigm of Retirement’ conference – U.S. Chamber of Commerce hosts ‘The Shifting Paradigm of Retirement: What it Means for Employers, Workers, and Retirees’ conference, highlighting the release of a policy solution roadmap and exploring ‘what retirement saving means for employers, workers, and retirees in today’s evolving landscape’. Participants include Investment Company Institute Chief Economist Brian Reid, Employee Benefit Research Institute Research Director Jack VanDerhei, American University Kogod School of Business Tax Policy Academic Fellow Jen Brown, and USCC Senior Vice President of Labor, Immigration and Employee Benefits Randy Johnson, Executive Director of Retirement Policy Aliya Wong, and Center for Capital Markets Competitiveness President and CEO David Hirschmann Location: USCC, 1615 H St NW, Washington, DC www.uschamber.com
<https://twitter.com/USChamber>

8:30 AM Conference on Tax Competition with keynote from GOP Rep. Kevin Brady – Georgetown Law Institute of International Economic Law and the International Tax Policy Forum Conference on Tax Competition, examining international tax competition as the U.S. ‘stands on the brink of business tax reform’, with keynote by House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Rep. Kevin Brady Location: Gewirz Student Center, Georgetown Law, 600 New Jersey Ave., Washington, DC iitelaw.org

9:30 AM Medellin, Colombia, mayor speaks – in Spanish – at Brookings – ‘Challenges and Opportunities in the U.S.-Colombia Relationship’: Brookings Institution Latin America Initiative and Center for 21st Century Security and Intelligence host Medellin, Colombia, Mayor Federico Gutierrez Zuluaga, who speaks (in Spanish, translation provided) on ‘the remarkable progress, challenges, and opportunities facing Medellin, as well as Colombia and the future of its relationship with the U.S. during the Trump administration’ Location: Brookings Institution, 1775 Massachusetts Ave NW, Washington,

DC <http://www.brookings.edu> <https://twitter.com/BrookingsInst>

Last Laughs:

LATE NIGHT POLITICAL HUMOR.

Jimmy Kimmel: “When [Donald Trump] said he was going to get tough on foreign leaders, I didn’t realize he meant Arnold Schwarzenegger.”

Jimmy Kimmel: “ You know we have a problem when turning the country over to Arnold Schwarzenegger seems like a good idea to people.”

Jimmy Kimmel: [Referring to Trump’s phone call to the Australian Prime Minister] “And from now on, the only Australian leader President Trump will deal with is Miss Australia.”

Stephen Colbert: “The President used the national prayer breakfast to insult Arnold Schwarzenegger. And tomorrow, he’s going to roast Rosie O’Donnell at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.”

James Corden: “ The groundhog has been predicting weather since 1887 and has been wrong 61 percent of the time. And yet this is still front-page news every year. So I guess fake news isn’t a recent phenomenon. I mean, you guys, you know that this isn’t actually based on any science, right? And for that reason, that Donald Trump has just appointed the groundhog to a special committee on climate change.”

Trevor Noah: [Referring to Donald Trump’s message, ‘bad hombres down there’] “Hey, look on the bright side. Trump’s learning Spanish.”

Trevor Noah: [Referring to Trump’s phone call to the Australian Prime Minister] “So Trump damaged relations with a key strategic ally because he missed his nap time? That is the cutest, most terrifying excuse I have ever heard!”

Jimmy Fallon: “Trump is causing all kinds of trouble this week. In fact, I saw that Israel just had to apologize to Mexico, after their prime minister tweeted support for Trump’s border wall. So not only has Trump failed to solve the Middle East conflict, somehow he’s dragged Mexico in the middle of it.”

Seth Meyers: “Today is Groundhog Day, and Punxsutawney Phil came out of his burrow, and was immediately captured and detained for extreme vetting. Things have changed since last year, Phil.”

Seth Meyers: “President Trump spoke at the national prayer breakfast this morning. Of course, ever since he was elected, every breakfast is a prayer breakfast.”

Seth Meyers: “Hombres. I like how Trump thinks threats will go down better

if he sprinkles in some sixth-grade Spanish.”

Seth Meyers: [Referring to Education Secretary nominee Betsy DeVos] “You want to be the Education Secretary, and you plagiarized someone else’s work? How do you expect students to behave while you’re in charge? ‘Brad, did you copy someone else’s homework?’ ‘So what if I did? Betsy DeVos does it.’ ‘Did you Brad?’ ‘I support accountability.’”

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From: Bloomgren, Megan
To: [Timothy Williams](#); [Downey Magallanes](#); [Casey Hammond](#); [Kathleen Benedetto](#)
Subject: Fwd: BLM Ellis Testimony at WHB House Hearing
Date: Friday, February 03, 2017 1:10:07 PM
Attachments: [BLM Testimony WHB \(FINAL\) 06.22.16.pdf](#)

FYI only

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Bolstad, Dean <dbolstad@blm.gov>
Date: Fri, Feb 3, 2017 at 12:48 PM
Subject: Fwd: BLM Ellis Testimony at WHB House Hearing
To: Megan Bloomgren <megan_bloomgren@ios.doi.gov>
Cc: Steve Tryon <stryon@blm.gov>, Patrick Wilkinson <p2wilkin@blm.gov>

Hi Megan,

Attached is the requested BLM testimony delivered at the June 22, 2016 House Natural Resources Subcommittee on Federal Lands' hearing, "Challenges and Potential Solution to the BLM's Wild Horse & Burro Program"

Glad you were able to attend our briefing today. Let us know if you need anything further.

Thanks,
Dean

Dean Bolstad
Division Chief, Wild Horse and Burro Program
Washington Office (WO-260)
(202) 912-7648 Office
(775) 750-6362 Cell

Statement of Steve Ellis
Deputy Director of Operations
Bureau of Land Management
U.S. Department of the Interior
House Natural Resources Subcommittee on Federal Lands
“Challenges and Potential Solution to the BLM’s Wild Horse & Burro Program”
June 22, 2016

Introduction

Chairman McClintock, Ranking Member Tsongas, and Members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to discuss the management of wild horses and burros on our nation’s public lands. The Bureau of Land Management’s (BLM’s) Wild Horse and Burro program is part of the agency’s broad multiple-use and sustained yield mandate which requires that the BLM manage the public lands for a variety of uses to meet the needs of the American people. The overall goal of the Wild Horse and Burro program is to ensure that healthy wild horses and burros thrive on healthy public rangelands.

The BLM shares the concerns of members of Congress and the public about growing herd populations; herd and rangeland health; program costs; and the effectiveness of past management strategies. To address these concerns, the BLM is taking a number of steps, including sponsoring a significant research program focused on fertility control; transitioning horses from corrals to more cost-effective pastures; working to increase adoptions with new programs and partnerships; and requesting legislative authority to allow for the immediate transfer of horses to other agencies that have a need for work animals. Despite these many initiatives, additional tools and resources are needed to bring this program onto a sustainable path. We sincerely appreciate the Subcommittee’s interest and look forward to further dialogue on these issues.

Congressional Mandates

The BLM manages wild horse and burro herds in 177 Herd Management Areas (HMAs) on 27 million acres of public lands located in 10 Western states. The BLM’s primary authority for managing these herds is the Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act of 1971 (WH&B Act), which directs the BLM to manage the herds as populations of healthy animals, in balance with other uses of the public lands, while maintaining the health and productive capacity of the range. This dual legislative mandate – protecting wild horse populations while at the same time protecting the rangelands from deterioration – presents the BLM with a considerable challenge.

As the first step toward achieving healthy herds, the WH&B Act requires the BLM to determine the “Appropriate Management Level” (AML) – that is, the number of wild horses and burros that can graze on the land in balance with other resources and uses. The BLM takes into account all natural resources (including forage, water, and wildlife) and authorized uses of the public lands, consistent with the Act and with the BLM’s multiple-use and sustained-yield mandate set out in the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976. The BLM has determined that the total AML for wild horses and burros on the range west-wide is slightly more than 26,700 animals.

Herd populations that exceed AML threaten the health of native plants, wildlife, and other public land resources and uses – and place the horses and burros themselves at risk of disease and

starvation. To prevent range deterioration from herd overpopulation, the WH&B Act directs the BLM to reduce the number of animals on the range to a sustainable level.

Options for keeping excess animals on rangelands are limited. The 1971 WH&B Act prevents the BLM from relocating herds to areas where they did not exist in 1971. Since wild horses have virtually no natural predators and herds double in size every four years, the BLM's primary tool to ensure that herd sizes are consistent with the land's capacity to support them has been to gather excess wild horses and burros and remove them from the range.

Population Numbers – On-Range, Off-Range & Adoptions

To provide proper context for the scale of the Wild Horse and Burro program, it is helpful to note the total number of horses and burros that are currently on the public lands as well as the number of animals that have been moved to off-range pastures and corrals, which are usually leased from private parties. The BLM estimates that as of March 1, 2016, more than 67,000 wild horses and burros (about 55,300 horses and 11,700 burros) are roaming on BLM-managed rangelands – exceeding by more than 40,000 the maximum number of animals (i.e., the AML) that the BLM has determined can thrive in balance with other public rangeland resources and uses. It is estimated that 10,000 foal births will occur in the current foaling season (March – June 2016).

In addition to the animals that are currently on the public lands, the agency is paying to support over 45,000 horses that, over the past two decades, were removed from the range to help sustain the health of the public lands. After gathers, wild horses and burros removed from the range enter short-term holding facilities where they receive veterinary care prior to being moved to corrals and pastures. The BLM uses 26 corrals (BLM-owned, contract, and state correctional facilities) to hold and prepare wild horses and burros for adoption and sale; and 25 contracts for pastures for long-term holding. As of May 2016, approximately 14,700 animals are being cared for in corrals and approximately 31,000 animals are being cared for in pastures.

The placement of gathered animals with qualified adopters has been an essential component of the BLM's overall herd population management strategy since the beginning. Since 1971, more than 235,000 wild horses and burros have been placed through the BLM's Adopt-a-Wild-Horse-or-Burro program. Until the last several years, the number of animals removed from the range was about equal to the number of animals adopted. In the early 2000s, for example, the BLM placed nearly 8,000 horses with private adopters each year. Over the past 10 years, however, the number of excess animals gathered has outpaced adoptions. Despite aggressive marketing, adoption demand has fallen dramatically and is now down to roughly 2,500 animals each year, while the BLM has gathered an average of about 6,700 animals per year over the past decade.

Animals that are not adopted or sold are generally returned to corrals or placed in pastures. Currently, the BLM has 25 contracts for pastures in Oklahoma, Kansas, Iowa, South Dakota, Montana, and Nebraska. Each pasture is 8,000 to 15,000 acres in size. In addition, the BLM has

contracts for three eco-sanctuaries, located in Oklahoma and Wyoming, which provide public education about wild horses and offer ecotourism opportunities.

Program Costs

With more than 112,000 horses and burros in the BLM's care – both on-range and off-range – the agency is redoubling its efforts to control program costs. The total lifetime cost of caring for an animal that is removed from the range is substantial. Costs for lifetime care in a corral approach \$50,000 per horse. With over 45,000 horses and burros already in off-range corrals and pastures, this means that without new opportunities for placing these animals with responsible owners, the BLM will spend more than \$1 billion to care for and feed these animals, which have already been removed from the range, over the remainder of their lives.

The BLM currently spends two-thirds of its Wild Horse and Burro program budget (\$49 million, or 65 percent of \$77 million in FY 2015) to care for animals removed from the range. Resources are inadequate to care for additional animals in holding facilities.

Given this vast financial commitment, the BLM is now severely limited in how many animals it can afford to remove from the range. The BLM has recently reduced the number of animals it is removing from the range to approximately 3,500 animals each year – about the same number of animals that leave the off-range system annually through adoption, sale and natural mortality. The BLM is prioritizing removals in response to public health and safety concerns (i.e., animals on highways, in agricultural fields, etc.); private land encroachment; Greater sage-grouse Focal Areas; research; court orders; and emergencies.

BLM Actions Underway

Over the past seven years, the BLM has doubled the amount of funding used for managing our nation's wild horses and burros, but current strategies cannot keep pace with constant population growth. Since the BLM first began tracking wild horse and burro population numbers in the 1970s, herd populations have consistently exceeded appropriate management levels. Herd populations in the 1970s and 1980s surpassed 64,000 animals, more than twice what the rangelands could sustain. Through an aggressive gather strategy and high adoption rates in the 1990s and early 2000s, the BLM was able to reduce the herd populations to near AML levels. Unfortunately, as the adoption rates fell, more horses were put into corrals and pastures limiting the number of additional animals that could be gathered. Today, the on-range population stands at 67,000 and growing; longer term solutions must be found if we are to ensure the health of wild horses and burros and the public rangelands.

The BLM is taking steps toward longer-term solutions – moving forward with a population growth-suppression strategy; working to increase adoptions of horses and burros through training and incentives; and requesting legislative authority to allow the immediate transfer of horses to Federal, state, and local agencies with a need for work animals.

Investment in Fertility Control Research

The BLM is pursuing an aggressive population growth-suppression strategy. Research is the first step. In 2013, the National Academy of Sciences confirmed that there are no highly effective, easily delivered, and affordable fertility-control methods for wild horses and burros. The BLM is committed to applying the best available fertility-control methods and vaccines to the maximum extent feasible and appropriate, and is open to new public-private partnerships that would expand the use of fertility control as a means of population growth suppression. The BLM currently utilizes PZP as the primary fertility control vaccine, however it is only effective for 12 months and requires a follow up booster shot within the first 15-30 days which makes field application challenging.

To address this issue, the BLM has teamed-up with top universities and the U.S. Geological Survey to initiate a five-year, \$11 million research program to develop better management tools; longer lasting fertility-control vaccines; and effective, safe methods for spaying and neutering wild horses. The BLM's new fertility control research program involves a total of 21 research study projects at five universities – the University of Kentucky, Oregon State University, Colorado State University, Ohio State University, and Louisiana State University. The BLM is committed to moving beyond research and to implementation of tools that provide productive results by incorporating them into our population control strategy. Detailed information about each project has been posted on the BLM's website at:

http://www.blm.gov/wo/st/en/prog/whbprogram/science_and_research/usgs_partnership.html

Increasing Adoptions

The BLM is currently working to increase placement of wild horses and burros to qualified adopters with improved programs and partnerships. Trained horses are more likely to be adopted when made available to the public. Toward that end, the BLM is working to boost the number of horses in training programs through partnerships with non-governmental organizations, such as the Mustang Heritage Foundation and Family Horses. Also, adoptions of wild horses and burros are now offered through the Internet and at more than 100 adoption events each year held all across the United States as well as at the BLM's holding facilities. The Mustang Heritage Foundation's popular "Extreme Mustang Makeovers" highlight the trainability and versatility of mustangs. Also, the Foundation places gentled mustangs in good homes through the BLM's Trainer Incentive program, which allows compensation for adoption of trained animals.

Transitioning from Off-Range Corrals to More Cost-Effective Pastures

The BLM is also working to reduce the cost of caring for the animals that have been removed from the range by increasing the number of off-range horses that are cared for on open pastures, which are more cost effective than corrals. The BLM is proposing to acquire more off-range pastures through contracts with private parties in order to reduce numbers in higher-cost corrals.

Legislative Requests

In addition, we are seeking help from the Congress. The President's FY 2017 budget includes a request for legislative authority to allow for the transfer of wild horses and burros to Federal, state and local agencies that have a legitimate need for work animals. The U.S. Border Patrol, the U.S. Military, and other agencies who are interested in using wild horses or burros in their work are unable to receive direct transfer of horses from the BLM. The U.S. Border Patrol, for instance, has used about 300 former wild horses over the past decade for their patrol efforts. However each of those animals must be adopted by individual members of the Patrol, in his or her personal capacity. The BLM wants to enable trusted agencies – who will commit to protecting and caring for the animals – to use these remarkable animals for important public purposes. We need Congress' help to make this possible.

The President's FY 2017 budget request also includes a legislative proposal for a congressionally chartered non-profit foundation for the BLM. A foundation would strengthen the BLM's efforts to link Americans to their public lands through an organization that would raise and spend private funds and foster constructive partnerships in support of the BLM's mission. A foundation could vastly expand the BLM's ability to work with partners to address the challenges facing the WH&B program and complement the agency's efforts to find animals good homes and to manage populations more effectively through expanded application of fertility treatments. The foundation would operate in a manner similar to the National Park Foundation, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, and the National Forest Foundation, all of which were approved by Congress.

Conclusion

Addressing the multiple challenges of this program will require congressional, stakeholder, and agency leadership on a long-term, sustained basis. The BLM is committed to working with the Congress and stakeholders to develop a sustainable Wild Horse and Burro program. We welcome the Subcommittee's interest in the BLM's management of the program and we look forward to working with you to address these challenges.

From: Simpson, Melissa
To: [Benedetto, Kathleen](#)
Subject: Fwd: Planning 2.0
Date: Monday, February 06, 2017 1:38:30 PM
Attachments: [Testimony of K. Sgamma - June 21, 2016.pdf](#)

FYI attached - WEA testimony

**Kathleen Sgamma
Vice President of Government & Public Affairs
Western Energy Alliance**

**Testimony Before the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources,
Subcommittee on Public Lands, Forests, and Mining**

***The Bureau of Land Management's Planning 2.0 Initiative*
June 21, 2016**

BLM's Planning 2.0 initiative would elevate wildlife and preservationist values over the needs of people; it redefines the concept of multiple use, prioritizes preservation over responsible development of the food, fuel and fiber that support human life, limits public involvement in the planning process, and further strains overburdened BLM staff. The primary justification of landscape-level planning seems compelling, but represents an attempt to treat the West as a blank slate that can simply be written on anew, ignoring realities on the ground, state borders, congressional mandates, prior commitments, community economic needs, and individual livelihoods. BLM should withdraw the proposed rule and reconsider this approach to resource management planning.

Western Energy Alliance represents over 300 companies engaged in all aspects of environmentally responsible exploration and production of oil and natural gas in the West. The Alliance represents independents, the majority of which are small businesses with an average of fifteen employees.

Landscape-Level Planning

Land use planners tend to look at each new planning effort as a chance to start anew and reshape public lands management according to what they see as the pressing issues of the day, or dare I say current fashion. It's always easier to start with a blank slate and rework everything in accordance with a new concept, in this case "landscape level," than it is to take into consideration all the intricate and often conflicting details on the ground. The landscapes at issue reflect decades of management decisions and on-the-ground realities that must be taken into account in new land use plans. It would be easier to wish all those decisions and commitments away, such as leases and grazing permits, but that is neither legally feasible nor democratic. We all understand that wildlife, rivers and ecosystems don't respect state borders, but our Constitution does, and it does so within a federalist structure that allows us to think at the larger scale but within a democratic system that balances the needs of the People.

The ecosystem concept that ecologists have advanced for several decades has now morphed into the "landscape-level" term that has taken hold of the imagination of many environmental groups, public land managers and some academics. Of course looking at broad ecosystems is a very valuable perspective that can help land managers across large areas enact management strategies and on-the-ground measures suited for the particular ecosystem or "landscapes" at issue. But humans are part of the ecosystem as well, and a landscape-level planning approach cannot simply be imposed over realities on the ground and prior commitments.

That is the beauty of the balance achieved through the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA). That balance arose from a democratic process that was enshrined into law by Congress and

the President in 1976. Is it perfect? Of course not. But did it achieve a reasonable balance between conservation and productive uses of public lands? Absolutely.

BLM is attempting to upset that balance with Planning 2.0. Updates to FLPMA-based regulation and guidance are appropriate, but updates that simply rewrite the law are not. If fully enacted as proposed, it would be a significant rewrite of Congressional intent, upending the multiple-use balance that Congress and replacing it with management for conservation only.

Obviously, there are lands that are appropriate for preservation only or limited use. The 110 million acres of wilderness lands are one example. The 85 million acres of National Parks are another. But these lands were designated through the democratic process by Congress. (I'll set aside designations of millions of acres of National Monuments as abuses of the Antiquities Act tangential to this testimony.) BLM protects 32 million additional acres for conservation only in the National Landscape Conservation System, removing those lands from multiple-use management. BLM continues to create additional designations administratively in land use plans, such as Areas of Critical Environmental Concern, lands with wilderness characteristics, wildlife emphasis areas and others.

But the vast majority of BLM's 245 million acreage is appropriate for productive multiple uses like grazing, mining, and energy development. These productive activities are important not only for supplying Americans with the basics of modern life, but also sustain rural communities across the West. Many will view these communities as inconvenient, and downplay their right to control their destinies by saying with a wave of their hand that all Americans own public lands. But the reality is that those East of the Mississippi were given their lands, and have control over how they are used, whether for state parks, productive uses, or in private ownership. Western states were deprived of much of their land. Yes, all Americans do own federal lands, but they also own the energy and minerals beneath those lands. And all Americans are not as invested in those lands as are western states, tribes and communities. FLPMA recognized the needs of states, tribes and local communities, and granted them cooperating status and a bigger voice in their lands, while still considering the interests of others.

State and Local Representation

Planning 2.0 aims to downplay the voice of communities that derive their livelihoods from appropriate multiple-use lands in the West by elevating certain conservation-only special interests over the broad public interest as represented by state governors, tribal councils, county commissioners, and other elected officials. Someone from New York cavalierly sending in a Sierra Club generated email opposing a rancher's grazing permit or a local oilfield worker's project simply is not invested as deeply as those living in western communities. Certainly, they have a say, and are often represented by various special-interest groups. Of course, they are also represented by their congressional representatives who do not have to worry that their constituents' livelihoods are directly impacted. But state governors, tribal councils, county commissioners, city councilmen, local groups and other stakeholders directly involved in the community should be afforded a higher level of deference than outside special interests.

That's the beauty of FLPMA and the cooperating agency status that has been given to local and state governments for decades. State and local governments do not represent just one interest. They must be responsive to all concerns of their citizens, from economic to conservation. They understand that their citizens need protected public lands for recreation, clean water, and wildlife, and they balance that with the need for jobs and economic opportunity. Planning 2.0 upends that balance.

Western Energy Alliance shares the goal of better public involvement. We more than many others understand how the federal government can dump obligations on the public, as we've had to wade through 49,226 pages of government documents over 47 proposed rules, policy changes, and land use plans in just the last year in an attempt to keep up with all the changes that affect responsible energy development. It's hard for the public to stay up on every public land action; thousands of bureaucrats can churn out tens of thousands of pages of dense documents, and short deadlines close off deliberative engagement. But Planning 2.0 would actually hamper public engagement by reducing the time available for public comment, and diminishing the ability of elected representatives of the People to engage effectively as full cooperating agencies.

BLM's messaging on the rule asserts that it will increase public engagement. But if it only serves to give special interests more power in the process at the expense of elected representatives of the People, then it will serve to diminish public participation. One example of how Planning 2.0 diminishes the role of elected officials is by ignoring state and county lines. BLM will have the discretion to ignore one governor's input if another governor's is more in line with its preferred approach, even though it will affect the first governor's state. The input of county commissioners is watered down even further, as an RMP amendment that covers several field offices also covers numerous counties, and one county's input can be drowned out by others. Another example is the new requirement that state, tribal and local agencies demonstrate expertise before being designated as cooperating agencies. State, local and tribal governments represent the citizens primarily affected by BLM planning decisions, and they should have every right to participate in the planning process as cooperating agencies, regardless of expertise.

But actually, in many instances, states, tribes and counties have more expertise and relevant data than the federal government. Planning 2.0 would result in numerous overlapping RMP amendments for various natural resource values, as modeled on the recent sage-grouse amendments. But sage grouse represents an area of landscape-level planning that states have been doing since at least 1954, well before the federal government got involved or the buzzword "landscape level" was coined. Last week, the 30th biennial Sage and Columbia Sharp-Tailed Grouse Workshop took place in Lander, Wyoming. An effort of the Western Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies (WAFWA), an inter-state body that has been cooperating across state boundaries since the 1920s, the workshops are but a visible manifestation of the immense work that WAFWA and the states have been doing to conserve sage grouse for generations. There are many other examples of state cooperation across boundaries on other resource values such as water.

Additional Layers of NEPA

Another problem with landscape level planning is that it is not at the level of detail necessary for on-the-ground land management. The intent to have multiple, overlapping RMP amendments focused on particular resource values would lead to many areas being subject to several amendments depending on the number of resource values present. Counties, tribes and states would be caught in a never-ending web of RMP amendments. The result will amount to yet more layers of National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analysis before any meaningful public lands management decisions can be made. BLM will become trapped in paralysis by analysis while not reaching the level of detail needed by planning area to make project-specific decisions. Project approvals that create jobs and economic opportunities already take many years, which Planning 2.0 will only exacerbate.

BLM has a system of planning areas that respect state boundaries and are determined based on various factors such as number of federal acres; dispersal of that acreage; topography; and county, tribal and state boundaries. Planning areas boundaries are established with the intention of setting appropriately sized areas that can be reasonably managed by staff connected to the land who know the local stakeholders and understand the land, wildlife, cultural resources, and other on-the-ground resource values. Taking the process out of the hands of local land managers and concentrating it in Washington breaks that connection to actual conditions on the ground, elected officials, and local stakeholders. Distant, centralized control hardly seems conducive to managing the land wisely. Adding yet more layers of NEPA is especially counterproductive as BLM already struggles to conduct timely land use planning and follow it up with monitoring in the field to ensure the plans are properly implemented and resources values are protected. Yet more NEPA analysis will continue to keep BLM staff out of the field and behind their desks pushing paper.

In addition to more multi-year planning processes, BLM is struggling to formulate and implement new mitigation policies, onshore orders, sage grouse land use plan amendments for 68 planning areas, Master Leasing Plans, and rules. These significant policy changes would be difficult to implement in a perfect world, but are becoming nearly impossible when BLM already struggles to meet existing project planning, permitting, and inspection obligations. As the White House attempts to jam in as many policy changes as possible before January 2017, there are simply too many moving parts for one agency to manage in a short period of time. These policy changes are highly interrelated, and should be carefully crafted in a deliberative manner. Instead, confusion reigns on how these policies will interact without massive contradictions, much less implemented in the field by the very staff charged with protecting the land and its resources. The result will be even more delays on permitting for productive activities, creating job loss and economic stagnation in affected communities.

Conclusion

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. There are many other aspects of Planning 2.0 deserving of attention, but that time does not permit me to address. Please refer to [Western Energy Alliance's full Planning 2.0 comments](#) for additional information. I welcome questions on these and other aspects of the proposed rule.

From: Kaster, Amanda
To: [Christopher Salotti](#); [Pamela Barkin](#); [Mahan, Joshua D](#); [Dominic Maione](#); [Matthew Quinn](#); [Tracy Goodluck](#)
Cc: [Micah Chambers](#)
Subject: ICYMI: House Natural Resources Committee Rules and Oversight Plan
Date: Tuesday, February 07, 2017 4:08:02 PM
Attachments: [115th natural resources committee rules.pd.pdf](#)
[authorization and oversight plan 115th.pd.pdf](#)
[authorization and oversight plan 115th.pd.pdf](#)

I figured most of you have already received this, but just in case, please see the attached documents on the new rules and oversight plan for House Natural Resources.

Of note is the change to QFRs - questions from the Member must now be submitted within three business days following a hearing, as opposed to within ten days.

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Amanda Kaster-Averill
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**RULES FOR THE COMMITTEE
ON
NATURAL RESOURCES**

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

115TH CONGRESS

Adopted February 7, 2017

RULE 1. RULES OF THE HOUSE; VICE CHAIRMEN

(a) Applicability of House Rules.

(1) The Rules of the House of Representatives, so far as they are applicable, are the rules of the Committee on Natural Resources (hereinafter in these rules referred to as the "Committee") and its Subcommittees.

(2) Each Subcommittee is part of the Committee and is subject to the authority, direction and rules of the Committee. References in these rules to "Committee" and "Chairman" shall apply to each Subcommittee and its Chairman wherever applicable.

(3) House Rule XI is incorporated and made a part of the rules of the Committee to the extent applicable.

(b) Vice Chairmen.—Unless inconsistent with other rules, the Chairman shall appoint Vice Chairmen of the Committee and the Subcommittees. If the Chairman of the Committee or Subcommittee is not present at any meeting of the Committee or Subcommittee, as the case may be, the Vice Chairman shall preside. If the Vice Chairman is not present, the ranking Member of the Majority party on the Committee or Subcommittee who is present shall preside at that meeting.

RULE 2. MEETINGS IN GENERAL

(a) Scheduled Meetings.—The Committee shall meet at 10 a.m. the first Wednesday of each month when the House is in session if so noticed by the Chairman under Committee Rule 3(a). The Committee shall also meet at the call of the Chairman subject to advance notice to all Members of the Committee. Special meetings shall be called and convened by the Chairman as provided in clause 2(c)(1) of House Rule XI. Any Committee meeting or hearing that conflicts with a party caucus, conference, or similar party meeting shall be rescheduled at the discretion of the Chairman, in consultation with the Ranking Minority Member. The Committee may not sit during a joint session of the House and Senate or during a recess when a joint meeting of the House and Senate is in progress.

(b) Open Meetings.—Each meeting for the transaction of business, including the markup of legislation, and each hearing of the Committee or a Subcommittee shall be open to the public, except as provided by clause 2(g) and clause 2(k) of House Rule XI.

(c) Broadcasting.—Whenever a meeting for the transaction of business, including the markup of legislation, or a hearing is open to the public, that meeting or hearing shall be open to coverage by television, radio, and still photography in accordance with clauses 2(a)(1) and 4 of House Rule XI. The provisions of clause 4(f) of House Rule XI are specifically made part of these rules by reference. To the maximum extent practicable, the Committee shall provide audio and visual coverage of each hearing or meeting for the transaction of business in a manner that allows the public to easily listen to and view the proceedings, and maintain the recordings of such coverage in a manner that is easily accessible to the public. Operation and use of any Committee Internet broadcast system shall be fair and nonpartisan and in accordance with clause 4(b) of House Rule XI and all other applicable rules of the Committee and the House.

(d) Authorization and Oversight Plan.—No later than February 15 of the first session of each Congress, the Committee shall adopt its authorization and oversight plan for that Congress in accordance with clause 2(d) of House Rule X.

RULE 3. MEETING AND HEARING PROCEDURES IN GENERAL

(a) Notice and Information for Members and the Public.

(1) The Chairman shall publicly announce the date, place and subject matter of a Committee hearing or meeting in accordance with clause 2(g)(3) of House Rule XI.

(2) A hearing or meeting may begin sooner if the Chairman, with the concurrence of the Ranking Minority Member, determines that there is good cause to begin the meeting or hearing sooner, or if the Committee so determines by majority vote. In these cases, the Chairman shall publicly announce the meeting or hearing at the earliest possible time. The Committee shall promptly notify the Daily Digest Clerk of the Congressional Record and shall promptly make publicly available in electronic form the appropriate information as soon as possible after the public announcement is made.

(3) To the extent practicable, a background memorandum prepared by the Majority staff summarizing the major provisions of any bill being considered by the Committee, including the need for the bill and its effect on current law, will be available for the Members of the Committee and the public no later than 48 hours before the meeting.

(b) Public Availability of Markup Text.—At least 24 hours prior to the markup of any legislation (or at the time of an announcement under paragraph (a)(2) above made within 24 hours before such meeting), the Chairman shall cause the text of such legislation to be made publicly available in electronic form.

(c) Meetings and Hearings to Begin Promptly.—Each meeting or hearing of the Committee shall begin promptly at the time stipulated in the public announcement of the meeting or hearing.

(d) Addressing the Committee.—A Committee Member may address the Committee or a Subcommittee on any bill, motion, or other matter under consideration or may question a witness at a hearing only when recognized by the Chairman for that purpose. The time a Member may address the Committee or Subcommittee for any purpose or to question a witness shall be limited to five minutes, except as provided in Committee Rule 4(f). A Member shall limit his remarks to the subject matter under consideration. The Chairman shall enforce the preceding provision.

(e) Quorums.

(1) A majority of the Members of the Committee shall constitute a quorum for the reporting of any measure or recommendation, the authorizing of a subpoena, the closing of any meeting or hearing to the public under clause 2(g)(1), clause 2(g)(2)(A) and clause 2(k)(5)(B) of House Rule XI, and the releasing of executive session materials under clause 2(k)(7) of House Rule X. Testimony and evidence may be received at any hearing at which there are at least two Members of the Committee present. For the purpose of transacting all other business of the Committee, one third of the Members shall constitute a quorum.

(2) When a call of the roll is required to ascertain the presence of a quorum, the offices of all Members shall be notified and the Members shall have not less than 15 minutes to prove their attendance. The Chairman shall have the discretion to waive this requirement when a quorum is actually present or whenever a quorum is secured and may direct the relevant Committee Staff to note the names of all Members present within the 15-minute period.

(f) Participation of Members in Committee and Subcommittees.—Any Member of the Committee may sit with any Subcommittee during any meeting or hearing, and by unanimous consent of the Members of the Subcommittee, may participate in such meeting or hearing, except that a former Chairman or former Ranking Member of the Full Committee may participate without unanimous consent. However, a Member who is not a Member of the Subcommittee (including former Full Committee Chairmen or Full Committee Ranking Members) may not vote on any matter before the Subcommittee, be counted for purposes of establishing a quorum or raise points of order.

(g) Proxies.—No vote in the Committee or its Subcommittees may be cast by proxy.

(h) Record Votes.—Record votes shall be ordered on the demand of one-fifth of the Members present, or by any Member in the apparent absence of a quorum.

(i) Postponed Record Votes.

(1) Subject to paragraph (2), the Chairman may, after consultation with the Ranking Minority Member, postpone further proceedings when a record vote is ordered on the question of approving any measure or matter or adopting an amendment. The Chairman shall resume proceedings on a postponed request at any time after reasonable notice, but no later than the next meeting day.

(2) Notwithstanding any intervening order for the previous question, when proceedings resume on a postponed question under paragraph (1), an underlying proposition shall remain subject to further debate or amendment to the same extent as when the question was postponed.

(3) This rule shall apply to Subcommittee proceedings.

(j) Privileged Motions.—A motion to recess from day to day, a motion to recess subject to the call of the Chairman (within 24 hours), and a motion to dispense with the first reading (in full) of a bill or resolution if printed copies are available, are nondebatable motions of high privilege.

(k) Layover and Copy of Bill.—No measure or recommendation reported by a Subcommittee shall be considered by the Committee until two calendar days from the time of Subcommittee action. No bill shall be considered by the Committee unless a copy has been delivered to the office of each Member of the Committee requesting a copy. These requirements may be waived by a majority vote of the Committee at the time of consideration of the measure or recommendation.

(l) Access to Dais and Conference Room.—Access to the hearing rooms' daises (and to the conference rooms adjacent to the Committee hearing rooms) shall be limited to Members of Congress and employees of the Committee during a meeting or hearing of the Committee, except that Committee Members' personal staff may be present on the daises if their employing Member is the author of a bill or amendment under consideration by the Committee, but only during the time that the bill or amendment is under active consideration by the Committee. Access to the conference rooms adjacent to the Committee hearing rooms shall be limited to Members of Congress and employees of Congress during a meeting or hearing of the Committee.

(m) Cellular Telephones.—The use of cellular telephones is prohibited on the Committee dais or in the Committee hearing rooms during a meeting or hearing of the Committee.

(n) Motion to go to Conference with the Senate.—The Chairman may offer a motion under clause 1 of Rule XXII whenever the Chairman considers it appropriate.

(o) Materials for Record.—Other than witness questions for the hearing record, materials must be submitted within 10 business days following the last day of the hearing or meeting. Witness questions for the hearing record must be submitted to the relevant Full Committee Staff or Subcommittee Clerk within 3 business days following the last day of the hearing. The materials submitted must address the subject matter of the hearing or meeting. Only a Member of the Committee or an invited witness may submit materials for inclusion in the hearing or meeting record.

RULE 4. HEARING PROCEDURES

(a) Written Statement; Oral Testimony.—Each witness who is to appear before the Committee or a Subcommittee shall file with the relevant Full Committee Staff or Subcommittee Clerk, at least two working days before the day of his or her appearance, a written statement of their proposed testimony. Each witness shall limit his or her oral presentation to a five-minute summary of the written statement, unless the Chairman, in consultation with the Ranking Minority Member, extends this time period. Subject to the approval of the Committee, the Chairman may waive oral testimony of any witness who has submitted written testimony for the record. In addition, a witness appearing in a nongovernmental capacity shall include a curriculum vitae and a disclosure of any Federal grants or contracts, or contracts or payments originating with a foreign government, received during the current calendar year or either of the previous two calendar years by the witness or by the entity represented by the witness and related to the subject matter of the hearing. The disclosure shall include the amount and source of each Federal grant (or subgrant thereof) or contract (or subcontract thereof) related to the subject matter of the hearing and the amount and country of origin of any payment or contract related to the subject matter of the hearing originating with a foreign government. Failure to comply with these disclosure requirements may result in the exclusion of the written testimony from the hearing record and/or the barring of an oral presentation of the testimony.

(b) Minority Witnesses.—When any hearing is conducted by the Committee or any Subcommittee upon any measure or matter, the Minority party Members on the Committee or Subcommittee shall be entitled, upon request to the Chairman by a majority of those Minority Members before the completion of the hearing, to call witnesses selected by the Minority to testify with respect to that measure or matter during at least one day of hearings thereon.

(c) Information for Members.—After announcement of a hearing, the Committee shall make available as soon as practicable to all Members of the Committee a tentative witness list and to the extent practicable the Majority staff shall make publicly available a memorandum explaining the subject matter of the hearing (including relevant legislative reports and other necessary material). In addition, the Chairman shall make available to the Members of the Committee any official reports from departments and agencies on the subject matter as they are received.

(d) Subpoenas.—The Committee or a Subcommittee may authorize and issue a subpoena under clause 2(m) of House Rule XI if authorized by a majority of the Members voting. In addition, the Chairman of the Committee may authorize and issue subpoenas during any period of time in which the House of Representatives has adjourned for more than three days. Subpoenas shall be signed only by the Chairman of the Committee, or any Member of the Committee authorized by the Committee, and may be served by any person designated by the Chairman or Member.

(e) Oaths.—The Chairman of the Committee, the Chairmen of the Subcommittees or any Member designated by the Chairman may administer oaths to any witness before the Committee. All witnesses appearing in hearings may be administered the following oath by the Chairman or his designee prior to receiving the testimony: “Do you solemnly swear or affirm that the

testimony that you are about to give is the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?"

(f) Opening Statements; Questioning of Witnesses.

(1) Opening statements may be made by the Chairman, Ranking Member, Vice Chair, and Vice Ranking Member only. If a witness scheduled to testify at any hearing of the Committee is a constituent of a Member of the Committee, that Member may be recognized for up to 30 seconds to briefly introduce the witness at the hearing.

(2) The questioning of witnesses in Committee and Subcommittee hearings shall be initiated by the Chairman, followed by the Ranking Minority Member and all other Members alternating between the Majority and Minority parties. In recognizing Members to question witnesses, the Chairman shall take into consideration the ratio of the Majority to Minority Members present and shall establish the order of recognition for questioning in a manner so as not to disadvantage the Members of the Majority or the Members of the Minority. A motion is in order to allow designated Majority and Minority party Members to question a witness for a specified period to be equally divided between the Majority and Minority parties. This period shall not exceed one hour in the aggregate.

(g) Claims of Privilege.—Claims of common-law privileges made by witnesses in hearings, or by interviewees or deponents in investigations or inquiries, are applicable only at the discretion of the Chairman, subject to appeal to the Committee.

RULE 5. FILING OF COMMITTEE REPORTS

(a) Duty of Chairman.—Whenever the Committee authorizes the favorable reporting of a measure from the Committee, the Chairman or his designee shall report the same to the House of Representatives and shall take all steps necessary to secure its passage without any additional authority needing to be set forth in the motion to report each individual measure. In appropriate cases, the authority set forth in this rule shall extend to moving in accordance with the Rules of the House of Representatives that the House be resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the consideration of the measure; and to moving in accordance with the Rules of the House of Representatives for the disposition of a Senate measure that is substantially the same as the House measure as reported.

(b) Filing.—A report on a measure which has been approved by the Committee shall be filed within seven calendar days (exclusive of days on which the House of Representatives is not in session) after the day on which there has been filed with the relevant Full Committee Staff a written request, signed by a majority of the Members of the Committee, for the reporting of that measure. Upon the filing with the relevant Full Committee Staff of this request, the Staff shall transmit immediately to the Chairman notice of the filing of that request.

(c) Supplemental, Additional, Dissenting or Minority Views.—Any Member may, if notice is given by any Member at the time a measure or matter is approved by the Committee, file supplemental, additional, dissenting or minority views. These views must be in writing and signed by each Member joining therein and be filed with the Committee Chief Counsel not less than two additional calendar days (excluding Saturdays, Sundays and legal holidays except when the House is in session on those days) of the time the bill or resolution is approved by the Committee. This paragraph shall not preclude the filing of any supplemental report on any measure or matter that may be required for the correction of any technical error in a previous report made by the Committee on that bill or resolution.

(d) Review by Members.—Each Member of the Committee shall be given an opportunity to review each proposed Committee report before it is filed with the Clerk of the House of Representatives. Nothing in this paragraph extends the time allowed for filing supplemental, additional or minority views under paragraph (c).

(e) Disclaimer.—All Committee or Subcommittee reports printed and not approved by a majority vote of the Committee or Subcommittee, as appropriate, shall contain the following disclaimer on the cover of the report:

"This report has not been officially adopted by the {Committee on Natural Resources} {Subcommittee} and may not therefore necessarily reflect the views of its Members."

RULE 6. ESTABLISHMENT OF SUBCOMMITTEES; FULL COMMITTEE JURISDICTION; BILL REFERRALS

(a) Subcommittees.—There shall be five standing Subcommittees of the Committee, with the following jurisdiction and responsibilities:

Subcommittee on Federal Lands

(1) Measures and matters related to the National Park System and its units, including Federal reserved water rights.

(2) The National Wilderness Preservation System.

(3) Wild and Scenic Rivers System, National Trails System, national heritage areas and other national units established for protection, conservation, preservation or recreational development, other than coastal barriers.

(4) Military parks and battlefields, national cemeteries administered by the Secretary of the Interior, parks in and within the vicinity of the District of Columbia and the erection of monuments to the memory of individuals.

(5) Federal and non-Federal outdoor recreation plans, programs and administration including the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965 and the Outdoor Recreation Act of 1963.

(6) Preservation of prehistoric ruins and objects of interest on the public domain and other historic preservation programs and activities, including national monuments, historic sites and programs for international cooperation in the field of historic preservation.

(7) Matters concerning the following agencies and programs: Urban Parks and Recreation Recovery Program, Historic American Buildings Survey, Historic American Engineering Record, and U.S. Holocaust Memorial.

(8) Public lands generally, including measures or matters relating to entry, easements, withdrawals, grazing and Federal reserved water rights.

(9) Forfeiture of land grants and alien ownership, including alien ownership of mineral lands.

(10) Cooperative efforts to encourage, enhance and improve international programs for the protection of the environment and the conservation of natural resources otherwise within the jurisdiction of the Subcommittee.

(11) Forest reservations, including management thereof, created from the public domain.

(12) Public forest lands generally, including measures or matters related to entry, easements, withdrawals, grazing and Federal reserved water rights.

(13) Wildlife resources, including research, restoration, refuges and conservation, and National Wildlife Refuges.

Subcommittee on Water, Power and Oceans

(1) Generation and marketing of electric power from Federal water projects by Federally chartered or Federal regional power marketing authorities.

(2) All measures and matters concerning water resources planning conducted pursuant to the Water Resources Planning Act, water resource research and development programs and saline water research and development.

(3) Compacts relating to the use and apportionment of interstate waters, water rights and major interbasin water or power movement programs.

(4) All measures and matters pertaining to irrigation and reclamation projects and other water resources development and recycling programs, including policies and procedures.

(5) Indian water rights and settlements.

(6) Rights of way over public lands for energy-related transmission.

(7) Fisheries management and fisheries research generally, including the management of all commercial and recreational fisheries (including the reauthorization of the Magnuson Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act), interjurisdictional fisheries, international fisheries agreements, aquaculture, seafood safety, and fisheries promotion.

(8) All matters pertaining to the protection of coastal and marine environments, estuarine protection, and coastal barriers (except coastal zone management).

(9) Oceanography.

(10) Ocean engineering, including materials, technology and systems.

(11) Marine sanctuaries.

(12) U.N. Convention on the Law of the Sea.

(13) All matters regarding Antarctica within the Committee's jurisdiction.

(14) Sea Grant programs and marine extension services.

(15) Cooperative efforts to encourage, enhance and improve international programs for the protection of the environment and the conservation of natural resources otherwise within the jurisdiction of the Subcommittee.

Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources

(1) All measures and matters concerning the U.S. Geological Survey, except for the activities and programs of the Water Resources Division or its successor.

(2) All measures and matters affecting geothermal resources.

(3) Conservation of United States uranium supply.

(4) Mining interests generally, including all matters involving mining regulation and enforcement, including the reclamation of mined lands, the environmental effects of mining, and the management of mineral receipts, mineral land laws and claims, long-range mineral programs and deep seabed mining.

(5) Mining schools, experimental stations and long-range mineral programs.

(6) Mineral resources on public lands.

(7) Conservation and development of oil and gas resources of the Outer Continental Shelf.

(8) Petroleum conservation on the public lands and conservation of the radium supply in the United States.

(9) Measures and matters concerning the transportation of natural gas from or within Alaska and disposition of oil transported by the trans-Alaska oil pipeline.

(10) Cooperative efforts to encourage, enhance and improve international programs for the protection of the environment and the conservation of natural resources otherwise within the jurisdiction of the Subcommittee.

(11) Coastal zone management.

Subcommittee on Indian, Insular and Alaska Native Affairs

(1) Measures relating to the welfare of Native Americans, including management of Indian lands in general and special measures relating to claims which are paid out of Indian funds.

(2) All matters regarding the relations of the United States with Native Americans and Native American tribes, including special oversight functions under House Rule X.

(3) All matters regarding Native Alaskans.

(4) All matters related to the Federal trust responsibility to Native Americans and the sovereignty of Native Americans.

(5) All matters regarding insular areas of the United States.

(6) All measures or matters regarding the Freely Associated States.

(7) All matters regarding Native Hawaiians.

Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations

(1) Primary and general oversight and investigative authority on all activities, policies and programs within the jurisdiction of the Committee under House Rule X.

(b) Full Committee.—The following measures and matters shall be retained at the Full Committee:

(1) Environmental and habitat measures of general applicability, including the National Environmental Policy Act and the Endangered Species Act.

(2) Cooperative efforts to encourage, enhance and improve international programs for the protection of the environment and the conservation of natural resources otherwise within the jurisdiction of the Full Committee under this paragraph.

(3) All other measures and matters retained by the Full Committee, including those retained under Committee Rule 6(e).

(4) General and continuing oversight and investigative authority over activities, policies and programs within the jurisdiction of the Full Committee.

(c) Ex-officio Members.—The Chairman and Ranking Minority Member of the Committee may serve as ex-officio Members of each standing Subcommittee to which the Chairman or the Ranking Minority Member have not been assigned. Ex-officio Members shall have the right to fully participate in Subcommittee activities but may not vote and may not be counted in establishing a quorum.

(d) Powers and Duties of Subcommittees.—Each Subcommittee is authorized to meet, hold hearings, receive evidence and report to the Committee on all matters within its jurisdiction. Each Subcommittee shall review and study, on a continuing basis, the application, administration, execution and effectiveness of those statutes, or parts of statutes, the subject matter of which is within that Subcommittee's jurisdiction; and the organization, operation, and regulations of any Federal agency or entity having responsibilities in or for the administration of such statutes, to determine whether these statutes are being implemented and carried out in accordance with the intent of Congress. Each Subcommittee shall review and study any conditions or circumstances indicating the need of enacting new or supplemental legislation within the jurisdiction of the Subcommittee. Each Subcommittee shall have general and continuing oversight and investigative authority over activities, policies and programs within the jurisdiction of the Subcommittee.

(e) Referral to Subcommittees; Recall.

(1) Except as provided in paragraph (2) and for those measures or matters retained at the Full Committee, every legislative measure or other matter referred to the Committee shall be referred to the maximum extent possible to the Subcommittee of jurisdiction within two weeks of the date of its referral to the Committee. If any measure or matter is within or affects the jurisdiction of one or more Subcommittees, the Chairman may refer that measure or matter simultaneously to two or more Subcommittees for concurrent consideration or for consideration in sequence subject to appropriate time limits, or divide the matter into two or more parts and refer each part to a Subcommittee.

(2) The Chairman, with the approval of a majority of the Majority Members of the Committee, may refer a legislative measure or other matter to a select or special Subcommittee. A legislative measure or other matter referred by the Chairman to a Subcommittee may be recalled from the Subcommittee for direct consideration by the Full Committee, or for referral to another Subcommittee, provided Members of the Committee receive one week written notice of the recall and a majority of the Members of the Committee do not object. In addition, a legislative measure or other matter referred by the Chairman to a Subcommittee may be recalled from the Subcommittee at any time by majority vote of the Committee for direct consideration by the Full Committee or for referral to another Subcommittee.

(f) Consultation.—Each Subcommittee Chairman shall consult with the Chairman of the Full Committee prior to setting dates for Subcommittee meetings and hearings with a view towards avoiding whenever possible conflicting Committee and Subcommittee meetings and hearings.

(g) Vacancy.—A vacancy in the membership of a Subcommittee shall not affect the power of the remaining Members to execute the functions of the Subcommittee.

RULE 7. TASK FORCES, SPECIAL OR SELECT SUBCOMMITTEES

(a) Appointment.—The Chairman of the Committee is authorized, after consultation with the Ranking Minority Member, to appoint Task Forces, or special or select Subcommittees, to carry out the duties and functions of the Committee.

(b) Ex-Officio Members.—The Chairman and Ranking Minority Member of the Committee may serve as ex-officio Members of each Task Force, or special or select Subcommittee if they are not otherwise members. Ex-officio Members shall have the right to fully participate in activities but may not vote and may not be counted in establishing a quorum.

(c) Party Ratios.—The ratio of Majority Members to Minority Members, excluding ex-officio Members, on each Task Force, special or select Subcommittee shall be as close as practicable to the ratio on the Full Committee.

(d) Temporary Resignation.—A Member can temporarily resign his or her position on a Subcommittee to serve on a Task Force, special or select Subcommittee without prejudice to the Member's seniority on the Subcommittee.

(e) Chairman and Ranking Minority Member.—The Chairman of any Task Force, or special or select Subcommittee shall be appointed by the Chairman of the Committee. The Ranking Minority Member shall select a Ranking Minority Member for each Task Force, or standing, special or select Subcommittee.

RULE 8. RECOMMENDATION OF CONFEREES

Whenever it becomes necessary to appoint conferees on a particular measure, the Chairman shall recommend to the Speaker as conferees those Majority Members, as well as those Minority Members recommended to the Chairman by the Ranking Minority Member, primarily responsible for the measure. The ratio of Majority Members to Minority Members recommended for conferences shall be no greater than the ratio on the Committee.

RULE 9. COMMITTEE RECORDS

(a) Segregation of Records.—All Committee records shall be kept separate and distinct from the office records of individual Committee Members serving as Chairmen or Ranking Minority Members. These records shall be the property of the House and all Members shall have access to them in accordance with clause 2(e)(2) of House Rule XI.

(b) Availability.—The Committee shall make available to the public for review at reasonable times in the Committee office transcripts of public meetings and hearings, except those that are unrevised or unedited and intended solely for the use of the Committee.

(c) Archived Records.—Records of the Committee which are deposited with the National Archives shall be made available for public use pursuant to House Rule VII. The Chairman of the Committee shall notify the Ranking Minority Member of any decision, pursuant to clause 3(b)(3) or clause 4(b) of House Rule VII, to withhold, or to provide a time, schedule or condition for availability of any record otherwise available. At the written request of any Member of the Committee, the matter shall be presented to the Committee for a determination and shall be subject to the same notice and quorum requirements for the conduct of business under Committee Rule 3.

(d) Records of Closed Meetings.—Notwithstanding the other provisions of this rule, no records of Committee meetings or hearings which were closed to the public pursuant to the Rules of the House of Representatives shall be released to the public unless the Committee votes to release those records in accordance with the procedure used to close the Committee meeting.

(e) Classified Materials.—All classified materials shall be maintained in an appropriately secured location and shall be released only to authorized persons for review, who shall not remove the material from the Committee offices without the written permission of the Chairman.

(f) Committee Information Available for the Public.—In addition to any other requirement of these rules or the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Chairman shall cause to be made available publicly in electronic form the following:

(1) a record of the votes on any question on which a recorded vote is taken which shall be posted no later than 24 hours after the vote is taken that shall include:

(i) a copy of the amendment or a detailed description of the motion, order or other proposition; and

(ii) the name of each Member voting for and each Member voting against such amendment, motion, order, or proposition, the names of those Members voting present, and the names of any Member not present.

(2) copies of all amendments adopted in Committee by voice vote or unanimous consent within 24 hours of the adoption of the amendment.

(3) the rules of the Committee, once adopted, and any amendments thereto, in accordance with clause 2(a)(2) of House Rule XI.

(4) the statements required under the second sentence of clause 2(g)(5) of House Rule XI, with appropriate redactions to protect the privacy of the witness, which shall be posted no later than one day after the witness appears before the Committee.

RULE 10. COMMITTEE BUDGET AND EXPENSES

(a) Budget.—At the beginning of each Congress, after consultation with the Chairman of each Subcommittee and the Ranking Minority Member, the Chairman shall present to the Committee for its approval a budget covering the funding required for staff, travel, and miscellaneous expenses.

(b) Expense Resolution.—Upon approval by the Committee of each budget, the Chairman, acting pursuant to clause 6 of House Rule X, shall prepare and introduce in the House a supporting expense resolution, and take all action necessary to bring about its approval by the Committee on House Administration and by the House of Representatives.

(c) Amendments.—The Chairman shall report to the Committee any amendments to each expense resolution and any related changes in the budget.

(d) Additional Expenses.—Authorization for the payment of additional or unforeseen Committee expenses may be procured by one or more additional expense resolutions processed in the same manner as set out under this rule.

(e) Month Reports.—Copies of each monthly report, prepared by the Chairman for the Committee on House Administration, which shows expenditures made during the reporting period and cumulative for the year, anticipated expenditures for the projected Committee program, and detailed information on travel, shall be available to each Member.

RULE 11. COMMITTEE STAFF

(a) Rules and Policies.—Committee staff members are subject to the provisions of clause 9 of House Rule X, as well as any written personnel policies the Committee may from time to time adopt.

(b) Majority and Nonpartisan Staff.—The Chairman shall appoint, determine the remuneration of, and may remove, the legislative and administrative employees of the Committee not assigned to the Minority. The legislative and administrative staff of the Committee not assigned to the Minority shall be under the general supervision and direction of the Chairman, who shall establish and assign the duties and responsibilities of these staff members and delegate any authority he determines appropriate.

(c) Minority Staff.—The Ranking Minority Member of the Committee shall appoint, determine the remuneration of, and may remove, the legislative and administrative staff assigned to the Minority within the budget approved for those purposes. The legislative and administrative staff assigned to the Minority shall be under the general supervision and direction of the Ranking Minority Member of the Committee who may delegate any authority the Ranking Member determines appropriate.

(d) Availability.—The skills and services of all Committee staff shall be available to all Members of the Committee.

RULE 12. COMMITTEE TRAVEL

In addition to any written travel policies the Committee may from time to time adopt, all travel of Members and staff of the Committee or its Subcommittees, to hearings, meetings, conferences and investigations, including all foreign travel, must be authorized by the Full Committee Chairman prior to any public notice of the travel and prior to the actual travel. In the case of Minority staff, all travel shall first be approved by the Ranking Minority Member. Funds authorized for the Committee under clauses 6 and 7 of House Rule X are for expenses incurred in the Committee's activities within the United States.

RULE 13. CHANGES TO COMMITTEE RULES

The rules of the Committee may be modified, amended, or repealed, by a majority vote of the Committee, provided that written notice of the proposed change has been provided each Member of the Committee prior to the meeting date on which the changes are to be discussed and voted on consistent with Committee Rule 3(a). A change to the rules of the Committee shall be published in the Congressional Record no later than 30 days after its approval and made publicly available in electronic form.

RULE 14. OTHER PROCEDURES

The Chairman may establish procedures and take actions as may be necessary to carry out the rules of the Committee or to facilitate the effective administration of the Committee, in accordance with the rules of the Committee and the Rules of the House of Representatives.

COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

Authorization and Oversight Plan

115th Congress



Chairman Rob Bishop

February 7, 2017

Introduction

Under clause 2 of Rule X of the House of Representatives, each standing committee of the House has general oversight responsibilities to determine whether laws and programs addressing subjects within its jurisdiction are being implemented in accordance with the intent of Congress to determine whether they should be continued, reformed, curtailed, or eliminated.

Congress has a responsibility to keep the Executive Branch accountable to the American people and ensure that decisions by agencies are open and transparent. During the 114th Congress, the Committee on Natural Resources conducted thoughtful oversight on a number of specific issues and policies administered by the U.S. Department of the Interior and other agencies under the Committee's jurisdiction – seeking answers to how and why policy decisions are made, who made the decision, and how it affects people, our economy and the environment.

In the 114th Congress, the Committee pursued aggressive oversight of the Executive Branch and formed a new subcommittee entirely dedicated to oversight and investigation of each federal agency within its jurisdiction. For the 115th Congress, through oversight hearings and investigations, the Committee and its subcommittees will continue to focus oversight efforts on promoting job creation and economic growth, reducing spending and ensuring responsible use of taxpayer resources, and protecting public access to public lands and waters for recreation and economic development. Furthermore, the Committee will work with federal oversight entities to identify and address instances of waste, fraud, abuse, and mismanagement in the federal government to ensure the most efficient use of taxpayer dollars.

Moreover, in the 115th Congress, the Committee will review and assess the authorizations of both agencies and programs within its jurisdiction and carefully consider whether programs with lapsed authorizations should be reauthorized, updated, or terminated.

This authorization and oversight plan outlines the initial, primary focuses of the Committee, though additional oversight activities are expected to be generated throughout the first and second sessions of the 115th Congress.

Federal Lands

The Committee will focus on four primary objectives for federal land management in the 115th Congress: restoring access to public lands; promoting sound management of public lands; making the Federal Government a good neighbor to local communities; and creating new jobs in rural communities

Budget and Spending Review - The Committee will review the Fiscal Year 2018 and 2019 budget requests for programs under its jurisdiction including the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the National Park Service (NPS), the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS). Furthermore, to enable these agencies to operate more efficiently and effectively, the Committee will review agency programs with lapsed authorizations and determine whether such programs should be reauthorized, updated, or terminated.

Local Input in Federal Lands Decision-Making - The Committee will explore ways for locally elected officials to have more input into federal land management decisions in their communities.

National Park Management - The Committee will explore new and innovative ways to reduce the substantial and growing maintenance backlog (estimated at over \$12 billion for FY 2017) and enhance public enjoyment of the parks. In order to innovate and modernize the management of National Parks, the Committee will examine expired programs under NPS to determine if such programs should be reauthorized, updated, or terminated.

National Park Service Sexual Harassment - The Committee will continue to examine allegations of sexual harassment occurring within the NPS, and NPS's failure to take appropriate disciplinary action. In recent years, the Committee and the Department of the Interior Inspector General have uncovered numerous cases of sexual harassment occurring within the NPS, including at some of the nation's most well-known parks.

Cultural and Historic Resources Management - The Committee will continue to conduct oversight of the National Park Service's compliance with various federal statutes, such as the National Historic Preservation Act, and accountability for officials who fail to adhere to federal laws.

Forest Health and Wildfires - The Committee will conduct oversight hearings on forest health, wildfire prevention and suppression, and the need for more active management of our national forests. The Committee will focus on western forests, particularly in California, where recent USFS reports estimate a total loss of more than 100 million trees.

Recreation Enhancement - The committee will conduct oversight on ways to strengthen public access to public lands for a wide range of family recreational and sporting activities, and ensure that fees for use of developed sites are not excessive.

Multiple Use and Sustained Yield for the Bureau of Land Management and the Forest Service - The Committee will conduct oversight on ways to ensure the BLM and USFS follow their multiple use and sustained yield mandate.

Economic Growth, National Security, and Sound Conservation on Bureau of Land Management and Forest Service Lands - The Committee will conduct oversight on ways to ensure our federal lands provide secure domestic sources of energy, food, fiber, minerals, and jobs while protecting the environment.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Refuge Oversight - According to FWS, the backlog for their 560 refuges now exceeds \$3.4 billion with 12,000 deferred projects left outstanding. The Committee will resume its oversight of this growing backlog.

Wildlife

Invasive Species - Thousands of acres of public land in the United States are adversely impacted by invasive species. The Committee intends to examine ways to effectively address this problem.

Lacey Act - The Committee will conduct oversight hearings on various provisions that have been added to this federal law since its original enactment in 1900. Among the issues to be examined are: why are American citizens required to comply with foreign laws; why individuals are denied “innocent owner” protections under the Lacey Act; and what has been the impact of the Legal Timber Protection Act of 2008.

In addition, the Committee will continue to examine how Lacey Act restrictions can impact interstate water supply issues.

Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species - The Committee will continue its oversight role in monitoring the Administration’s implementation of proposals adopted by the Convention at the 17th Conference of the Parties.

Voluntary Compensatory Mitigation - The Committee will continue to conduct oversight of the FWS’ use of voluntary payments by energy developers to mitigate impacts on migratory bird habitats.

Energy and Minerals

Expanding Domestic Energy Production - The Committee will focus on the importance of increasing American-made energy in order to create more new high-paying jobs, increase our economic competitiveness, and to improve national security through energy independence. In June 2016, the Department of the Interior released a jobs report that showed that 1.8 million Americans were employed in jobs related to programs and activities of the Department. Nearly half the jobs identified in the report were related to oil, natural gas, and mining activities on federal lands, and yet those activities only occupy a small fraction of the total lands managed by the Department.

Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Oil and Natural Gas - The Committee has jurisdiction over the administration of the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act (OCSLA) and will work to ensure safe and responsible production of America’s offshore oil and natural gas resources. The Obama Administration’s 2016 ban on offshore acreage in the Arctic and the Atlantic prohibits drilling in over 100 million acres of federally owned Arctic waters, despite the extensive resources in the OCS and the industry jobs at stake. This is one of many critical considerations moving into the 115th Congress. The Committee will build upon oversight and legislative efforts to reform the Offshore Planning Process, direct specific offshore lease sales, codify the reorganization of the former Minerals Management Service (MMS), provide fair and equitable revenue sharing for all coastal states, and promote new safety efforts.

Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) - The committee will examine and conduct oversight of the Coastal Zone Management Act and its implementation and impacts on OCS oil and gas exploration and development. Furthermore, the Committee will review coastal zone management programs with expired authorizations and determine if such programs need to be reauthorized, updated, or terminated.

Onshore Oil and Natural Gas Programs - In the 115th Congress the Committee will focus on the state of oil and natural gas leasing on federal lands in the western United States. This will include leasing delays and declines in production from federal lands, reforms to streamline onshore energy leasing and permitting, development of oil shale resources, access and leasing in the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska (NPRa), and access to the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR). This Congress will include additional oversight on Alaskan oil and natural gas development by reviewing NPRa administrative reforms and an in-depth review of the previous Administration's regulation of hydraulic fracturing. Moreover, the Committee will examine federal oil and gas leasing programs with lapsed authorizations to determine if such programs should be reauthorized, updated, or terminated. The United States is the world's leading producer of petroleum and natural gas, and a new look at regulations could ease access to gas and oil reserves throughout the country.

Renewable and Alternative Energy - In the 115th Congress, the Committee will conduct oversight over current solar, geothermal, and wind programs operated by the Bureau of Ocean and Energy Management (BOEM), the BLM, and the USFS. The Committee will examine ways to streamline the leasing and permitting of these renewable and alternative energy forms. The Committee will also review lapsed programs under these agencies to determine if the expired programs should be reauthorized, modified, or terminated.

National Mineral Security Strategy - The Committee will conduct oversight on domestic mineral resources, current and planned production, and possible future production opportunities, including critical minerals.

Coal Mining Regulations and Leasing - The previous Administration through the Department of the Interior waged a consistent war on coal. The Committee has conducted and will continue extensive oversight of the job-destroying regulatory changes, such as the Stream Protection Rule, proposed by the Obama Administration to stifle coal mining, production, and use. The Committee will focus on this issue through both legislative relief and aggressive oversight. The subcommittee will begin discussions concerning the reauthorization of the AML fee structure, and the future of a Good Samaritan program to remediate abandoned mine lands.

United States Geological Survey - For several years, the Committee has had growing concerns about the path taken and the programs operated by the United States Geological Survey (USGS). Particularly of concern are the growing non-resource or hazard programs at USGS and other Department programs, USGS data quality dependence on outside data, USGS data manipulation, mineral and energy programs focused on stopping mineral development not promoting it, and the current state of mapping programs. The Committee intends to closely examine the operations of USGS and may consider legislation to consolidate and streamline the focus of the agency to reduce waste and duplication, not only in the USGS, but across agencies. Moreover, the Committee will review expired programs under the Department to determine if such programs need to be reauthorized, updated, or terminated.

Federal Mapping Programs - The federal government has spent billions each year on new geospatial data. This spending, including tens of billions in the stimulus act, is frequently wasteful, duplicative, and uncoordinated. During hearings in previous congresses, witnesses were clear that multiple Administrations have had this problem with little control, central oversight, or effective management. Going forward with the new Administration, the Committee intends to reexamine this issue and may consider legislation to simplify the Department's geospatial programs for greater efficiency. Furthermore, the Committee intends to conduct oversight of federal agencies and how they track and monitor their land management responsibilities and purposes.

Water and Power

Budget and Spending Review - At a time of growing water supply needs, water-use conflicts, curtailment of water and power deliveries due to federal regulation and a spiraling national debt, the Committee intends to examine the Bureau of Reclamation's and the U.S. Geological Survey's annual budget requests and ongoing spending. The goal of this oversight is to determine whether the agencies are accountable to the American taxpayers, water and power ratepayers and other beneficiaries and to ascertain whether they are fulfilling their core missions. Furthermore, the Committee will review agency programs with lapsed authorizations, to determine if such programs need to be reauthorized, updated, or terminated.

Oversight of the Power Marketing Administration Budgets - The Committee will continue budget oversight of the four Power Marketing Administrations that sell hydropower generated at federal dams and reservoirs to wholesale customers that serve millions of retail electricity customers with a particular focus on rate and budget transparency.

Protecting and Promoting Hydropower as a Clean, Renewable Energy Source - Litigating interests and regulatory efforts undermine existing hydropower resources and curtail the growth of new hydropower. The Committee will examine these efforts and ways to protect and promote large-scale and small-scale hydropower generation at existing and potential facilities.

Increasing Traditional Water Supplies - Visionary leaders developed much of the western water supply infrastructure that urban and rural communities have depended upon for generations. These existing water storage and delivery projects continue to serve millions of ratepayers and food consumers nationwide, but their operations are being curtailed by endless litigation. The Committee will focus on the need to protect existing water storage/conveyance facilities and also examine and overcome regulatory, financial and other barriers to building new ones as a way of returning to a policy of abundance. The Committee will focus on the implementation of Public Law 114-322 as part of these oversight efforts. In addition, the Committee will review and examine water supply programs with lapsed authorizations to assess if such programs need to be reauthorized, updated, or terminated.

Maintaining Electricity Transmission/Distribution Service on Federal Lands - Energy rights of way on federal lands have a direct impact on electricity transmission and distribution systems. Vegetative management on these rights-of-way is an issue in some areas of the western United States. The Committee will continue examining these matters as it relates to electricity reliability and catastrophic forest fire prevention.

Oceans

Budget and Spending Review - The Committee will conduct oversight of the budgets of the National Marine Fisheries Service and certain “wet” programs of National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), within the Department of Commerce. In addition, programs under NOAA that have lapsed authorizations will need to be examined to determine if such programs ought to be reauthorized, updated, or terminated.

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COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

Authorization and Oversight Plan

115th Congress



Chairman Rob Bishop

February 7, 2017

Introduction

Under clause 2 of Rule X of the House of Representatives, each standing committee of the House has general oversight responsibilities to determine whether laws and programs addressing subjects within its jurisdiction are being implemented in accordance with the intent of Congress to determine whether they should be continued, reformed, curtailed, or eliminated.

Congress has a responsibility to keep the Executive Branch accountable to the American people and ensure that decisions by agencies are open and transparent. During the 114th Congress, the Committee on Natural Resources conducted thoughtful oversight on a number of specific issues and policies administered by the U.S. Department of the Interior and other agencies under the Committee's jurisdiction – seeking answers to how and why policy decisions are made, who made the decision, and how it affects people, our economy and the environment.

In the 114th Congress, the Committee pursued aggressive oversight of the Executive Branch and formed a new subcommittee entirely dedicated to oversight and investigation of each federal agency within its jurisdiction. For the 115th Congress, through oversight hearings and investigations, the Committee and its subcommittees will continue to focus oversight efforts on promoting job creation and economic growth, reducing spending and ensuring responsible use of taxpayer resources, and protecting public access to public lands and waters for recreation and economic development. Furthermore, the Committee will work with federal oversight entities to identify and address instances of waste, fraud, abuse, and mismanagement in the federal government to ensure the most efficient use of taxpayer dollars.

Moreover, in the 115th Congress, the Committee will review and assess the authorizations of both agencies and programs within its jurisdiction and carefully consider whether programs with lapsed authorizations should be reauthorized, updated, or terminated.

This authorization and oversight plan outlines the initial, primary focuses of the Committee, though additional oversight activities are expected to be generated throughout the first and second sessions of the 115th Congress.

Federal Lands

The Committee will focus on four primary objectives for federal land management in the 115th Congress: restoring access to public lands; promoting sound management of public lands; making the Federal Government a good neighbor to local communities; and creating new jobs in rural communities

Budget and Spending Review - The Committee will review the Fiscal Year 2018 and 2019 budget requests for programs under its jurisdiction including the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the National Park Service (NPS), the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS). Furthermore, to enable these agencies to operate more efficiently and effectively, the Committee will review agency programs with lapsed authorizations and determine whether such programs should be reauthorized, updated, or terminated.

Local Input in Federal Lands Decision-Making - The Committee will explore ways for locally elected officials to have more input into federal land management decisions in their communities.

National Park Management - The Committee will explore new and innovative ways to reduce the substantial and growing maintenance backlog (estimated at over \$12 billion for FY 2017) and enhance public enjoyment of the parks. In order to innovate and modernize the management of National Parks, the Committee will examine expired programs under NPS to determine if such programs should be reauthorized, updated, or terminated.

National Park Service Sexual Harassment - The Committee will continue to examine allegations of sexual harassment occurring within the NPS, and NPS's failure to take appropriate disciplinary action. In recent years, the Committee and the Department of the Interior Inspector General have uncovered numerous cases of sexual harassment occurring within the NPS, including at some of the nation's most well-known parks.

Cultural and Historic Resources Management - The Committee will continue to conduct oversight of the National Park Service's compliance with various federal statutes, such as the National Historic Preservation Act, and accountability for officials who fail to adhere to federal laws.

Forest Health and Wildfires - The Committee will conduct oversight hearings on forest health, wildfire prevention and suppression, and the need for more active management of our national forests. The Committee will focus on western forests, particularly in California, where recent USFS reports estimate a total loss of more than 100 million trees.

Recreation Enhancement - The committee will conduct oversight on ways to strengthen public access to public lands for a wide range of family recreational and sporting activities, and ensure that fees for use of developed sites are not excessive.

Multiple Use and Sustained Yield for the Bureau of Land Management and the Forest Service - The Committee will conduct oversight on ways to ensure the BLM and USFS follow their multiple use and sustained yield mandate.

Economic Growth, National Security, and Sound Conservation on Bureau of Land Management and Forest Service Lands - The Committee will conduct oversight on ways to ensure our federal lands provide secure domestic sources of energy, food, fiber, minerals, and jobs while protecting the environment.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Refuge Oversight - According to FWS, the backlog for their 560 refuges now exceeds \$3.4 billion with 12,000 deferred projects left outstanding. The Committee will resume its oversight of this growing backlog.

Wildlife

Invasive Species - Thousands of acres of public land in the United States are adversely impacted by invasive species. The Committee intends to examine ways to effectively address this problem.

Lacey Act - The Committee will conduct oversight hearings on various provisions that have been added to this federal law since its original enactment in 1900. Among the issues to be examined are: why are American citizens required to comply with foreign laws; why individuals are denied “innocent owner” protections under the Lacey Act; and what has been the impact of the Legal Timber Protection Act of 2008.

In addition, the Committee will continue to examine how Lacey Act restrictions can impact interstate water supply issues.

Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species - The Committee will continue its oversight role in monitoring the Administration’s implementation of proposals adopted by the Convention at the 17th Conference of the Parties.

Voluntary Compensatory Mitigation - The Committee will continue to conduct oversight of the FWS’ use of voluntary payments by energy developers to mitigate impacts on migratory bird habitats.

Energy and Minerals

Expanding Domestic Energy Production - The Committee will focus on the importance of increasing American-made energy in order to create more new high-paying jobs, increase our economic competitiveness, and to improve national security through energy independence. In June 2016, the Department of the Interior released a jobs report that showed that 1.8 million Americans were employed in jobs related to programs and activities of the Department. Nearly half the jobs identified in the report were related to oil, natural gas, and mining activities on federal lands, and yet those activities only occupy a small fraction of the total lands managed by the Department.

Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Oil and Natural Gas - The Committee has jurisdiction over the administration of the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act (OCSLA) and will work to ensure safe and responsible production of America’s offshore oil and natural gas resources. The Obama Administration’s 2016 ban on offshore acreage in the Arctic and the Atlantic prohibits drilling in over 100 million acres of federally owned Arctic waters, despite the extensive resources in the OCS and the industry jobs at stake. This is one of many critical considerations moving into the 115th Congress. The Committee will build upon oversight and legislative efforts to reform the Offshore Planning Process, direct specific offshore lease sales, codify the reorganization of the former Minerals Management Service (MMS), provide fair and equitable revenue sharing for all coastal states, and promote new safety efforts.

Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) - The committee will examine and conduct oversight of the Coastal Zone Management Act and its implementation and impacts on OCS oil and gas exploration and development. Furthermore, the Committee will review coastal zone management programs with expired authorizations and determine if such programs need to be reauthorized, updated, or terminated.

Onshore Oil and Natural Gas Programs - In the 115th Congress the Committee will focus on the state of oil and natural gas leasing on federal lands in the western United States. This will include leasing delays and declines in production from federal lands, reforms to streamline onshore energy leasing and permitting, development of oil shale resources, access and leasing in the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska (NPRA), and access to the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR). This Congress will include additional oversight on Alaskan oil and natural gas development by reviewing NPRA administrative reforms and an in-depth review of the previous Administration's regulation of hydraulic fracturing. Moreover, the Committee will examine federal oil and gas leasing programs with lapsed authorizations to determine if such programs should be reauthorized, updated, or terminated. The United States is the world's leading producer of petroleum and natural gas, and a new look at regulations could ease access to gas and oil reserves throughout the country.

Renewable and Alternative Energy - In the 115th Congress, the Committee will conduct oversight over current solar, geothermal, and wind programs operated by the Bureau of Ocean and Energy Management (BOEM), the BLM, and the USFS. The Committee will examine ways to streamline the leasing and permitting of these renewable and alternative energy forms. The Committee will also review lapsed programs under these agencies to determine if the expired programs should be reauthorized, modified, or terminated.

National Mineral Security Strategy - The Committee will conduct oversight on domestic mineral resources, current and planned production, and possible future production opportunities, including critical minerals.

Coal Mining Regulations and Leasing - The previous Administration through the Department of the Interior waged a consistent war on coal. The Committee has conducted and will continue extensive oversight of the job-destroying regulatory changes, such as the Stream Protection Rule, proposed by the Obama Administration to stifle coal mining, production, and use. The Committee will focus on this issue through both legislative relief and aggressive oversight. The subcommittee will begin discussions concerning the reauthorization of the AML fee structure, and the future of a Good Samaritan program to remediate abandoned mine lands.

United States Geological Survey - For several years, the Committee has had growing concerns about the path taken and the programs operated by the United States Geological Survey (USGS). Particularly of concern are the growing non-resource or hazard programs at USGS and other Department programs, USGS data quality dependence on outside data, USGS data manipulation, mineral and energy programs focused on stopping mineral development not promoting it, and the current state of mapping programs. The Committee intends to closely examine the operations of USGS and may consider legislation to consolidate and streamline the focus of the agency to reduce waste and duplication, not only in the USGS, but across agencies. Moreover, the Committee will review expired programs under the Department to determine if such programs need to be reauthorized, updated, or terminated.

Federal Mapping Programs - The federal government has spent billions each year on new geospatial data. This spending, including tens of billions in the stimulus act, is frequently wasteful, duplicative, and uncoordinated. During hearings in previous congresses, witnesses were clear that multiple Administrations have had this problem with little control, central oversight, or effective management. Going forward with the new Administration, the Committee intends to reexamine this issue and may consider legislation to simplify the Department's geospatial programs for greater efficiency. Furthermore, the Committee intends to conduct oversight of federal agencies and how they track and monitor their land management responsibilities and purposes.

Water and Power

Budget and Spending Review - At a time of growing water supply needs, water-use conflicts, curtailment of water and power deliveries due to federal regulation and a spiraling national debt, the Committee intends to examine the Bureau of Reclamation's and the U.S. Geological Survey's annual budget requests and ongoing spending. The goal of this oversight is to determine whether the agencies are accountable to the American taxpayers, water and power ratepayers and other beneficiaries and to ascertain whether they are fulfilling their core missions. Furthermore, the Committee will review agency programs with lapsed authorizations, to determine if such programs need to be reauthorized, updated, or terminated.

Oversight of the Power Marketing Administration Budgets - The Committee will continue budget oversight of the four Power Marketing Administrations that sell hydropower generated at federal dams and reservoirs to wholesale customers that serve millions of retail electricity customers with a particular focus on rate and budget transparency.

Protecting and Promoting Hydropower as a Clean, Renewable Energy Source - Litigating interests and regulatory efforts undermine existing hydropower resources and curtail the growth of new hydropower. The Committee will examine these efforts and ways to protect and promote large-scale and small-scale hydropower generation at existing and potential facilities.

Increasing Traditional Water Supplies - Visionary leaders developed much of the western water supply infrastructure that urban and rural communities have depended upon for generations. These existing water storage and delivery projects continue to serve millions of ratepayers and food consumers nationwide, but their operations are being curtailed by endless litigation. The Committee will focus on the need to protect existing water storage/conveyance facilities and also examine and overcome regulatory, financial and other barriers to building new ones as a way of returning to a policy of abundance. The Committee will focus on the implementation of Public Law 114-322 as part of these oversight efforts. In addition, the Committee will review and examine water supply programs with lapsed authorizations to assess if such programs need to be reauthorized, updated, or terminated.

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From: Bloomgren, Megan
To: [Daniel Jorjani](#); [Scott Hommel](#); [James Cason](#); [Domenech, Douglas](#); [Micah Chambers](#)
Cc: [Swift, Heather](#)
Subject: ICYMI: E+E Federal Indian Minerals Office mismanaged — IG
Date: Tuesday, February 07, 2017 5:58:03 PM

FYI - coverage of latest IG reports - email 2 of 2.

Federal Indian Minerals Office mismanaged — IG

Cecelia Smith-Schoenwalder <http://www.eenews.net/staff/Cecelia_Smith-Schoenwalder>, E&E News reporter

Published: Tuesday, February 7, 2017

A little-known federal office created by the Interior Department to assist Navajo oil and gas beneficiaries did not follow a 2005 agreement outlining its responsibilities or have adequate oversight, Interior's Office of Inspector General has found.

The Federal Indian Minerals Office in Farmington, N.M., is run by employees from three partner bureaus — the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Office of Natural Resources Revenue and Bureau of Land Management — and is meant to serve as an integrated "one-stop shop" for Navajo oil and gas allottees.

FIMO did not meet the requirements set by its most recent memorandum of understanding (MOU) — from 2005 — because the memo is outdated and does not contain adequate operational detail, the inspector general said. The Executive Management Group, established to monitor and oversee FIMO management, also failed in its oversight responsibilities, it said.

The inspector general also found in its report <https://www.doioig.gov/sites/doioig.gov/files/FinalAudit_BIAFederalIndianMineralsOffice_02032017_Public.pdf> that the FIMO partnership bureaus did not know which in a series of MOUs setting out the office's structure was in effect and referred back to previous MOUs despite some of them being superseded for many years.

FIMO employees could not agree on who is responsible for completing an audit and compliance review work plan, and the office has not reconciled its oil and gas lease inventory with BLM's inventories, the inspector general found.

Among its 14 recommendations, the inspector general said BIA, BLM and ONRR should develop a new MOU that lists each agency's roles and provides specific operational details. BIA and BLM agreed with this recommendation.

The inspector general also asked BIA and BLM to develop a process to reconcile lease inventories to ensure BLM has an accurate inventory of allotted leases. BIA did not agree with the recommendation, saying the inventory discrepancies in the report cannot be reconciled.

"The listed inventories will never truly reconcile as they are not used as, nor have they been created to be used as, a measurement of the management of all Navajo allotted leases," BIA said in its response to the inspector general.

BIA did, however, commit to maintaining and updating the lease inventory system.

FIMO was created in 1992 as the first endeavor of its kind — the only multi-bureau partnership meant to assist allottees with oil and gas activities. It was the result of a 1985 lawsuit from Navajos who accused Interior of failing to make timely royalty and lease rental payments.

From: Cason, James
To: [Bloomgren, Megan](#)
Subject: Re: ICYMI: E+E Federal Indian Minerals Office mismanaged — IG
Date: Wednesday, February 08, 2017 7:26:19 AM

Thanks Megan. This office has been a challenge for quite awhile.

On Tue, Feb 7, 2017 at 5:57 PM, Bloomgren, Megan <megan_bloomgren@ios.doi.gov> wrote:

FYI - coverage of latest IG reports - email 2 of 2.

Federal Indian Minerals Office mismanaged — IG

Cecelia Smith-Schoenwalder <http://www.eenews.net/staff/Cecelia_Smith-Schoenwalder>, E&E News reporter

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The White House

February 07, 2017

HJR 44 Disapproving the Rule Submitted by the Department of the Interior Relating to Bureau of Land Management Regulations that Establish the Procedures Used to Prepare, Revise, or Amend Land Use Plans Pursuant to the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976

February 7, 2017
(House)

STATEMENT OF ADMINISTRATION POLICY

H.J. RES. 44 DISAPPROVING THE RULE SUBMITTED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR RELATING TO BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT REGULATIONS THAT ESTABLISH THE PROCEDURES USED TO PREPARE, REVISE, OR AMEND LAND USE PLANS PURSUANT TO THE FEDERAL LAND POLICY AND MANAGEMENT ACT OF 1976

(REP. CHENEY, R-WY, AND 16 COSPONSORS)

The Administration strongly supports the actions taken by the House to begin to nullify unnecessary regulations. The regulations that the House is voting to overturn under the Congressional Review Act establish onerous reporting requirements and other constraints on States, local communities, and institutions of higher education.

H.J. Res. 44 would nullify the final rule relating to Resource Management Planning, 81 Fed. Reg. 89580 (Dec. 12, 2016), promulgated by the Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management (BLM). This rule, also known as the BLM Planning Rule 2.0, would prioritize regional and national considerations over state and local interests in land use planning for activities on public lands. The BLM manages over 245 million acres of Federal lands, located mostly in the western States, for multiple uses, including grazing, timber, recreation, and energy and mineral development. Given its regional approach to planning, the Administration believes the rule does not adequately serve the State and local communities' interests and could potentially dilute their input in planning decisions.

If these bills were presented to the President in their current form, his advisors would recommend that he sign them into law.

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From: Bloomgren, Megan
To: [Daniel Jorjani](#); [Domenech, Douglas](#); [Scott Hommel](#)
Subject: Fwd: NPS checking in
Date: Friday, February 10, 2017 1:58:58 PM
Attachments: [NPS Anniversaries 2016.pdf](#)

FYI only per our earlier conversation - list of National Park anniversaries. These are from 2016 so add one year. Denali, Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park (GA), and Guildford Courthouse National Military Park (NC) all celebrate 100 this year.

Thanks,
Megan



Important Anniversaries and Dates of Designation for National Park Service Units

Legislative Anniversaries

Year Est.	Day-Month	Event	Year 2016
1906	8-Jun	Antiquities Act	110
1916	25-Aug	National Park Service Act	100
1933	10-Aug	Reorganization	83
1935	21-Aug	Historic Sites Act	81
1936	23-Jun	Park, Parkway, and Recreation Area Study Act	80
1964	3-Sep	Wilderness Act	52
1964	3-Sep	Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965	52
1966	15-Oct	National Historic Preservation Act	50
1968	2-Oct	National Trails System Act	48
1968	2-Oct	Wild and Scenic Rivers Act	48
1980	2-Dec	Alaska National Interests Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA)	36

National Park Service Unit Anniversaries

Year Est.	Day-Month	Site Name	Year 2016
1790	16-Jul	National Mall, District of Columbia	226
1792	10-Oct	White House (Presidents Park), District of Columbia (transferred to the NPS August 10, 1933)	224
1832	20-Apr	Hot Springs NP, Arkansas (proclaimed Hot Springs Reservation; redesignated 1921)	184
1866	7-Apr	Ford's Theatre, District of Columbia (acquisition authorized; designated a NHS 1970)	150
1872	1-Mar	Yellowstone NP, Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming	144
1876	2-Aug	Washington Monument, District of Columbia (accepted; dedicated 1885)	140
1877	3-Mar	Statue of Liberty, New York (accepted; dedicated 1886; designated a NM 1924)	139
1886	7-Dec	Little Bighorn Battlefield NM, Montana (renamed from Custer Battlefield NM 1991; redesignated 1946 from National Cemetery of Custer's Battlefield Reservation)	130
1889	2-Mar	Casa Grande Ruins NM, Arizona (authorized as Casa Grande Ruin Reservation; redesignated 1918)	127
1890	19-Aug	Chickamauga and Chattanooga NMP, Georgia and Tennessee	126
1890	30-Aug	Antietam NB, Maryland (redesignated from a NBS 1978)	126
1890	25-Sep	Sequoia NP, California	126
1890	27-Sep	Rock Creek Park, District of Columbia	126
1890	1-Oct	Kings Canyon NP, California (incorporated General Grant NP 1940)	126
1890	1-Oct	Yosemite NP, California (incorporated Yosemite State Park 1906)	126
1894	27-Dec	Shiloh NMP, Tennessee	122
1895	11-Feb	Gettysburg NMP, Pennsylvania	121
1899	21-Feb	Vicksburg NMP, Mississippi	117
1899	2-Mar	Mount Rainier NP, Washington	117
1902	22-May	Crater Lake NP, Oregon	114

1902	1-Jul	Chickasaw NRA, Oklahoma (incorporated Platt NP and Arbuckle NRA March 17, 1976)	114
1903	9-Jan	Wind Cave NP, South Dakota	113
1906	29-Jun	Mesa Verde NP, Colorado	110
1906	24-Sep	Devils Tower NM, Wyoming	110
1906	8-Dec	El Morro NM, New Mexico	110
1906	8-Dec	Montezuma Castle NM, Arizona	110
1906	8-Dec	Petrified Forest NP, Arizona (redesignated from a NM 1962)	110
1907	4-Mar	Jean Lafitte NHP and Preserve, Louisiana (incorporated Chalmette NHP 1978)	109
1907	6-May	Lassen Volcanic NP, California (incorporated Cinder Cone and Lassen Peak NMs August 9, 1916)	109
1907	16-Nov	Gila Cliff Dwellings NM, New Mexico	109
1907	19-Dec	Tonto NM, Arizona	109
1907	11-Mar	Chaco Culture NHP, New Mexico (incorporated Chaco Canyon NM Dec. 19, 1980)	109
1908	9-Jan	Muir Woods NM, California	108
1908	16-Jan	Pinnacles NP, California (redesignated from a NM 2013)	108
1908	7-Feb	Jewel Cave NM, South Dakota	108
1908	16-Apr	Natural Bridges NM, Utah	108
1908	15-Sep	Tumacacori NHP, Arizona (incorporated NM 1990)	108
1909	2-Mar	Olympic NP, Washington (incorporated Mount Olympus NM)	107
1909	20-Mar	Navajo NM, Arizona	107
1909	12-Jul	Oregon Caves NM, Oregon	107
1909	31-Jul	Zion NP, Utah (incorporated Zion NM 1956; incorporated Mukuntuweap NM 1918)	107
1910	23-Mar	Sitka NHP, Alaska (redesignated from a NM 1972)	106
1910	11-May	Glacier NP, Montana	106
1910	30-May	Rainbow Bridge NM, Utah	106
1910	23-Jun	Big Hole Battlefield NB, Montana (redesignated from a NM 1963)	106
1911	9-Feb	Lincoln Memorial, District of Columbia (dedicated 1922)	105
1911	24-May	Colorado NM, Colorado	105
1911	6-Jul	Devils Postpile NM, California	105
1913	14-Oct	Cabrillo NM, California	103
1915	26-Jan	Rocky Mountain NP, Colorado	101
1915	4-Oct	Dinosaur NM, Colorado	101
1915	30-Nov	Walnut Canyon NM, Arizona	101
1916	11-Feb	Bandelier NM, New Mexico	100
1916	8-Jul	Acadia NP, Maine (originally Sieur de Monts NM; redesignated Lafayette NP 1919; redesignated Acadia NP 1919)	100
1916	17-Jul	Abraham Lincoln Birthplace NHP, Kentucky (originally Abraham Lincoln NP; redesignated a NHS 1939; renamed and redesignated 1959; redesignated a NHP 2009)	100
1916	1-Aug	Haleakala NP, Hawaii (detached from Hawaii NP 1960)	100
1916	1-Aug	Hawaii Volcanoes NP, Hawaii (split into Haleakala NP and Hawaii NP 1960; latter redesignated Hawaii Volcanoes NP 1961)	100
1916	9-Aug	Capulin Volcano NM, New Mexico (redesignated from Capulin Mountain NM 1987)	100
1917	18-Feb	Kennesaw Mountain NBP, Georgia (originally a NBS; redesignated 1935)	99
1917	26-Feb	Denali NP and Denali NPRES, Alaska (incorporated Mount McKinley NP and Denali NM by ANILCA 1980)	99
1917	2-Mar	Guilford Courthouse NMP, North Carolina	99
1918	24-Sep	Katmai NP and Katmai NPRES, Alaska (originally a NM, redesignated by ANILCA 1980)	98

1919	26-Feb	Grand Canyon NP, Arizona (incorporated 1908 Grand Canyon NM)	97
1919	12-Dec	Scotts Bluff NM, Nebraska	97
1919	19-Dec	Yucca House NM, Colorado	97
1922	24-Jan	Great Basin NP, Nevada (incorporated Lehman Caves NM 1986)	94
1922	14-Oct	Timpanogos Cave, Utah	94
1923	21-Jan	Aztec Ruins NM, New Mexico (redesignated 1928)	93
1923	2-Mar	Hovenweep NM, Utah	93
1923	31-May	Pipe Spring NM, Arizona	93
1923	8-Jun	Bryce Canyon NP, Utah (redesignated Utah NP 1924; redesignated from Bryce Canyon NM 1928)	93
1923	25-Oct	Carlsbad Caverns NP, New Mexico (redesignated from Carlsbad Cave NM 1930)	93
1923	2-Mar	Hopewell Culture NHP, Ohio (incorporated Mound City Group NM 1992)	93
1924	18-Apr	Chiricahua NM, Arizona	92
1924	2-May	Craters of the Moon NM and Craters of the Moon NPres, Idaho (preserve designated August 21, 2002)	92
1924	15-Oct	Castillo de San Marcos NM, Florida (redesignated from Fort Marion NM 1942)	92
1924	15-Oct	Fort Matanzas NM, Florida	92
1924	15-Oct	Fort Pulaski, Georgia	92
1924	9-Dec	Wupatki NM, Arizona	92
1925	26-Feb	Glacier Bay NP and Glacier Bay NPres, Alaska (originally a NM; redesignated by ANILCA 1980)	91
1925	3-Mar	Fort McHenry NM and Historic Shrine, Maryland (redesignated from Fort McHenry NP 1939)	91
1925	4-Mar	Arlington House, The Robert E. Lee Memorial, Virginia (date restoration authorized; designated Custis-Lee Mansion 1955; redesignated 1972)	91
1925	21-Nov	Lava Beds NM, California	91
1925	3-Mar	Mount Rushmore NMem, South Dakota (acquired 1939)	91
1926	22-May	Shenandoah NP, Virginia	90
1926	22-May	Great Smoky Mountains NP, North Carolina and Tennessee	90
1926	25-May	Mammoth Cave NP, Kentucky	90
1926	2-Jun	Moores Creek NB, North Carolina (originally a NMP; redesignated 1980)	90
1926	3-Jul	Petersburg NMP, Virginia (redesignated a NB 1962)	90
1927	14-Feb	Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania County Battlefields Memorial NMP, Virginia	89
1927	2-Mar	Wright Brothers NMem, North Carolina (originally Kill Devil Hill Monument, redesignated 1953)	89
1927	3-Mar	Stones River NB, Tennessee (originally a NMP; redesignated 1980)	89
1929	21-Feb	Brices Cross Roads NBS, Mississippi	87
1929	26-Feb	Grand Teton NP, Wyoming (incorporated 1929 NP and Jackson Hole NM)	87
1929	4-Mar	Cowpens NB, South Carolina (redesignated from a NBS 1972)	87
1929	12-Apr	Arches NP, Utah (redesignated from a NM 1978)	87
1930	23-Jan	George Washington Birthplace NM, Virginia	86
1930	26-May	Sunset Crater Volcano NM, Arizona (redesignated from Sunset Crater Volcano NM 1990)	86
1930	29-May	George Washington Memorial Parkway, Virginia (incorporated Mount Vernon Memorial Highway May 23, 1928)	86
1930	18-Jun	Appomattox Court House NHP, Virginia (authorized as a national historical monument 1935; redesignated 1954)	86
1930	30-Dec	Colonial NHP, Virginia (authorized July 3, 1930; redesignated from a NM 1936)	86
1931	14-Feb	Canyon de Chelly NM, Arizona	85
1931	3-Mar	Isle Royale NP, Michigan	85
1931	4-Mar	Fort Necessity NB, Pennsylvania (redesignated from a NBS 1961)	85

1932	17-Mar	Great Sand Dunes NP and Great Sand Dunes NPRes, Colorado (NPRes authorized 2000; redesignated from a NM 2004)	84
1932	21-May	Theodore Roosevelt Island, District of Columbia	84
1933	18-Jan	White Sands NM, New Mexico	83
1933	11-Feb	Death Valley NP, California (incorporated Death Valley NM)	83
1933	1-Mar	Saguaro NP, Arizona (redesignated from a NM 1994)	83
1933	2-Mar	Black Canyon of the Gunnison NP, Colorado (redesignated from a NM 1999)	83
1933	16-Jun	Blue Ridge Parkway, North Carolina and Virginia	83
1933	22-Aug	Cedar Breaks NM, Utah	83
1933	2-Mar	Morristown NHP, New Jersey	83
1933	10-Aug	Fort Donelson NB, Tennessee	83
1933	10-Aug	Kings Mountain NMP, South Carolina	83
1933	10-Aug	Tupelo NB, Mississippi	83
1933	10-Aug	National Capital Parks, District of Columbia (incorporated Baltimore-Washington Parkway 1975)	83
1934	30-May	Everglades NP, Florida	82
1934	19-Jun	Natchez Trace Parkway, Mississippi (incorporated Ackia Battleground NM and Meriwether Lewis NM 1961)	82
1934	21-Jun	Monocacy NB, Maryland (reauthorized and redesignated from a NMP Oct. 21, 1976)	82
1934	26-Jun	Thomas Jefferson Memorial, District of Columbia (dedicated 1943)	82
1934	14-Jun	Ocmulgee NM, Georgia	82
1935	20-Jun	Big Bend NP, Texas	81
1935	21-Aug	Fort Stanwix NM, New York (acquired 1973)	81
1935	29-Aug	Andrew Johnson NHS, Tennessee (redesignated from a NM 1963)	81
1935	21-Dec	Jefferson National Expansion Memorial, Missouri (Gateway Arch authorized 1954)	81
1936	2-Mar	Richmond NBP, Virginia	80
1936	19-Mar	Homestead NM of America, Nebraska	80
1936	26-May	Fort Frederica NM, Georgia	80
1936	2-Jun	Perry's Victory and International Peace Memorial, Ohio (redesignated 1972)	80
1936	29-Jun	Whitman Mission NHS, Washington (redesignated from Whitman NM 1963)	80
1936	10-Aug	Joshua Tree NP, California (incorporated Joshua Tree NM 1994)	80
1936	14-Nov	Catoctin Mountain Park, Maryland (renamed from Catoctin Recreational Demonstration Area 1954)	80
1936	14-Nov	Manassas NBP, Virginia (redesignated from Bull Run Recreational Demonstration Area May 10, 1940)	80
1936	14-Nov	Prince William Forest Park, Virginia (redesignated from Chopawamsic Recreational Demonstration Area 1948)	80
1937	13-Apr	Organ Pipe Cactus NM, Arizona	79
1937	2-Aug	Capitol Reef NP, Utah (redesignated from a NM 1971)	79
1937	17-Aug	Cape Hatteras NS, North Carolina	79
1937	25-Aug	Pipestone NM, Minnesota	79
1938	17-Mar	Salem Maritime NHS, Massachusetts	78
1938	26-Apr	Channel Islands NP, California (incorporated Channel Islands NM 1980)	78
1938	1-Jun	Saratoga NHP, New York	78
1938	16-Jul	Fort Laramie NHS, Wyoming (redesignated from a NM 1960)	78
1938	3-Aug	Hopewell Furnace NHS, Pennsylvania (redesignated from Hopewell Village NHS 1985)	78
1938	23-Sep	Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, District of Columbia, Maryland, and West Virginia (date acquired; designated a NM 1961; incorporated in Chesapeake and Ohio Canal NHP 1971)	78

1939	26-May	Federal Hall NMem, New York (redesignated from Federal Hall Memorial NHS 1955)	77
1939	25-Jul	Tuzigoot NM, Arizona	77
1939	25-Jan	Badlands NP, South Dakota (redesignated from a NM 1978)	77
1940	11-Jun	Cumberland Gap NHP, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Virginia	76
1940	18-Dec	Vanderbilt Mansion NHS, New York	76
1940	12-Aug	Fort Washington Park, Maryland (transferred from War Dept. 1940)	76
1941	5-Apr	Fort Raleigh NHS, North Carolina	75
1943	14-Jul	George Washington Carver NM, Missouri	73
1944	15-Jan	Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt NHS, New York	72
1944	30-Jun	Harpers Ferry NHP, West Virginia (redesignated from a NM 1963)	72
1946	12-Aug	Castle Clinton NM, New York	70
1946	9-Dec	Adams NHP, Massachusetts (originally Adams Mansion NHS; redesignated Adams NHS 1952; redesignated NHP 1998)	70
1946	18-Dec	Lake Roosevelt NRA, Washington (administered under cooperative agreement starting 1990; redesignated from Coulee Dam NRA 1997)	70
1947	25-Apr	Theodore Roosevelt NP, North Dakota (authorized Theodore Roosevelt National Memorial Park, redesignated 1978)	69
1948	28-Apr	Fort Sumter NM, South Carolina	68
1948	22-Jun	Hampton NHS, Maryland	68
1948	28-Jun	Independence NHP, Pennsylvania (incorporated Independence Hall NHS, designated 1943)	68
1948	11-Mar	De Soto NMem, Florida	68
1948	19-Jun	Fort Vancouver NHS, Washington (redesignated from a NM 1961)	68
1949	14-Feb	San Juan NHS, Puerto Rico	67
1949	8-Jun	Saint Croix Island NM, Maine (redesignated an International Historic Site 1984)	67
1949	25-Oct	Effigy Mounds NM, Iowa	67
1950	3-Aug	Greenbelt Park, Maryland	66
1950	21-Sep	Fort Caroline NMem, Florida	66
1952	4-Mar	Christiansted NHS, Virgin Islands (redesignated from Virgin Islands NHS 1961)	64
1952	9-Jul	Coronado NMem, Arizona	64
1954	28-Jun	Fort Union NM, New Mexico	62
1955	26-Jul	Pu'uhonua o Hōnaunau NHP, Hawaii (redesignated from City of Refuge NHP 1978)	61
1955	6-Dec	Thomas Edison NHP, New Jersey (originally Edison Home NHS; incorporated in Edison NHS 1962; redesignated 2009)	61
1956	2-Apr	Booker T. Washington NM, Virginia	60
1956	20-Jul	Pea Ridge NMP, Arkansas	60
1956	25-Jul	Horseshoe Bend NMP, Alabama	60
1956	2-Aug	Virgin Islands NP, Virgin Islands	60
1958	18-Apr	Glen Canyon NRA, Utah	58
1958	29-May	Lewis and Clark NHP, Oregon (incorporated Fort Clatsop NM October 30, 2004)	58
1958	14-Aug	General Grant NMem, New York	58
1958	2-Sep	Grand Portage NM, Minnesota (designated a NHS 1951)	58
1959	14-Apr	Minute Man NHS, Massachusetts (redesignated a NHP Sept. 21, 1959)	57
1959	5-Sep	Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial, District of Columbia (dedicated 1997)	57
1960	22-Apr	Wilson's Creek NB, Missouri (redesignated from a NP 1970)	56
1960	3-Jun	Bent's Old Fort NHS, Colorado	56
1960	6-Jul	Arkansas Post NMem, Arkansas	56

1961	11-May	Russell Cave NM, Alabama	55
1961	7-Aug	Cape Cod NS, Massachusetts	55
1961	8-Sep	Fort Davis NHS, Texas	55
1961	13-Sep	Fort Smith NHS, Arkansas	55
1961	4-Oct	Piscataway Park, Maryland	55
1961	28-Dec	Buck Island Reef NM, Virgin Islands	55
1962	19-Feb	Lincoln Boyhood NMem, Indiana	54
1962	27-Apr	Hamilton Grange NMem, New York	54
1962	25-Jul	Sagamore Hill NHS, New York	54
1962	25-Jul	Theodore Roosevelt Birthplace NHS, New York	54
1962	5-Sep	Frederick Douglass NHS, District of Columbia (redesignated from Frederick Douglass Home 1988)	54
1962	13-Sep	Point Reyes NS, California	54
1962	28-Sep	Padre Island NS, Texas	54
1964	27-Aug	Ozark National Scenic Riverways, Missouri	52
1964	30-Aug	Fort Bowie NHS, Arizona	52
1964	31-Aug	Fort Larned NHS, Kansas	52
1964	31-Aug	Allegheny Portage Railroad NHS, Pennsylvania	52
1964	31-Aug	Johnstown Flood NMem, Pennsylvania	52
1964	31-Aug	Saint-Gaudens NHS, New Hampshire	52
1964	31-Aug	John Muir NHS, California	52
1964	11-Sep	Fire Island NS, New York	52
1964	12-Sep	Canyonlands NP, Utah	52
1964	8-Oct	Lake Mead NRA	52
1965	11-Feb	Curecanti NRA, Colorado	51
1965	15-Mar	Lake Meredith NRA, Texas (name changed from Sanford NRA, 1972; redesignated Nov. 28, 1990)	51
1965	15-May	Nez Perce NHP, Idaho	51
1965	5-Jun	Agate Fossil Beds NM, Nebraska	51
1965	28-Jun	Pecos NHP, New Mexico (incorporated Pecos NM June 27, 1990)	51
1965	30-Jul	Golden Spike NHS, Utah (designated 1957)	51
1965	12-Aug	Herbert Hoover NHS, Iowa	51
1965	21-Aug	Alibates Flint Quarries NM, Texas (formerly Al bates Flint Quarries and Texas Panhandle Pueblo Culture NM, redesignated 1978)	51
1965	28-Aug	Hubbell Trading Post NHS, Arizona	51
1965	1-Sep	Delaware Water Gap NRA, Pennsylvania	51
1965	21-Sep	Assateague Island NS, Maryland	51
1965	22-Oct	Roger Williams NMem, Rhode Island	51
1965	11-Nov	Amistad NRA, Texas (redesignated 1990)	51
1965	8-Nov	Whiskeytown-Shasta-Trinity NRA, California (Whiskeytown Unit)	51
1966	10-Mar	Cape Lookout NS, North Carolina	50
1966	20-Jun	Fort Union Trading Post NHS, Montana and North Dakota	50
1966	30-Jun	Chamizal NMem, Texas	50
1966	23-Jul	George Rogers Clark NHP, Indiana	50
1966	9-Sep	San Juan Island NHP, Washington	50
1966	15-Oct	Bighorn Canyon NRA, Montana and Wyoming	50

1966	15-Oct	Guadalupe Mountains NP, Texas	50
1966	15-Oct	Pictured Rocks NL, Michigan	50
1966	15-Oct	Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts, Virginia	50
1966	2-Nov	Theodore Roosevelt Inaugural NHS, New York	50
1966	5-Nov	Indiana Dunes NL, Indiana	50
1967	26-May	John Fitzgerald Kennedy NHS, Massachusetts	49
1967	27-Nov	Eisenhower NHS, Pennsylvania	49
1968	5-Apr	Saugus Iron Works NHS, Massachusetts	48
1968	2-Oct	Saint Croix National Scenic Riverway, Wisconsin	48
1968	2-Oct	Appalachian NST, Maine	48
1968	2-Oct	Lake Chelan NRA, Washington	48
1968	2-Oct	North Cascades NP, Washington	48
1968	2-Oct	Redwood NP, California	48
1968	2-Oct	Ross Lake NRA, Washington	48
1968	17-Oct	Carl Sandburg Home NHS, North Carolina	48
1968	18-Oct	Biscayne NP, Florida (incorporated Biscayne NM 1980)	48
1969	20-Aug	Florissant Fossil Beds NM, Colorado	47
1969	2-Dec	Lyndon B. Johnson NHP, Texas (redesignated from a NHS 1980)	47
1969	2-Dec	William Howard Taft NHS, Ohio	47
1970	26-Sep	Apostle Islands NL, Wisconsin	46
1970	16-Oct	Fort Point NHS, California	46
1970	16-Oct	Andersonville NHS, Georgia	46
1970	21-Oct	Sleeping Bear Dunes NL, Michigan	46
1971	8-Jan	Voyageurs NP, Minnesota	45
1971	8-Jan	Chesapeake and Ohio Canal NHP, District of Columbia, Maryland, and West Virginia (incorporated Chesapeake and Ohio Canal NM)	45
1971	8-Jan	Gulf Islands NS, Florida and Mississippi	45
1971	18-Aug	Lincoln Home NHS, Illinois	45
1972	1-Mar	Buffalo NR, Arkansas	44
1972	17-Aug	Pu`ukoholā Heiau NHS, Hawaii	44
1972	25-Aug	Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS, Montana	44
1972	25-Aug	John D. Rockefeller, Jr., Memorial Parkway, Wyoming	44
1972	9-Oct	Longfellow House – Washington's Headquarters NHS, Massachusetts (redesignated from Longfellow National Historic Site 2010)	44
1972	21-Oct	Hohokam Pima NM, Arizona	44
1972	21-Oct	Thaddeus Kosciuszko NMem, Pennsylvania	44
1972	23-Oct	Fossil Butte NM, Wyoming	44
1972	23-Oct	Cumberland Island NS, Georgia	44
1972	27-Oct	Gateway NRA, New York	44
1972	27-Oct	Golden Gate NRA, California	44
1973	28-Dec	Lyndon Baines Johnson Memorial Grove on the Potomac, District of Columbia	43
1974	7-Mar	Big South Fork NR and Recreation Area, Tennessee	42
1974	1-Aug	Constitution Gardens, District of Columbia	42
1974	1-Oct	Boston NHP, Massachusetts	42
1974	11-Oct	Big Thicket NP, Texas	42

1974	11-Oct	Big Cypress NPRes, Florida	42
1974	26-Oct	Knife River Indian Villages NHS, North Dakota	42
1974	26-Oct	Clara Barton NHS, Maryland	42
1974	26-Oct	Martin Van Buren NHS, New York	42
1974	26-Oct	Springfield Armory NHS, Massachusetts	42
1974	26-Oct	Tuskegee Institute NHS, Alabama	42
1975	8-Oct	John Day Fossil Beds NM, Oregon	41
1975	3-Jan	Canaveral NS, Florida	41
1975	26-Jun	Cuyahoga Valley NP, Ohio (redesignated from a NRA 2000)	41
1976	30-Jun	Klondike Gold Rush NHP, Alaska and Washington	40
1976	4-Jul	Valley Forge NHP, Pennsylvania	40
1976	19-Aug	Ninety Six NHS, South Carolina	40
1976	12-Oct	Obed WSR, Tennessee	40
1976	18-Oct	Eugene O'Neill NHS, California	40
1976	18-Oct	Congaree NP, South Carolina (redesignated from a NM 2003)	40
1977	26-May	Eleanor Roosevelt NHS, New York	39
1978	5-Jun	Lowell NHP, Massachusetts	38
1978	15-Aug	War in the Pacific NHP, Guam	38
1978	15-Aug	Chattahoochee NRA, Georgia	38
1978	19-Oct	Fort Scott NHS, Kansas	38
1978	10-Nov	Palo Alto Battlefield NHP, Texas (redesignated from a NHS 2009)	38
1978	10-Nov	Rio Grande WSR, Texas	38
1978	10-Nov	San Antonio Missions NHP, Texas	38
1978	10-Nov	Missouri National Recreational River, Nebraska	38
1978	10-Nov	Edgar Allan Poe NHS, Pennsylvania	38
1978	10-Nov	Friendship Hill NHS, Pennsylvania	38
1978	10-Nov	Maggie L. Walker NHS, Virginia	38
1978	10-Nov	Middle Delaware NSR, Pennsylvania	38
1978	10-Nov	New River Gorge NR, West Virginia	38
1978	10-Nov	Saint Paul's Church NHS, New York (designated 1943)	38
1978	10-Nov	Thomas Stone NHS, Maryland	38
1978	10-Nov	Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River, Pennsylvania	38
1978	10-Nov	Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve, Washington	38
1978	10-Nov	Kaloko-Honokohau NHP, Hawaii	38
1978	10-Nov	Santa Monica Mountains NRA, California	38
1978	1-Dec	Aniakchak NM and Aniakchak NPRes, Alaska (originally Aniakchak NM; designated NM and NPRes by ANILCA 1980)	38
1978	1-Dec	Bering Land Bridge NPRes, Alaska (redesignated from a NM by ANILCA 1980)	38
1978	1-Dec	Cape Krusenstern NM, Alaska	38
1978	1-Dec	Gates of the Arctic NP and Gates of the Arctic NPRes, Alaska (originally a NM; redesignated by ANILCA 1980)	38
1978	1-Dec	Kenai Fjords NP, Alaska (redesignated from a NM by ANILCA 1980)	38
1978	1-Dec	Kobuk Valley NP, Alaska (redesignated from a NP by ANILCA 1980)	38
1978	1-Dec	Lake Clark NP and Lake Clark NPRes, Alaska (originally a NM; redesignated by ANILCA 1980)	38
1978	1-Dec	Noatak NPRes, Alaska (incorporated Noatak NM by ANILCA 1980)	38

1978	1-Dec	Wrangell-St. Elias NP and Wrangell-St. Elias NPRes, Alaska (incorporated Wrangell-St. Elias NM by ANILCA 1980)	38
1978	1-Dec	Yukon-Charley Rivers NPRes, Alaska (redesignated from Yukon-Charley NM by ANILCA 1980)	38
1979	12-Oct	Frederick Law Olmsted NHS, Massachusetts	37
1980	9-Sep	World War II Valor in the Pacific NM, Hawaii (incorp. USS Arizona Memorial 2008)	36
1980	1-Jul	Vietnam Veterans Memorial, District of Columbia (dedicated 1982)	36
1980	10-Oct	Boston African American NHS, Massachusetts	36
1980	10-Oct	Martin Luther King, Junior, NHS, Georgia	36
1980	2-Dec	Alagnak Wild River, Alaska	36
1980	19-Dec	Salinas Pueblo Missions NM, New Mexico (proclaimed Gran Quivira NM 1909; renamed Salinas NM 1980, renamed 1988)	36
1980	22-Dec	Kalaupapa NHP, Hawaii	36
1980	28-Dec	James A. Garfield NHS, Ohio	36
1980	28-Dec	Women's Rights NHP, New York	36
1983	28-Mar	Potomac Heritage NST, District of Columbia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Virginia	33
1983	28-Mar	Natchez Trace NST, Mississippi	33
1983	23-May	Harry S Truman NHS, Missouri (designated 1982)	33
1986	28-Oct	Korean War Veterans Memorial, District of Columbia (dedicated 1995)	30
1986	30-Oct	Steamtown NHS, Pennsylvania	30
1987	30-Sep	Pennsylvania Avenue NHS, District of Columbia (designated 1965)	29
1987	23-Dec	Jimmy Carter NHS, Georgia	29
1987	31-Dec	El Malpais NM, New Mexico	29
1988	16-Feb	Timucuan Ecological and Historic Preserve, Florida	28
1988	27-Jun	San Francisco Maritime NHP, California (formerly part of Golden Gate NRA)	28
1988	8-Sep	Charles Pinckney NHS, South Carolina	28
1988	7-Oct	Natchez NHP, Mississippi	28
1988	31-Oct	National Park of American Samoa, American Samoa	28
1988	31-Oct	Poverty Point NM, Louisiana	28
1988	18-Nov	Mississippi NR and Recreation Area, Minnesota	28
1988	18-Nov	City of Rocks National Reserve, Idaho	28
1988	18-Nov	Hagerman Fossil Beds NM, Idaho	28
1988	26-Dec	Bluestone NSR, West Virginia	28
1988	26-Dec	Gauley River NRA, West Virginia	28
1989	2-Oct	Ulysses S. Grant NHS, Missouri	27
1990	27-Jun	Petroglyph NM, New Mexico	26
1990	31-Oct	Weir Farm NHS, Connecticut	26
1991	24-May	Niobrara NSR, Nebraska	25
1991	11-Dec	Mary McLeod Bethune Council House NHS, District of Columbia (designated 1982)	25
1992	24-Feb	Salt River Bay NHP and Ecological Preserve, Virgin Islands	24
1992	3-Mar	Manzanar NHS, California	24
1992	26-Aug	Marsh-Billings NHP, Vermont (redesignated Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller NHP 1998)	24
1992	16-Oct	Dayton Aviation Heritage NHP, Ohio	24
1992	21-Oct	Little River Canyon NPRes, Alabama	24
1992	26-Oct	Brown v. Board of Education NHS, Kansas	24
1992	27-Oct	Keweenaw NHP, Michigan	24

1992	27-Oct	Great Egg Harbor Scenic and Recreational River, New Jersey	24
1992	26-Oct	Dry Tortugas NP, Florida (proclaimed Fort Jefferson NM 1935)	24
1994	31-Oct	Mojave NPRes, California	22
1994	31-Oct	New Orleans Jazz NHP, Louisiana	22
1994	2-Nov	Cane River Creole NHP, Louisiana	22
1996	12-Nov	Washita Battlefield NHS, Oklahoma	20
1996	12-Nov	Nicodemus NHS, Kansas	20
1996	12-Nov	Tallgrass Prairie NPRes, Kansas	20
1996	12-Nov	Boston Harbor Islands NRA, Massachusetts	20
1996	12-Nov	New Bedford Whaling NHP, Massachusetts	20
1998	6-Nov	Little Rock Central High School NHS, Arkansas	18
1998	6-Nov	Tuskegee Airmen NHS, Alabama	18
1999	29-Nov	Minuteman Missile NHS, South Dakota	17
2000	11-Oct	First Ladies NHS, Ohio	16
2000	24-Oct	Rosie the Riveter WWII Home Front NHP, California	16
2001	17-Jan	Virgin Islands Coral Reef NM, Virgin Islands	15
2001	19-Jan	Governors Island NM, New York	15
2001	19-Sep	Minidoka NHS, Idaho (established Minidoka Internment NM August 1942; redesignated Minidoka NHS 2008)	15
2002	24-Sep	Flight 93 NMem, Pennsylvania	14
2002	19-Dec	Cedar Creek & Belle Grove NHP, Virginia	14
2004	29-May	World War II Memorial, District of Columbia (authorized May 25, 1993)	12
2006	27-Feb	Carter G. Woodson Home NHS, District of Columbia	10
2006	27-Feb	African Burial Ground NM, New York	10
2007	27-Apr	Sand Creek Massacre NHS, Colorado	9
2009	28-Oct	Port Chicago Naval Magazine NMem, California	7
2010	22-Oct	River Raisin NBP, Michigan	6
2010	14-Dec	President William Jefferson Clinton Birthplace Home NHS, Arkansas	6
2011	28-Aug	Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial, District of Columbia	5
2011	1-Nov	Fort Monroe NM, Virginia	5
2011	7-Nov	Paterson Great Falls NHP, New Jersey	5
2012	8-Oct	César E. Chávez NM, California	4
2013	25-Mar	Charles Young Buffalo Soldiers NM, Ohio	3
2013	25-Mar	First State NHP, Delaware (originally a NM; rededicated a NHP in 2014)	3
2013	25-Mar	Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad NHP, Maryland (originally a NM; rededicated a NHP in 2014)	3
2014	19-Dec	Blackstone River Valley NHP, Massachusetts and Rhode Island	2
2014	19-Dec	Tule Springs Fossil Beds National Monument, Nevada	2
2014	19-Dec	Valles Caldera NPRes, New Mexico	2
2014	19-Dec	World War I Memorial, District of Columbia	2
2015	19-Feb	Pullman NM, Illinois	1
2015	24-Feb	Honouliuli NM, Hawaii	1
2015	10-Jul	Waco Mammoth National Monument, Texas	1
2015	10-Nov	Manhattan Project NHP, New Mexico, Washington, and Tennessee	1

updated 12/28/15

From: Swift, Heather
To: [Matthew Allen](#); [Paul Ross](#); [Megan Bloomgren](#)
Subject: Fact check quick
Date: Friday, February 10, 2017 5:22:20 PM

Can you confirm that yesterday's BLM oil and gas lease was the largest in four years?

-

Heather Swift
Department of the Interior

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From: Swift, Heather
To: [Matthew Allen](#); [Paul Ross](#); [Megan Bloomgren](#)
Subject: Fact check quick
Date: Friday, February 10, 2017 5:22:21 PM

Can you confirm that yesterday's BLM oil and gas lease was the largest in four years?

-

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From: Swift, Heather
To: [Amanda Kaster](#); [Micah Chambers](#)
Subject: Fwd: Afternoon Energy: Alabama's new senator gets ENR seat — OPEC's win — Aging and failing dams burst
Date: Friday, February 10, 2017 5:59:47 PM

TIME OF DEATH: The proposed Cherry Point coal export terminal in Northwest Washington is officially dead after developers [announced](#) they are withdrawing their application for the Gateway Pacific Terminal. The contentious project suffered an all-but-fatal blow last May when the Army Corps of Engineers denied a key permit, saying the project would harm the treaty-protected fishing rights of the Lummi Nation. The developer, Pacific International Terminals, said in a letter to county officials this week that it is looking into other alternatives.

-
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----- Forwarded message -----

From: POLITICO Pro Energy <politicoemail@politicopro.com>
Date: Fri, Feb 10, 2017 at 4:00 PM
Subject: Afternoon Energy: Alabama's new senator gets ENR seat — OPEC's win — Aging and failing dams burst
To: heather_swift@ios.doi.gov

By Annie Snider | 02/10/2017 03:59 PM EDT

With help from Matt Daily and Alex Guillén

ENR GETS STRANGE: Alabama's new Republican senator, Luther Strange, will take his predecessor's spot on the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, a panel spokeswoman confirmed. Strange, who was appointed to U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions' seat Thursday, is a climate change skeptic and a foe of federal environmental regulation. He has sued over the Clean Power Plan and has been a vocal backer of Trump's pick for EPA administrator, Oklahoma Attorney General Scott Pruitt.

OPEC's SUCCESS? The oil markets are showing some confidence that OPEC may actually be following through on what it promised to do: curbing its production to drain off the excess supply in global oil inventories that has weighed on prices. A new [report](#) puts the oil cartel's compliance with it promised cuts of 1.2 million barrels per day at 90 percent. That's A- for most students, but it's practically unheard of for OPEC, whose members have historically cheated on their individual production ceilings. Light sweet crude futures prices [climbed](#) more than a buck today, bringing the gains over the past three days to nearly \$3 a barrel, and the market may be poised to extend the rally.

But any major bullish move will test OPEC's resolve, and it's yet to be seen whether its members will extend the production curbs past June, when they are set to expire. The surplus in global inventories won't be gone by June, and OPEC's bigger problem may be that other oil producing countries are getting all the benefits. That includes the U.S., where firmer oil prices

have already resulted in production [climbing](#) back near 9 million barrels per day for the first time since last spring. And as the Wall Street Journal [reports](#), it's driven U.S. exports above 600,000 bpd, up 42 percent so far this year compared to early 2016.

Welcome to Afternoon Energy, it's finally Friday! I'm your fill-in host Annie Snider, covering for Kelsey Tamborrino who will be back soon. Send her your thoughts, news and tips at ktamborrino@politico.com, and also to mdaily@politico.com and njuliano@politico.com, and keep up with us on Twitter at [@kelseytam](https://twitter.com/kelseytam), [@dailym1](https://twitter.com/dailym1), [@nickjuliano](https://twitter.com/nickjuliano), [@Morning_Energy](https://twitter.com/Morning_Energy) and [@POLITICOPro](https://twitter.com/POLITICOPro).

A CONFIRMATION THAW: After a series of brutal floor battles over President Donald Trump's nominees, the upper chamber has reached a deal to allow votes on a series of top staffers in quick succession next week, POLITICO's Burgess Everett [reports](#).

First up is Steven Mnuchin for Treasury secretary, with the vote slated for Monday night. Then the chamber will move swiftly to David Shulkin, an Obama administration holdover, for VA secretary. And on Tuesday morning, former wrestling executive Linda McMahon, who has drawn little dissent from Democrats, will get a vote to be administrator of the Small Business Administration.

But what about the energy slots? Montana Republican [Ryan Zinke](#)'s nomination for Interior secretary has also been among the less controversial personnel decisions, but a spokesman for Majority Leader [Mitch McConnell](#) would say only that it could see floor time "soon." Senate Energy and Natural Resources Chairman [Lisa Murkowski](#) has said she has her fingers crossed it could come up next week, along with Rick Perry's nomination for Energy secretary.

But Oklahoma Attorney General Scott Pruitt's nomination for EPA is an even longer shot for valuable floor time ahead of President's Day recess. With Democrats eager to underscore their opposition with long floor speeches, Pruitt's consideration could be another massive time sink.

AGING INFRASTRUCTURE IN REALTIME: Groups are pointing to a pair of dam failures this week as a living example of the country's infrastructure woes. In California, a [gaping hole](#) opened up this week in the main spillway of Oroville Dam, one of the state's largest reservoirs and a key part of the State Water Project that provides drinking water to 23 million people. Below the dam is a fish hatchery crucial to the state's salmon fishery. Workers scrambled yesterday to net millions of fish and truck them downstream, but millions more couldn't be saved. Meanwhile, Nevada's Elko County declared a state of emergency after the earthen Twentyone Mile Dam burst following heavy rains, forcing trains to reroute, washing out part of a highway and damaging a number of farms and ranches.

"It is critical we make the right investments to ensure our rivers are healthy and our nation's water infrastructure is safe," American Rivers President Bob Irvin said in a statement about the twin disasters, arguing that "more frequent and intense storms and floods are straining aging dams and other infrastructure."

MORE TIME, PLEASE: Senate Environment and Public Works Chairman [John Barrasso](#) [wants](#) EPA to extend the public comment period on its proposed hardrock mining financial assurance rule by 120 days, to July 10. Comments currently are due March 13. The current comment period is too short to scrutinize EPA's estimates of financial responsibility at hundreds of hardrock mines in the U.S., he said. Barrasso also complained that the rule appears to carry greater costs for the industry than projected benefits to EPA and taxpayers.

EPA is under a court order to finish the rule, which was required as part of the Superfund law passed decades ago, by Dec. 1. EPA is expected to then move on to similar rules for other industries, including utilities and chemical manufacturers.

TIME OF DEATH: The proposed Cherry Point coal export terminal in Northwest Washington is officially dead after developers [announced](#) they are withdrawing their application for the Gateway Pacific Terminal. The contentious project suffered an all-but-fatal blow last May when the Army Corps of Engineers denied a key permit, saying the project would harm the treaty-protected fishing rights of the Lummi Nation. The developer, Pacific International Terminals, said in a letter to county officials this week that it is looking into other alternatives.

NOT YOU FOR NO. 2: Elliott Abrams, who served as George W. Bush's deputy national security adviser and had been seen as a top contender for the deputy secretary at the State Department has been nixed by Trump, CNN [reports](#). Abrams, who also served in the Reagan administration, harshly [criticized](#) Trump during the campaign last May — something three Republican sources told CNN the new president couldn't get past.

MAIL CALL: E&C LEADERS LOOK FOR WASTE: Leaders of the House Energy and Commerce Committee today sent letters to agencies in their jurisdiction, including [EPA](#) and the [Energy Department](#), looking for opportunities to save money. The letters were inspired by a December Washington Post report on an internal Pentagon study that identified \$125 billion wasted on bureaucratic inefficiencies in the department. E&C Chairman [Greg Walden](#) and Oversight Subcommittee Chairman [Tim Murphy](#) ask the agencies to hand over similar studies they have done or identify lessons they could learn from the Pentagon's effort.

QUICK HITS:

— It may seem counterintuitive, but rejecting Scott Pruitt for EPA chief is the smart move for oil-rich Texas, [Dallas Morning News](#).

— At \$60,000 an acre, the Permian basin may be too ritzy, [Bloomberg](#).

— BLM delays oil-drilling leases near Zion National Park amid growing concerns, [Salt Lake Tribune](#).

— Temperatures in the Arctic are skyrocketing — for the third time this winter, [Washington Post](#).

WIDE WORLD OF POLITICS:

— Trump's big [surprise](#)

— House Democratic staffers' [guide to protestors](#)

— The [flaws](#) that prompted Trump's travel ban defeat

To view online:

<https://www.politicopro.com/tipsheets/afternoon-energy/2017/02/alabamas-new-senator-gets-enr-seat-021332>

Stories from POLITICO Pro

Breakthrough on Trump's Cabinet after 2 a.m. vote [Back](#)

By Burgess Everett | 02/10/2017 09:39 AM EDT

After an excruciating week of battles over his Cabinet, President Donald Trump will experience a significant breakthrough next week in the Senate's gridlocked attempts to confirm top staffers to his administration.

On Monday, the Senate will vote on Steven Mnuchin for Treasury secretary, after the GOP pulled the plug on plans to power through his nomination during a weekend session. But rather than a long delay between Mnuchin and the next confirmation vote, Trump will see votes on two more top officials in quick succession.

Immediately after the Mnuchin vote, the Senate will move to confirm David Shulkin as VA secretary. Shulkin, a holdover from the Obama administration, has faced no opposition from Senate Democrats. Then on Tuesday morning, the chamber will vote on former wrestling executive Linda McMahon for administrator of the Small Business Administration. She also has drawn little dissent from the Democratic minority.

The parliamentary thaw comes after repeated complaints by Trump himself that Democrats are slow-walking his administration with a historic delay in approving his Cabinet. Senate Majority Leader [Mitch McConnell](#) declared that it's the slowest confirmation process since the presidency of George Washington, but the Kentucky Republican now has some good news to take to Trump during their private meeting at the White House on Friday morning.

The development also could allow the Senate to begin Trump's agenda as soon as March. The battle over his Cabinet has tied the Senate in knots and delayed any attempts to move on legislation.

Still, GOP hopes of lock in a confirmation schedule by the end of next week remains an uphill battle. Democrats kept the Senate in for 57 straight hours in protest of Education Secretary Betsy DeVos and Attorney General Jeff Sessions, then forced a 2 a.m. Friday vote on HHS Secretary Tom Price. Democrats may press for more all-nighters in protests of Rep. [Mick Mulvaney](#)'s nomination to lead the Office of Management and Budget and Scott Pruitt's selection to lead the EPA.

Ben Carson's nomination to lead HUD as well as Wilbur Ross' selection as Commerce secretary could face significant opposition. Democrats may allow speedier votes for Rep. [Ryan Zinke](#) (R-Mont.) to lead the Interior Department. Republicans want to have a plan to finish everyone but Labor Department nominee Andrew Puzder ahead of the President's Day recess, which begins on Feb. 17.

Democrats can force 30 hours of debate and delay on confirmation of each of Trump's Cabinet picks. They can also require a procedural vote that effectively makes each nomination take several days.

[Back](#)

Trump vexed by challenges, scale of government [Back](#)

By Alex Isenstadt, Kenneth P. Vogel and Josh Dawsey | 02/10/2017 05:06 AM EDT

Being president is harder than Donald Trump thought, according to aides and allies who say that he's growing increasingly frustrated with the challenges of running the massive federal bureaucracy.

In interviews, nearly two dozen people who've spent time with Trump in the three weeks since his inauguration said that his mood has careened between surprise and anger as he's faced the predictable realities of governing, from congressional delays over his cabinet nominations and legal fights holding up his aggressive initiatives to staff in-fighting and leaks.

The administration's rocky opening days have been a setback for a president who, as a billionaire businessman, sold himself to voters as being uniquely qualified to fix what ailed the nation. Yet it has become apparent, say those close to the president, most of whom requested anonymity to describe the inner workings of the White House, that the transition from overseeing a family business to running the country has been tough on him.

Trump often asks simple questions about policies, proposals and personnel. And, when discussions get bogged down in details, the president has been known to quickly change the subject — to "seem in control at all times," one senior government official said — or direct questions about details to his chief strategist Steve Bannon, his son-in-law Jared Kushner or House Speaker Paul Ryan. Trump has privately expressed disbelief over the ability of judges, bureaucrats or lawmakers to delay — or even stop — him from filling positions and implementing policies.

After Trump grew infuriated by disclosures of his confrontational phone calls with foreign leaders, an investigation was launched into the source of the leaks, according to one White House aide. National Security Council staffers have been instructed to cooperate with inquiries, including requests to inspect their electronic communications, said two sources familiar with the situation. It's not clear whether the investigation is a formal proceeding, how far along it is or who is conducting it.

The administration is considering limiting the universe of aides with access to the calls or their transcripts, said one administration official, adding that the leaks — and Trump's anger over them — had created a climate where people are "very careful who they talk to."

The president and his allies believe career NSC staff assigned from other agencies are out to get them. In turn, some NSC staff believe Trump does not possess the capacity for detail and nuance required to handle the sensitive issues discussed on the calls, and that he has politicized their agency by appointing chief strategist Bannon to the council.

Last week, Trump told an associate he had become weary of in-fighting among — and leaks from — his White House staff "because it reflects on me," and that he intended to sit down staffers to tell them "to cut this shit out."

He also became aggravated after learning about [complications](#) surrounding his appointment of one of his top fundraisers, Anthony Scaramucci, to a plum White House job, which Trump blamed on internal jockeying between aides, according to one person with knowledge of the situation.

Trump "was furious," this person said. "He doesn't like this shit."

The White House press office did not respond to a series of detailed questions about the way the president has coped with leaks, in-fighting and setbacks.

Christopher Ruddy, a Trump friend and the chief executive of the conservative Newsmax Media, said "Running the federal government is something new for him, for sure." But, Ruddy added, "I think if he's demonstrated anything in his life, he is a very fast learner and adapts very quickly. The man is not to be underestimated."

For all his frustrations, Trump has reveled in the trappings of the presidency. He has taken a liking to the Oval Office, where he spends much of his time working. Following a recent gathering of business leaders, he brought the group into the storied room and showed them around.

But he has also sought refuge from the pressures of the presidency, frequently calling up old friends and sounding them out about golf.

Trump aides joke that they wish their boss would spend more time at his Mar-A-Lago estate in Palm Beach, Fla., where they say the president appears more relaxed and at ease. He dispensed hugs and kisses to female guests attending a Red Cross ball at the estate last week, and is scheduled to return this weekend for a round of golf with Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe.

Most of those interviewed for this story requested anonymity to describe the inner workings of a White House where they say the tension has been intensified by the president's propensity for knee-jerk micromanaging when faced with disappointment, and jockeying among aides to avoid blame or claim credit when possible.

The interviews paint a picture of a powder-keg of a workplace where job duties are unclear, morale among some is low, factionalism is rampant and exhaustion is running high. Two visitors to the White House last week said they were struck by how tired the staff looks.

In Washington circles, talk has turned to whether a staff shake-up is in the works.

One person close to Trump said: "I think he'd like to do it now, but he knows it's too soon."

Those closest to the president are unnerved by that prospect, which they say would be a tacit acknowledgment that their team is struggling.

Kushner, who is among Trump's most trusted advisers, has been incensed by reports that New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie, who has ripped the White House over its implementation of Trump's executive order restricting travel from seven predominantly Muslim countries, could want a job in the White House as part of a "second wave" of staffers that will replace initial hires. While Christie hasn't said he wants a job, the rumor has been fanned by his allies. Kushner has long had tensions with Christie and played a key role in blocking him from getting a senior job in the administration.

Some staffers worry about running afoul of Kushner, and say they're unclear about his role, describing his portfolio as amorphous. "No one quite knows what it is," said one. "It's confusing."

Perhaps the job Trump has micromanaged the most is that of press secretary Sean Spicer,

whose performance as the public face of the White House hasn't always pleased the image-conscious president.

Trump, a voracious consumer of cable news, has been known to critique aides and surrogates for their appearances. After Spicer's press briefings, the president has told his spokesman that he's unhappy about specific answers or his demeanor.

The president, who is obsessive about looks and appearance, even was unhappy with a Saturday Night Live parody of a Spicer briefing, partly because the combative press secretary was depicted by a female comedian, Melissa McCarthy. After it aired, Spicer had proposed cracking a joke about the send-up during his next briefing, or even firing a squirt gun, as McCarthy had done in the sketch. Trump vetoed the idea, according to one person briefed on the matter.

Spicer, a 45-year-old party operative who rose through the ranks of the Republican National Committee, has told several people that he finds the non-stop demands of the position difficult.

For now, the president is standing by his press secretary. After [CNN reported](#) Tuesday that Trump regretted hiring Spicer and was disappointed in him, the president spoke with his press secretary and told him that he was in fine shape. Trump, who has been reluctant to admit any missteps, also has acknowledged to Spicer that it was a mistake to send him to the White House briefing room on the administration's first full day to berate reporters for coverage of his inauguration crowd size.

For all of Trump's frustrations about staff drama however, it isn't clear they're going away any time soon. Tensions remain between the staffs of chief of staff Reince Priebus and Bannon. Priebus's advisers blamed Bannon's team for the botched rollout of the travel ban executive order, saying that they hadn't done the needed legwork ahead of time.

And some were surprised that first lady Melania Trump decided to hire Lindsey Reynolds as her chief of staff along with Stephanie Winston Wolkoff as her senior adviser. Reynolds and Wolkoff worked on the inauguration planning team, and Reynolds, a Republican fundraiser and event planner, abruptly quit before Inauguration Day. At the time, several people attributed her departure to "personality conflicts" with Wolkoff, a Trump family friend who has overseen the Met Gala.

There are indications, however, that the new White House team is moving forward - and looking for reinforcements, among other ways to calm the waters.

Trump's top aides and allies are frantically searching for help for Spicer in the form of a [communications director](#), a demanding role Spicer has been juggling along with his press secretary duties.

On Wednesday, some of Trump's top advisers met with James Baker, a Republican Party statesman who was chief of staff in the Ronald Reagan and George H.W. Bush administrations, and talked things over.

If the opening days of Trump's presidency have been rocky and unconventional, many of his admirers aren't bothered by it.

"I'm not disappointed in the President's work so far - he operates like many great CEO's I know - and I hope he continues to manage the country in a manner worlds apart from the way we've seen in the past," said Michael Caputo, who was a Trump campaign aide. "It's about time."

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Inside the protest movement that has Republicans reeling [Back](#)

By Elana Schor and Rachael Bade | 02/10/2017 05:11 AM EDT

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich — Hill Republicans are openly accusing liberal mega-donors of bankrolling the tide of local protesters storming their offices. They're beefing up their physical [protection](#) from demonstrators. And they're imploring out-of-state critics to stop clogging their phone lines.

"It's just yelling and criticizing. There is no substance," said Rep. Dave Brat (R-Va.). "It's a protest against the election."

To which Angel Padilla, a co-founder of the group organizing the demonstrations that have spread across the country in a matter of weeks, had this to say: You'd better get used to it.

"We want to pressure these members of Congress for as long as we have this president," Padilla said.

Dubbed "Indivisible," the group launched as a way for Padilla and a handful of fellow ex-Democratic aides to channel their post-election heartbreak into a manual for quashing President Donald Trump's agenda. They drafted a 26-page protest [guide](#) for activists, full of pointers on how to bird dog their members of Congress in the language of Capitol insiders.

The booklet concludes with a stirring promise to fellow Trump enemies: "Good luck — we will win."

The group isn't planning to limit itself to the town-hall resistance to repealing Obamacare that it's becoming known for. Indivisible has marshaled demonstrations against Trump's Cabinet nominees and his immigration order, and it's partnering with the organizers of the Jan. 21 Women's March for a new action next week.

Its handful of senior leaders count about 100 contributors to their national organizing work but insist that all are working on a volunteer basis. They know conservatives are spreading unfounded rumors that their success is being driven by wealthy donors like George Soros, which they flatly deny.

"It doesn't matter who we take money from — we're always going to get blamed as a Soros group, even if we don't take money from Soros," said Padilla, now an analyst with the National Immigration Law Center. "That's one of the attacks and that's fine."

The group began when Ezra Levin, a former aide to Texas Democratic Rep. Lloyd Doggett, commiserated over the election in late November with his wife Leah Greenberg, a longtime aide to ex-Virginia Democratic Rep. Tom Perriello. The couple was "going through the stages of grief, like a lot of progressives," Levin recalled in an interview, "and wanted to do what we

could to help."

They got to work on what became the "Indivisible Guide," billed as a set of "best practices for making Congress listen." The manual borrows openly from the early tactics of the Tea Party, which sprouted on the strength of local conservative resistance to former President Barack Obama's hefty government stimulus bill and health care reform plan.

"Trump is not popular," the guide states. "He does not have a mandate. He does not have large congressional majorities. If a small minority in the Tea Party could stop President Obama, then we the majority can stop a petty tyrant named Trump."

The Indivisible manual is often blunt about what it says members of Congress really tick — and how protesters might use it to their advantage. One chart compares what "your MoC cares a lot about" (an example: "an interest group's endorsement") vs. what a lawmaker "doesn't care much about" (for one, "your thoughtful analysis of the proposed bill").

Levin, Greenberg, Padilla, and another former Doggett aide, Jeremy Haile, continued tweaking the guide even as their burgeoning effort mushroomed a full-fledged movement. About two dozen veteran Hill staffers and activists contributed or edited the guide in some way since that November first draft, according to Levin.

While the millions-strong turnout for anti-Trump Women's Marches captured the nation last month, the Indivisible founders were conscious of the need for protest tactics that could truly force members of Congress to pay attention — or risk losing their seats.

"Marches are great to bring people together, but our experience as congressional staffers had taught us that energy needed to be channeled in a smart way to make a difference on Capitol Hill," Haile said.

Indivisible's founders never planned or expected the groundswell of interest that resulted from their guide, which prompted them to organize as a 501(c)4 group this month. "The last thing the progressive ecosystem really needed was yet another nonprofit," Levin said.

But Indivisible's guide has spread at the grassroots level at an unpredictable speed this year, with the help of other liberal groups amplifying its message. Less than two months after the group launched its website, 225,000 interested participants have registered to learn more, according to Levin.

It helped that Doggett was one of the first Democrats targeted by the tea party in the summer of 2009. During one of his routine Saturday morning office hours that August, hundreds of local conservative activists showed up wearing Revolutionary War costumes, Haile recalled. They chanted and jeered while carrying tombstones and coffins, and the chaotic scene caught the attention of the national media. Doggett required an escort to leave his own event that day.

Fast forward to last weekend. Police escorted Rep. Tom McClintock (R-Calif.) out of his own town hall meeting after a local Indivisible chapter joined other progressive groups to [protest](#) it.

When the tea party began rattling lawmakers with local disruptions, Haile explained, "what mattered was this sense around the members that their constituents were unhappy. And what that is did is create discontent around Congress but also energized angry people who said, 'I'm angry; we're angry; and if we join together we can make a difference and get members of

Congress to change their positions."

That alignment of protesters galvanized by many different issues is a linchpin of Indivisible's early success. The group doesn't have a core policy mission: some chapters protest in defense of Obamacare; others embrace criminal justice reform or rally against Trump's controversial travel ban.

Chapters don't even have to call themselves Indivisible. Levin estimated that no more than 40 percent of the 6,200 local affiliates registered on the group's website use the name.

The organizers of Indivisible Grand Rapids, for example, hadn't spoken to any original drafters in Washington before they helped marshal a crowd of several hundred to a Thursday night town hall meeting held by Rep. Justin Amash (R-Mich.). Chapter leaders explained to POLITICO that they'd heard about the movement through friends, visited the website to register themselves, then found others registered in their area who wanted to start a group.

The Michiganders downloaded the Indivisible guide and started a Facebook group in mid-January. The group now includes more than 300 people, a third of whom are registered for a Sunday training session on how to approach lawmakers.

"It's important for us that we rise above; we don't want to be depicted in any way as only being an angry mob, and we're not," said Claire Bode, 49, the co-founder of Indivisible Grand Rapids. "It's a long-haul effort."

Indivisible is also embracing collaboration with other major anti-Trump protest outlets. Leaders of the group were in communication with Women's March organizers before their main event on Jan. 21, and that partnership will become official when the March unveils the third in its series of 10 direct actions that attendees have been asked to pursue in their communities.

In addition, MoveOn.org and the Working Families Party joined with Indivisible for its first nationwide call on Jan. 22. Nearly 60,000 people phoned in that day, according to Levin and MoveOn organizing director Victoria Kaplan. Indivisible estimates that its second national call, on the impact of Trump's immigration order with assistance from the ACLU and Padilla's group, drew 35,000 people.

Kaplan said MoveOn plans to team up again with Indivisible ahead of the Presidents' Day recess week. They want to help to major local chapters organize demonstrations while lawmakers are back home in their districts.

The White House has aggressively pushed back at any comparisons between the new Indivisible-boosted efforts and the tea party. Trump spokesman Sean Spicer told Fox News on Monday that the anti-Obama conservative opposition was "a very organic movement" but the rippling wave of liberal protest is "a very paid, Astroturf-type movement."

Rep. Steve King (R-Iowa) sounded a similar note in an interview. "I think it's going to be a demonstration a week until they run out of funding," he said, predicting that "they will incrementally die off."

It doesn't look like that will happen soon. Two House Republican chairmen faced fierce pushback at town halls in their districts on Thursday night, with budget committee

chairwoman Rep. Diane Black fielding tough questions on the party's lack of a united plan to replace Obamacare and oversight committee chairman Rep. Jason Chaffetz shouted down by furious boos.

Organizers at the Amash town hall said they're in it for the long haul. At the event in Grand Rapids, Mich., they passed out pamphlets encouraging attendees to "boo when he falls back on regressive values."

And they recruited the best interrogators in the crowd to join their cause.

"Do you mind if I grab your contact information?" group organizer Colin McWatters asked one Amash constituent who grilled the lawmaker about GOP plans to repeal Obamacare.

The constituent signed up.

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3 key Trump mistakes that led to the travel ban court defeat [Back](#)

By Josh Gerstein | 02/09/2017 11:51 PM EDT

President Donald Trump's three-week-old administration took a thrashing from a federal appeals court Thursday as a panel of three judges unanimously rejected his request to resume enforcement of his controversial travel ban executive order.

The 9th Circuit Court of Appeals ruling put into sharp relief several tactical and strategic errors Trump and his aides made in crafting, implementing and defending the order, which the president said was needed to ward off the terrorist threat posed by foreigners entering the U.S.

Introspection does not seem to be one of Trump's strongest personality traits. Even after Trump's own Supreme Court nominee expressed strong discomfort with Trump's public attacks on judges weighing his travel ban case, White House press secretary Sean Spicer made clear that the president had no intention of retreating from his remarks.

"He has no regrets," Spicer said flatly.

Now, several legal experts are urging Trump to withdraw his order altogether, so it can be redrafted in a way that might be more likely to hold up to court review.

Here are three key mistakes that contributed to Trump's courtroom defeat Thursday:

1. The green-card debacle

The White House failure to make clear from the outset that the travel ban did not include U.S. permanent residents, so-called green-card holders, was both a political and legal gaffe of the first order. The confusion led to the detention of more than 100 green-card holders during the first 24 hours the order was in effect and many more thereafter.

That caused major blowback from Congress, because many green-card holders are longtime residents of the U.S. It included many Iranians who fled their country in the 1980s to escape Islamic fundamentalism, a bizarre result for an executive order allegedly aimed at combating

radical Islamic terrorism.

But strictly as a matter of legal strategy, the impact on green-card holders was a serious error. Permanent residents have more U.S. constitutional rights than any other category of foreigners. The green-card issue all but guaranteed that opponents of the travel ban would win the early rounds of litigation by persuading judges that these long-term U.S. residents were being unfairly denied entry or detained.

White House officials have insisted that green-card holders were never supposed to be covered by the order, but many experts don't believe that.

"I think they clearly intended to include legal permanent residents," said Jonathan Meyer, a former Department of Homeland Security deputy general counsel. "It was a mistake to do so, compounded by the fact and shows that they did not vet this sufficiently. There's no question that it meant they would face legal defeats ... It's definitely hurt them."

2. The McGahn fix

One of the steps the Trump team settled on to save face while stemming the legal and public outcry over the order's impact on U.S. residents essentially blew up in the White House's face Thursday.

Once the concern about green-card holders was identified, Trump could have simply signed a half-page tweak to his executive order, making crystal clear that U.S. permanent residents were exempt from the order. But he didn't do that, apparently because he or his aides did not want to admit any flaws in the drafting or vetting process. A formal change to the order would have amounted to a concession of such imperfections.

Instead, Trump and his advisers settled on having his official lawyer — White House Counsel Don McGahn — sign a memorandum purporting to offer "authoritative guidance" that the order did not apply to green-card holders. The memo did not say that Trump instructed McGahn to tweak the order or even that the president approved the new "guidance."

"The White House counsel speaks for the president in this context," Justice Department lawyer August Flentje insisted during Tuesday's oral arguments in response to skeptical questions from the only Republican appointee on the three-judge panel, Richard Clifton.

Despite the claims by McGahn and Flentje that the counsel's memo was conclusive, the three judges nearly ridiculed that position.

"At this point, however, we cannot rely upon the Government's contention that the Executive Order no longer applies to lawful permanent residents. The Government has offered no authority establishing that the White House counsel is empowered to issue an amended order superseding the Executive Order signed by the President," the judges wrote, adding curtly: "That proposition seems unlikely."

And the appeals judges didn't leave it there.

"Nor has the Government established that the White House counsel's interpretation of the Executive Order is binding on all executive branch officials responsible for enforcing the Executive Order. The White House counsel is not the President, and he is not known to be in the chain of command for any of the Executive Departments," the court wrote.

Some legal experts said the Trump administration's contention that McGahn could clarify the order was bizarre. If Trump wanted to change it, he could have in moments with the stroke of a pen, but the bravado exhibited by the president and his aides seemed to foreclose that possibility.

"There were other options," said George Washington University law professor John Banzhaf. "The president's counsel has no official standing at all ... The Homeland Security Secretary does, the Secretary of State does. Maybe it's not as good as the president himself, but it's a hell of a lot better than the counsel, the president's dog, his wife or his son, all of whom have no official standing whatsoever in the government.

3. Pushing the legal argument too far

Another major tactical mistake came when the Justice Department decided to argue to the 9th Circuit that the courts have no role to play whatsoever in examining immigration-related decisions the president makes on national security grounds.

The claim that Trump's action was unreviewable is a tough one for judges to stomach. Some lawyers say government lawyers might have done better by acknowledging a role for judges but insisting that they must be very deferential to the executive branch.

"I think in the context of this case it was clearly a mistake," said Meyer, now with Sheppard Mullin. "I think it's a mistake almost any time you tell judges you can't look at something."

The claim that the issue was beyond the province of the courts essentially invited the judges to do just what they did at oral arguments on Tuesday: raise Trump's "Muslim ban" comments and ask whether the courts would have no role in reviewing an immigration-related action explicitly taken to discriminate against a religion or for some other highly dubious reason.

The court's opinion makes short work of that argument. "There is no precedent to support this claimed unreviewability, which runs contrary to the fundamental structure of our constitutional democracy," the judges wrote.

And while the judges made no reference at the arguments or in their opinion to Trump's extraordinary public attacks on them and the judge who issued the restraining order at issue, this is where Trump's statements may have come into play.

The 9th Circuit ruling goes on to cite a Supreme Court case decided under President George W. Bush rejecting efforts by Congress and the White House to shut down legal cases brought by Guantanamo prisoners. If the courts did not believe Bush was due complete deference in that case, it seems unthinkable that the 9th Circuit would grant such latitude to Trump, given the erratic decision-making processes on display in recent weeks.

"Given the dynamics we've seen in this administration, they had to know that argument would not be popular with almost any judge," Meyer said.

In their ruling Thursday, the judges didn't squarely address the relevance of Trump's "Muslim ban" talk to assessing the legality of his executive order. But it was clear that the fact Trump was on the record suggesting a desire to target Muslims made it almost impossible for the judges to buy into the Justice Department's argument and conclude his order should be entirely immune from judicial scrutiny.

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Somewhat



Neutral



Not really



Not at all

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This email was sent to heather_swift@ios.doi.gov by: POLITICO, LLC 1000 Wilson Blvd. Arlington, VA, 22209, USA

From: Heather Swift
To: [Matthew Allen](#)
Cc: [Paul Ross](#); [Megan Bloomgren](#)
Subject: Re: Fact check quick
Date: Friday, February 10, 2017 6:58:42 PM

Good intel. Was it the second largest?

Sent from my iPhone

On Feb 10, 2017, at 6:41 PM, Matthew Allen <mrallen@blm.gov> wrote:

Negative, NM had a larger sale last year.

Sent from my iPhone

On Feb 10, 2017, at 3:22 PM, Swift, Heather <heather_swift@ios.doi.gov> wrote:

Can you confirm that yesterday's BLM oil and gas lease was the largest in four years?

-

Heather Swift
Department of the Interior

[@DOIPressSec](#)
Heather_Swift@ios.doi.gov | Interior_Press@ios.doi.gov

From: Heather Swift
To: [Matthew Allen](#)
Cc: [Paul Ross](#); [Megan Bloomgren](#)
Subject: Re: Fact check quick
Date: Friday, February 10, 2017 7:19:37 PM

Roger that. Thank you much.

Sent from my iPhone

On Feb 10, 2017, at 7:00 PM, Matthew Allen <mrallen@blm.gov> wrote:

I'll send that to the oil and gas folks to find out and get a list of the top sales, but they're gone for the day.

Sent from my iPhone

On Feb 10, 2017, at 4:58 PM, Heather Swift <heather_swift@ios.doi.gov> wrote:

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Heather Swift
Department of the Interior

[@DOIPressSec](#)
Heather_Swift@ios.doi.gov | Interior_Press@ios.doi.gov

From: Heather Swift
To: [Matthew Allen](#)
Cc: [Paul Ross](#); [Megan Bloomgren](#)
Subject: Re: Fact check quick
Date: Friday, February 10, 2017 8:50:17 PM

You're great. Thank you!! They don't have to do it over the weekend.

Sent from my iPhone

On Feb 10, 2017, at 8:15 PM, Matthew Allen <mrallen@blm.gov> wrote:

Hearing there are others in that range. I'll have my PA team work with the o&g folks to get a list together of the top 5. Thanks.

Sent from my iPhone

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Subject: Re: Fact check quick
Date: Friday, February 10, 2017 8:50:20 PM

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Heather Swift
Department of the Interior

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Heather_Swift@ios.doi.gov | Interior_Press@ios.doi.gov

From: Benedetto, Kathleen
To: [Melissa Simpson](mailto:Melissa.Simpson)
Subject: Fwd: Comms/600 Rack Up - February 12-18, 2017
Date: Sunday, February 12, 2017 3:29:19 PM

Upcoming BLM stuff

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Wilkinson, Patrick** <p2wilkin@blm.gov>
Date: Fri, Feb 10, 2017 at 5:29 PM
Subject: Comms/600 Rack Up - February 12-18, 2017
To: Kristin Bail <kbail@blm.gov>, Jerome Perez <jperez@blm.gov>, "Benedetto, Kathleen" <kathleen_benedetto@ios.doi.gov>, Marshall Critchfield <marshall_critchfield@ios.doi.gov>, Lara Douglas <ledouglas@blm.gov>, "Brune, Jeff" <jbrune@blm.gov>, Kelly Orr <korr@blm.gov>, Timothy Shannon <tshannon@blm.gov>, Shannon Stewart <scstewar@blm.gov>, Ryan Sklar <ryan.sklar@sol.doi.gov>
Cc: Matthew Allen <mrallen@blm.gov>, Beverly S Winston <BWinston@blm.gov>, Michael Richardson <mjrichardson@blm.gov>, Kimberly Brubeck <kbrubeck@blm.gov>, Michelle Barret <mbarret@blm.gov>, Megan Crandall <mcrandal@blm.gov>, "Ralston, Jill" <jralston@blm.gov>, Jeff Krauss <jkrauss@blm.gov>

BLM Press Releases / Announcements This Week:

Fee Free Days Press Release - WO, 2/13
Soda Fire Press Release - BLM ID, TBD

600 Transition-Related Requests

ASLM additional data request re ROWs.
ASLM additional data request re APDs.

Congressional:

Anticipated Floor Action - House:

-- Red River, H.R. 428 (Rep. Thornberry, R-TX-13); 2/14

Anticipated Floor Action - Senate:

-- Confirmation of Ryan Zinke as Secretary of the Interior; TBD
-- BLM Planning 2.0 CRA Disapproval Resolution (H.J. Res 44); TBD
-- BLM Methane Waste Prevention CRA Disapproval Resolution (H.J. Res 36); TBD

Briefings/Meetings

-- BLM-New Mexico State Director Amy Lueders will participate with Sen. Heinrich (D-NM) in a flight over lands in southern New Mexico known as "Otero Mesa," focused on reviewing wildlife habitats in the area; 2/18
-- Ed Roberson, BLM Utah State Director, will meet with Sen. Hatch for a courtesy visit at Sen. Hatch's office in Salt Lake City; 2/21
-- Rep. Stewart (R-UT) meeting request with Acting BLM Director re: Utah water development project; 3/2 (tentative)

-- Infrastructure Project Priorities: HNR majority staff request to discuss BLM's infrastructure project priorities. WO Leg coordinating w/ leadership on response.

Information Requests

-- Lands Potentially Suitable for Disposal: HNR majority staff request for compiled information on all BLM lands potentially suitable for disposal. WO Leg is coordinating w/ WO-300, WO-200, and leadership on the request.

BLM State Announcements the Week of Feb 13-18, 2017

February 12-15: The Corps Network will hold its annual conference in Washington. Assistant Director or Deputy Assistant Director from National Conservation Lands and Community Partnerships will attend.

February 12-16: The BLM will participate in the Public Lands Alliance Convention and Trade Show in Arlington, Virginia. Nikki Moore/ Deputy Division Chief NLCS will attend and present at the Partnership Forum on the mutual benefits of partnerships.

February 13-16: National Native Seed Conference will be held in Washington, D.C. BLM attendance will include the Assistant Director and staff from Resources and Planning.

Feb 13-25: Open houses to provide information regarding the Oct 2016 mineral resources report for the Sagebrush Focal Areas of Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, and Wyoming . Open houses will be held for the proposed Sagebrush Focal Areas Withdrawal Environmental Impact Statement at eight locations: Malta, MT; Salt Lake City, UT; Rock Springs, WY; Idaho Falls, ID; Reno, NV; Lake View, OR; Elko, NV, and Boise, ID from 2/13-2/16 and 2/21-2/24. This topic is controversial with some counties, states, and industry.

February 13: BLM-Alaska leadership and project staff will meet with ConocoPhillips to update them on permitting for the Greater Mooses Tooth 2 (GMT2), a Federal Oil & Gas Greater unit project within the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska.

February 14: The BLM-Oregon/Washington Roseburg District will issue a Decision for the Semaphore Timber Sale, which would consist of approximately 282 acres and

6.7 million board feet in Douglas County, Oregon.

February 15-19: The 41st Annual National Wild Turkey Federation Convention and Sport Show will be held in Nashville, Tennessee. The event includes a National Technical Committee meeting and partner awards ceremony. The BLM, U.S. Forest Service, and state agency partners will participate.

February 15: The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) will hold monthly cooperating agency meetings beginning February 15 for the proposed Donlin Gold mine in the Kuskokwim River valley in the Anchorage Field Office/Anchorage District, Alaska.

February 15: BLM-Oregon/Washington will hold the Blue Mule timber sale, including 5,500 million board feet of thinning harvest on 324 acres in Polk County, Oregon. The BLM will also hold the Quarry 5 Timber Sale including 7,358 million board feet of regeneration and thinning harvest on 283 acres in Tillamook County, Oregon.

February 16: BLM-Colorado will meet with sage-grouse cooperating agencies to discuss implementing the recent Greater Sage-Grouse Instruction Memorandums at the Colorado River Valley Field Office in Silt. The meeting will cover the policies, current status and next steps.

February 16-19: The 2017 Western Hunting and Conservation Expo will be held in Salt Lake City, Utah. This annual gathering is sponsored by the Mule Deer Foundation and Sportsmen for Fish & Wildlife. BLM, USFS, and state agency partners will participate.

February 16: The BLM-Wyoming Pinedale Field Office will hold combined Pinedale Anticline Project Area wildlife, air, water and operator planning meetings in Pinedale.

February 17: The BLM-Oregon/Washington Coos Bay District will offer the Six One and Wilson Creek 4 Timber Sales. Six One consists of 68 acres of regeneration harvest and one acre of right-of-way clearing in Curry County. This regeneration harvest project is expected to be controversial. Wilson Creek 4 implements 187 acres of commercial thinning. The project is expected to be somewhat controversial as it

contains alder conversion.

Week of February 20-25, 2017

February 23 or 24 - Campbell County Commissioners, Oil & Gas, P2.0, etc. (Kristin Bail, Jerry Perez, Larry Claypool, Karen Kelleher)

February 24 - Western Counties Alliance, WH&B Update, 1:00 - 3:00pm (Dean Bolstad) - Washington, DC

February 25 - NACo WH&B Panel Discussion 11:00 - Noon (Dean Bolstad or Kristin Bail) - Washington, DC

February 25 - NACo Public Lands (BLM & FS) Discussion, Saturday, 2:00 - 4:00pm (Kristin Bail) - Washington, DC

February 26 - TENTATIVE - WGA Breakfast, Sunday, 2/26 7:00am (Director's tentative invitation to accompany Secretary-Designee Rep. Ryan Zinke) - EPA Bldg, Washington, DC

--

Patrick Wilkinson
U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Legislative Affairs Division (WO 620)
Phone: (202) 912-7429
Fax: (202) 245-0050

From: Simpson, Melissa
To: [Benedetto, Kathleen](mailto:Benedetto.Kathleen)
Subject: Re: Comms/600 Rack Up - February 12-18, 2017
Date: Sunday, February 12, 2017 3:54:27 PM

Very useful. Thank you.

On Sun, Feb 12, 2017 at 3:29 PM, Benedetto, Kathleen <kathleen_benedetto@ios.doi.gov> wrote:

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Cc: Matthew Allen <mrallen@blm.gov>, Beverly S Winston <BWinston@blm.gov>, Michael Richardson <mjrichardson@blm.gov>, Kimberly Brubeck <kbrubeck@blm.gov>, Michelle Barret <mbarret@blm.gov>, Megan Crandall <mcrandal@blm.gov>, "Ralston, Jill" <jralston@blm.gov>, Jeff Krauss <jkrauss@blm.gov>

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Patrick Wilkinson
U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Legislative Affairs Division (WO 620)
Phone: (202) 912-7429
Fax: (202) 245-0050

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Melissa Simpson

Intergovernmental and External Affairs, Room 6211
Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20240
(202) 706 4983 cell
melissa_simpson@ios.doi.gov

From: Benedetto, Kathleen
To: [Simpson, Melissa](mailto:Simpson.Melissa)
Subject: Re: Comms/600 Rack Up - February 12-18, 2017
Date: Sunday, February 12, 2017 3:57:37 PM

I'll send them to you as I get them

On Sun, Feb 12, 2017 at 3:54 PM, Simpson, Melissa <melissa_simpson@ios.doi.gov> wrote:
Very useful. Thank you.

On Sun, Feb 12, 2017 at 3:29 PM, Benedetto, Kathleen <kathleen_benedetto@ios.doi.gov> wrote:

Upcoming BLM stuff

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Wilkinson, Patrick <p2wilkin@blm.gov>

Date: Fri, Feb 10, 2017 at 5:29 PM

Subject: Comms/600 Rack Up - February 12-18, 2017

To: Kristin Bail <kbail@blm.gov>, Jerome Perez <jperez@blm.gov>, "Benedetto, Kathleen" <kathleen_benedetto@ios.doi.gov>, Marshall Critchfield <marshall_critchfield@ios.doi.gov>, Lara Douglas <ledouglas@blm.gov>, "Brune, Jeff" <jbrune@blm.gov>, Kelly Orr <korr@blm.gov>, Timothy Shannon <tshannon@blm.gov>, Shannon Stewart <scstewar@blm.gov>, Ryan Sklar <ryan.sklar@sol.doi.gov>

Cc: Matthew Allen <mrallen@blm.gov>, Beverly S Winston <BWinston@blm.gov>, Michael Richardson <mjrichardson@blm.gov>, Kimberly Brubeck <kbrubeck@blm.gov>, Michelle Barret <mbarret@blm.gov>, Megan Crandall <mcrandal@blm.gov>, "Ralston, Jill" <jralston@blm.gov>, Jeff Krauss <jkrauss@blm.gov>

BLM Press Releases / Announcements This Week:

Fee Free Days Press Release - WO, 2/13

Soda Fire Press Release - BLM ID, TBD

600 Transiton-Related Requests

ASLM additional data request re ROWs.

ASLM additional data request re APDs.

Congressional:

Anticipated Floor Action - House:

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Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, NW
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(202) 706 4983 cell
melissa_simpson@ios.doi.gov

From: Simpson, Melissa
To: [Marshall Critchfield](#)
Subject: Sportsmen's background papers
Date: Monday, February 13, 2017 12:26:56 PM
Attachments: [CSF-02_Infograph_FINAL.pdf](#)
[Making Public Lands Public.pdf](#)
[W21_Volume_5_Updated.pdf](#)

Marshall,

Where off campus is good for this evening? (b) (6) but am happy to go wherever you wish. - Melissa

Please find attached the Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation Economic Report:

CSF Economic Report 2013.pdf

<https://drive.google.com/a/ios.doi.gov/file/d/0B26KpZ6xSz8TamJfek1JMmZRY0k/view?usp=drive_web>

Also attached are:

*Info graphic explaining the American System of Conservation Funding

*Details on a policy pitch for utilizing Land and Water Conservation Funds for purchasing small easements for access

*Wildlife for the 21st Century - policy recommendations from 48 or so leading hunting conservation organizations

--

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CONTRIBUTIONS OF AMERICA'S TRUE CONSERVATIONISTS

HOW SPORTSMEN AND WOMEN SUPPORT THE AMERICAN SYSTEM OF CONSERVATION FUNDING

LAST YEAR ALONE

\$823 million

generated by the Pittman-Robertson Fund, from hunting and recreational shooting-related excise taxes

\$624 million

generated by the Dingell-Johnson/Wallop-Breaux Fund, from fishing and boating related excise taxes

\$686 million

generated from fishing licenses

\$821 million

generated from hunting licenses

Since 1939 state fish and wildlife agencies have received over

\$56.9 billion

from sportsmen and women

80%

of the funding for state fish and wildlife agencies is paid for by sportsmen and women

Much, much more: Sportsmen and women also contribute to improved access to public lands, recreational shooting facilities, improved water quality, soil conservation, habitat restoration, and hunter and boater safety programs through conservation funding



This "user pays – public benefits" program known as the American System of Conservation Funding allows the public to access and enjoy our country's greatest natural resources.

Learn More: www.sportsmenslink.org/policies/federal/ascf

Making Public Lands Public



Enhancing Hunting, Fishing & Other Recreational Access to Federal Public Lands

OVERVIEW



► *These are typical scenes when trying to access Federal public lands.*

SUMMARY

The non-governmental organizations (NGOs) comprising the American Wildlife Conservation Partners (AWCP) request that an access category be created within the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) to be used by the U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the National Park Service to open or improve access to existing Federal lands for hunting, fishing and other recreational activities. No less than 1.5% of the funds appropriated annually from LWCF or a minimum of \$10 million, whichever is greater, will be made available for access projects that can open to the public hundreds of thousands of acres of lands in Federal ownership. **We request your support of S. 901 and H.R. 1997, which will amend LWCF to achieve this request.**

THE ROUNDTABLE

The Federal Lands Hunting and Shooting Sports Roundtable (Roundtable) was created through a Memorandum of Understanding signed in 2006 by the USFS, BLM, USFWS and 40 national hunting, fishing and shooting sports organizations. The Roundtable was created to improve

partnership efforts between these Federal agencies and these non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to address issues impacting access to Federal lands for sportsmen and women. One of the Roundtable's initiatives was to address the problem of landlocked Federal lands that hold the key to expanding recreational opportunities for the public.

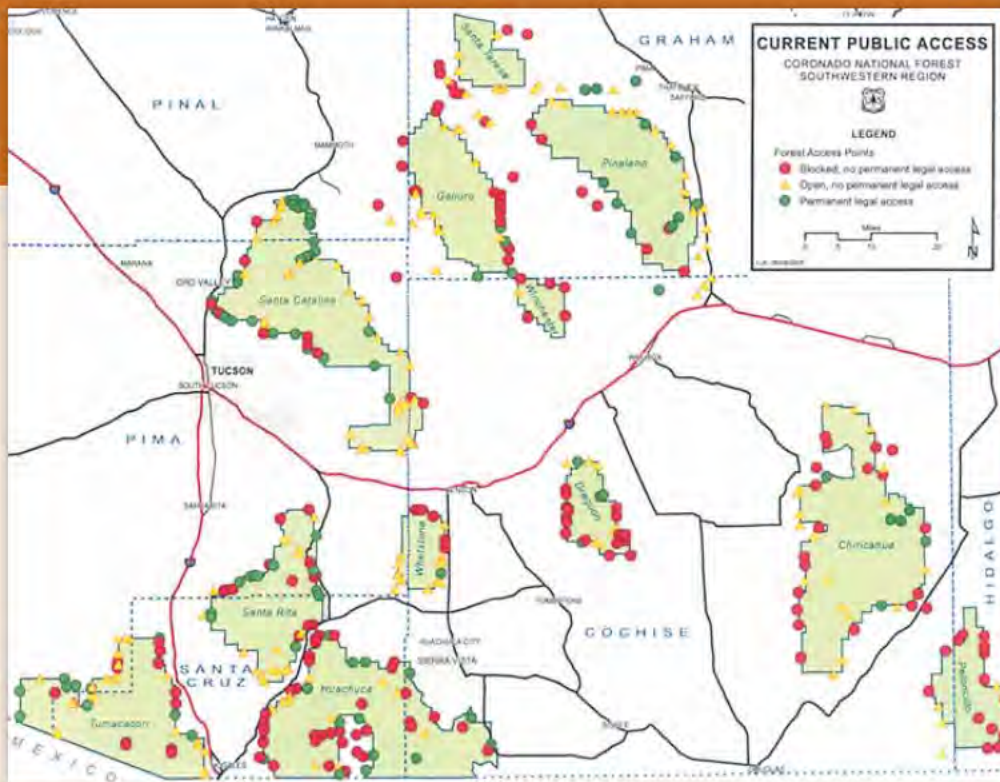
THE ISSUE

Federal public lands are an important destination for many Americans, including hunters and anglers. Nearly half of all hunters conduct a portion of their hunting activity on these lands. However, numerous reports verify access to Federal land is problematic in a number of areas. In fact, a 2004 report to the House Appropriations Committee concluded that more than 35 million acres of USFS and BLM land have inadequate access. Lack of access is cited as a primary reason that hunters and anglers stop participating in these traditional activities.

A limited and targeted 2008 Request for Proposals, from the Roundtable, resulted in 51 project submissions from the USFS and the BLM. Combined, the top 5 projects for each agency would improve access to 155,780 acres of Federal land at a cost of only \$9.03 per acre. This is a tremendous bargain considering the cost of acquiring new public lands is hundreds to thousands of dollars per acre.

Making Public Lands Public

Enhancing Hunting, Fishing & Other Recreational Access to Federal Public Lands



▶ Blocked access to Federal lands as illustrated by the Coronado National Forest, Arizona.

CONTACTS

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National Rifle Association
(703) 267-1541
SRecce@nrahq.org

David Anderson
Boone & Crockett Club
(202) 349-4022
danderson@naturalresourcesresults.com

Joel Pedersen
National Wild Turkey Federation
(803) 637-3106
jpedersen@nwtf.net

THE SOLUTION

Specifying a portion of LWCF for access related projects through S. 901 and H.R. 1997 will positively impact the American public by allowing them increased access to America's great outdoors. Priority projects could include easements, rights-of-way, and fee acquisition projects. Such priority projects from willing landowners could include some or all of the following characteristics:

- Significant acreage of improved access
- State fish and wildlife agency priorities
- Access to quality hunting and fishing areas
- Provides additional recreational opportunities
- Good relative value (cost/acre accessed)
- Relatively simple transaction

THE GROUP



Archery Trade Association
Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
Bear Trust International
Boone and Crockett Club
Bowhunting Preservation Alliance
Camp Fire Club of America
Catch a Dream Foundation
Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation
Conservation Force
Dallas Safari Club
Delta Waterfowl Foundation
Ducks Unlimited

Houston Safari Club
International Hunter Education Association
Izaak Walton League of America
Masters of Foxhounds Association of America
Mule Deer Foundation
National Rifle Association
National Shooting Sports Foundation
National Trappers Association
National Wild Turkey Federation
North American Bear Foundation
North American Grouse Partnership
Orion, The Hunters Institute
Pheasants Forever
Pope and Young Club
Public Lands Foundation
Quail Forever

Quail Unlimited
Quality Deer Management Association
Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation
Ruffed Grouse Society
Safari Club International
Shikar Safari Club
Texas Wildlife Association
Tread Lightly!
The Wildlife Society
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership
U.S. Sportsmen's Alliance
Whitetails Unlimited
Wild Sheep Foundation
Wildlife Forever
Wildlife Management Institute

A photograph of a herd of deer in a natural setting. The deer are in the foreground, some with large antlers, standing in a field of tall grass and shrubs. In the background, there is a dense line of trees and a range of mountains under a bright sky.

WILDLIFE

FOR THE

21ST CENTURY

VOLUME V

PRESENTED BY THE
AMERICAN
WILDLIFE
CONSERVATION
PARTNERS

AWCP

American Wildlife Conservation Partners

ESTABLISHED IN 2000

WILDLIFE FOR THE 21ST CENTURY: VOLUME V IS THE FIFTH IN A SERIES of recommendations from the American Wildlife Conservation Partners (AWCP) beginning in 2001. AWCP is a consortium of 47 organizations that represent the interests of America's millions of dedicated hunter conservationists, professional wildlife and natural resource managers, outdoor recreation users, conservation educators, and wildlife scientists.

AWCP came together in 2000 to combine the energy and wisdom of our individual organizations. While individual organizations have their own primary areas of interest, collectively we all are dedicated to ensuring the vitality of our wildlife resources and providing for sustainable public use and enjoyment of those resources under the science-based management of the state and federal fish and wildlife agencies, in cooperation with habitat and land management by the federal, state, county, and local governments. This system of wildlife conservation is known as The North American Model of Wildlife Conservation.

We work together towards a future in which we envision...

- all wildlife and private and public habitats are abundant, maintained and enhanced;
- hunting, trapping and other outdoor interests are supported by the public to maintain America's great wildlife conservation heritage and cultural traditions;
- natural resources policies encourage, empower, and reward stewardship and responsible use;
- all citizens are committed to principles of scientific wildlife management, where wildlife is held in public trust, and where the use of resources is shared equitably and sustained for present and future generations.

Previous volumes were provided to Presidents Bush and Obama. Now we present these recommendations to help inform the next administration about the pressing issues facing wildlife conservation and our sporting heritage. These recommendations for improving wildlife conservation are offered in the spirit of the hunter conservationists our organizations represent. Each recommendation is based on sound science and builds on the historical achievements of hunter conservationists in making this country's wildlife resources the envy of the world.

These recommendations represent a general agreement of the partners. Each partner organization reserves the right to establish independent positions on any issue as we research, debate, and act on these ideas for the next 5 years of the 21st century. In the tradition of the hunter and angler conservationists, we look forward to working with you to conserve our fish, wildlife, and habitat resources long into the 21st century.


Joel Pedersen, 2015 Chair
American Wildlife Conservation Partners
Editor, *Wildlife for the 21st Century, Volume V*
jpedersen@nwtf.net | 803-637-7513

Our members live in your backyard—in every county of every state in the nation.

The nation's 15.5 million hunters over age 6, outpaces the number of Americans over age 7 that play soccer. Hunters and anglers vote. If every sportsman and sportswoman had voted in the 2012 election, they would have represented 30% of all votes cast. Hunting is important to our economy. Hunters spent \$38.3 billion in 2011, including \$11.8 billion in local, state, and Federal taxes. Sportsmen and sportswomen—and hunters in general—are an important segment of our society. Their needs and opinions cannot be ignored.

HOW SPORTSMEN AND SPORTSWOMEN SUPPORT THE AMERICAN SYSTEM OF CONSERVATION FUNDING

LAST YEAR ALONE... \$2.95 BILLION



Since 1939 state fish and wildlife agencies have received over

\$56.9
BILLION from sportsmen and sportswomen

80% of funding for state fish and wildlife agencies is paid for by sportsmen and sportswomen

Information provided by the Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation

AMERICAN WILDLIFE CONSERVATION PARTNERS

ARCHERY TRADE ASSOCIATION
ASSOCIATION OF FISH & WILDLIFE AGENCIES
BEAR TRUST INTERNATIONAL
BOONE AND CROCKETT CLUB
CAMP FIRE CLUB OF AMERICA
CATCH A DREAM FOUNDATION
CONGRESSIONAL SPORTSMEN'S FOUNDATION
CONSERVATION FORCE
COUNCIL TO ADVANCE HUNTING AND
THE SHOOTING SPORTS
DALLAS SAFARI CLUB
DELTA WATERFOWL FOUNDATION
DUCKS UNLIMITED
HOUSTON SAFARI CLUB
INTERNATIONAL HUNTER EDUCATION
ASSOCIATION - USA
Izaak WALTON LEAGUE OF AMERICA
MASTERS OF FOXHOUNDS FOUNDATION
MULE DEER FOUNDATION
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
FOREST SERVICE RETIREES
NATIONAL BOBWHITE
CONSERVATION INITIATIVE
NATIONAL RIFLE ASSOCIATION
NATIONAL SHOOTING SPORTS FOUNDATION
NATIONAL TRAPPERS ASSOCIATION
NATIONAL WILD TURKEY FEDERATION
NATIONAL WILDLIFE FEDERATION
NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE ASSOCIATION
NORTH AMERICAN GROUSE PARTNERSHIP
ORION – THE HUNTER'S INSTITUTE
PHEASANTS FOREVER, INC.
QUAIL FOREVER
POPE AND YOUNG CLUB
PROFESSIONAL OUTFITTERS AND
GUIDES OF AMERICA
PUBLIC LANDS FOUNDATION
QUALITY DEER MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION
ROCKY MOUNTAIN ELK FOUNDATION
RUFFED GROUSE SOCIETY
SAFARI CLUB INTERNATIONAL
SHIKAR SAFARI CLUB
SPORTSMEN'S ALLIANCE
TEXAS WILDLIFE ASSOCIATION
THE CONSERVATION FUND
THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY
THEODORE ROOSEVELT
CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP
TREAD LIGHTLY!
WHITETAILS UNLIMITED
WILD SHEEP FOUNDATION
WILDLIFE FOREVER
WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE
WILDLIFE MISSISSIPPI





WILDLIFE FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

VOLUME V

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ACKNOWLEDGING AMERICA'S HUNTERS, THE TRUE CONSERVATIONISTS

AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 20TH CENTURY, GIFFORD PINCHOT, Chief of the U.S. Forest Service and one of the fathers of the American conservation movement along with Theodore Roosevelt, George Bird Grinnell, and Aldo Leopold, developed the now widely accepted definition of conservation as the “wise use of the Earth and its resources for the lasting good of men.” According to Pinchot, the purpose of conservation is to produce “the greatest good for the greatest number for the longest time,” with sound science as the recognized tool to accomplish this objective.

Conservationists are people who support and/or engage in this approach to natural resource management. Hunters and anglers are among the first Americans to endorse this idea. Their legacy now spans over 100 years. Through the leadership and willing financial support of hunters and anglers, state fish and wildlife agencies were established to restore and manage our nation’s fish and wildlife, to adopt laws regarding take, educate and train fish and wildlife professionals, and create programs to conserve these public trust resources. Involvement of hunters and anglers and conservation organizations are what has made the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation the most successful program of its kind in the world.

Arguably, the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration programs, key components of the American System of Conservation Funding, were the

AWCP STEERING COMMITTEE

2016 CHAIR – LEN VALLENDER
Camp Fire Club of America

2016 VICE-CHAIR – BEN CARTER
Dallas Safari Club

TERMS EXPIRE 2016

Jeff Crane – *Congressional Sportsmen’s Foundation*
Bob Model – *Boone and Crockett Club*
Dan Dessecker – *Ruffed Grouse Society*
Mitch King – *Archery Trade Association*

TERMS EXPIRE 2017

Mark Hirvonen – *Orion, The Hunter’s Institute*
Gray Thornton – *Wild Sheep Foundation*
Dave Nomsen – *Pheasants Forever*
John J. Jackson III – *Conservation Force*

TERMS EXPIRE 2018

Margaret Everson – *Ducks Unlimited*
Lori McCullough – *Tread Lightly!*
Joel Pedersen – *National Wild Turkey Federation*
Paul Wilkins – *Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership*

WILDLIFE FOR THE 21ST CENTURY – VOLUME 5 EDITORS

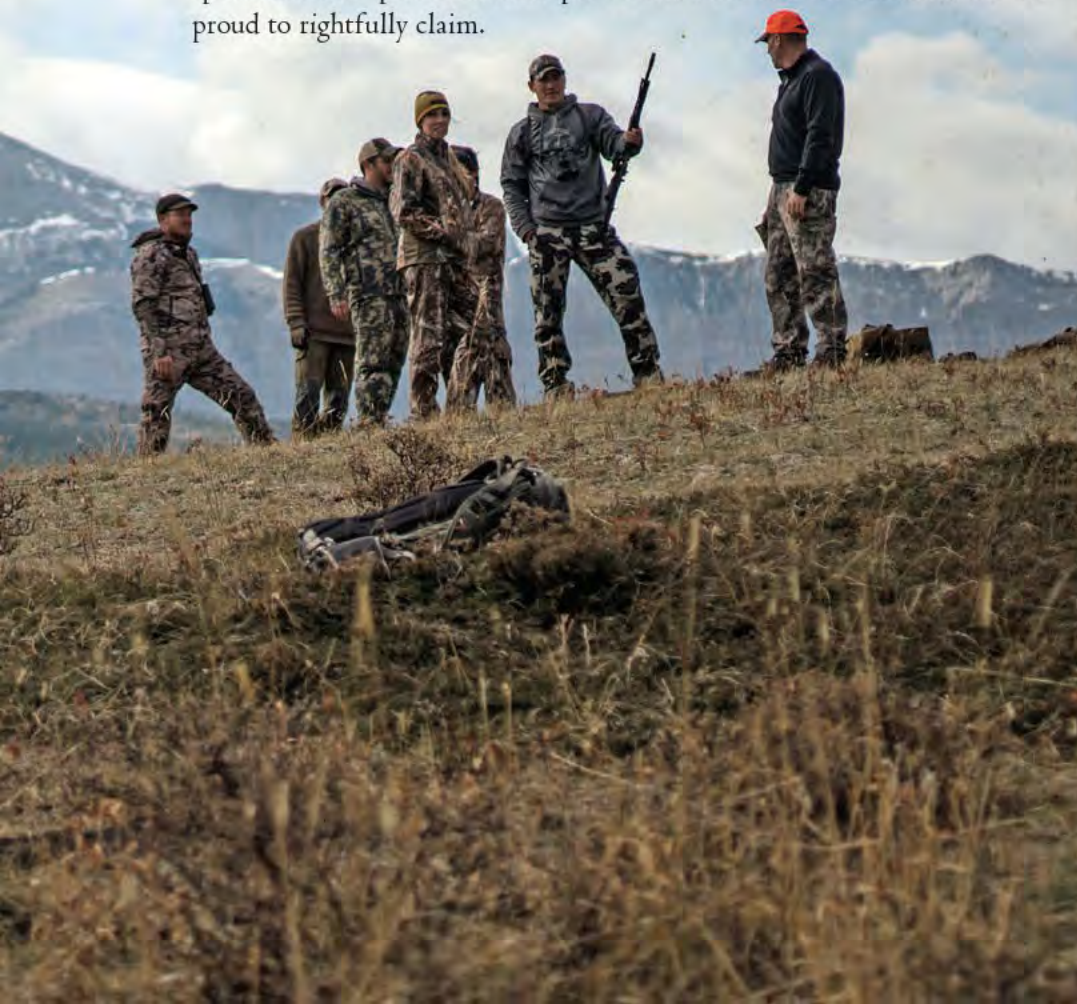
Joel Pedersen & Gary Taylor
National Wild Turkey Federation

catalysts to the overarching conservation design. Through this unique “user-pays, public-benefits” system, sportsmen and sportswomen are the primary funders of fish and wildlife conservation, providing upwards of 80% of the funding for state fish and wildlife agencies. They financially support conservation by purchasing hunting and fishing licenses, permits, and stamps, including duck stamps; and by paying federal excise taxes on firearms, ammunition, archery equipment and fishing tackle; philanthropy; and the creation of non-government organizations whose mission is the restoration and enhancement of fish and wildlife.

Unfortunately, the tremendous contribution made by sportsmen and sportswomen toward the restoration and conservation of our fish and wildlife resources remains largely unknown to the general public. This situation is exacerbated by the media’s broad-based use of the term “conservationist.” The media are not distinguishing between individuals and organizations which explicitly support fish and wildlife conservation financially, and those that don’t. All citizens, including hunters and anglers, pay federal, state, and local taxes which support land and habitat management at all levels through government appropriations. However, only hunters and anglers willingly pay additional fees that are explicitly dedicated to fish, wildlife, and habitat conservation by the state and federal fish and wildlife agencies. Hunters and anglers, as do many citizens, contribute financially to non-government organizations, but not all of these organizations embrace the meaning of conservation to include wise and sustainable use of our renewable natural resources. This vision of conservation held by Roosevelt, Pinchot, and Leopold is as compelling today as when first articulated decades ago.

It is critical to understand that hunting, angling, recreational shooting, and trapping are necessary to support fish and wildlife conservation. The term “conservationist” must be rightfully applied. “Conservationist” is a title sportsmen and sportswomen helped create, work hard to maintain, and are proud to rightfully claim.

CONSERVATION: WISE USE OF THE EARTH AND ITS RESOURCES FOR THE LASTING GOOD OF MEN.



Considered one of the fathers of wildlife conservation in America, Gifford Pinchot was the first chief of the U.S. Forest Service. He's pictured here with fellow conservationist Theodore Roosevelt, circa 1907.

SECURE PERMANENT AND DEDICATED
FUNDING
 FOR WILDLIFE AND
 HABITAT CONSERVATION,
 EXPAND USER PAYS – PUBLIC
 BENEFITS POLICIES,
 AND PROMOTE
 PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

ACTIONS:

1. Increase the federal investment in conservation as a percentage of the annual federal discretionary budget.
2. Create parity between hunting and angling, and other forms of outdoor recreation in the funding of conservation by expanding the categories of outdoor-related products that are subject to a federal excise tax.
3. Affirm that the Wildlife and Sportfish Restoration Funds are a mandatory spending account and not subject to sequestration.
4. Encourage the use of market mechanisms to better leverage private capital for conservation.

A HISTORY OF FEDERAL CONSERVATION FUNDING. SINCE THE TIME of Theodore Roosevelt, natural resources conservation has been accepted as one of the core purposes of the federal government along with securing the national defense, administering justice, protecting property rights, and building infrastructure to enable interstate commerce. Federal funding for conservation has declined by 50 percent between fiscal year 1977 and fiscal year 2014. Federal land and state wildlife managers are less able to address the threats of human population growth, land conversion, climate change, and invasive species with fewer fiscal and staff resources.

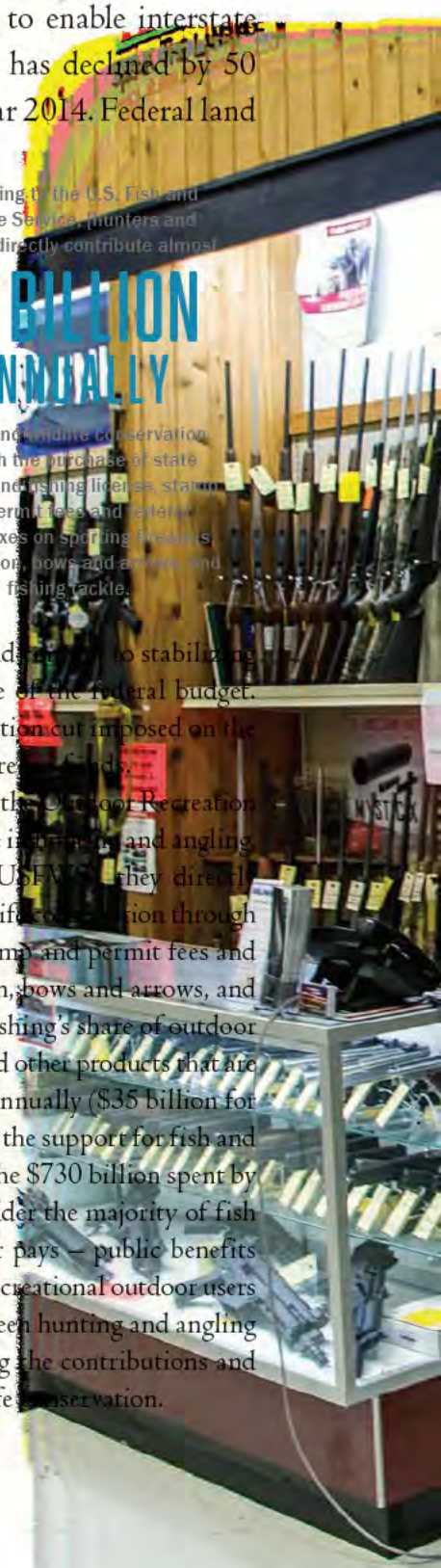
Unless policy makers increase their commitment to existing conservation funding sources and adopt new policy approaches to better fund wildlife conservation, the traditions of American sportsmen and sportswomen will continue to suffer, as will the health of our nation's landscapes and wildlife. As such, policy makers should stabilize and increasing conservation funding as a percentage of the federal budget. Policy makers should also end the 2 percent sequestration cut imposed on the Pittman-Robertson and Dingell-Johnson/Wallop-Brederford funds.

The Role of Hunters and Anglers. According to the Outdoor Recreation Foundation (ORF), 46 million Americans participate in hunting and angling. According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), they directly contribute almost \$3 billion annually to fish and wildlife conservation through the purchase of state hunting and fishing license, stamp and permit fees and federal excise taxes on sporting firearms, ammunition, bows and arrows, and fishing tackle. According to the ORF, hunting and fishing's share of outdoor recreation spending (\$3 billion plus travel, clothing and other products that are not subject to a federal excise tax) totals \$58 billion annually (\$35 billion for fishing and \$23 billion for hunting). This means that the support for fish and wildlife conservation relies on less than 9 percent of the \$730 billion spent by all outdoor recreationists. Hunters and anglers shoulder the majority of fish and wildlife conservation funding through this user pays – public benefits concept. We need to increase the dialogue among all recreational outdoor users to expand the concept and bring funding parity between hunting and angling and other forms of outdoor recreation, while keeping the contributions and voices of hunters and anglers alive in fish and wildlife conservation.

According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, [hunters and anglers] directly contribute almost

\$3 BILLION ANNUALLY

to fish and wildlife conservation through the purchase of state hunting and fishing licenses, stamps and permit fees and federal excise taxes on sporting firearms, ammunition, bows and arrows, and fishing tackle.



Market Investment in Conservation. Finally, policy makers should examine ways to employ market mechanisms to better leverage federal and state dollars with private money. The federal government should work with state agencies and non-profit

conservation organizations to develop policies that enable the greater use of market mechanisms such as mitigation banks that replace both the quantity and functional quality of lost habitat, water banking, and green bonds.



IMPROVE PUBLIC LAND FOR WILDLIFE WHILE ENHANCING ACCESS FOR HUNTERS AND OUTDOOR RECREATIONISTS

ACTIONS:

1. Develop intergovernmental policy that ensures that federal agencies will work with state fish and wildlife agencies to attain or sustain wildlife population goals during public land management planning and implementation.
2. Pursue the permanent authorization and full and perpetual dedication of funds to the LWCF.

continued...

THE NEED FOR ACCESS. ACCESS TO QUALITY PLACES TO HUNT AND fish is a primary concern of sportsmen and sportswomen. A survey by Southwick Associates in 2012 found that 23 percent of hunters lost access to land they hunted, and 20 percent of anglers reported losing access to certain waters. Places to pursue game and fish are a cornerstone of hunting and fishing in America and part of our nation's culture.

The Land and Water Conservation Fund History. The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) is one of the country's most important tools for conserving fish and wildlife habitat. Established through a bipartisan act of Congress in 1964, the fund uses royalties paid by energy companies to drill for oil and gas on the Outer Continental Shelf. Through this fund, millions of dollars are directed annually into safeguarding native habitat, water resources, cultural heritage sites, and outdoor recreation opportunities for all Americans—including 46 million hunters and anglers.

Since its inception, the LWCF has been used to invest over \$16 billion in conservation and outdoor recreation, including the establishment of public hunting and fishing areas,

Over the life of LWCF, Congress has diverted more than

\$19 BILLION

from the fund for other uses.



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3. Support the “Making Public Lands Public” provision to dedicate not less than 1.5 percent or \$10 million of the LWCF to providing and enhancing access for hunting, fishing and other outdoor recreation.
4. Amend LWCF to make fish and wildlife conservation a statutory purpose.
5. Ensure continued ownership of public lands by the federal government under improved statutes, regulations, and policies that guarantee a balanced use for wildlife conservation, recreation access, environmental services, and compatible development. We do not support large-scale divestiture of public lands.
6. Support legislation that allows targeted “land for land” approaches that improve recreation opportunities and protect fish and wildlife habitat such as FLTFA, the Small Tracts Act amendment, and USFS land adjustment legislation.

access into landlocked public lands, and easement acquisitions that benefit fish, wildlife, and the sporting public. However, the full potential of the LWCF remains unrealized because expenditures from the fund are subject to annual appropriations. Congress has only fully funded LWCF at \$900 million once in its 50-year history. Over the life of the program, Congress has diverted more than \$19 billion from the fund for other uses.

A broad spectrum of sportsmen and sportswomen’s groups strongly support the following recommendations:

1. The LWCF should be modernized and permanently authorized by Congress and fully funded with permanent, dedicated funds (not subject to appropriations) directed to the purposes of the LWCF.
2. Amend the LWCF to include the provision known as “Making Public Lands Public,” which specifies that a portion of LWCF dollars (not less than 1.5 percent of the requested amount or \$10 million, whichever is greater), must be used to secure recreational public access to existing public lands that currently have significantly restricted access for hunting, fishing, and other outdoor recreational uses.
3. Fish and wildlife conservation should be a stated primary purpose of the LWCF, both at the state and federal levels, to allow expenditure of funds to conserve fish and wildlife habitat.

Turn the Debate on Transferring Public Lands in a Positive Direction.

The origins of the public land system and the rise of proposals to transfer these lands to the states are heavy with historical detail and legalities but boil down to a few simple facts: These lands were retained after decades of the Homestead Acts and other policies that distributed land for settlement. The purpose of public lands was envisioned as providing multiple shared benefits for conservation, jobs, and recreation; according to the USFWS, 72 percent of western hunters depend on public land for access. Hard-fought disagreements over the use of these lands are creating high levels of conflict.

The solution also involves a few simple ideas: Agencies must keep existing legal authorities for land swaps and transfers that allow them to clarify boundary issues around in-holding properties and nearby lands of conservation value. Decisions on the use of public lands and the implementation of these decisions must occur in a more timely fashion, at lower cost, and with more collaborative deliberation among all interests and stakeholders. The future of our public lands must be secured to extend an American heritage that defines this country and promotes conservation worldwide.

We support legislation that authorizes the sale of targeted public lands without high conservation value to generate funds for the acquisition of high priority conservation public lands, particularly those that improve opportunities for hunting, fishing, recreational shooting, and other recreational access, and to protect significant wildlife habitat. This includes the Federal Land Transaction Facilitation Act (FLTFA), Small Tracts Act amendment, U.S. Forest Service (USFS) land adjustment legislation, and other appropriate legislation that provides land management tools and generates revenue for conservation.

ENERGY DEMAND AND CONSUMPTION IS INCREASING IN THE U.S. Technological advances in energy development, such as the hydraulic fracturing of shale for oil and gas, have increased the ability to produce more of our energy domestically. The move toward energy independence has increased interest in development of renewable energy sources, which grew an average of 5 percent per year from 2001 to 2014, and comprised 9.8 percent of the total domestic energy consumption in 2014. Increased interest in renewable energy and energy self-sufficiency continue to provide federal and state wildlife managers with challenges in balancing energy demands while conserving the nation's natural resources; both high national priorities.

Energy development and the construction of the associated transmission infrastructure convert and fragment native habitats, imperil priority wildlife travel corridors, and affect water quality and quantity, providing new challenges for state fish and wildlife agencies in managing public trust resources. The development of traditional sources of energy can result in significant decrease of both habitat quantity and quality. The current scale of development has the potential to affect entire species and not just populations. For example, impacts of natural gas and oil development throughout the range of the greater sage grouse led to the largest coordinated conservation plan between state and federal governments in our nation's history. Natural gas burns cleaner than coal, but hydraulic fracturing requires tremendous amounts of water, and the disposition of the contaminated water is problematic. The U.S. cannot fully transition to renewable energy sources for decades, so our nation will continue to rely on coal, oil, and natural gas. We must work together with the energy industries to find better ways of avoiding, minimizing, and mitigating its extraction on fish, wildlife, and their habitats.

Wind and solar power have exposed gaps in current policy that fail to account for the risks to wildlife habitat. There are still significant fatalities of bats from turbines, birds are still being electrocuted by and colliding with power lines, and certain solar panels require significant water for cleaning. Development of all these energy sources should avoid, minimize or mitigate their impacts to wildlife. Biofuels have the potential to provide fish and wildlife habitat. However, widespread land conversion from native prairies to monolithic cornfields threatens the nation's waterfowl, grassland songbirds, and upland bird species. In addition, nonnative, invasive plant species are increasingly being used as the source for production. The introduction and encroachment of these plants into aquatic and terrestrial habitats is a very serious




MAKE ENERGY DEVELOPMENT COMPATIBLE WITH WILDLIFE AND HABITAT CONSERVATION THROUGH EARLY, INTEGRATED COOPERATION AMONG INDUSTRY AND GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

ACTIONS:

1. Develop intergovernmental policy that ensures that federal agencies will work with state fish and wildlife agencies to attain or sustain wildlife population goals while planning and developing energy and transmission projects.

continued...

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2. Review existing science to develop more specific guidelines for the location of energy projects that avoid, minimize, or mitigate the potential negative impacts on wildlife.
 3. Support legislation that would dedicate a portion of federal revenue from energy development on federal lands and waters to federal, state, and local agencies to mitigate the loss of fish, wildlife and their habitat from energy development.

concern. We support thorough research and thoughtful discussion to address the impacts nonnative biofuel species have on wildlife and habitat. We encourage prudent development of renewable energy as part of our nation's overall goals toward energy security. This will require federal land management agencies, state and federal fish and wildlife agencies, and state and federal regulatory agencies working cooperatively with the energy industry to avoid, minimize or mitigate the impacts to fish, wildlife and their habitats.

Integrate state wildlife agency expertise early in project planning. Energy development and transmission companies often collaborate among themselves and with federal agencies and state public utility agencies to negotiate critical project details. Executive orders and federal policies intended to make federal and state permitting more efficient have either not included coordination with state fish and wildlife agencies or coordination has been integrated too late in the process. Consequently, state fish and wildlife population objectives are

Advancing the nation's
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manner.

not fully considered or addressed in many federal and state processes and are sometimes viewed as impediments to progress. State and federal wildlife, land management and utility regulatory agencies must work together with the energy companies to ensure that conservation of our country's wildlife and their habitats is achieved when planning energy development and infrastructure. Early coordination between state and federal agencies and the energy industry will lead to conservation success only when the best available scientific information on wildlife and their habitats is incorporated while planning energy development or transmission.

Advancing the nation's energy independence, while maintaining diverse and thriving wildlife

populations, requires viewing energy development and wildlife management in a more integrated manner. Federal and state wildlife agencies should start integrating energy development considerations into their overall management plans on both public and private lands. This Administration should set a precedent for early, effective coordination among federal agencies, state agencies and energy sectors to integrate energy development that is compatible with natural resource conservation. This cooperative effort between all partners must include incorporating energy planning into public land stewardship, landscape-scale mitigation policies, resource management plans, and conservation actions on private lands.



RECOMMENDATION

**INCENTIVIZE WILDLIFE
AND HABITAT
CONSERVATION AND
ENCOURAGE ACCESS
FOR HUNTING ON AMERICA'S
PRIVATE CROPLANDS,
GRASSLANDS,
WETLANDS, AND FORESTS**

ACTIONS:

1. Fully fund and implement conservation programs in the 2014 Farm Bill and encourage landowner participation in CRP, ACEP and other programs.

continued...

THE ROLE OF PRIVATE LANDOWNERS. PRIVATE LANDS SUPPORT wildlife in many areas, as well as the croplands, grazing lands, and forests which comprise over 60 percent of the rural lands in the U.S. In the eastern half of the country, private lands comprise the majority of the wetland, grassland and forest habitats.

Landowners rightfully decide how to use their land either at their discretion or out of economic necessity. That is why the core of private land conservation policy focuses on incentives. Policies that promote healthy markets for sustainably managed crops, wood products, and livestock can also help sustain habitat. Along with regulatory programs, voluntary, incentive-based programs can provide important tools for habitat conservation on private lands. Cost-share programs can incentivize initial landowner enrollment and assist with program implementation costs. Incentive-based programs can also identify and target



options for both voluntary acquisitions and permanent easements. These are important “tools in the toolbox” of a comprehensive suite of habitat conservation programs and policies for private lands.

Farm Bill Conservation Programs. The Farm Bill provides the bulk of conservation incentives on agricultural lands. Most of these programs supply rental or easement payments, cost-share for restoration or enhancement, or technical assistance to landowners to promote habitat management for fish and wildlife. The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) has been recognized for 30 years as one of USDA’s most successful conservation programs, benefitting farmers and ranchers, wildlife and the environment by providing wildlife habitat, land-based income, and opportunities for access by hunters.

The CRP should be enhanced to ensure that vegetation planted and managed on it provides wildlife habitat values as well as soil erosion, water quality and carbon sequestration benefits. Since 2008, the Voluntary Public Access -

Habitat Incentives Program (VPA-HIP) has opened 3 million acres of private land to public hunting and improved wildlife habitat quality on lands enrolled in public access programs.

Easement programs, such as the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) which includes the Wetlands Reserve Easement (WRE) and the Agricultural Land Easement (ALE), especially the Grassland of Special Significance, and the Healthy Forests Reserve Program (HFRP), provide significant benefits to both wetland and upland wildlife, including federal trust species. We support efforts to fully fund these important programs, but strongly encourage that funding between ALE and WRE follow historic allocations of legacy programs. We support the flexibility provided at the state level to fund projects based on resource needs and prioritization through ranking. It is important that both ACEP and HFRP are maintained as a priority in future farm bills.

Working lands programs, including the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, Conservation Stewardship Program, and others



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2. Ensure that vegetation planted on CRP, and for other conservation programs, is beneficial to wildlife as well as for soil conservation, water quality and carbon sequestration.
3. Reauthorize the Farm Bill in 2018, sustaining incentive-based programs and policies for fish and wildlife conservation, including an increase to the VPA-HIP program funding which incentivizes access for hunting and fishing, on private lands.
4. Protect and enhance wetlands and streams while striving for no net loss of wetlands.
5. Initiate regional water management approaches utilizing state water planning efforts in order to appropriately manage water use for fish, wildlife, food security, cities and communities.
6. Increase and streamline quantity and functional quality mitigation banking to expand habitat conservation, improve water quality, and increase hunting and fishing access.
7. Incentivize private land forestry and grassland habitat conservation through cost-share programs and tax policies that will keep forest and grassland under active management.

enable soil, water, and wildlife conservation to be integrated with agricultural production. Easement programs promote long-term stewardship. The Working Lands for Wildlife program is helping to restore declining species including sage grouse, lesser prairie chicken, and bobwhite quail while providing landowners who invest in conservation with regulatory certainty with respect to their activities. Other voluntary programs such as swampbuster, sodbuster, sodsaver, and conservation compliance encourage landowners to plan conservation of wetlands, native prairies and other habitats, and complement the incentive programs. We support efforts to fully fund these important conservation programs and ensure that they are maintained as priorities in future Farm Bills.

Other Conservation Assistance Programs. Clear, overarching wetland policies should achieve no net loss of wetlands and associated uplands while enhancing and protecting the nation's remaining wetlands and streams. Incentive and cost-share programs for wetlands restoration, management, and protection contained in the North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA), state grants, and Farm Bill programs are critical to sustained conservation in North America. In particular, NAWCA and state grants should be fully reauthorized and funded to improve habitat for wetland wildlife and ensure clean water and flood protection for people.

A comprehensive assessment of regional water supply issues that impact people, wildlife and agriculture should be a joint priority of state governments with the cooperation of the federal government. These efforts should provide additional protection for our nation's drinking water, food, and wildlife resources during drought. Mitigation banks that replace both the quantity and functional quality of lost habitat, and species conservation banks should be enlarged and streamlined to expand "no net loss" of habitat, with specific incentives for increased hunting and fishing access. The arduous bureaucracy associated with establishing mitigation banks should also be reduced.

The Use of Taxes as Incentives for Conservation. About 60 percent of forest land in the U.S. is in private ownership. These private forests, when actively managed, offer a multitude of public environmental benefits, from quality fish and wildlife habitat to carbon sequestration and improved water quality. It is important that we keep these private forest lands and grasslands in wildlife habitat and provide incentives to landowners who actively manage their lands for conservation. Congress should recognize the importance of existing tax policies and preserve tax code sections that conserve and protect public benefits of forests, grasslands, and other wildlife habitats. We welcome recent Congressional enactment giving permanent status to tax incentives for landowners who dedicate conservation easements on their property. Tax policies to recover listed threatened and endangered species should be developed.

PRIVATE LANDS

support wildlife in many areas, as well as the croplands, grazing lands, and forests which comprise over

OVER 60%

of the rural lands in the U.S.

THE NEED TO ENHANCE THE ROLE OF PUBLIC LANDS. ALL WILDLIFE conservation is based on the premise that wildlife will thrive if vital habitat is available in sufficient quantity and quality. Most of the U.S. offers good prospects for habitat: Of our nearly 2.5 billion acres, about 75 percent is either held in trust by the federal government for conservation or lies outside metropolitan areas. The keys to quality habitat are the shared-use policies governing public land. The American people have access to the most extensive network of public lands in the world. Our national forests, national wildlife refuges, public lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management, and national parks provide vital habitat and outstanding recreational opportunities. These lands are essential to perpetuating hunting, angling, and other traditional outdoor activities. However, nearly one-third of the nation's lands held in trust by federal agencies are facing serious problems. Controversies over how the lands should be used and managed have, ironically, hamstrung the agencies in their job of caring for the lands. Conflicting direction, either by organic acts or as a result of changes in Congress and the White House, and routine conflicts in the courts have paralyzed land management or reduced agencies to haphazard programs. Worsened by declining federal funding, federal ineffectiveness is leaving habitat quality unfulfilled and is polarizing recreation and development opportunities.



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PROTECT THE VITAL CONTRIBUTION OF PUBLIC LANDS TO WILDLIFE HABITAT CONSERVATION BY INCREASING ACTIVE MANAGEMENT, COLLABORATION, AND REDUCING LITIGATION

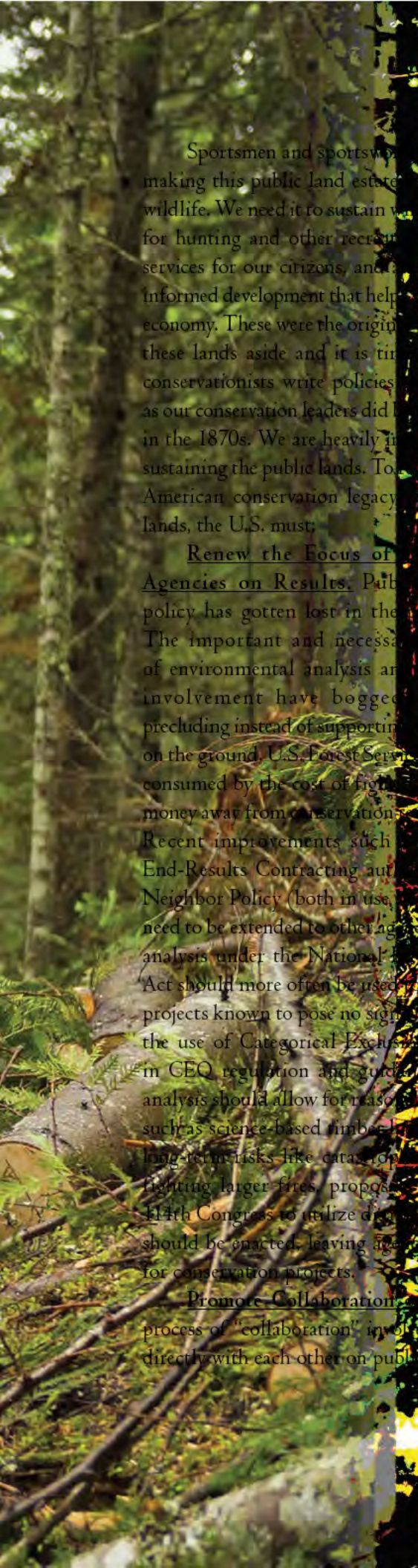
ACTIONS:

1. Enact a legislative remedy that provides access to dedicated disaster funds for catastrophic fires, protects operating conservation funds, and ensures conservation programs are reducing the risk and cost of catastrophic fires.

continued...

2. Authorize a stronger role for collaborative approaches to the design of public land management plans and utilize and expand authorities, such as the use of Categorical Exclusions, to streamline environmental analysis.
3. Explore alternative remedies to litigation, including full disclosure of all aspects of those filing lawsuits, and arbitration instead of litigation.





Sportsmen and sportswomen are committed to making this public land estate work for people and wildlife. We need it to sustain wildlife, provide access for hunting and other recreation, retain ecosystem services for our citizens, and allow careful, science-informed development that helps sustain the country's economy. These were the original purposes for setting these lands aside and it is time that 21st Century conservationists write policies that work today just as our conservation leaders did when they began in the 1870s. We are heavily invested in sustaining the public lands. To have the American conservation legacy on these lands, the U.S. must:

Renew the Focus of Federal Agencies on Results. Public land policy has gotten lost in the process. The important and necessary tasks of environmental analysis and public involvement have bogged down, precluding instead of supporting conservation results on the ground. U.S. Forest Service budgets are largely consumed by the cost of fighting large fires, taking money away from conservation results on the ground. Recent improvements such as the Stewardship End-Results Contracting authority and the Good Neighbor Policy (both in use by the Forest Service) need to be extended to other agencies. Environmental analysis under the National Environmental Policy Act should more often be used for projects known to pose no significant harm through the use of Categorical Exclusions as promulgated in CEQ regulation and guidance. Environmental analysis should allow for reasonable short-term risks such as science-based timber harvesting that reduce long-term risks like catastrophic fires. To pay for fighting larger fires, proposed by the 114th Congress to utilize dedicated funding accounts should be enacted, leaving general funding in place for conservation projects.

Promote Collaboration over Conflict. The process of "collaboration" involves citizens working directly with each other on public land management

plans and projects. The idea is taking hold in forest management and needs to be extended to projects involving recreation access and development. The 2009 Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program and the 2014 Farm Bill both moved collaboration to a more influential role in land management. In 2015, the House passed the Resilient Federal Forests Act, and the Senate has introduced a variety of forest health bills which endorse a stronger role for collaboration.

Worsened by declining federal funding,

FEDERAL INEFFECTIVENESS

is leaving habitat quality unfulfilled and is polarizing recreation and development opportunities.

These concepts are applicable to all public land management. In the next four years, we must enact refined legal language that places collaborative agreements on par with lawsuits in determining the direction of public land conservation. This would be a good start in transferring public land management and wildlife conservation from the courts back to professional wildlife biologists and public land managers.

Examine Environmental Litigation. Perhaps the biggest obstacle to active and productive public land policy is litigation. What began as a truly American idea that citizens could use to exercise oversight in keeping agencies honest has become an outlet for private interest groups to use the courts to satisfy their agendas with respect to public land management. The result is routine environmental lawsuits seeking to stop legitimate agency decisions in order to achieve the litigant's preferred opinion, usually by exploiting procedural technicalities, which agencies then try to remedy, further slowing progress. To remedy this problem, we support full disclosure of lawsuits, why they are filed, and the resulting reimbursement for costs as proposed in the 114th Congress as the Open Book on Equal Access to Justice Act. Disclosure of basic facts will reveal how much of this problem is agency error, litigants pushing a special interest, or flawed laws making lawsuits inevitable. Other bills in the 114th Congress have introduced the idea of binding arbitration, which should be explored so that no case goes to court that can be resolved by collaboration.

ACHIEVE GREATER CONSERVATION OF WILDLIFE SPECIES THROUGH BETTER COOPERATION BETWEEN STATE AND FEDERAL AGENCIES AND MODERNIZATION OF THE ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT

ACTIONS:

1. Make state wildlife population objectives a formal purpose of public land management plans to ensure coordination of habitat and population objectives.
2. Enforce respect of state hunting and fishing regulations by public land agencies.

continued...

THE IMPORTANCE OF MANAGING WILDLIFE POPULATIONS, WILDLIFE conservation requires adding, removing, and relocating animals, in addition to providing habitat. This adjusts population sizes and densities according to available habitat, social tolerance, and goals for recreational and subsistence hunting. Successful management for popular game animals such as elk, deer, wolves, bear, grouse, and turkeys has made them numerous today. These species were depleted in the 19th century and then restored beginning in the 1890s through the cooperative efforts of hunters, private landowners, state fish and wildlife agencies, and the federal government. Today, wildlife conservation and management, with the exception of migratory birds and endangered species, where the USFWS and state fish and wildlife agencies have concurrent jurisdiction, are principally governed by state authority, including wildlife living on most federal lands.

Hunters still work closely with agencies in the shared mission of conservation to ensure that wildlife flourishes and remains accessible for generations. Hunters support state efforts financially through state license, stamp and permit fees and by contributing to state research and conservation programs. Hunters also pay into federal programs—most importantly, the Wildlife Restoration Fund, which distributes revenue from a federal excise tax on sporting equipment and ammunition for wildlife management, habitat restoration, boater safety programs and affiliated shooting ranges. The federal Duck Stamp program also channels sportsmen and sportswomen’s dollars to wetlands conservation on National Wildlife Refuges. State and federal revenues work together as state hunting revenues are used to match federal excise tax funds, both of which are protected by federal law from diversion to purposes other than conservation.

The celebrated success of private-state-federal collaboration requires several actions:

Align federal habitat management with state wildlife population management. What federal agencies do with habitat on public lands is essential to what state managers are doing with populations using the habitat. For example, habitat for elk on federal forest land has degraded over the same period

The ESA needs to be

MODERNIZED

and refocused on restoring and delisting species.

that expanding wolf packs have pressured elk populations. Success for the forests, elk, and wolves requires concerted, cooperative state and federal decisions. Similarly, grouse and wild turkey habitat has declined in mid-western forests and other federal habitats throughout the country. Requirements for better federal-state cooperation will likely take a combination of new and existing policy and formal agreements.



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3. Provide state wildlife agencies access to public lands to conduct wildlife management actions.
4. Modernize the Endangered Species Act, starting with updates to listing and delisting decisions, increasing the role of state fish and wildlife agencies, and improving cooperation with private landowners.

Enforce respect for state authority in hunting seasons, means, and methods. The states' responsibility to manage wildlife populations is carried out largely through scientifically regulated hunting and trapping. However, some federal agencies are now ignoring these state obligations by limiting the states' ability to establish seasons, bag limits, and regulate methods of take. For example, recently in Alaska, federal land managers are issuing regulations that undermine state management authority for bears, wolves, and other predators on public lands. This disrupts the state's program for these species and the moose, caribou, elk, deer, and other prey on public lands. Clauses in federal law requiring federal and state cooperation and collaboration are disrespected or only partially heeded. Reversing this disturbing trend will take a combination of legislation and agency policy.

Open federal lands to state agencies for official wildlife management work. State managers need access to wildlife populations living on public lands for population monitoring or for conducting other professional tasks such as employing the use of telemetry. This access for species management has proven difficult, especially to Wilderness Areas and military withdrawal areas when the management work requires mechanical equipment prohibited by the Wilderness Act, or critical timing that must be coordinated with military training schedules. Surmounting these problems should be feasible with new or existing law and formal agreements facilitating cooperation between state and federal agencies.

Engage Congress to update the Endangered Species Act (ESA). This landmark law was last amended in 1988. Gridlock preventing updates to ESA are putting the law's admirable principles at risk. Many of the problems concern the listing and delisting of threatened and endangered species.

For example, removing a species from the list is difficult even after recovery goals have been met. A species can also be added to the list even when science demonstrates that greater conservation can be achieved by keeping it off the list. The Act leaves no discretion to the Secretary to fix these problems. As a result, the ESA has fallen into a

state of near constant litigation. Arguments over words enacted in 1988 or earlier, rather than decisions based on modern science and current experience, are now driving federal ESA decision-making by the federal courts. The ESA needs to

be modernized and refocused on restoring and delisting species. The clearest starting point is in the listing and delisting decisions. Species considered for listing should be chosen based on science-based priorities with great deference to state fish and wildlife agency population data.

Delisting should be justified by meeting recovery population and habitat goals.

More money should go to the recovery of species so that ultimately delisting better balances with new listings. More of the significant role Congress intended for state fish and wildlife agencies should be realized. These improvements can be achieved only by revision of the law.

HUNTING AND SHOOTING HERITAGE ON PUBLIC LANDS. THE HUNTING community has strong representation in Executive Branch decision-making. In 2008, Executive Order (EO) 13443 was issued to reaffirm the key role that hunters play in restoring and conserving our wildlife resources, to address modern challenges to conservation, and to shape wildlife conservation and wildlife dependent recreation in the 21st century.

The EO directed public land management agencies to work with the Sporting Conservation Council (Council) to “facilitate the expansion and enhancement of hunting opportunities and the management of wildlife species and their habitat.” It also called for a White House Conference on North American Wildlife Policy to facilitate the exchange of information and advice needed to fulfill the purposes of the EO. The Recreational Hunting and Wildlife Conservation Plan, known as the 10-year Action Plan, was the product of the conference and identified 58 actions to implement the EO. Additionally, the EO intended that such conferences would be convened periodically to update the 10-year Action Plan to reflect evolving hunting and wildlife policies and to recommend changes through succeeding Administrations. In 2018, the first ten years will have passed since the development of the Action Plan. The time is right for the Administration to convene a conference to update the Plan.

In 2010, the Council was renamed and reorganized as the Wildlife and Hunting Heritage Conservation Council (WHHCC) and, like its predecessor, this federal advisory committee provides advice to the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture on vital issues to wildlife conservation, hunters and recreational shooters. The Council and WHHCC have proven to be indispensable links between hunters and recreational shooters and the federal land management agencies.

The hunting community has strong representation in legislative decision-making as well. The Congressional Sportsmen’s Caucus, the largest bicameral caucus of any kind in Congress, provides hunters with a significant link to the development of sound wildlife conservation policies. Caucus leadership has worked with sportsmen and sportswomen to prioritize the importance of carrying forward the innovative and visionary work of hunters in the 20th century.

The hunting and recreational shooting sports community plays an active role in protecting the interests of its constituency. In 2014, the Administration



BUILD A STRONG, COLLABORATIVE FUTURE FOR HUNTING, RECREATIONAL SHOOTING AND WILDLIFE CONSERVATION ON PUBLIC LANDS

ACTIONS:

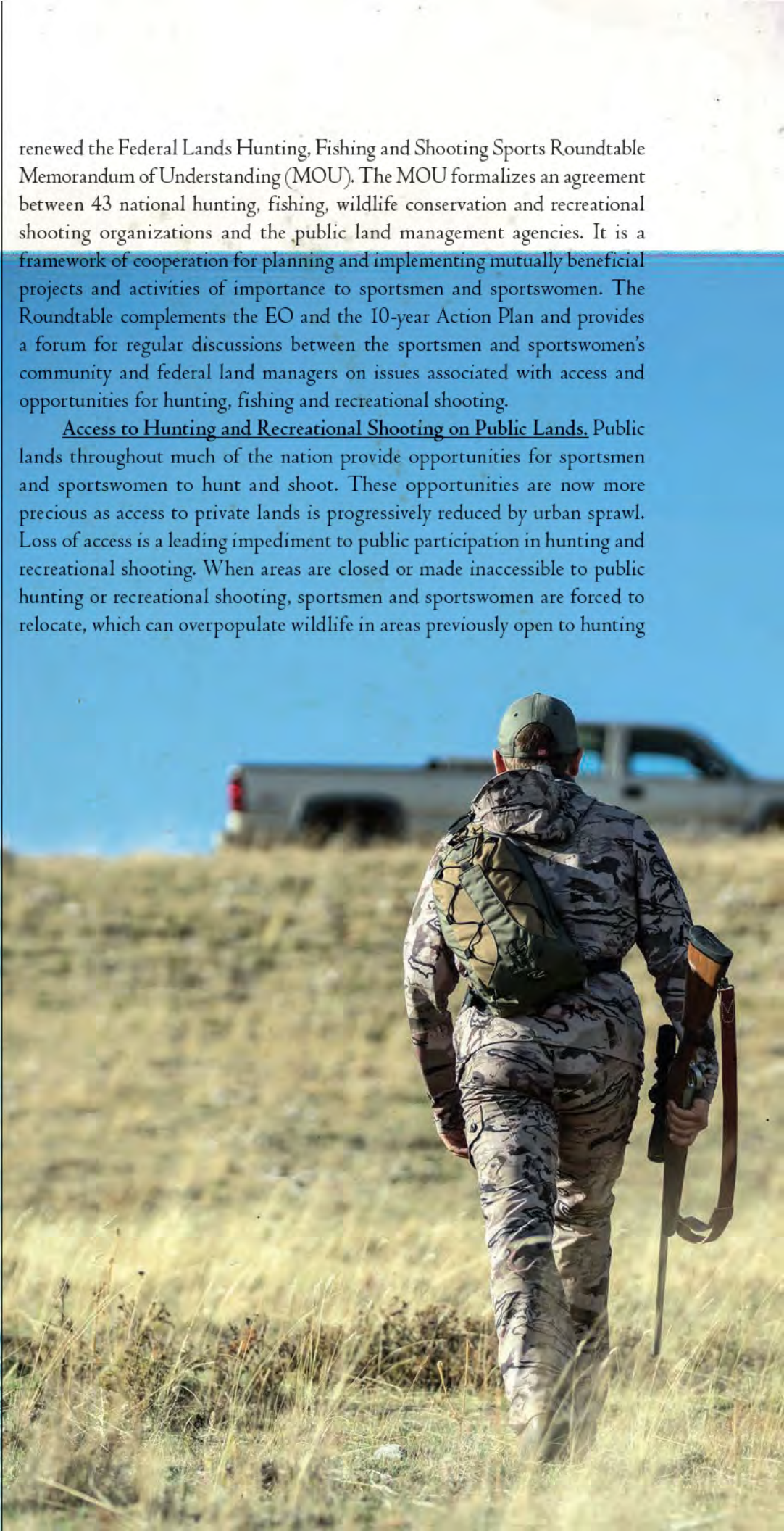
1. Permanently authorize the Wildlife and Hunting Heritage Conservation Council so it can continue to advise the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture on public land management issues and policies from the perspective of sportsmen and sportswomen.
2. Convene a second White House Conference on North American Wildlife Policy and update the 10-year Action Plan.

continued...

3. Utilize the bicameral interest of the Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus to build a strong future for hunting, recreational shooting and wildlife conservation in the 21st century.
4. Support active and meaningful participation by federal land managers in meeting the goals and objectives of the Federal Lands Hunting, Fishing and Shooting Sports Roundtable.
5. Analyze the impacts of federal land management proposals on hunting and recreational shooting access and assess opportunities for these activities in planning and decision-making.
6. Support legislation to enhance opportunities and access for hunting and recreational shooting on public lands.

renewed the Federal Lands Hunting, Fishing and Shooting Sports Roundtable Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The MOU formalizes an agreement between 43 national hunting, fishing, wildlife conservation and recreational shooting organizations and the public land management agencies. It is a framework of cooperation for planning and implementing mutually beneficial projects and activities of importance to sportsmen and sportswomen. The Roundtable complements the EO and the 10-year Action Plan and provides a forum for regular discussions between the sportsmen and sportswomen's community and federal land managers on issues associated with access and opportunities for hunting, fishing and recreational shooting.

Access to Hunting and Recreational Shooting on Public Lands. Public lands throughout much of the nation provide opportunities for sportsmen and sportswomen to hunt and shoot. These opportunities are now more precious as access to private lands is progressively reduced by urban sprawl. Loss of access is a leading impediment to public participation in hunting and recreational shooting. When areas are closed or made inaccessible to public hunting or recreational shooting, sportsmen and sportswomen are forced to relocate, which can overpopulate wildlife in areas previously open to hunting



and cause excessive pressure on wildlife in areas where hunters are redirected. This can complicate wildlife management by state wildlife agencies and diminish the quality of the hunting experience for many. In addition, access loss places greater burdens on hunter recruitment and retention. The loss of accessible areas means fewer people are able to join mentors in learning and enjoying hunting and recreational shooting activities.

Loss of public access also has indirect impacts on recreational use. Access loss discourages participation and triggers a decline in hunting licenses, reducing revenue used by state fish and wildlife agencies for conservation. Loss of access also hinders the ability of state agencies to use hunting to maintain wildlife

THE 621 MILLION ACRES

held and managed by the federal
land management agencies

MUST CONTINUE

to be managed for the enjoyment of
the public in these traditional and
historic activities.

populations at desired levels and robs rural economies of small business income and tax revenue that hunters generate by purchasing food, lodging and gear.

The 621 million acres held and managed by the federal land management agencies—27 percent of the land area of the nation—must continue to be managed for the enjoyment of the public in these traditional and historic activities.

Efforts to provide access must not stop with the public lands. Many public lands are inaccessible as a result of being surrounded by private lands. Therefore, government purchases, from willing sellers, of conservation easements, other rights-of-way, or fee-title acquisition of these private lands must be made to improve access.



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PUBLISHED BY THE

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406-542-1888

From: Swift, Heather
To: [Allen, Matthew](#)
Cc: [Paul Ross](#); [Megan Bloomgren](#)
Subject: Re: Fact check quick
Date: Monday, February 13, 2017 4:45:12 PM

Gold star to the BLM team. Thank you for this list

-

Heather Swift
Department of the Interior

@DOIPressSec
Heather_Swift@ios.doi.gov | Interior_Press@ios.doi.gov

On Mon, Feb 13, 2017 at 4:31 PM, Allen, Matthew <mrallen@blm.gov> wrote:

Heather,

As promised - Some stats from our O&G program on lease sales. The sale last week was, in fact, the second largest. Top 5 below, and stats sheet attached that shows a few additional data points such as total acres, number of parcels etc. in addition to dollar figures.

Top 5 Total Bonus Bids Received:

1. 9/16 NM \$145,556,170
2. 2/17 WY \$128,978,446
3. 8/08 CO \$113,853,914*
4. 7/14 NM \$83,080,090
5. 7/15 NM \$70,399,074

As you can see, New Mexico holds 3 of the top 5 for total dollars from bids. Interested to see what this year's sales bring.

Thank you!
-Matthew

On Sun, Feb 12, 2017 at 5:26 PM, Matthew Allen <mrallen@blm.gov> wrote:

Hearing now it was the second largest, after the NM sale last Sept.

Sent from my iPhone

On Feb 10, 2017, at 8:50 PM, Heather Swift <heather_swift@ios.doi.gov> wrote:

You're great. Thank you!! They don't have to do it over the weekend.

Sent from my iPhone

On Feb 10, 2017, at 8:15 PM, Matthew Allen <mrallen@blm.gov> wrote:

Hearing there are others in that range. I'll have my PA team work with the o&g folks to get a list together of the top 5. Thanks.

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On Feb 10, 2017, at 4:58 PM, Heather Swift <heather_swift@ios.doi.gov> wrote:

Good intel. Was it the second largest?

Sent from my iPhone

On Feb 10, 2017, at 6:41 PM, Matthew Allen <mrallen@blm.gov> wrote:

Negative, NM had a larger sale last year.

Sent from my iPhone

On Feb 10, 2017, at 3:22 PM, Swift, Heather <heather_swift@ios.doi.gov> wrote:

Can you confirm that yesterday's BLM oil and gas lease was the largest in four years?

-

Heather Swift
Department of the Interior

@DOIPressSec
Heather_Swift@ios.doi.gov | Interior_Press@ios.doi.gov

From: Swift, Heather
To: [Allen, Matthew](#)
Cc: [Paul Ross](#); [Megan Bloomgren](#)
Subject: Re: Fact check quick
Date: Monday, February 13, 2017 5:33:18 PM

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Heather Swift
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-

Heather Swift
Department of the Interior

@DOIPressSec
Heather_Swift@ios.doi.gov | Interior_Press@ios.doi.gov

From: Magallanes, Downey
To: [Kathleen Benedetto](#)
Subject: WEA/Quarterly Lease Sales
Date: Monday, February 13, 2017 5:42:22 PM

I ran into Kate and Rich and let them know you would be setting up a briefing for Jim Cason on the BLM lease sale issue discussed in the meeting today. Let me know if you need me to assist. I will attend the briefing as well.

Downey

--

Downey Magallanes
Office of the Secretary

downey_magallanes@ios.doi.gov
202-501-0654 (desk)
202-706-9199 (cell)

From: Benedetto, Kathleen
To: [Magallanes, Downey](#)
Subject: Re: WEA/Quarterly Lease Sales
Date: Monday, February 13, 2017 6:09:28 PM

Thank you. KB

On Mon, Feb 13, 2017 at 5:35 PM, Magallanes, Downey <downey_magallanes@ios.doi.gov> wrote:

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Downey

--

Downey Magallanes
Office of the Secretary

downey_magallanes@ios.doi.gov
202-501-0654 (desk)
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From: Swift, Heather
To: [Megan Bloomgren](#)
Subject: Fwd: BLM Daily Media Wrap-Up 13 Feb
Date: Monday, February 13, 2017 6:11:26 PM

BOOM

CNN— Wyoming Gas and Oil Sale Bidders: Reporter Sonam Vashi requested information regarding the numbers of registered bidders at last Tuesdays Oil and Gas Sale. WY PA gathering information to respond to request.

That's the reporter I did the fact check with. Told her about the sale.

-
Heather Swift
Department of the Interior

@DOIPressSec
Heather_Swift@ios.doi.gov | Interior_Press@ios.doi.gov

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Richardson, Michael <mjrichardson@blm.gov>
Date: Mon, Feb 13, 2017 at 5:55 PM
Subject: BLM Daily Media Wrap-Up 13 Feb
To: Paul Ross <paul_ross@ios.doi.gov>, Heather Swift <heather_swift@ios.doi.gov>, Megan Bloomgren <megan_bloomgren@ios.doi.gov>

BLM Daily Media Inquiry Wrap-up – February 13, 2017

E&E News— Dixie Resource Management Plan: Reporter Scott Streater contacted the BLM Utah state office this morning regarding the BLM's decision to postpone offering the two leases near Zion National Park. Scott is looking to write a short story on the subject and was looking to publish at 10 a.m. MT. Scott wanted to know about NPS concerns and if they were contained in a formal response and confirmation of the location of the two parcels.

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Tooele Transcript—Sage Grouse Withdrawal: Reporter Mark Watson requested information regarding the sage

grouse withdrawal. WO PA sent fact sheet and URL for additional information on the BLM.gov website.

--

Michael J. Richardson
Bureau of Land Management
National Communications Support Team

Office- 801-539-4205

Cell- 385-315-5988

Fax- 801-539-4013

From: Swift, Heather
To: [Richardson, Michael](#)
Cc: [Paul Ross](#); [Megan Bloomgren](#)
Subject: Re: BLM Daily Media Wrap-Up 13 Feb
Date: Monday, February 13, 2017 6:11:59 PM

Thanks, Michael. How did you respond to the CNN inquiry? I was working with her earlier today on an item and mentioned the lease sale.

-
Heather Swift
Department of the Interior

@DOIPressSec
Heather_Swift@ios.doi.gov | Interior_Press@ios.doi.gov

On Mon, Feb 13, 2017 at 5:55 PM, Richardson, Michael <mjrichardson@blm.gov> wrote:

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--

Michael J. Richardson
Bureau of Land Management
National Communications Support Team

Office- 801-539-4205
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From: Swift, Heather
To: [Richardson, Michael](#)
Cc: [Paul Ross](#); [Megan Bloomgren](#)
Subject: Re: BLM Daily Media Wrap-Up 13 Feb
Date: Monday, February 13, 2017 6:20:02 PM

Thanks, Michael. How did you respond to the CNN inquiry? I was working with her earlier today on an item and mentioned the lease sale.

-
Heather Swift
Department of the Interior

@DOIPressSec
Heather_Swift@ios.doi.gov | Interior_Press@ios.doi.gov

On Mon, Feb 13, 2017 at 5:55 PM, Richardson, Michael <mjrichardson@blm.gov> wrote:

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--

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National Communications Support Team

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From: Swift, Heather
To: [James Schindler](#); [Magallanes, Downey](#); [Megan Bloomgren](#); [Kathleen Benedetto](#)
Subject: Fwd: E&E News question
Date: Monday, February 13, 2017 6:32:17 PM

Fact finding here for an EE article.

-

Members of the Ute tribe mentioned to me today that they are meeting with Interior officials to discuss a possible settlement to the tribe's ongoing legal challenge to BLM's fracking rule. Can you confirm the meeting or give any further details? My story is running tomorrow morning, so any information before then would be useful.

E&E NEWS

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www.eenews.net <<http://www.eenews.net/>> | @EENewsUpdates <<https://twitter.com/EENewsUpdates>>

Energywire, Climatewire, Greenwire, E&E Daily, E&E News PM, E&ETV

From: Swift, Heather
To: [Ellen Gilmer](#)
Cc: Interior_Press@ios.doi.gov
Subject: Re: E&E News question
Date: Monday, February 13, 2017 6:35:47 PM

Hi Ellen, trying to track down intel for you. As you alluded, it's more difficult after hours.

-

Heather Swift
Department of the Interior

@DOIPressSec
Heather_Swift@ios.doi.gov | Interior_Press@ios.doi.gov

On Mon, Feb 13, 2017 at 5:24 PM, Ellen Gilmer <egilmer@eenews.net> wrote:

Afternoon,

Sorry for the after-hours question. Members of the Ute tribe mentioned to me today that they are meeting with Interior officials to discuss a possible settlement to the tribe's ongoing legal challenge to BLM's fracking rule. Can you confirm the meeting or give any further details? My story is running tomorrow morning, so any information before then would be useful.

Thanks,

Ellen M. Gilmer

E&E News legal reporter

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Energywire, Climatewire, Greenwire, E&E Daily, E&E News PM, E&ETV

From: Melissa Simpson
To: [Yakhour Wadi](#)
Subject: List
Date: Monday, February 13, 2017 6:42:15 PM
Attachments: [ATT00001.htm](#)
[Zinke_Opposition_letter.pdf](#)

http://www.biologicaldiversity.org/programs/public_lands/pdfs/Zinke_Opposition_letter.pdf

Melissa

Melissa Simpson
Intergovernmental and External Affairs
Department of the Interior
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melissa_simpson@ios.doi.gov

Sent from my iPhone

Melissa

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melissa_simpson@ios.doi.gov

Sent from my iPhone

February 6, 2017

Re: Oppose Ryan Zinke for Secretary of the Interior

Dear Senator:

On behalf of the undersigned groups and our millions of members and supporters, we write to express serious concern about the nomination of Rep. Ryan Zinke (R-MT) for Secretary of Interior. In the two short years he has been in Congress, Rep. Zinke has earned a three percent lifetime rating from the League of Conservation Voters, reflecting a consistent voting record against protecting America's public lands, waters and endangered species 97 percent of the time. Rep. Zinke has prioritized the narrow, short-term interests of corporate and extractive industries, championing dirty fossil fuel development on public lands while supporting significantly reduced environmental review of and public involvement in decisions about this development. Based on this record, we ask that you oppose his nomination.

As Secretary of Interior, Rep. Zinke would be responsible for managing hundreds of millions of acres of public land. Rep. Zinke's voting record suggests he will put corporate profits ahead of conservation and public involvement. His record includes voting to turn management of public land over to industry-dominated panels, while dispensing with environmental laws in order to ramp up unsustainable logging levels, voting to strip the president of authority to designate national monuments in seven western states, and voting to block the Bureau of Land Management from limiting harm to water, air and wildlife from hydraulic fracking. Rep. Zinke even voted against designating the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge—an area of global environmental significance—as wilderness to protect it from oil and gas drilling.

Through oversight of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Rep. Zinke would also have responsibility for implementation of the Endangered Species Act and the survival and recovery of our nation's more than 1500 threatened and endangered species. As with public lands, Rep. Zinke's record on endangered species hardly indicates he will be a champion for their survival. Rep. Zinke cast at least 21 votes against endangered species protections, including voting to remove endangered species protections for the gray wolf and to prevent protection for greater sage grouse, lesser prairie chicken and northern long-eared bats. Zinke also voted against tougher regulation of the ivory trade, which is driving catastrophic declines of African elephants. He also voted to block rules that would have prevented cruel and biologically indefensible "predator" hunting of wolves and bears and their young on national preserves and wildlife refuges in Alaska including aerial gunning of wolves and spotlighting denning bears and their cubs as they hibernate to boost populations of game species like moose and caribou.

Finally, as Secretary of Interior, Rep. Zinke would be responsible for overseeing mineral leasing on millions of acres across the country, including for oil and gas drilling and fracking and coal mining. Here too, there is cause for concern. The Congressman introduced legislation that would have lifted President Obama's moratorium on federal coal leasing, a significant contributor to U.S. carbon pollution, and stopped a review of the impacts of federal coal leasing on climate change and communities.

While we commend Rep. Zinke for publicly opposing giving away America's public lands to states or private interests, this does not lessen our concern over his record on management of these lands. The Secretary of Interior should be a steward of America's federal public lands and natural heritage for this and future generations. His short tenure in Congress demonstrates that his views are out of step with the majority of Americans who want to see our public lands protected from rapacious development, endangered species conserved and a livable climate future. For all of these reasons, we request your opposition to Rep. Zinke's nomination.

Sincerely,

The Center for Biological Diversity

Friends of the Earth

Center for Food Safety

Food and Water Watch

Sierra Club

Public Citizen

350.org

350 Eugene Oregon

Advocates for Snake Preservation

African Wild Dog Conservancy

Alameda Creek Alliance

All Creatures

Alliance for the Wild Rockies

Animal Legal Defense Fund

Animal Protection League of New Jersey

Animal Welfare Institute

Animals Are Sentient Beings, Inc.

Animas Valley Institute

Apalachicola Riverkeeper

Apollo Kauai'i

BARK

Basin and Range Watch

Battle Creek Alliance

Bay Area Labor Committee for Peace & Justice

Basin and Range Watch

Berkeley Partners for Parks

Berkshire Environmental Action Team (BEAT)

Beyond Nuclear

Bird Conservation Network

Black Warrior Riverkeeper

Blue Mountains Biodiversity Project

Bold Visions Conservation

California Wolf Center

Californians for Western Wilderness

Caney Fork Headwaters Association

Cascadia Wildlands

Center for International Environmental Law (CIEL)

Center for Sierra Nevada Conservation

Center for Snake Conservation

Citizens Committee to Complete the Refuge

Citizens for Sludge-Free Land

Citizens United For Resources and Environment, Inc.

Clean Air Watch

Climate Law and Policy Project

Coast Range Association

Coastal Environmental Rights Foundation.

Conservation Council for Hawai'i

CORALations

Cornucopia Network

Conservation Congress

Cottonwood Law Center

Cumberland Countians for Ecojustice

Daily Kos

Delaware Riverkeeper Network

Dogwood Alliance

Eastern Coyote Research

Ecology Party of Florida

Endangered Habitats League
Endangered Small Animal Conservation
Fund
Endangered Species Coalition
Environmental Protection Information
Center
Eyak Preservation Council
Fairmont, Minnesota Peace Group
Food Empowerment Project
Friends of Blackwater
Friends of Merrymeeting Bay
Friends of the Clearwater
Friends of the West Shore in Tahoe
Friends of the Wisconsin Wolf & Wildlife
Gas Free Seneca
Georgia ForestWatch
Geos Institute
Gila Conservation Coalition
Gila Resources Information Project
Global Owl Project
Grand Canyon Wolf Recovery Project
Greenaction for Health and Environmental
Justice
Growing Alternative Resource Development
and Enterprise Network
Gulf Restoration Network
Hands Across the Sand.org
Health Professionals for a Healthy Climate
Hells Canyon Preservation Council
Hoosier Environmental Council
Howling For Wolves
Humboldt Baykeeper
INFORM Colorado
Juniata Valley Audubon Society
Justice for Wolves
Kettle Range Conservation Group
Klamath Forest Alliance
KS Wild
KyotoUSA
Lane County Audubon Society
League of Humane Voters of New Jersey
Long Branch Environmental Education
Center
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Massachusetts Forest Watch
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Mt. Diablo Audubon Society
National Wolfwatcher Coalition
Native Plant Conservation Campaign
NC WARN
Network for Environmental & Economic
Responsibility of United Church of Christ
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Northeast Oregon Ecosystems
Northwest Environmental Advocates
Northwest Environmental Defense Center
Ocean Conservation Research
One More Generation
Oso:ah Foundation
Partnership for Policy Integrity
Peace and Freedom Party, California
Pesticide Action Network
Physicians for Social Responsibility
Predator Defense
Raptors Are The Solution
RESTORE: The North Woods
Rocky Mountain Wild
Russian Riverkeeper
SafeEnergyAnalyst.org
San Bernardino Valley Audubon Society
San Juan Citizens Alliance
San Luis Valley Ecosystem Council
Santee Riverkeeper Alliance
Save Our Sky Blue Waters
Save The Colorado
Save the Frogs
Save the Pine Bush
Sciencecorps
Selkirk Conservation Alliance
Shoals Environmental Alliance
Sierra Club, Cumberland Chapter
Sky Island Alliance
SoCal 350 Climate Action
South Umpqua Rural Community
Partnership
Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance
Southwest Environmental Law Center
Species' Forest, Inc.

Spokane Riverkeeper
Surfrider Foundation
Sustainable Arizona
Swan View Coalition
Tennessee Environmental Council
Texas Drought Project
The Center for Snake Conservation
The Ecology Center
The Fund for Wild Nature
The Lands Council
The Public Lands Project of the Rochester
Area Vegan Society
Turning Green
Turtle Island Restoration Network
Upper Peninsula Environmental Coalition
Urban Bird Foundation
Utah Physicians for a Healthy Environment
Ventana Wilderness Alliance
Western Watersheds Project
Wild and Scenic Rivers
Wild Horse Education
Wild Virginia
WildEarth Guardians
Wilderness Workshop
WildLands Defense
Wildlife Friendly Enterprise Network
WildWest Institute
Yahi Group Sierra Club

From: Magallanes, Downey
To: [Swift, Heather](#)
Cc: [James Schindler](#); [Megan Bloomgren](#); [Kathleen Benedetto](#)
Subject: Re: E&E News question
Date: Monday, February 13, 2017 6:54:28 PM

I am not aware of this meeting.

On Mon, Feb 13, 2017 at 6:31 PM, Swift, Heather <heather_swift@ios.doi.gov> wrote:

Fact finding here for an EE article.

-

Members of the Ute tribe mentioned to me today that they are meeting with Interior officials to discuss a possible settlement to the tribe's ongoing legal challenge to BLM's fracking rule. Can you confirm the meeting or give any further details? My story is running tomorrow morning, so any information before then would be useful.

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--

Downey Magallanes
Office of the Secretary

downey_magallanes@ios.doi.gov
202-501-0654 (desk)
202-706-9199 (cell)

From: Kathleen Benedetto
To: [Swift, Heather](#)
Subject: Re: E&E News question
Date: Monday, February 13, 2017 7:34:10 PM

I'm not aware let me see what I can find out

Sent from my iPhone

On Feb 13, 2017, at 6:31 PM, Swift, Heather <heather_swift@ios.doi.gov> wrote:

Fact finding here for an EE article.

-

Members of the Ute tribe mentioned to me today that they are meeting with Interior officials to discuss a possible settlement to the tribe's ongoing legal challenge to BLM's fracking rule. Can you confirm the meeting or give any further details? My story is running tomorrow morning, so any information before then would be useful.

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Energywire, Climatewire, Greenwire, E&E Daily, E&E News PM, E&ETV

From: Melissa Simpson
To: frank_quimby@ios.doi.gov
Cc: [Benedetto Kathleen](#)
Subject: Fwd: U.S. Department of the Interior News Briefing for Tuesday, February 14, 2017
Date: Tuesday, February 14, 2017 7:51:33 AM

Hi Frank,

Can you please make sure Kathy Benedetto is on this distribution list?

Thanks,

Melissa

Melissa Simpson
Intergovernmental and External Affairs
Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, NW Room 6211
Washington, DC 20240
(202) 706 4983 cell
melissa_simpson@ios.doi.gov

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Bulletin Intelligence <Interior@bulletinintelligence.com>
Date: February 14, 2017 at 7:02:51 AM EST
To: <Interior@BulletinIntelligence.com>
Subject: U.S. Department of the Interior News Briefing for Tuesday, February 14, 2017

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DOI In The News

Senate May Vote Soon On Zinke.

The "Floor Action" blog of [The Hill](#) (2/13, Carney) reports Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell has teed up "votes on six additional Trump nominees as Republicans try to end a Democratic slow walk of the president's picks." On Monday, the Kentucky Republican "filed cloture" for Rep. Ryan Zinke to head the Interior Department and for five other Cabinet nominees. The action "sets up initial votes for all of Trump's nominees who've so far had confirmation hearings and committee votes, which allows them to come before the full Senate." Senate Democrats "could easily drag out votes on the six nominees" for more than "a week and the Senate is poised to leave town on Friday for the week-long Presidents Day recess." A separate "Floor Action" blog piece in [The Hill](#) (2/13, Carney, Marcos) reports Democratic Sen. Jon Tester and Republican Sen. John Cornyn "predicted" yesterday that Zinke and Energy nominee Rick Perry "could come up this week." The [Washington Post](#) (2/13, O'Keefe) reports that if they are not confirmed this week "they will have to wait until late February or early March for a final vote."

The "Morning Energy" blog of [Politico](#) (2/13) reported "the conventional wisdom seems to be at least one of them will get a vote this week." Perry and Zinke "are generally seen as less controversial," but "Democrats still appear inclined to run out the clock on a number of the picks." Sen. Ben Cardin said on Sunday, "We can't stop these nominees. We know that. ... We're going to use our time to make sure that people understand the background of these individuals, their commitment to the agency that they are being appointed to, and so, we can hold them accountable."

Additional coverage was provided by [Roll Call](#) (2/14, Lesniewski), [KFBB-TV Great Falls \(MT\)](#) Great Falls, MT (2/14, Chase), [KULR-TV Billings \(MT\)](#) Billings, MT (2/14, Chase), and [KWYB-TV Butte \(MT\)](#) Butte, MT (2/14, Chase).

White House Cancels Bill Signing Trip To Ohio.

[The Hill](#) (2/13, Cama, Henry) reports a planned trip for President Trump to Ohio “to sign into law a bill undoing an Obama-era coal mining rule” has been canceled by the White House. The trip was never “formally announced” by the White House, “though the administration issued a notice last week suggesting he would stop in Vienna, Ohio, according to the Cleveland Plain Dealer.” Trump, during the stop, “was set to sign into law a Congressional Review Act resolution undoing the Office of Surface Mining’s Stream Protection Rule to protect waterways from the effects of coal mining, according to the report.” It is unknown when “Trump will sign the Stream Protection Rule resolution, or a separate one ending a financial disclosure rule for mining and drilling firms.”

Additional coverage was provided by the [Cleveland \(OH\) Plain Dealer](#) (2/13), the [Youngstown \(OH\) Vindicator](#) (2/14, Skolnick), [Western Journalism](#) (2/13, Davis), and [WEWS-TV Cleveland \(OH\)](#) Cleveland (2/13).

Senate Considers Methane Rule, More Reforms Pending.

[E&E Daily](#) (2/13) reports the Senate, after a week of Cabinet confirmations, may take up a House-passed resolution to repeal the Bureau of Land Management’s regulation that seeks to limit natural gas flaring, venting and leakage on public and tribal lands. The House also appears to be considering a number of new reforms. For example, Rep. Don Young introduced a resolution of disapproval that seeks to undo an Interior Department rule requiring tougher safety measures for oil and gas drilling in the arctic.

[E&E Publishing](#) (2/13) reports GOP lawmakers representing western states have proposed to repeal at least eight rules related to oil and gas extraction on federally controlled land and waters. The repeal of the methane rule and Planning 2.0 have already passed the House, and a third, blocking a revision of the Office of Natural Resources Revenue’s mineral valuation rule, is expected to be introduced soon. In total, the Western Caucus is targeting 13 rules implemented by the Obama Administration during his last months in office. The BLM’s Onshore Order 3, a rule implemented to address measuring oil and gas production on public land, is also being targeted for repeal.

Republicans Targeting ONRR Rule. [Natural Gas Intelligence](#) (2/13, Passut) reports that “a group of Republican House lawmakers from Western states said they plan to use the Congressional Review Act (CRA) this week to roll back one – and possibly more – rules enacted during the Obama administration, and that a total of 13 regulations should be targeted.” According to the Congressional Western Caucus, Rep. Scott Tipton will “introduce

a CRA bill this week to invalidate a final rule introduced last summer by DOI's Office of Natural Resources Revenue (ONRR)." The CWC said on its website, "The ONRR's new rule ostensibly sought to simplify and clarify the process for valuing oil, gas, and coal production on federal and Indian lands in order to provide 'certainty' to industry and to ensure all royalties due to ONRR have been paid. In fact, it did the opposite. The rule didn't simplify the process, disallows common cost deductions, and added burdensome and redundant reporting requirements."

Wyden Presses Interior Over Firefighter Hiring.

[KTVZ-TV](#) Bend, OR (2/13) reports that Sen. Ron Wyden on Monday asked the Interior Department "for a swift response to growing concerns in Oregon and nationwide about the impact of the unilateral White House action imposing a 90-day federal employee hiring freeze on rural communities' need to have enough seasonal workers to fight forest fires." Wyden wrote Acting Interior Secretary Kevin Haugrud, "I joined my Oregon colleagues in a recent letter outlining our concerns about the federal hiring freeze and potential negative effects on wildland firefighting for the 2017 season." He added, "I have heard informally from United States Forest Service staff that hiring has resumed. But the Bureau of Land Management has been given no such assurance, which negatively impacts its ability to fight wildland fires. The White House has yet to send an official response to our letter."

Flake Seeks To Expand Hiring Freeze Exemption To BLM Firefighters. The [Prescott \(AZ\) E-News](#) (2/13) reports that Sen. Jeff Flake has "sent a letter to the Acting Interior Secretary to secure an exemption that will allow the Interior Department's Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to hire firefighters during the current federal hiring freeze." According to the article, "after Flake successfully secured an exemption for Forest Service firefighters the other week, BLM personnel in Arizona requested his assistance to ensure their agency will also be authorized to hire firefighters for the upcoming wildfire season."

Additional coverage was provided by [KJZZ-FM](#) Phoenix (2/13, Jung).

Federal Agencies Plan For Next-Generation Telecommunications As EIS Contract Looms.

[FedTech](#) (2/13, Goldstein) reports that "sometime this spring, the General Services Administration expects to award its Enterprise Infrastructure Solutions contract, a \$50 billion, 15-year telecommunications infrastructure vehicle." According to the article, "GSA and other agencies are getting ready, with the Justice Department seeking industry input on how it can best make the transition to EIS, and the Interior Department seeking information on how to augment EIS with more voice services." In a "new sources sought" notice, "similar to a request for information, the Interior Department indicated it is not sure if EIS will be able to

support voice services for all of its remote offices.” The department sates, “A primary concern to DOI is the fact that GSA EIS contract holders may not have the capability to provide coverage nationwide to every location where DOI has voice communication services.”

Utah Lawmakers Considering Requests To Fund Public Lands, Wildlife Efforts.

The [Salt Lake \(UT\) Tribune](#) (2/13, Maffly) reports that “Utah lawmakers are again considering several requests to fund legal and lobbying efforts directed at gaining greater state control over public lands and wildlife, including another \$2 million to an anti-predator activist on retainer with the state to lobby on wolf and sage grouse.” According to the article, “such requests entertained by the Natural Resources, Agriculture and Environmental Quality Appropriations Subcommittee totaled \$4.6 million.”

Congress Urged To Repeal Antiquities Act.

In an op-ed for the [National Review](#) (2/14, Regan), Shawn Regan, a research fellow at the Property and Environment Research Center, writes, “Like many Progressive Era policies, the Antiquities Act is predicated on the notion that the expert judgment of Washington, D.C. is superior to that of local communities.” Regan argues that “if government is the things we do together, then we should govern together.” Regan blasts “midnight monuments” as “monuments to presidential vanity” and for ignoring opposition by local residents. According to Regan, “if monument designations are truly good public policy, they shouldn’t require eleventh-hour executive actions that thwart the legislative process to become reality.”

Canadian Scientist Urges US Scientists To “Speak Out” Against The Administration.

Wendy Palen, associate professor of biology at Simon Fraser University, writes in the [New York Times](#) (2/14, Palen), on the state of science in the Trump Administration, which she says is “ominous” alleging that scientists “have been hit with gag orders” while there may also be “slashing research budgets and gutting funding.” She says that there was “a similar assault on science” in Canada under Prime Minister Stephen Harper. She urges scientists to organize and “speak out” against the Administration.

America’s Great Outdoors

National Park Service

Scientists Fear Everglades Declining Toward “Tipping Point”.

The [Miami Herald](#) (2/13, Staletovich) reports that “for the last 16 years, nearly 80 scientists and their students from 29 organizations — including all the state’s major universities, the National Park Service and the South Florida Water Management District — have

embarked on one of the longest and largest studies ever conducted on South Florida's coastal Everglades." According to the article, "they now fear the system may be at what lead investigator Evelyn Gaiser calls a 'tipping point,' where change is happening faster than scientists expected and spinning into a self-perpetuating cycle of decline." The article notes that "aside from losing one of the planet's rarest ecosystems, changes happening in the system could also have global consequences, damaging one of the region's main defenses against climate change fueled by greenhouse gases."

NPS Approves Potomac River Recreation Zone In Georgetown.

The [Georgetown \(DC\) Patch](#) (2/13, Luttrell) reports that the National Park Service "approved a plan for a project that will establish a Potomac River recreation zone that more fully supports non-motorized recreation, such as canoeing, kayaking, rowing and paddle boarding, they announced Monday." NPS National Capital Regional Director Bob Vogel "signed a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the Georgetown Nonmotorized Boathouse Zone Development Plan and Environmental Assessment, including development of a boating zone and related park improvements along the DC side of the Potomac River in the Georgetown area." According to a press release, "the FONSI is based on a preferred alternative that includes proposed changes that respect the historic character, natural resources and existing recreational uses of Chesapeake & Ohio Canal National Historical Park and Rock Creek Park while providing substantial improvements to the waterfront."

Gulf Island National Seashore Temporarily Suspends Primitive Camping At Perdido Key.

The [Pensacola \(FL\) News Journal](#) (2/13) reports that "irresponsible campers who leave behind piles of garbage and discarded gear have prompted Gulf Island National Seashore to temporarily suspend primitive camping at the Perdido Key area." Superintendent Dan Brown said, "Unfortunately, the irresponsible actions of some park users has negatively affected the visitor experience at the Perdido Key camping area and has placed a heavy burden on the natural resources there. It is our responsibility as the stewards of this land to prevent further damage, and develop a plan to improve the visitor experience." According to the article, "during the closure, the park will work with backcountry camping experts throughout the National Park Service and the country to develop a management plan for the area."

Fort Larned National Historic Site Receives National Park Foundation Grant.

The [High Plains and Midwest AG \(KS\) Journal](#) (2/13) reports that the Fort Larned National Historic Site has "received a grant from the National Park Foundation, the official charity of America's national parks, to support the Every Kid in a Park program." Superintendent Betty Boyko said, "There's so much to discover at

Fort Larned NHS, and we're excited to welcome fourth graders and teachers to participate in the hands-on learning activities. We hope that our young visitors can develop a lifelong connection to our nation's history and natural resources."

John Glenn's Ohio Birthplace Passed Over For Listing On National Register Of Historic Places.

The [AP](#) (2/13) reports that "a New York graduate student seeking historic recognition for John Glenn's birthplace in Ohio says the proposal has been rejected." State history officials "wrote 24-year-old Adam Sackowitz that the Cambridge home in eastern Ohio where Glenn was born in 1921 wasn't a strong candidate for listing on the National Register of Historic Places." The Ohio History Connection, the National Park Service "now views Glenn's boyhood home in New Concord, where he moved at age 2, as 'most suitable' for recognition."

AP coverage was also picked up by [Philly \(PA\)](#) (2/13), [U.S. News & World Report](#) (2/13), the [Washington \(DC\) Times](#) (2/13), the [Washington \(DC\) Post](#) (2/13), the [Bristol \(VA\) Herald Courier](#) (2/13), the [Daily Mail](#) (2/13), and [WHIZ-FM South Zanesville \(OH\)](#) South Zanesville, OH (2/13).

George Washington Carver Schoolhouse In Final Stage Of Historic Place Designation.

The [AP](#) (2/13) reports that the George Washington Carver schoolhouse is "in its final stages before being added to the National Register of Historic Places." Historic preservation consultant Deb Sheals presented the site "to the Missouri Advisory Council on Historic Preservation last week." It was "approved and recommended for advancement to the final stage." The National Park Service is "expected to approve the designation within the next 12 weeks in Washington, D.C."

Cropsey Farm Added To National Register Of Historic Places.

The [Lower Hudson Valley \(NY\) Journal News](#) (2/13, Kramer) reports that New City's Blauvelt-Cropsey Farm was added to the National Register of Historic Places on Jan. 30.

Return Of Eagle Mountain Lands To Joshua Tree National Park Supported.

In an op-ed for the [Palm Springs \(CA\) Desert Sun](#) (2/13, Lewis), retired U.S. Army veteran Scott Lewis supports "the withdrawal of more than 20,000 acres of the Eagle Mountain lands from further development" and the return of "these lands to the National Park Service for inclusion back into Joshua Tree National Park." Lewis speaks of his "longing for the solitude of the mountains and deserts of home" while he was deployed "in support of our country's efforts," and hopes that "coming generations" will "find as much solitude, peace, and beauty as this area offers."

Senate Committee To Kick Off Expected “Modernizing” Of Long-Standing Environmental Laws.

[The Hill](#) (2/13, Cama) reports Republicans on both sides of Capitol Hill “will start looking into ‘modernizing’ key, long-standing environmental laws,” including the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act. The Hill says GOP control of both chambers of Congress and the White House “gives the party a unique opportunity to make lasting changes” and “fix what Republicans think [is] wrong with the standards.” The Senate Environment and Public Works Committee “will kick off the process with a Wednesday hearing in the full committee on modernizing the Endangered Species Act.”

Military To Destroy Unexploded Ordnance On Plum Tree Island National Wildlife Refuge.

The [AP](#) (2/13) reports that “military officials say the 633rd Civil Engineering Squadron will destroy three unexploded ordnance devices on Plum Tree Island National Wildlife Refuge.” According to Joint Base Langley-Eustis, “airmen will destroy the devices Tuesday from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m.”

Coverage by the AP was also picked up by [U.S. News & World Report](#) (2/13) and the [Washington \(DC\) Post](#) (2/13).

Additional coverage was provided by the [Newport News \(VA\) Daily Press](#) (2/13, Mishkin).

Appeals Court Denies Petition To Hear St. Tammany Frog Case.

The [Baton Rouge \(LA\) Advocate](#) (2/13, Roberts) reports that the U.S. Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals on Monday “denied a petition to re-hear a case that pits a group of St. Tammany landowners against the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.” At the center of dispute is the dusky gopher frog. According to the article, “the next step in the legal process is to file it with the U.S. Supreme Court.”

Coverage by the AP was also picked up by the [Daily Mail](#) (2/14), the [Minneapolis \(MN\) Star Tribune](#) (2/13, McGILL), [Philly \(PA\)](#) (2/14, McGILL), the [San Francisco \(CA\) Chronicle](#) (2/14, McGILL), [U.S. News & World Report](#) (2/14, McGILL), and the [Washington \(DC\) Post](#) (2/14, McGill).

FWS To Tackle Swine Problem At Havasu National Wildlife Refuge.

The [Havasu \(AZ\) News-Herald](#) (2/14, Messick) reports that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service this month will “begin implementing the first part of a plan announced last October to eliminate” the swine population at the Havasu National Wildlife Refuge. Portions of the refuge will be “closed Feb. 20 through March 6 as specially-trained USDA agents fly helicopters over the refuge, carrying marksmen

who will hunt and shoot the swine from above." Last year, the FWS partnered with USDA in drafting the Havasu refuge's "Feral Swine Eradication Plan."

Man Admits To Smuggling Endangered Turtles.

The [AP](#) (2/13, Tom Hays |, Ap) reports that "a man who was mailed 42 rare turtles concealed in packages marked 'snacks' pleaded guilty on Monday to charges he was trafficking an endangered species." Hsien Lin Hsu "admitted in federal court in Brooklyn that he was involved in a scheme with associates in Hong Kong to smuggle several varieties of turtles that are threatened with extinction because of the black market of buyers — paying hundreds of dollars per turtle — in China and elsewhere who eat or collect them." Hsu was "arrested last year after U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service agents intercepted five packages from Hong Kong that were addressed to him and labeled 'snacks.'" According to a criminal complaint, "inside were 42 turtles 'concealed in various bags of noodles and small pieces of candy.'"

Additional coverage was provided by the [New York \(NY\) Times](#) (2/13, Feuer).

Invasive Pythons Found Living In Abandoned Missile Shelters At Crocodile Lake National Wildlife Refuge.

The [Atlanta Journal-Constitution](#) (2/13, Miller) reports that "two long-abandoned military buildings in the Florida Keys that were once used as missile shelters were recently found to be housing another inhabitant — invasive and damaging Burmese pythons." The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service "says four large snakes, including a nearly 16-foot long female, were found within the past month at the old missile base at Crocodile Lake National Wildlife Refuge."

Additional coverage was provided by [WPLG-TV](#) Miami (2/13, Burke).

FWS Proposes An Emperor Goose Subsistence Hunt.

[KYUK-TV](#) Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta, AK (2/13, MacArthur) reports that "after decades of conservation, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has submitted a proposal to open a subsistence hunt for the Emperor Goose in Alaska." Crystal Leonetti, "an Alaska Native Affairs Specialist for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, says, in Alaska, residents worked together to grow the goose population." She said, "We recognize the great sacrifice that elders have made to not have a taste of that special food for a long time."

Fremont Expecting Final Ballville Dam-removal Permit In March.

The [Fremont \(OH\) News-Messenger](#) (2/13, Carson) reports that "Fremont's law director said the city now expects to be awarded a final permit for the Ballville Dam's removal in the first week of March." According to the article, "once the city gets the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Section 404 permit, it would have all the

federal and state permits needed to begin removal of the 103-year-old dam." But the Sierra Club is "still weighing its options on whether it will pursue a federal lawsuit against the city and federal agencies to halt the removal."

Bureau of Land Management

Testimony In Bundy Standoff Trial Gets Underway.

The [AP](#) (2/13, Ritter) reports that "jurors got a unique perspective from the FBI Monday of an armed standoff developing in a dry river wash where six defendants are accused of wielding weapons to force federal agents to abandon a round-up of Nevada rancher Cliven Bundy's cattle in April 2014." Special Agent E.J. McEwen "testified that people on the ground probably didn't know he was nearly 12,000 feet above, recording video from a single-engine airplane as the noontime standoff developed beneath an Interstate 15 overpass near the community of Bunkerville." The images "showed perhaps 200 people gathering on foot and on horseback with flags fluttering in a stiff breeze and dogs running ahead in a dry river wash beneath the overpass."

The [Las Vegas Review-Journal](#) (2/13, Wilson) reports that "earlier in the day, a defense attorney representing one of the men on trial announced he recently received an unredacted version of a report that accuses a BLM agent of several conduct violations, including using his position to obtain sold-out Burning Man tickets in 2015." Todd Leventhal, "who represents defendant Scott Drexler, previously had cited suspicions that the federal agent targeted in the report is the same person who oversaw the cattle impoundment in Bunkerville." U.S. District Judge Gloria Navarro "did not immediately rule on the issue."

Additional coverage was provided by the [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/13, Carlton, Randazzo).

Appeals Court Won't Hear Lawsuit Over Artifact Looting Case Suicide.

The [AP](#) (2/13, Whitehurst) reports that "a federal appeals court won't revive an excessive-force lawsuit from the family of a Utah doctor who killed himself after his arrest by federal agents in an artifact looting investigation, according to a ruling handed down Monday." The 10th Circuit Court of Appeals in Denver held that the U.S. Bureau of Land Management "didn't use excessive force when armed agents dressed in body armor arrested James Redd in 2009." The court "declined to overturn a lower-court decision that tossed the lawsuit after a judge found the presence of federal agents in SWAT-like gear wasn't unreasonable."

AP coverage was also picked up by the [Bristol \(VA\) Herald Courier](#) (2/13, Whitehurst), [U.S. News & World Report](#) (2/13, Whitehurst), [Philly \(PA\)](#) (2/13, Whitehurst), the [Washington \(DC\) Post](#) (2/13, Whitehurst), and the [Daily Mail](#) (2/13).

Additional coverage was provided by the [Salt Lake \(UT\) Tribune](#) (2/13, Maffly).

Southern California Land-swap Bill Could Protect Endangered, Threatened Species.

The [Riverside \(CA\) Press Enterprise](#) (2/13, Hurt) reports that “a bill reintroduced in the U.S. Senate Monday, Feb. 13” would restore “mining-degraded habitat in the Upper Santa Ana River Wash in Redlands.” The legislation “proposes a land swap that would move mining operations to protect plants and animals where the wash joins Mill Creek.” If passed, the Santa Ana Wash Plan Land Exchange Act would direct the Bureau of Land Management “to trade 327 acres of federal land degraded by mining operations with about 310 acres of pristine land owned by the San Bernardino Valley Water Conservation District.”

Securing America’s Energy Future

Offshore Energy Development

Report: Drilling Could Fuel Arctic Infrastructure Boom.

The “Morning Energy” blog of [Politico](#) (2/13) reported the Alliance for Innovation and Infrastructure has released a report “concluding Arctic offshore oil and gas activity would generate up to a \$6.3 billion infrastructure investment at the Port of Nome, Port Clarence and Cape Blossom, as well as expanded Arctic military and maritime infrastructure.”

Onshore Energy Development

Judge Rejects Tribes’ Request To Halt Dakota Access Pipeline Construction.

[Reuters](#) (2/13, Gardner) reports US District Court Judge James Boasberg rejected the request of the Standing Rock Sioux and Cheyenne River Sioux tribes, who argued that the Dakota Access pipeline would prevent them from practicing religious ceremonies at a lake surrounded by sacred ground. While the legal options for the tribes continue to narrow, another hearing is scheduled as the tribes seek an injunction ordering the Army Corps of Engineers to withdraw the easement. Chase Iron Eyes, a member of the Standing Rock Sioux, said in a statement, “We’re disappointed with today’s ruling denying a temporary restraining order against the Dakota Access Pipeline, but we are not surprised.” The [Washington Times](#) (2/13, Richardson) reports the tribes’ motion said, “Without access to natural, unadulterated, and ritually pure water, the Lakota people cannot practice their religion. ... As Lake Oahe is the only natural, unadulterated, and ritually pure water available to the Tribe – a trust resource for which the United States owes the Tribe

a fiduciary duty – desecration of these waters represents a substantial burden on the Tribe’s religious exercise.” However, the Army Corps of Engineers argued the tribes failed to show they would suffer “any injury, much less an imminent irreparable injury, from either the mere conveyance of a real estate interest or the construction of a pipeline that will contain no oil for at least 53 days.” The [AP](#) (2/13) reports Boasberg said that as long as oil is not flowing through the pipeline there is no imminent harm to the tribes, but he said he would consider the arguments more thoroughly at the next hearing. Attorneys for Energy Transfer Partners called the tribe’s argument that the pipeline violates religious freedoms “exceedingly tardy,” “not construction-related” and a “last-minute delay tactic.” Company attorney William Scherman said, “Dakota Access has the greatest respect for the religious beliefs and traditions of (tribes). The emergency relief sought here simply is not necessary to protect the exercise of those beliefs or preserve those traditions.” The Army Corps also filed court documents on Monday arguing a work stoppage is not warranted, saying the tribes will have time to make their case before oil flows through the pipeline. The [Washington Post](#) (2/13, Mufson, Hsu) reports Jan Hasselman, an attorney for Earthjustice, said the tribe is expected to file a new, broader motion seeking partial summary judgment under the National Environmental Policy Act, Clean Water Act and Administrative Process Act. Boasberg said a new filing likely would raise different legal questions. [The Hill](#) (2/13, Henry) reports Boasberg assured the tribe that oil would not flow before a ruling on the injunction. He told the tribe’s lawyers, “If you are worried it’s going to flow before I rule on the injunction, that’s not going to happen.”

[Platts](#) (2/13) and [The Guardian \(UK\)](#) (2/13) also provided coverage.

Owners Of Navajo Generation Station Announce Plans For Closure.

The [Arizona Republic](#) (2/13) reports the owners of the Navajo Generating Station coal-fired power plant in Arizona “are tired of overpaying for power” and decided yesterday “to close the plant when their lease expires at the end of 2019.” In order to operate until then, “the utility owners need to work out an arrangement with the Navajo Nation, which owns the land, to decommission the plant after the lease expires.” If they don’t, “the owners will have to close at the end of this year to have time to tear down the plant’s three generators and be gone by 2020.” The move to close “one of the biggest polluters in the nation” was “cheered” by environmentalists, “while other stakeholders such as the U.S. Department of the Interior and coal supplier Peabody Energy hope to find a way for the Navajo Nation or another entity to step in and keep the plant going beyond 2019.” But “the clock is ticking” and “the utilities want the lease extension settled with the tribe by July 1.” Salt River Project owns the largest portion of the plant.

Additional coverage was provided by the [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/13, Gold), the [Arizona Daily Star](#) (2/13), the [Arizona Daily Sun](#) (2/13, Cowan), [MarketWatch](#) (2/13), and [Natural Gas Intelligence](#) (2/13, Nemec).

Coverage by the AP was picked up by the [Albuquerque \(NM\) Journal](#) (2/13), [U.S. News & World Report](#) (2/13), the [Washington \(DC\) Times](#) (2/13), the [Miami \(FL\) Herald](#) (2/13), and the [Arizona Republic](#) (2/13).

A separate piece by the [Arizona Republic](#) (2/13) considers the impacts of the plant's closure.

Renewable Energy

BOEM Prepares For Kitty Hawk Offshore Wind Lease Sale.

The [Wilmington \(NC\) Star News](#) (2/13, Wagner) reports that as the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management "prepares to lease the first of three North Carolina wind energy sites, progress on a pair of locations off Southeastern N.C. remains stalled." According to the article, "in response to concerns about how the Wilmington areas could affect North Atlantic right whale habitat areas and the wind power available to a larger site off South Carolina's Grand Strand, BOEM year shifted their lease processes from the North Carolina to the South Carolina designation." The move will "allow the lease of a 122,000-acre site off the Outer Banks, near Kitty Hawk, to move forward March 16 while BOEM and local agencies continue to evaluate the six South Carolina sites – now including the pair below the mouth of the Cape Fear River."

Governors Calling On Trump To Support Renewable Energy.

[Bloomberg News](#) (2/13, Ryan) reports governors, Republican and Democrat, are pushing for President Trump to support renewable energy, saying the wind and solar industries "are crucial economic engines for impoverished rural regions." The Governor's Wind & Solar Energy Coalition is seeking "increased federal funding to modernize local power grids and boost clean energy research, according to a letter submitted to the White House Monday." The group is "also calling for legislation to promote offshore wind farms and efforts to streamline the permitting process for wind and solar projects."

Empowering Native American Communities

BIA Working On Lease For Two Rivers Prison.

The [AP](#) (2/14) reports that the Bureau of Indian Affairs "says it could secure a lease in coming months to operate a vacant Montana prison, which closed after the agency dropped its previous contract with the detention facility." BIA spokeswoman Nedra Darling "says in an email the agency expects to take over the Two Rivers

Detention Facility in Hardin in April.”

Additional coverage was provided by the [Billings \(MT\) Gazette](#) (2/13, Hudson).

AP coverage was also picked up by the [Greeneville \(TN\) Sun](#) (2/14), the [Bristol \(VA\) Herald Courier](#) (2/14), [U.S. News & World Report](#) (2/14), the [Washington \(DC\) Times](#) (2/14), and [KECI-TV Missoula \(MT\)](#) Missoula, MT (2/14).

Montana County Fights For Lost Revenue From Tribes’ Dam In Case That Could Have National Implications.

[Courthouse News](#) (2/13, Reese) reports that “a Montana county is pursuing legal action over the tax status of Selish Qlispe Ksanka Dam on the Flathead River in Montana, now owned by the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes.” Lake County is arguing that “the land that the dam sits on is federal reserve land — not tribal trust land — and is therefore taxable.” The case could have “national implications for Native American tribes across the United States.”

Mashpee Wampanoag Ask For Reaffirmation On “Land Into Trust” Designation.

The [Boston Globe](#) (2/13, Vennoch) reports that Mashpee Wampanoag tribal council chairman Cedric Cromwell is “asking the Trump administration to reissue a new record of decision that reaffirms the ‘land into trust’ designation previously approved by the Obama administration for a casino in Taunton.” According to the article, “that designation is now up in the air after neighbors filed a lawsuit which stalled the project.”

Tackling America’s Water Challenges

Oroville Dam Emergency Spillway Erosion Predicted In 2005 Court Filing.

The [Los Angeles Times](#) (2/13) reports that Saturday’s emergency discharge at Lake Oroville which jeopardized PG&E equipment and force more than 100,000 downriver resident to evacuate was predicted in a 2005 technical filing. In a technical memo on the lake’s discharge, the Yuba County Water Agency wrote in 2002 that if the Department of Water Resources used the emergency spillway, “extensive erosion would take place” and that “the spillway road and possibly high voltage transmission towers would be impacted” because of an unlined hillside, according to a motion filed by environmentalist groups in 2005. The [AP](#) (2/13, Knickmeyer, Pritchard) reports the danger of a breach eased Monday as water levels declined, but more rain is in the forecast.

[USA Today](#) (2/13, James) reports the Friends of the River, Sierra Club and the South Yuba River Citizen’s League “wanted federal officials to require modifications including building a concrete-armored spillway.” Ron Stork at Friends of the River said

in an interview Monday, "Our combined judgment at the time was that the Oroville Dam complex could not be used safely or confidently to conduct flood control operations." The [San Francisco Chronicle](#) (2/13, Moffitt) also reports.

Additional coverage was provided by the [Fresno \(CA\) Bee](#) (2/13, Griswold), the [Fort Collins \(CO\) Coloradoan](#) (2/13, Marmaduke), and the [Deseret \(UT\) News](#) (2/13, Lockhart).

Nearly 20 Percent Of Dams In Populated Areas Lack Emergency Plan. [USA Today](#) (2/13, Spillman) reports that of the 84,000 dams in the US, 15,500 dams are characterized as high hazard, whereby at least one person could die if the dam were to fail. Among those high-hazard dams, nearly 20 percent lack an emergency action plan. "If you have a good emergency action plan, you are going to reduce the consequences if the dam fails," said Lori Spragens, executive director of the Association of State Dam Safety Officials.

Westlands Water District Irrigation Drainage Plan Faces Hurdles In Congress.

The [McClatchy](#) (2/13, Doyle) reports that "the political terrain appears favorable for a mega-million-dollar irrigation drainage deal, with Congress still fully in Republican hands and California's sprawling Westlands Water District with influential allies." According to the article, "legislation putting the drainage deal into effect could be introduced at any time." However, "the magnitude of the irrigation drainage plan and Westlands' own political clout ensure controversy, potentially aggravated by issues outside of Westlands' control involving up to three smaller districts that serve 102,000 acres in western Fresno and Merced counties."

BOR Boosts Shasta, Keswick Water Releases.

The [Redding \(CA\) Record-Searchlight](#) (2/13, Schultz) reports that the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation "increased water flow into the Sacramento River to 79,000 cubic-feet per second Monday afternoon from 70,000 cfs." BOR area manager Don Bader "said the last time flows were that high was 1996-97, saying the decision to raise them to that level is based on weather forecasts." The article notes that "with Lake Shasta about 96 percent full, Bureau of Reclamation officials say the higher dam releases, which could last throughout the week, will certainly cause more localized flooding."

Top National News

Flynn Resigns; Kellogg Named Acting National Security Adviser.

Michael Flynn's late-evening resignation as national security adviser came at the end of a day in which many Democrats called for Flynn to be fired and in which the White House offered mixed messages on whether he would remain. The White House announced just after 11 p.m. ET that retired Lt. Gen. Joseph Keith Kellogg Jr. would

serve as acting NSA, and CNN and the Wall Street Journal both reported that according to an Administration source, Kellogg, former Central Command Deputy Commander Robert Harward, and ex-CIA Director David Petraeus are under consideration for the permanent post.

Coverage of the resignation itself is generally brief and straightforward, given that it broke late in the evening, though some analysts express surprise over how quickly Flynn made his exit. Jim Acosta said on [CNN Tonight](#) (2/13), "That is a pretty stunning development. ... We were hearing just yesterday that Mike Flynn had no intention to resign, and was not expecting to be fired today, but obviously the day's events have caught up with him, the weight of this scandal was enough to force him out of this very important position in the Trump Administration."

John Roberts said on [Fox News](#) (2/13), "This is kind of a logical outgrowth from what we've seen over the past 12 hours coming out of the White House. I was told [that] as of last night, it looked as though [Flynn] would probably, the words that were used were 'skate through' this controversy. ... But then as of this morning, when the President saw all the negative press that was coming out about Flynn and about these conversations that he had had with the Russian ambassador, that he just thought Flynn was becoming far too big a liability."

The [AP](#) (2/13, Pace, Tucker, Colvin) reports that the "embattled" Flynn resigned "following reports that he had misled Vice President Mike Pence and other officials about his contacts with Russia. His departure upends Trump's senior team after less than one month in office." Flynn said in [his resignation letter](#) that "he held numerous calls with the Russian ambassador to the US during the transition and gave 'incomplete information' about those discussions" to Pence.

The [New York Times](#) (2/13, Rosenberg, Apuzzo, Thrush, Schmidt) says Flynn had "previously had denied that he had any substantive conversations" with Ambassador Sergey Kislyak, "but on Monday, a former administration official said the Justice Department last month warned the White House that Mr. Flynn had not been fully forthright about his conversations with the ambassador. As a result, the Justice Department feared that Mr. Flynn could be vulnerable to blackmail by Moscow." The [Washington Post](#) (2/13, Entous, Nakashima, Rucker) reports that then-Acting Attorney General Sally Yates informed the White House last month that she believed Flynn had misled senior Administration officials.

[USA Today](#) (2/13, Ventura) reports that earlier Monday evening, White House press secretary Sean Spicer said in a statement, "The President is evaluating the situation. He's speaking to the Vice President relative to the conversation the Vice President had with Gen. Flynn, and also speaking to various other people about what he considers the single most important subject there is: our national security." USA Today writes that also on Monday,

Kellyanne Conway "told [MSNBC](#) that Trump has 'full confidence' in Flynn. But one official told CNN that Flynn's future could be shaky given the development." Jim Acosta said on [CNN's Anderson Cooper 360](#) (2/13), "There has been some whiplash today at the White House."

[Bloomberg Politics](#) (2/13, Talev, Pettypiece) says the resignation "capped a night in which top White House officials shuttled between the Oval Office" and Spicer's office. Among them were Chief of Staff Priebus, Conway, and "top lawyer Don McGahn." [CNN](#) (2/13, Murray, Borger, Diamond) says Flynn's "sudden exit marks the most public display yet of disarray at the highest levels of the new administration, which has faced repeated questions over a slew of controversies and reports of infighting among senior aides during its first three weeks."

[NBC News](#) (2/14, Greenberg, Johnson, Welker) reports on its website that the President "pointedly declined to answer reporters' questions about Flynn on Monday afternoon, saying only, 'We just put out a statement.'" [Fox News](#) (2/13) says that Trump, "who comments on a steady stream of issues on his Twitter feed, has been conspicuously silent" about Flynn since his discussions with Kislyak were first reported last week.

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/13, Lee) says that Flynn was one of Trump's first and most vocal campaign supporters. The [Huffington Post](#) (2/13, Date) says that Flynn, "like Trump, has advocated a closer relationship with Russia as an ally in the fight against Islamic terrorism." Gloria Borger said on [CNN Tonight](#) (2/13), "The President, I was told by one source, is very loyal to the people who have been loyal to him, and you'll recall that Flynn was very loyal to him. And that I was told it was this 'flood of information' that was coming in, that in the end the dam burst, and the President had no choice."

The [Washington Post](#) (2/14, Costa) reports that Harward "became the front-runner late Monday" to replace Flynn, "following lengthy discussions among top advisers to President Trump and several Cabinet members after Flynn resigned." Harward's "rapid ascension to the top of Trump's three-person shortlist for the position was confirmed by two White House officials who were not authorized to speak publicly."

In addition to Kellogg, Harward, and Petraeus, [Politico](#) (2/13, Palmeri, Stokols) reports that other possible replacements include ex-NSA Stephen Hadley, DHS Secretary Kelly, and retired Adm. James Stavridis. Among the other sources with brief reports on the breaking news are [Reuters](#) (2/13, Holland), the [Los Angeles Times](#) (2/13, Memoli), and the [Washington Times](#) (2/13, Dinan).

The evolving story had been big news Monday even before the resignation. The [CBS Evening News](#) (2/13, lead story, 2:40, Pelley) led with it, saying that "the President's adviser on national security may not have much job security. ... Conway said the President had full confidence in Michael Flynn, but minutes later the White House rushed out a correction saying that Mr. Trump is

evaluating Flynn." On [ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/13, story 2, 3:35, Muir), Jonathan Karl reported that Flynn apologized to Pence "for misleading him and the American public about the phone call he had with a Russian ambassador back in January. ... The President dodged questions about whether Flynn would keep his job, but later...Conway offered the Administration's first show of public support for Flynn since the story broke." [NBC Nightly News](#) (2/13, story 2, 2:30, Holt) reported that the White House was "offering differing signals over Flynn's future."

[The Hill](#) (2/13, Williams) reported that "dozens of House Democrats" had been preparing to urge the President to suspend Flynn and deny him access to classified material. House Minority Leader Pelosi posted [six tweets](#) Monday containing the hashtag #FireFlynn. Rep. Adam Schiff (D-CA), the ranking Democrat on the House Intelligence Committee, was asked earlier Monday on [MSNBC's MTP Daily](#) (2/13) if he is confident of the job Flynn is doing. Schiff said, "No, I'm not at all. And of course this comes on the heels of a troubled past when he was the head of the DIA. ... I really think it's time for him to step down." Sen. Chris Coons similarly said on [CNN's Situation Room](#) (2/13) that he is "very worried" about "the lack of confidence expressed in Mike Flynn."

Senate Homeland Security Chairman Ron Johnson declined to directly support Flynn during an appearance on [CNN's Situation Room](#) (2/13), saying, "His position is not a Senate confirmable position. I haven't been privy to those conversations. All I know is what I have heard in news reports. From my standpoint, this a matter within the Administration and a decision for the President to make, not me."

In a [Washington Post](#) (2/13) column posted before Flynn resigned, Richard Cohen wrote, "Flynn, ousted from his previous job for an allegedly chaotic management style, has apparently not lost his touch." The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/13) asks in an editorial if intelligence services had authority to listen in on Flynn's calls, and if so, why.

[Reaction on Twitter](#) is mostly critical of Flynn, with some noting the irony of the national security adviser putting national security at risk, and others recalling that Flynn led "Lock her up!" chants against Hillary Clinton but may himself have broken the law. Twitter reaction to the possibility of Petraeus succeeding Flynn is [heavily negative](#), primarily due to his own mishandling of classified information.

WPost A1 Analysis: Chaos Becoming "Standard Operating Procedure." In a front-page piece posted before the resignation was public knowledge, the [Washington Post](#) (2/13, A1, Parker, Rucker) said that "the upheaval inside the administration that West Wing officials had optimistically dismissed as growing pains is now cementing itself as standard operating procedure." According to interviews with White House officials and other Republicans, "the chaos and competing factions that were a Trump trademark in business and campaigning now are threatening to plague his

presidency.” Republican strategist Steve Schmidt said, “None of this is normal. The incompetence, the sloppiness, and the leaking is unprecedented.”

In his [Washington Post](#) (2/13) column, Michael Gerson writes that “former officials with deep knowledge of the presidency” say the current Administration has “five or six power centers and little vertical structure.” The President “has run a family business but never a large organization. Nor has he seen such an organization as an employee.” The goal of aides’ television appearances, Gerson writes, “is not to persuade or even explain. It is to confidently repeat Trump’s most absurd or unsubstantiated claims from the previous week.”

Gerald Seib writes in his [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/13) column that this might be a good time for a reboot of an Administration that has been roiled with controversy and infighting in its first weeks.

Mnuchin Confirmed As Treasury Secretary 53-47.

Steven Mnuchin was confirmed as treasury secretary on a near-party line [vote of 53-47](#), with all Republicans and Democratic Sen. Joe Manchin voting in favor. The [AP](#) (2/13, Ohlemacher) says “a bitterly divided Senate” confirmed Mnuchin “despite strong objections by Democrats that the former banker ran a ‘foreclosure machine’ when he headed OneWest Bank.” [USA Today](#) (2/13, Yu) says Mnuchin “was one of Trump’s most controversial cabinet picks as his résumé and confirmation hearing seemingly ran counter to Trump’s populist campaign message of reining in Wall Street’s influence.” The [New York Times](#) (2/13, Rappeport) says that during his confirmation last month, Mnuchin “was scolded by Democrats for failing to disclose nearly \$100 million in assets and for not revealing his role as a director for an investment fund based in the Cayman Islands.”

The [Los Angeles Times](#) (2/13, Puzanghera) says Mnuchin “faces a packed agenda.” [Reuters](#) (2/13, Lawder) says in a brief item that Mnuchin will be President Trump’s “point-man on tax reform, financial deregulation and economic diplomacy efforts.” [Bloomberg News](#) (2/14, Mohsin) says Mnuchin “is expected to push ahead quickly with top administration goals to dismantle financial regulations and slash taxes” and “will play a leading role” if Trump starts “any economic confrontations – with China, for example.” The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/13, Timiraos) says that given the contentious nature of his confirmation, it is unclear how well Mnuchin will be able to work with Democrats on issues like a tax code overhaul, a rewriting of the Dodd-Frank regulatory package, and infrastructure spending.

[McClatchy](#) (2/13, Koh, MurphyeKoh) writes that “like several Treasury secretaries before him, Mnuchin pursued a career on Wall Street as a Goldman Sachs banker.” [Politico](#) (2/13, Guida, Warmbrodt) says Mnuchin “is the third former Goldman executive to lead Treasury in recent decades following Robert Rubin and

Henry Paulson.”

Sen. Elizabeth Warren criticized Mnuchin on Twitter, [writing](#), “If Wall Street threatens to blow up the economy again, does anyone seriously expect Steve Mnuchin to tell his buddies to knock it off?” Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand [tweeted](#), “Mnuchin has consistently worked to boost big bank profits at a cost to American families.”

Senate Unanimously Confirms Shulkin To Be VA Secretary.

The [AP](#) (2/13, Yen) reports that the Senate “easily confirmed physician David Shulkin to be secretary of Veterans Affairs.” The Senate voted 100-0 “to approve the former Obama administration official, who was the VA’s top health official since 2015, in a rare show of bipartisanship amid partisan rancor over Trump’s other nominees.” [USA Today](#) (2/13, Slack) calls Shulkin “the lone holdover from the Obama administration among President Trump’s Cabinet picks.”

The [Washington Post](#) (2/13, Rein) says that Shulkin, an internist, “will run the second-largest federal agency after serving 18 months as undersecretary for health in charge of VA’s sprawling medical system, which takes care of nearly 9 million veterans a year.” Trump “surprised critics by turning inside rather than outside for a VA leader.”

Editorial Wrap-Up

New York Times.

“In Peril At Oroville Dam, A Parable On Infrastructure.” The [New York Times](#) (2/13) editorializes that the Lake Oroville dam emergency is “the latest wake-up call” that American infrastructure is crumbling from lack of necessary repairs. The American Society of Civil Engineers estimates the cost of repairing the country’s dams, whose average age is 52, at \$21 billion. The Times writes that President Trump’s proposal to fund \$1 trillion in infrastructure spending with investor tax credits is not a sound strategy for keeping public works safe despite its likely profitability for developers.

“The Latest Voter-Fraud Lie.” In an editorial, the [New York Times](#) (2/13) criticizes senior White House adviser Stephen Miller for asserting that Trump’s claims of widespread voter fraud in New Hampshire are accurate. The Times says, “Baseless claims about ‘widespread’ voter fraud have become so frequent, and so shameless, that it’s tempting to succumb to the fatigue of fighting them and laugh them off. Under President Trump and Attorney General Jeff Sessions, who became famous by prosecuting bogus voter-fraud cases in Alabama, that would be a big mistake.”

“A New Beginning For Israel And The United States.” The [New York Times](#) (2/14) in an editorial calls it a “fair bet” that the meeting between President Trump and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu “will feature big smiles and reassuring words.”

Yet, despite “personal chemistry,” the Times says the US national interest means that “there are likely to be rough patches” in the relationship with Israel. The Times says Trump’s reported decision to name Jared Kushner to be “special envoy” is “a powerful signal” but means the President’s initiative would depend on “someone who also has no experience in...Middle East peacemaking.” Still, the Times thinks the “moment seems riper” for progress from the outside, and hopes Trump “can confound the skeptics, including ourselves, and pull it off.”

Washington Post.

“The United States Needs A New Strategy For North Korea.” A [Washington Post](#) (2/13) editorial argues that President Trump “refrained from a rash response of the kind he delivered in January” when the North conducted a similar missile test, and “wisely emphasized the United States’ support for Japan while standing alongside Prime Minister Shinzo Abe.” Now, the Post argues, Trump “needs to focus on creating a strategy to deal with North Korea,” which it says should include the use of “sticks — such as sanctions and deploying missile defenses in South Korea — as well as carrots to end the North Korean threat.”

“The Postal Service Needs More Than A Band-Aid.” The [Washington Post](#) (2/13) in an editorial on a “plan to fix” the US Postal Service by a “penny-per-letter permanent rate increase and from shifting postal retirees into Medicare.” The Post calls it “the bare, bare minimum necessary” to keep the service going. The Post says that other matters that should be addressed are collective bargaining, and Saturday delivery, but that the current plan will at least prevent “collapse.”

“Diversity Is On Trial At A Virginia High School.” A [Washington Post](#) (2/13) editorial.

Wall Street Journal.

“Andy Puzder’s Grilling.” In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/13) defends Labor Secretary-designate Puzder, saying that the charges against him are exaggerated or false and come from disgruntled workers, and that Puzder is a solid choice to dismantle anti-business Obama Administration labor policies.

“Eavesdropping On Michael Flynn.” The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/13) asks in an editorial if intelligence services had authority to listen in on now former National Security Adviser Flynn’s calls, and if so, why.

“White House Disruption.” The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/13) says in an editorial that many of the questions surrounding White House Chief of Staff Priebus’ authority and his possible departure from the Administration are due to President Trump’s reluctance to let Priebus actually manage the White House staff. Though Trump prefers competing circles of power and viewpoints, the Journal says this approach makes it all but impossible for the White House to speak with one voice and proceed effectively on policy.

Big Picture

Headlines From Today's Front Pages.

Wall Street Journal:

[US Eyes New Tactic To Press China](#)

[Trump "Evaluates" Flynn's Fate](#)

[The Rise And Fall Of A K Street Renegade](#)

[Disney Severs Ties With Top YouTube Star PewDiePie](#)

New York Times:

[Michael Flynn Resigns As National Security Adviser](#)

[Case Of Captive In Yemen Could Test Trump's Guantánamo Pledge From Trump's Mar-a-Lago To Facebook, A National Security Crisis In The Open](#)

[Angry Town Hall Meetings On Health Care Law, And Few Answers In Shadow Of California Dam, Water Turns From Wish To Woe](#)

Washington Post:

[White House Was Warned On Flynn](#)

[In Trump Administration, Tumult Becoming Norm](#)

[Dinner, With A Side Of Security Crisis](#)

[Romancing The \(Lab-Grown\) Stone](#)

Financial Times:

[Trump Eases Canadian Fears Of US Trade Shake-Up](#)

[EU Gears Up For WTO Challenge To US Border Tax](#)

[Famine Fears Rise As Drought Crisis Hits Somalia](#)

[Japan Accepted 28 Refugees In 2016](#)

Washington Times:

[Gorsuch Offers Schumer No Hints On Judicial Philosophy](#)

[Homeland Security Captures 680 Illegals In First Major Raids Of Trump Era](#)

[California Spent On High-Speed Rail And Illegal Immigrants, But Ignored Oroville Dam](#)

[Gun Rights Advocates In California Brace For Long Battle Over Restrictions](#)

['Never Chelsea' Movement Grows Among Liberal Activists](#)

[U.S. Admiral's Visit To Thailand Shows Signs Of Trump's New Approach](#)

Story Lineup From Last Night's Network News:

ABC: Oroville Dam Emergency; Flynn Controversy; Canadian Prime Minister Visit; Immigrant Deportations; Severe Weather; Mobile Unlimited Data; Chicago Shooting Suspect Manhunt; Sandusky Arrest; Health-Back Pain; Dog Show.

CBS: Flynn Controversy; Security-Mar-a-Largo Dinner; Canadian Prime Minister Visit; Refugees Going To Canada; Oroville Dam

Emergency; Climate Change; Ford Exhaust Fumes; Sandusky Arrest; Health-Back Pain; National Zoo Panda.

NBC: Oroville Dam Emergency; Flynn Controversy; Security-Mar-a-Largo Dinner; Severe Weather; Sandusky Arrest; Drug Overdose; Mobile Unlimited Data; Health-Back Pain; Grammy Award; Playboy Magazine; Smartest Sibling; Community Charity.

Network TV At A Glance:

Oroville Dam Emergency – 8 minutes, 55 seconds

Flynn Controversy – 8 minutes, 45 seconds

Health-Back Pain – 4 minutes, 20 seconds

Security-Mar-a-Largo Dinner – 4 minutes, 15 seconds

Mobile Unlimited Data – 3 minutes, 30 seconds

Canadian Prime Minister Visit – 3 minutes, 30 seconds

Severe Weather – 2 minutes, 20 seconds

Sandusky Arrest – 1 minute, 20 seconds

Story Lineup From This Morning's Radio News Broadcasts:

ABC: Flynn Resignation; Cabinet Confirmation; Oroville Dam Emergency.

CBS: Flynn Resignation; Cabinet Confirmation; Immigrant Deportations; Oroville Dam Emergency.

FOX: Cabinet Confirmation; President Trump-Retailer Meeting; North Korea Missile Test; Flynn Controversy; Oroville Dam Emergency; Sandusky Arrest; Grammy Awards; Flynn Resignation.

NPR: Flynn Resignation; Cabinet Confirmation; Immigrant Deportations; Canadian Prime Minister Visit; Vatican Reform; Women's College Basket Ball.

Washington Schedule

Today's Events In Washington.

White House:

PRESIDENT TRUMP — Participates in a parent-teacher conference listening session; has lunch with Governor and Mrs. Christie; signs H.J. Res. 41; meets with the Secretary of Homeland Security Kelly and the Attorney General Sessions.

VICE PRESIDENT PENCE — Speaks with Secretary of State Tillerson by phone; joins the President to participate in a parent-teacher conference listening session; participates in Senate Republican Policy Lunch; joins the President as he signs H.J. Res. 41; participates in the swearing-in of Secretary of Veterans Affairs Dr. David Shulkin; joins the President to meet with the Secretary of Homeland Security Kelly and the Attorney General Sessions.

US Senate: 9:30 AM Senate Armed Services Committee closed briefing on long-term defense challenges and strategies – Closed briefing on 'Long-term Defense Challenges and Strategies', given by Deputy Secretary of Defense Robert Work, and Office of the Secretary of Defense Office of Net Assessment Director James

Baker Location: SVC-217, US Capitol, Washington, DC

<http://armed-services.senate.gov/>

10:00 AM Fed Chair Yellen presents Monetary Policy Report to Senate Banking Committee – Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs hearing on 'The Semiannual Monetary Policy Report to the Congress', with testimony from Federal Reserve Board Chair Janet Yellen Location: Rm 106, Dirksen Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://www.federalreserve.gov>
<https://twitter.com/federalreserve>

2:30 PM Senate Armed Services subcommittee hearing on DoD readiness programs – Personnel Subcommittee hearing on 'Department of Defense Single Servicemember and Military Family Readiness Programs', with testimony from Sgt. Maj. of the Army Daniel Dailey; Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy Steven Giordano; Sgt. Maj. of the Marine Corps Ronald Green; Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force James Cody; Acting Assistant Secretary of Defense for Manpower and Reserve Affairs Stephanie Barna; Blue Star Families CEO Kathy Roth-Douquet; and National Military Family Association Executive Director Joyce Raezer Location: Rm 222, Russell Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://armed-services.senate.gov/>

2:30 PM Closed Briefing: Intelligence Matters Location: Rm 219, Hart Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC
<http://intelligence.senate.gov>

2:30 PM SCOTUS nominee Neil Gorsuch meets Dem Sen. Chris Coons – US Supreme Court nominee Neil Gorsuch on Capitol Hill for meeting with Democratic Sen. Chris Coons, followed my media availability with Sen. Coons Location: Rm 127A, Russell Senate Office Bldg., Washington, DC [coons.senate.gov](https://twitter.com/SenCoonsOffice)
<https://twitter.com/SenCoonsOffice>

Vice President Mike Pence participates in Senate Republican Policy Lunch Location: US Capitol, Washington, DC
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/vicepresident> <https://twitter.com/VP>

US House: 10:00 AM House Technology subcommittee hearing on cybersecurity – Research and Technology Subcommittee hearing on 'Strengthening US Cybersecurity Capabilities', with testimony from National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Information Technology Lab Director Dr Charles Romine; VMware CTO for Security Iain Mulholland; Institute for Information Infrastructure Protection (I3P) Executive Director and Chair Dr Diana Burley; and Government Accountability Office Director of Information Security Issues Gregory Wilshusen Location: Rm 2318, Rayburn House Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://science.house.gov>
<https://twitter.com/HouseScience>

10:00 AM House Armed Services Committee hearing on effective counterterrorism strategies – Hearing on 'The Evolving Threat of Terrorism and Effective Counterterrorism Strategies', with testimony from Georgetown University Center for Security Studies Director Bruce Hoffman; West Point Combating Terrorism Center Distinguished Chair Michael Sheehan; and RAND Corporation

President's Senior Advisor Brian Michael Jenkins Location: Rm 2118, Rayburn House Office Bldg, Washington, DC

www.armedservices.house.gov

<https://twitter.com/HASCRpublicans>

10:00 AM House Homeland Security subcommittee hearing on the future of FEMA – Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications Subcommittee hearing on 'The Future of FEMA: Stakeholder Recommendations for the Next Administrator', with testimony from Michigan State Police Emergency Management and Homeland Security Commander Chris Kelenske (on behalf of National Governors Association); International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) President and Chair of the Board John Sinclair; and Save the Children National Director of Policy, Advocacy and Development Richard Bland

Location: CVC 210, US Capitol, Washington, DC

homeland.house.gov <https://twitter.com/HouseHomeland10:00> AM

House Homeland Security subcommittee hearing on the future of FEMA – Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications Subcommittee hearing on 'The Future of FEMA: Stakeholder Recommendations for the Next Administrator', with testimony from Michigan State Police Emergency Management and Homeland Security Commander Chris Kelenske (on behalf of National Governors Association); International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) President and Chair of the Board John Sinclair; and Save the Children National Director of Policy, Advocacy and Development Richard Bland Location: CVC 210, US Capitol, Washington, DC

homeland.house.gov <https://twitter.com/HouseHomeland>

10:00 AM House Judiciary subcommittee hearing on 'Judicial Transparency and Ethics' – Courts, Intellectual Property and the Internet Subcommittee hearing on 'Judicial Transparency and Ethics', with testimony from National Press Photographers Association General Counsel Mickey Osterreicher; Cornell Law School Legal Information Institute Director Thomas Bruce; and Indiana Law School Professor Charles Geyh Location: Rm 2141, Rayburn House Office Bldg, Washington, DC

<http://judiciary.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/HouseJudiciary>

10:00 AM House Workforce subcommittee hearing on the NLRB – Health, Employment, Labor, and Pensions Subcommittee hearing on 'Restoring Balance and Fairness to the National Labor Relations Board' Location: Rm 2175, Rayburn House Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://edworkforce.house.gov/>

<https://twitter.com/EdWorkforce>

10:00 AM House Oversight and Government Reform Committee Business Meeting – Business Meeting, with agenda including 'H.R. 195, Federal Register Printing Savings Act of 2017', 'H.R. 624, Social Security Fraud Prevention Act of 2017', 'H.R. 998, Searching for and Cutting Regulations that are Unnecessarily Burdensome Act of 2017', 'H.R. XXX, Regulatory Integrity Act of 2017', 'H.R. XXX, OIRA Insight, Reform, and Accountability Act', 'H.R. XXX, District of Columbia Courts and Public Defender Service

Voluntary Separation Incentive Payments Act', and 'H.R. 653, Federal Intern Protection Act of 2017' Location: Rm 2154, Rayburn House Office Bldg., Washington, DC <http://oversight.house.gov/>
<https://twitter.com/GOPoversight>

10:15 AM House Ways and Means Committee marks up its oversight plan and its views and estimates letter – Markup hearing on 'Authorization and Oversight Plan for the 115th Congress', 'Budget Views and Estimates for Fiscal Year 2018', 'Ratification of Ways and Means Committee Subcommittee Assignments', and 'Ratification of Appointments to the Joint Committee on Taxation' Location: Rm 1100, Longworth House Office Bldg, Washington, DC
<http://waysandmeans.house.gov/>
<https://twitter.com/WaysandMeansGOP>

10:15 AM House Dems hold press conference following caucus meeting – House Democratic Caucus Chairman Joe Crowley and Vice Chair Linda press conference following Caucus meeting Location: HVC Studio A, US Capitol, Washington, DC
<http://www.dems.gov/> <https://twitter.com/HouseDemocrats>

10:15 AM House Commerce subcommittee hearing on self-driving cars – Digital Commerce and Consumer Protection Subcommittee hearing on 'Self-Driving Cars: Road to Deployment', with testimony from General Motors Vice President of Global Strategy Mike Abelson; RAND Center for Decision Making Under Uncertainty Co-Director and Senior Information Scientist Dr Nidhi Kalra; Volvo Car Group Vice President of Government Affairs Anders Karrberg; Lyft Vice President of Public Policy Joseph Okpaku; and Toyota Research Institute Executive Technical Advisor and CEO Gill Pratt Location: Rm 2123, Rayburn House Office Bldg, Washington, DC
<http://energycommerce.house.gov/>
<https://twitter.com/HouseCommerce>

10:30 AM House Veterans' Affairs subcommittee hearing on VA's National Work Queue and disability claims processing – Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs Subcommittee hearing on 'Exploring National Work Queue's Impact on Claims Processing' Location: Rm 334, Cannon House Office Bldg, Washington, DC
<http://veterans.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/HouseVetAffairs>

11:00 AM House Minority Whip Steny Hoyer regular pen-and-pad briefing Location: H-144, US Capitol, Washington, DC
www.democraticwhip.gov/ <https://twitter.com/WhipHoyer>

12:00 PM House meets for legislative business – House of Representatives meets for legislative business, with agenda including 'H.R. 428 – Red River Gradient Boundary Survey Act' Location: Washington, DC <http://www.house.gov/>

12:00 PM ESA '2016 Economic and Geographic Impact Report' released at Capitol Hill briefing – Entertainment Software Association '2016 Economic and Geographic Impact Report' released, with discussion on the impact of video game jobs and higher education programs, with Democratic Rep. Jim McGovern, Republican Rep. Doug Collins, Higher Education Video Game Alliance President Dr Donstance Steinkuehler, and ESA President

and CEO Michael Gallagher and Senior Vice President of Government Affairs Erik Huey Location: Rm 2318, Rayburn House Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://www.theesa.com/>
<https://twitter.com/ESAGovAffairs>

2:00 PM House Foreign Affairs subcommittee hearing on terrorism in Syria – Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade Subcommittee hearing on ‘Defeating Terrorism in Syria: A New Way Forward’, with testimony from Tahrir Institute for Middle East Policy Senior Fellow Hassan Hassan; Atlantic Council Rafik Hariri Center for the Middle East Director Frederic Hof; and Center for Strategic and International Studies Senior Fellow Melissa Dalton Location: Rm 2172, Rayburn House Office Bldg, Washington, DC
<http://www.hcfa.house.gov> <https://twitter.com/HFACrepublicans>

3:00 PM House Rules Committee hearing – Hearing on ‘H.J. Res. 69 – Providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the final rule of the Department of the Interior relating to ‘Non-Subsistence Take of Wildlife, and Public Participation and Closure Procedures, on National Wildlife Refuges in Alaska’ and ‘H.J. Res. 43 – Providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the final rule submitted by Secretary of Health and Human Services relating to compliance with title X requirements by project recipients in selecting subrecipients’ Location: H-313, US Capitol, Washington, DC <http://www.rules.house.gov/>
<https://twitter.com/RulesReps>

Other: 7:30 AM National Congress of American Indians Executive Council Winter Session continues – National Congress of American Indians 2017 Executive Council Winter Session (aka Tribal Nations Legislative Summit) continues. Day two speakers include House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, Sens. Jon Tester and Debbie Stabenow, Reps. Kristi Noem, Derek Kilmer, Todd Rokita, Don Young, Betty McCollum, Doug LaMalfa and Chris Collins, and Acting Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs Michael Black. Agenda today includes the Leadership Awards Banquet, with Rep. Tom Cole Location: Capital Hilton, 1001 16th St NW, Washington, DC
<http://www.ncai.org/> <https://twitter.com/NCAI1944>

8:00 AM GOP Rep. Kevin Brady speaks on tax reform – House Committee on Ways and Means Chairman Kevin Brady speaks at American Council for Capital Formation forum on tax reform, sharing his perspective on the upcoming debate over tax reform, including potential changes to the tax code for corporations and individuals, as well as provisions like the proposed border tax adjustment Location: Capitol Hill Club, 300 1st St SE, Washington, DC www.accf.org <https://twitter.com/ACCFMedia>

8:00 AM NAHU Capitol Conference continues – National Association of Health Underwriters Capitol Conference continues, with speakers today including Republican Sen. Bill Cassidy, America’s Health Insurance Plans CEO Marilyn Tavenner, Indiana University School of Medicine Center for Health Policy and Professionalism Research Director Dr Aaron Carroll, George Mason

University Center of Health Policy Research and Ethics Director Len Nichols, and American Enterprise Institute Scholar in Healthcare and Retirement Policy Joe Antos Location: Hyatt Regency on Capitol Hill, Washington, DC <http://www.nahu.org>
<https://twitter.com/nahudotorg>

10:00 AM Dem Sen. Ben Cardin speaks on Russia-US relations at CAP Action Fund – Democratic Sen. Ben Cardin speaks on ‘Russia-US Relations’ at the Center for American Progress Action Fund, focusing on legislation that he and his colleagues have introduced to impose additional sanctions on Russia for their ‘destabilizing activities in the US and worldwide’ Location: CAP Action Fund, 1333 H St., NW, Washington, DC
www.americanprogressaction.org <https://twitter.com/CAPaction>

11:00 AM Senate votes on SBA Administrator-nominee Linda McMahon – Senate votes on nomination of Linda McMahon to be Small Business Administration Administrator * Then-President-elect Donald Trump announced the nomination of the former WWE president and CEO in December Location: Washington, DC
<http://www.senate.gov/>

6:30 PM Annual Friends of National Service Awards Reception – Friends of National Service Awards Reception, honoring leaders in govt, business, and journalism, based on ‘recognition and support for national service as a solution to some of the nation’s most pressing challenges’. Honorees are Republicans Sens. Roy Blunt, John Cornyn, and Bill Cassidy and Reps. Tom Cole, Will Hurd, and Martha McSally, Democrats Sen. Tammy Duckworth and Reps. David Price, John Larsen, and Seth Moulton, Arizona Governor Doug Ducey, Montana Governor Steve Bullock, Spokane, WA, Mayor David Condon, Bank of America, AT&T Vice President for External Affairs Kathy McKim, ‘PBS NewsHour’s Judy Woodruff, The New York Times’ David Brooks, and Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation Co-Chair Stacy Schusterman Location: Union Station, Washington DC www.voicesforservice.org
<https://twitter.com/Voices4Service>

America Votes State Summit – America Votes State Summit, providing preview of the challenges ahead for progressives at the electoral and legislative level. EMILY’s List founder Ellen Malcolm receives the Cecile Richards Progressive Leader Award, while speakers include Democrats Sens. Sherrod Brown and Tammy Baldwin and Rep. Ruben Gallego Location: Walter E. Washington Convention Center, 801 Mt Vernon Pl, Washington, DC
www.americavotes.org <https://twitter.com/AmericaVotes>

Last Laughs

Late Night Political Humor.

Jimmy Kimmel: [Referring to President Donald Trump and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe responding to the North Korean missile test at a dinner table at Mar-a-Lago] “You know, if you’re

going to hold a classified meeting in a public place, you do it somewhere where there aren't any people. Like a RadioShack, for instance."

Jimmy Kimmel: "Am I the only one who gets nervous every time [Trump] meets a new world leader? It's like introducing a heavily tattooed girlfriend to your parents."

Stephen Colbert: "But you know who did not win a Grammy last night? Donald Trump. Yeah. Rigged. Totally rigged."

Stephen Colbert: "President Trump and Prime Minister Abe were eating their dinners when they receive news that North Korea had test launched a ballistic missile. This is a provocation by a rogue nuclear state. So President Trump immediately retreated to a secure location where he could be briefed on the details. I'm just kidding."

Stephen Colbert: "That's right. Trump team handled an international crisis like teens at an after-prom party looking at Derek's Instagram."

Stephen Colbert: [Referring to White House Senior Policy Adviser Stephen Miller's comment that the border wall will pay for itself] "It will pay for itself? I thought Mexico was paying for it. Now Trump's going to make the wall pay for the wall?"

James Corden: "For the first time in the Trump presidency, Kim Jong-Un and North Korea conducted one of their ballistic missile tests. This is going to be tough for Donald Trump to figure out his response, especially because he can only use 140 characters."

James Corden: "It's weird to have Donald Trump facing off against Kim Jong-Un. They're basically the same person. Like, I bet Trump wants to call Kim Jong-Un and say, 'We understand you're testing nuclear missiles, and I want to say, can I come watch? Because they don't let me do that here!'"

Trevor Noah: [Referring to Trump nodding at Shinzo Abe's speech without translator earpiece] "'To the best of [Trump advisers'] knowledge, he does not speak Japanese.' How do Trump's advisers not know what languages he speaks? It's like them going around saying, 'Well, he said he doesn't speak Japanese, but he also said he would release his tax returns.'"

Trevor Noah: "Now Trump responded to North Korea after this. But part of me goes, thank God Shinzo Abe was there. Because reportedly [Trump] didn't want to say anything about it. Shinzo was like, 'No, we are leaders. We have to speak.' Like Trump was basically cheating off the smart Asian kid, that's what he was

doing.”

Jimmy Fallon: “During his performance with A Tribe Called Quest, Busta Rhymes referred to President Trump as ‘President Agent Orange.’ And the Secret Service said, ‘Great. Now he needs a new code name.’”

Seth Meyers: “President Trump today held a press conference with Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau. Just look at those two. It looks like a debate between a snowboarding instructor and a ghost that drowned.”

Seth Meyers: “President Trump today spoke on the phone with the Presidents of Nigeria and South Africa, and I just pray that before those calls, someone told him how to pronounce Nigeria.”

Seth Meyers: “President Trump will reportedly have lunch with Chris Christie tomorrow. ‘Just a salad please,’ said Christie, when asked if there was anything on the menu he didn’t want.”

Seth Meyers: “Trump spent the weekend with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe of Japan, and of course the Trump-Abe summit began on Friday, with his now infamous Oval Office handshake. ...Was he trying to shake his hand or stop him from leaving? ‘Don’t let go. When you let go, they ask me questions.’”

Seth Meyers: “So either Flynn straight-up lied to Mike Pence, or Mike Pence lied to us. But of course, to Mike Pence, a lie is just a truth that hasn’t gone through conversion therapy yet.”

Seth Meyers: “So the President of the United States thinks thousands of people were bused in from Massachusetts, to illegally vote in New Hampshire? I’m from New Hampshire, and I can tell you we’d notice if thousands of people from Massachusetts showed up on buses. That’s the invasion we’re most afraid of.”

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From: Bloomgren, Megan
To: amanda_kaster@ios.doi.gov; [Swift, Heather](#); [Shane Wolfe](#)
Subject: Transcript from Zinke SENR confirmation hearing
Date: Tuesday, February 14, 2017 3:39:26 PM
Attachments: [SENR Hearing on Rep. Ryan Zinke as Interior Secretary.docx](#)

Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee Holds Hearing on the Nomination of Rep. Zinke to be Interior Secretary

MURKOWSKI:

Good afternoon, everyone.

To get started this afternoon, I just, kind of, give a lay of the land here this afternoon. I will first proceed with my opening statement, then I will call upon our Ranking Member Senator Cantwell to make hers.

After Senator Cantwell has concluded her remarks, we will hear from our colleagues, the Montana senators, Senator Daines and Senator Tester. Thank you both.

Senator Tester of course is -- excuse me -- Senator Daines, of course is on the committee here and Senator Tester it's good to have you join us as well. They will introduce our distinguished witness and the other member of the Montana delegation, Representative Ryan Zinke.

And after the introductions, as is the committee's longstanding practice with nominees, I will then swear in the witness, ask him three questions that we address to all nominees at confirmation hearings.

So that's how we will proceed this afternoon. I think it's important for us all to recognize that we also have a vote that is scheduled at about 4:15 and so that will cause a little bit of an interruption. But we do want to try to move as expeditiously through this hearing as we can.

Before I proceed, I'd like to recognize an individual who is well known to this committee room and that's the former chairman of the Energy Committee, former Senator Frank Murkowski, who I happen to know well. It's good to have him back. Little bit of favoritism there, but it's good to have you here as well.

I'd also like to welcome the new members to our committee. We have three new members and we're pleased to have the new senator from Nevada, Ms. Cortez Masto, welcome. As well as the new senator -- the junior senator from Illinois, Senator Duckworth, it's good to have you as part of the committee and Senator Sessions has also joined the committee. As we know he's a little bit busy right now on some other issues, but we do have three new members and we welcome them.

Our first hearing of the new year, a new Congress, a new administration and I hope it will also be a new era for the Department of the Interior.

I'd like to thank you Congressman Zinke for being here. Yours has really been a life of service to our country, from your more than two decades as a Navy SEAL, to your time as a member of the House of Representatives. And then, of course, most recently you have answered the call to continue your public work as a Cabinet secretary for our next president.

Now we have just begun to get to know one another, since the president-elect announced his intention to nominate you. I've appreciated the conversations that we have had and I look forward to continuing them in this more formal setting here today. And as you learn more about each of the states that are touched by the Department of Interior, I particularly appreciate your efforts to understand how and why Alaska is unique among them.

MURKOWSKI:

Now to state that Alaska has had a difficult or a tenuous relationship with the outgoing administration is probably more than an understatement. Instead of seeing us as a state of Alaska, our current president and secretary seem to see us as Alaska, the national park and wildlife refuge, a broad expansive wilderness with little else of interest or value. We've lost access to lands and to waters, that even President Carter had promised us would be open to us. We've had our longstanding right to manage wildlife within our borders ripped away. We've seen projects halted through the delay or the denial of vital permits. For eight years, it seemed that this administration has taken the approach that Alaska has to be protected from Alaskans and they've acted accordingly. The restrictions that we face in resource development are almost unbelievable at times.

Through the Interior Department, the Obama Administration has attempted to ban energy development in nearly all of the Beaufort and the Chukchi Seas. It's withdrawn tens of thousands of square miles of water outside of those two areas. It's attempted to convert the non-wilderness 1002 area and our coastal plain in ANWAR which was set aside, by Congress, for its energy potential into de facto wilderness. It's cancelled lease sales, closed half of our national petroleum reserve and imposed costly extra legal mitigation requirements, and it goes on and on and on and we've had an opportunity to talk about that. The Obama Administration has repeatedly violated or sought to evade our No More Clause. It is rewritten management plans to cut off economic activities and other reasonable uses of public lands.

It's deprived of us -- us of an opportunity but offered nothing in return, not even to Alaska native villages that are threatened because of climate change. And this reaches all the way out to King Cove, where our current secretary rejected a short, one lane, gravel, non-commercial use road needed to protect the health and safety of nearly 1,000 Alaskans. Without that road, we've seen 55 medi-vacs over the last three years alone, including recently an elderly Aleut woman, who had a hip fracture, she was forced to wait more than 40 hours for help to arrive. And while Alaska may be the poster child, the reality is that our state is not alone in having suffered at the hands of the Interior Department. With little regard for local concern and opposition, the President has designated more land and water as national monuments than the previous 18 presidents combined.

Landscape level planning, a term that sounds pretty reasonable, is another example of a strategy that has been used to reduce the influence of local areas so that someone sitting here in Washington, D.C. can tell someone living in Forty Mile, Alaska or Blanding, Utah what their life is going to look like. And of course, Congressman Zinke, this is the Interior Department that you are walking into. And I'm counting on you, as many Alaskans are, and I think many Americans are to come in and help fix it. I know that you're a Navy man, so excuse the expression, but we hope the cavalry is on the way. And I've got a list of some things that I think can be done to improve the situation. We need an Interior Department that fully understands the commitments made to Alaska and abides by them, particularly our No More Clause. We need the department to recognize that individuals, such as John Sturgeon (ph), what they go through when agencies, like the Park Service overreach into our lives.

We need the department to restore public access to public lands, to allow us to produce our resources and to help us restore throughput in the Trans-Alaskan Pipeline. We need a department that will lift decades old public lands orders, that no longer serve any purpose, other than to allow the Federal government to control more of Alaska, and it will prioritize the clean-up of contaminated lands and legacy wells. In Alaska, which has 223 million federal acres, but just one quarter of 1 percent of its land in private ownership, again we've got 223 million federal acres, one quarter of 1 percent of land in private ownership. So, interior must recognize the importance of land transfers and land exchange -- exchanges. We've got promises that have been made to our state at statehood that remained unfulfilled. Promises made pursuant to ANCSA, promises made to our native veterans, so know that insuring that our Federal government honors those commitments to Alaskans remains one of my highest priorities.

We also need a department who will rely on the expertise of the state and do more to address our needs from volcanic monitoring to mineral mapping within its budget. And that's a lot, on its own. But if you are confirmed, you will also inherit an array of problems and challenges that are much broader in scope. The Park Service reports it has an \$11.3 billion maintenance backlog, meaning that even while some remain intent on acquiring more federal land, we're not properly taking care of what we already have. The U.S. affiliated islands, the territories, like the Northern Marianas and the freely associated states like Pulau, have issues ranging from worker visas to compact agreements that cannot be forgotten either. And then there's the Bureau of Indian Affairs, whether we are discussing tribal courts, education, infrastructure or development, we must work together to improve and empower our native communities. And that begins with meaningful consultation with tribes, which is a legal requirement that the outgoing administration has often failed to meet.

So finally, Congressman Zinke, if you are confirmed, I expect we will work together in a manner that is thoughtful and reflective of a true partnership. And I hope that you'll be able to show that the Interior Department is capable of working with, rather than against, local stakeholders to achieve good results. I think, in the conversations that we have had, you've shared a vision of how the department will look under your direction. We know -- we both know that that will take hard work and close cooperation with this committee to fulfill your vision. But that work is well worth it, for all of us who truly care about our public lands, who want to see them managed well, and who want the public to have access to them, whether for rock climbing, or gold mining, or energy development. So again, I thank you for being here, for your willingness to serve and I'd now like to turn to Ranking Member Cantwell for your comments.

CANTWELL:

Thank you Chairwoman Murkowski and welcome to the former Chair Frank Murkowski. Welcome to the new members of the committee, particularly on our side of the aisle, Senator Duckworth and Senator Cortez Masto. Thank you for being willing to serve on this committee and I look forward, maybe look forward to seeing, Mr. Sessions, Senator Sessions on the committee. I don't know. We'll leave that for another days discussion. And our two colleagues here, thank you for coming to support the

nomination of your colleague, who has been nominated by the President-elect to be the Secretary of Interior. I'll give you my congratulations on that nomination when we get to the Q and A.

But today, we're here to discuss the office of Secretary of Interior, as one of the most important offices of the Federal government, because it oversees our national parks, wildlife refuge, public lands and it is responsible for protecting our nations trust responsibility to Indian country, and as the chair mentioned to insular areas, that frankly, get very little attention here and deserve more attention. The secretary's also responsible for much of the nations onshore and offshore mineral resources and it also manages the water resources in western states, responsible for our nation's hydro systems, something that Senator Wyden and I are very keen on, as well as our colleague from Nevada. It is a far reaching portfolio and it is growing and very much impacts our economy. One of the main responsibilities of the Secretary of Interior, is overseeing our national parks. The park system includes 417 areas, covering more than 84 million acres in every state with an annual operating budget of almost \$3 billion, and has more than 20,000 employees.

But it is also America's treasures, our national parks and they drive an outdoor economy that provides over 6.1 million jobs and \$646 billion in annual revenue, so never underestimate the value of public land when it comes to recreation. Last year was the 100th anniversary of our national parks. And while we passed a very modest improvement to our national parks, I believe our 100 year celebration deserves more and I look forward to asking the nominee if he agrees with me on that. Americans want us to do more to invest in these crown jewels, by providing jobs and recreational opportunities, and something, I know we all can agree on, fixing the maintenance backlog.

CANTWELL:

One of the successes that the Senate had last Congress, was passing a bi-partisan legislation preserving our special places through a bi-partisan land and water conservation fund legislation. And I believe that Congressman Zinke will have a chance to discuss this in his testimony, but I'm sure as an avid sportsman, he knows the value of our public lands and was enthusiastic about us trying to come up with bi-partisan legislation to fix the land and water conservation fund.

My constituents want to know, with the new administration, are these public lands going to face an unbelievable attack by those who would like these public lands away from us and turn them over back to states? Or, are we going to continue to manage these resources for the incredible investment they are and continue to improve, so we can get even more economic return? A second major responsibility of the Department of Interior is the management of resource extraction, over 260 surface acres, I'm sorry, 260 million surface acres, 700 million sub-surface acres and 1.7 billion OCS, outer continental shelf. So today's hearing is about determining whether the nominee is committed to making sure that we minimize environmental harm, that we pay for clean up and that we have one fundamental principle that continues to be and that is that polluters pay.

There is, and continues to be an opportunity for us to insure that these public policies, according to the Government Accountability Office are getting a fair return for the American taxpayer. We have seen, over time, problems in the fossil fuel program at Interior, that is GAO has said could cost over \$200 million a year in loss revenue. The Obama Administration took important steps to try to fix these problems. The Deep Water Horizon oil spill in 2010, exposed the consequences of failing to have these kinds of regulations. And so, the disaster caused us to put in major reforms at the Department of Interior to making sure important oversight and regulations were not pushed aside and that we monitor these programs. I would have to say that the coal program is one that needs continued focus and attention and we'll have a chance to talk about this today.

The Obama Administration has adopted rules to insure a fair return to taxpayers for our national mineral resources, requiring everyone to pay for mitigation for the damages that they cause. Just today, the Government Accountability Office announced a new conclusion after reviewing multiple types of energy and national resources. The GAO found that coal mining alone gets a very special treatment in the ability to have bonding for reclamation requirements. Everyone else, oil and gas producers, wind, solar and even hard rock miners have to post and cash a third-party bond to make sure that they can clean up the financial surety of the pollution that would be caused. This is something that needs to be address by the agency and would hope that our nominee would address this.

Today's hearing also affords, Congressman Zinke, the opportunity to demonstrate how he will uphold the trust and treaty obligations to 567 federally recognized tribes. This includes overseeing the Bureau of Indian Affairs and Indian education and a \$2.5 billion budget in Indian country. The reason, Madam Chair, I will take a minute on this particular point, is that our colleagues, many of who serve on this committee, also serve on Indian Affairs, will not have the same chance to point these important issues out to the nominee. But clearly, these issues of stewardship, as it relates to tribal lands, support for tribal education, social services and infrastructure, I think regardless of the side of aisle you sit on, you will hear many things from people both on Indian affairs and Energy committee about how important these issues are to the constituents that we represent.

It is also critical that we understand the nominee's commitment to carrying out our obligations in insular affairs and as the chair mentioned, there are many issues that we will get to in the Q and A.

But I would like to bring up a few issues as it relates to the Pacific Northwest. There are issues where climate has caused greater impacts on both drought and fire damage. This committee has taken bi-partisan efforts to move forward on both of those issues, collaborative efforts to make sure in both Washington and Oregon. We are doing all that we can to plan for better resource management of our water supply and build capacity for the future. And we have reached consensus here in the Senate as well, on ways to stop fire borrowing and move forward on what our fuel reduction policies that would better serve our federal public lands. I would also mention, of particular importance to all of us in the Pacific Northwest, the important pending reauthorization or recommitment of the Columbia River Treaty. The management of our federal hydro system between the United States and Canada needs a lot of attention and direction and we hope that we will have a chance to ask you questions about that as well.

So thank you Madam Chair. I again congratulate the nominee and look forward to hearing from him and his wife, here and meeting his family as he makes his introduction.

MURKOWSKI:

Thank you Senator Cantwell. We will now turn to the Montana Senators for introduction of a nominee and -- and recognizing your -- your seat on the committee here.

Senator Daines, we will hear from you and then hear from Senator Tester, to introduce the nominee to be secretary of the Interior.

Senator Daines.

DAINES:

Madam Chair Murkowski, Ranking Member Cantwell, thank you.

It is truly my great honor to introduce a fellow Montanan, an American hero and a good friend of mine, Congressman Ryan Zinke and support his confirmation to the position of interior secretary of our new president, Donald J. Trump.

Notice you have the entire Montanan congressional delegation before you today. We have both the Montana senators, one who is a Republican and one who is a Democrat.

You know, I first met Ryan in 1979, when we were both high school students growing up in Montana. In fact, we were in Dillon, Montana for boy state (ph). Ryan from Whitefish High School and I was representing Bozeman High School. He was captain of the soon to be undefeated State Champion Whitefish Bulldog football team, he was also president of his class.

After high school, Ryan went on to the University of Oregon, where he was a full scholarship, starting athlete for the Oregon Ducks, their football team, where he would win numerous awards for outstanding academics as well as athletic performance. And he majored in geology, the subject matter that I know has served him well in serving the people of Montana.

And then Ryan enlisted in the United States Navy. Ryan Zinke is a U.S. Navy SEAL commander, whose assignments include the Elite SEAL Team Six. And part of that tenure was serving under General Mattis as commander of Joint Special Forces in Iraq, at the height of insurgent activity.

I would like to highlight Ryan's experience as a SEAL, because Navy SEALs never quit. They don't know the definition of the word, because they never do. Navy SEALs also don't fail, they die trying. And it's that work ethic that Ryan Zinke brings with him to every mission he takes. Whether it's in the military, in the United States Congress, or at the Department of Interior.

During his 23 years of service as a SEAL, Ryan conducted special operations on four continents. He trained and mentored thousands of men and women and he made sure our troops were as prepared and as safe as absolutely possible when conducting these no-failed missions around the globe.

He was also the guy who the Navy called upon to go into units and see how they could be improved. Whether it was looking at new advancements in technology so our special forces could invade new landscapes undetected by the enemy or reviewing existing processes and implementing new policies that our ground force commanders and headquarters could communicate more efficiently during combat, Ryan Zinke has always been a trusted leader of the most amending missions. And it will be no different at the Department of Interior.

As the deputy and acting commander of Joint Special Forces in Iraq in 2004, Ryan led a combined force of special operators through the streets of Fallujah as the forward commander at the height of insurgent terrorist activity in what can only be described and I quote, "As a warehouse of death."

Ryan was charged with implementing a strategy utilizing tens of thousands of personnel, both military and civilian, to advance our mission. And he coordinated with other branches, nations and government agencies, to achieve diplomatic and military missions. Ryan earned two bronze stars and many other awards for his service to our great nation.

We should also be thankful to his wife Lola and their children for their service. I might add, apples don't fall far from the tree. Ryan's daughter, who's sitting beside him, was a Navy diver, his son-in-law is also a Navy SEAL.

Following his retirement from the Navy after 23 years of honorable service to our nation, Ryan came back to Montana and he continued to serve, because Ryan ran for and he won a seat in our state Senate and then as Montana's sole representative for the state House. In fact, he was the first Navy SEAL ever elected to the U.S. Congress.

Ryan has been a strong supporter of conservationists, as well as responsible natural resource development and increase recreation access on our public lands. You see Ryan grew up 30 minutes from Glacier National Park, I grew up 60 minutes from Yellowstone National Park, we both understand the importance of our national parks, in fact Ryan and I have shared a mackenzie (ph) boat together fly fishing in one of Montana's many blue ribbon trout streams. Ryan is intimately familiar with the vast jurisdiction of the Department of Interior because he's lived it.

He has seen his own hometown suffer due to bad government policies that hurt rural communities like Libie (ph), like Malta (ph), like Colestrip (Ph) that depend on our public land access. After all Ryan is a born and break Montanan, who knows that we must strike that right balance between conservation and responsible energy development. And he understands that a one size fits all policies, like we see coming from Washington D.C., never work for real America.

Ryan Zinke is smart, he's got Montana horse (ph) sense, he's the guy you want in your corner whether you're fighting in the streets of Fallujah for your life or fighting on the floor of Congress for your livelihood. He listens and he fights for what he believes in, I have no doubt that he will be a fighter for America, for our public lands, as the next Secretary of the Interior. Thank you madam (ph) chair (ph).

MURKOWSKI:

Thank you Senator Daniels, appreciated your comments and sharing all that with us. Senator Tester thank you for joining us here at the committee and please if you will, precede with your introductions.

TESTER:

It indeed is a pleasure and I want to thank you Chairwoman Murkowski and ranking member Cantwell, distinguished members of this committee for allowing me to be here today, because it is an honor today to participate to introduce the decorated Navy veteran and fellow public servant, lucky enough to represent the people of the great state of Montana, the treasure state, the last best place. Before our time here both Congressman Zinke and the pleasure of serving in the Montana Senate, albeit not at the same time. So I want to thank him for answering the call to serve our great nation.

I believe it is very important for someone who knows the West to serve as Interior Secretary. The job of Interior Secretary is incredibly important especially today as America's public lands come under attack by folks who want individual states to manage them which is the first step to selling off our public lands to the highest bidder. It falls on this committee to ask Congressman Zinke specific questions about how he views the responsibilities of Interior Secretary and how he will push back on this administration with his perspective, his Montana perspective, whenever necessary.

Things like public lands, keeping public lands in public hands for our kids and our grandkids, a very important issue at the moment and time. Things like the deferred maintenance and backlog wreaking (ph) havoc on our national park system. Things like land and water conservation fund, how to work with Congress in this administration to ensure full and devoted funding to initiatives (ph) like that visionary LWCF, Land and Water Conservation Fund. As the Chairwoman pointed out, things like crushed (ph) responsibilities in Indian (ph) country and the ranking member as well, for America's sovereign Indian nations and of course resource development.

How to responsibly manage our public lands for energy and resource development, and how to balance that with respect to clean water and clean air and wildlife in the habitat that supports them. I am particular encourage my Congressman's support for protecting the gateway to Yellowstone National Park. Just recently when a mining company proposed to drill just a few miles

from the doorstep of this nations first national park, the Congressman joined me and local businesses and community leaders to protect our outdoor economy.

Of course there are issues that the Congressman don't see eye to eye, but he provided - but if he provides you with the answers that he has provided to me I expect that you will find that he is well equip to post with accountability. As a westerner I know what's at stake, so I am honored to introduce Congressman Zinke to this committee, I trust that a Navy Seal as always will shoot straight. Thank you madam Chairwoman.

MURKOWSKI:

Thank you Senator Tester, thank you both for being here and providing that introduction for our nominee. And with that representative Zinke, if you will come forward and before asking you to begin your opening statement and introduce your family, I will ask that we proceed with administering the oath which is customary in hearings such as this one and then I'm going to ask three questions, again customary to operation within this committee.

So the rules of the committee which apply to all nominees require that they be sworn in in connection with their testimony. So please raise your right hand, do you solemnly swear that testimony that you are about to give to the Senate committee on energy and natural resources shall be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

ZINKE:

I do.

MURKOWSKI:

Before you begin your statement I will ask you three questions that we address to each nominee before the committee, will you be available to appear before the committee and other congressional committees to represent departmental positions and respond to issues of concern to the Congress.

ZINKE:

I will.

MURKOWSKI:

Are you aware of any personal holdings, investments or interest that would constitute a conflict or create an appearance of such a conflict should you be confirmed and assume the office to which you have been nominated by the president?

ZINKE:

Madam Chairman my investments, personal holding, and other interests have been reviewed by both myself and the appropriate ethics counselors within the federal government. I've taken all appropriate action to avoid any conflicts of interest, and there are no conflicts of interest or appearances thereof to my knowledge.

MURKOWSKI:

Thank you. And final question, are you involved or do you have any assets that are held in blind trust.

ZINKE:

I do not.

MURKOWSKI:

Thank you Representative Zinke, you may proceed with introduction of family and opening statements but welcome to the committee.

ZINKE:

Thank you madam Chairman, ranking member Cantwell and members of the committee, and thank you also Montana Senators Tester and Daniels for their kind remarks, leadership and continued service on behalf of our great treasure state. It is an honor to appear before this esteemed Senate committee on energy and natural resources. Before beginning my remarks, I would like to introduce and recognize my members of the family who have joined me today. My wife Lolita (ph) who also a member of the president-elects Hispanic Advisory Committee, Lola (ph), my two grandchildren Matilda (ph) and Charlotte (ph), my daughter Jennifer (ph) and her husband Jack (ph).

And for the record I did tell my daughter don't join the Navy and don't marry a Navy Seal and she did both. My sons Wolfgang (ph) and Conrad (ph) are back at school and hopefully studying today so they will not be with us. As a son of a plumber and a kid who grew up in a small timber town, railroad town, in Whitefish near Glacier Park, I am humbled to be before you as the president-elects designee (ph) for Secretary of Interior. I'm also deeply humbled because of the great responsibility that the position holds, to be the steward of our majestic lands, the champion of our great Indian nations and the manager and voice of our diverse wildlife.

Up front I am an unapologetic admirer of Teddy Roosevelt and believe he had it right when he placed under federal protection millions of our acres of federal lands and set aside much of it as our national forests. Today those lands provide American's the opportunity to hike, fish, camp, recreate, and enjoy the great outdoors. It was on these lands that my father to hunt and fish and the boy scouts taught me the principles and environmental stewardship and the importance of public access. It is also on these lands that many communities, like the community I grew up in, rely on to harvest timber, mine, provide our nation with critical energy, without question our public lands are America's treasures and are rich in diversity.

I fully recognize and appreciate there are lands that deserve special recognition and are better managed under the John Muir model of wilderness, where man has a light touch and is an observer. I also fully recognize the proponents (ph) of our federal holdings are better suiting under the pensial (ph) model of multiple use, using best practices, sustainable policies and objective science. During my recent sentential (ph) - or during the recent sentential (ph) of our National Park Service, I found myself this ceremony at Yellowstone National Park, our first national park established by Congress and signed into law by President Ulysses S. Grant on March 1, 1872. As I enjoyed the celebration under the famous Roosevelt Arch, I could not help but notice the words etched on the stone above. "For the benefit and enjoyment of the people." I also could not help but notice on the plaque on the side, said "Erected by Congress." When I saw that, I thought, this is the perfect policy of land that our great nation should uphold.

In order to have great deeds and accomplish great things, both sides have to work together. Higher purpose can only be achieved by both sides coming together for a higher purpose. In a nutshell, that's my commitment to you. If confirmed, I will work with each of you to ensure that our public lands reflect higher purpose, so that our children's children, my granddaughter's children, can look back and say we did it right.

I have almost met every member of this committee and I understand that each state is different. I also understand that issues within your state are different and you have different priorities. But I'm confident that we can work together to get the job done.

When asked about what my goals might be, I would say there are three immediate tasks. The first is to restore trust and working with rather than against local communities and states. I fully recognize that there is distrust, anger and even hatred against some federal management policies. Being a listener and a listening advocate rather than a deaf adversary is a good start.

Second is to prioritize the estimated \$12.5 billion in backlog of maintenance and repair of our national parks. The president-elect is committed to a jobs and infrastructure bill and I am committed and need your help in making sure that bill includes our national treasures.

And third, to ensure that the professionals in the frontline, that's our managers and rangers, have the right tools, the right resources and the flexibility to make the right decisions to give a voice to the people they represent. As a former Montana state senator and current Congressman, I have learned a lot since I was a SEAL in the deserts of Iraq. To accomplish my mission as secretary of Interior, if confirmed, I know that I'm gonna need your help. I'm gonna need your confidence and even perhaps your prayers.

I look forward to answering your questions, and if confirmed, representing the interests of our great nation and giving a voice to all Americans, to include our great Indian nations, on how we manage, sustain our public lands and the treasures they contain.

Madam Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you and this committee, and I look forward to your questions.

MURKOWSKI:

Thank you, Congressman Zinke.

And I couldn't see her when you were seated in front here, but I'd also like to recognize the representative from American Samoa who is with us here today, Congresswoman Radewagon. It's good to have you here. Obviously, a great deal of interest in that aspect of the jurisdiction coming out of the Interior Department.

Congressman, I would like to talk about land management. You and I have had a good deal of conversation about the necessity to manage our lands and manage them well. If confirmed, you're going to be responsible for managing over 245 million surface acres and 700 million acres of subsurface mineral estate. I think we both recognize that's a pretty weighty responsibility.

Over one-fifth of it is in my state, and that means your land management efforts have an overwhelming impact on the state of Alaska. We refer to the secretary of Interior effectively as Alaska's landlord and you are probably the most consequential member of the administration outside of the president in terms of issues that we work with. So I take this nomination very, very seriously.

I've mentioned in my opening statements we have had a number of disagreements and a very difficult relationship at times with this administration. You have acknowledged that each of our states are different. I have walked you through our map and tried to outline why we are unique, why we are bigger and better and broader and faster and more complicated and challenging than most others.

So my question to you, very broadly, is how will your approach to management of Alaska's lands be different than what we have seen? How will your recognition of the unique aspects of a state like Alaska be different in these years going forward?

ZINKE:

Well, thank you, and thanks for the question.

As you know, as we visited with (ph) each other, Alaska is different and I recognize that. As a Navy SEAL, I've spent time in Kodiak and I've spent time in the Aleutian Chain, not spent a lot of time in the interior.

But clearly, what's happened is folks in Alaska are upset. They feel like the management -- they have no voice. If you are looking at the timber assets along the coast in the southern part of Alaska, those timber assets, forest fires occur, and yet, we can't harvest a tree. Inland, your pipeline is down 40 percent, and engineering wise, there's a lot of issues when your pipeline, the backbone of Alaska's energy, is that low.

A lot of it, I think, has to do with these cost savings mechanisms put in place. What's occurred is we've taken the field and we've (inaudible) those in the field and have taken away the resources and keep on bringing them up to consolidation, layers and layers and layers. A lot of these decisions should be made on the field in the ground -- on the ground by people that are closest to the problem, and these are people that live in communities. A lot of the BLM (ph) managers live in the communities and they understand the communities have to have a voice.

And I do recognize Alaska is different, it needs to be handled different because of the size. I also understand, thanks to your maps, that I -- that I clearly understand that the private land equity in Alaska is so incredibly small, your resources are incredibly large and the great people of Alaska need to be a partner in the proper development of those resources.

MURKOWSKI:

Well -- and we look forward to a partnership and an even partnership because when it comes to consultation, when it comes to -- to truly listening to Alaskans, it just feels that we have fallen upon deaf ears. And so a more welcoming dialogue I think is what we are anticipating going forward.

When we talk about the resources of Alaska and Alaska's willingness to share those resources with the rest of the country and truly the world, one of our great assets is our oil reserves that we have up north. As you mentioned, our Trans-Alaska pipeline is running three quarters empty. It now carries about 500,000 -- a little less than 500,000 barrels a day and it's not due to lack of resource. It's -- it's instead a lack of permission to access those resources.

Are you -- will you commit to a formal review of all of the Obama administration's actions that took resource-bearing lands and waters in Alaska effectively off the table, including the decisions that specifically prevented the leasing of those lands and those waters for development, and determine whether or not they can be reversed?

ZINKE:

Yes. I think -- the president-elect has said that we want to be energy independent. As a former Navy SEAL, I think I've been to 63 countries in my lifetime and I can guarantee you it is better to produce energy domestically under reasonable regulation than watch it be produced overseas with no regulation. I have seen the consequences of what happens when you don't have any regulation in the Middle East.

We can do it right. The backbone of our environmental policies has been NEPA, and I'm a strong supporter of NEPA. But we also have to understand that we need an economy. And look, if we don't have an economy as a country, then the rest of it doesn't matter because we're not gonna be able to afford a strong military, nor are we going to be able to afford to keep the promises we've made as a great nation, and we've made a lot of promises to education, to out childrens' future, to infrastructure, to Social Security.

All that take an economy that's moving forward, and energy is a part of that economy. And Alaska is a critical part of that economy. Alaska is different for a reason. You are blessed with great resources, you are blessed with great recreation, a little cold in the winter, but it is not Palm Springs.

MURKOWSKI:

You are from Montana, you can handle it.

ZINKE:

Yes, we can. But yes, I think we need to be prudent, and always, I think we need to review things to make sure we are doing it right. Because over time, the government keeps on getting bigger and bigger, the bureaucracy gets larger and larger, and we can't get something done. And I think we do as a nation, should look at everything with an objective eye to get things done.

MURKOWSKI:

Thank you. I will now turn to Senator Cantwell, Ranking Member.

CANTWELL:

Thank you, Congressman Zinke. Thank you for your willingness to serve. And obviously going from congressman to then secretary of the interior means a different kind of portfolio. And so I was hoping in this first round, because there's so many people that want to ask questions, if I can cover three issues quickly with you. Then give our colleagues a chance to ask questions. First, obviously, you representing the district you do in Montana, has made a lot of statements about coal. And I - just for the record want to understand where you are. Do you believe the administration does have a right and should have a review of updating information about our coal program?

ZINKE:

I think always transparency is important. Any administration has the permission to ask the right questions. All in our energy fields.

CANTWELL:

So you wouldn't stop the review that's underway now?

ZINKE:

I think a review is good. I don't know the specifics of that review, but I think we should always look at our energy portfolio with an objectivist because it is important.

CANTWELL:

You don't have an objective to taxpayers getting a fair value.

ZINKE:

I think taxpayers should always get a fair value.

CANTWELL:

Including on coal.

ZINKE:

Including our coal, wind, all of the above.

CANTWELL:

Thank you, and on the GAO statement on asurity (ph), making sure that coal companies have the capability, just as other energy companies to, do you support that as well?

ZINKE:

I think on the GAO, again, I have not read the specifics, but if it is a question that involves bonding -- I'm from Montana, where we have Decker, we have a lot of coalmines, strip mines and stuff. I think bonding is important. I'm also from a state, that in the 1800s, mine gold by going up and down stream beds and taking all the material and dumping it upside down. I don't think we want to go back to those days. And in some of the reclamation problems we had in the west, still are not repaired. As a Teddy Roosevelt -- Teddy Roosevelt had the courage to look 100 years forward. I think we need to have the courage today to look 100 years forward and look back and say we did it right.

CANTWELL:

I hope that was a great endorsement of a stream protection rule, but on the Teddy Roosevelt point - I'll ask you thank later. On the teddy Roosevelt point, you have made comments. Do you support making the land and water conservation program permanent?

ZINKE:

I do. I think land and water conservation has been important to Montana, certainly in many of these states. I do think we should look at it. If you are in the Gulf States, I understand their point. That it's -- the revenue comes from all offshore, and very little of it goes within the states that are affected most by the offshore industry. So I think we need to look at revenues and evening out the revenue source. I think always, you should look at programs to make sure more revenue goes to projects. So making sure the bureaucracy hasn't grown over time. And lastly, I think the states should have a say, the local communities should have a say of where the funds go, more so than they sometimes do today.

CANTWELL:

Well, that in and of itself may lead me to go down a different line of questioning as it relates to making sure federal lands stay in federal hands, as your colleague from Montana said. But I want to cover the park area backlog and budget. As I mentioned in my testimony, we faced the 100 year anniversary, the Teddy Roosevelt theme you have struck is important. Because as I mentioned, we're talking about billions of dollars to our economy from the outdoor access to our public lands. Do you think we need to go further than what we have done in supporting our national parks and getting rid of the maintenance backlog?

ZINKE:

I do. I feel very strongly about it. Because as you point out, a lot of our national parks this last year are at capacity, we've had record numbers. And so looking forward, what do we do about it? And a lot of it is repairing the roads, backlog, trails, but also looking at the public lands around the park to make sure we look at those trail systems, to make sure the restrooms are clean, to make sure the sewer systems work.

When you're talking about a \$12.5 billion backlog, I was over at the transition office, and oddly enough, I looked at the park in front of the department of interior. The very park that everyone working in the department of interior goes by every day. The fountains don't even work. And they're in need of repair. Then you start asking, what about the rest of Washington D.C.? It turns out very few fountains work. Then you look at the bridge - the Memorial Bridge that goes across into Arlington. I guess that need \$150 million. So we better get on it.

CANTWELL:

Thank you. We are out of time but I will come back to this question. Because there's been questions about your viewpoints in resolutions, in platforms and House votes about federal lands staying in federal hands. But we will come back to that in the second round. Thank

MURKOWSKI:

Senator Hoeven.

HOEVEN:

Thank you Madam Chairman. And I'd like to thank you, Congressman Zinke, for your service to the country and the U.S. Navy, and for your willingness to serve as secretary of the interior. Also I want to thank your family for their commitment to service as well, and for being here. Talk for a minute if you would about a balanced approach to multiple use.

Many different resources and very many different constituencies you have to deal with, the national parks, but also public lands, Native American affairs. So for example on the BLM, bureau of land management, you managed to hundred 45 million surface acres, 700 million acres of subsurface minerals. Talk about how you managed that in a way that is balanced and multiple use.

ZINKE:

In multiple use, in the spirit of Roosevelt, it means you can use it for multiple purposes. I am particularly concerned about public access. I am a hunter, a fisherman. But multiple uses are also making sure what you're going to do, you know, and you go in with both eyes open, that means sustainability. That means that it doesn't have to be in conflict if you have recreation over mining.

You just have to make sure that you understand what the consequence of each of those uses are. It's our public land. What I have seen most recently is our access is being shut off, roads are being shut off, and we're all getting older. And when you don't have access to hunting areas, traditional fishing areas, it makes it an elite sport.

And I'm particularly concerned about the elitism of our traditional hunting, fishing, and snowmobiling. Making our public lands accessible in the spirit of multiple use. Single use, if you look at the Murray (ph) model of some of our national parks and some of our areas, I agree. There are some areas that need to be set aside that are absolutely appropriate for man to be an observer.

There are special places in our country that deserve that recognition. But a lot of it is traditional uses of what we find in North Dakota and Montana where you can hunt and fish, you can drill an oil well. Make sure there is a reclamation project. Make sure there is a permit, make sure there's NEBA. If you are doing something that's more intrusive, make sure you monitor the water. Everyone enjoys clean water and we should. I don't think necessarily they are in conflict. I think you have to do it right.

HOEVEN:

Well, as somebody who looks to hunt and fish, I appreciate that answer very much. Also in North Dakota, we've had a real challenge with the Dakota access pipeline protest' you and I talked about it. State and local law enforcement has worked very hard to keep the peace and keep people safe, but we need federal law enforcement help as well. And so in your case, that means BIA law enforcement. And so, my questions is, if you are confirmed, will you ensure that BIA law enforcement works with state and local law enforcement to resolve the situation, to keep people safe, and to make sure the rule of law is followed?

ZINKE:

Yes sir, and we talked about it in your office. If confirmed, I'm going to be a very busy man traveling. I'm going to travel to Utah, travel to Alaska, and travel to North Dakota. Those are three impending problems that we need to resolve quickly. I have great respect for the Indian nations. I'm adopted to (ph) (inaudible). The last time, the Sioux nations all got together, I would say General Custer probably was not -- would say that was not a good issue.

So you look at this, and there is deep cultural ties. There is a feeling like that we haven't been a fair consultant, a fair partner. And so I think we need to listen to that voice. And that's part of the trust is that, you know, outside of Washington, D.C. when you start going west to North Dakota, there is a lot of anger. There's a lot of mistrust. Not everywhere, but enough where I'm concerned.

I'm concerned that we need to be better partners. We need to work together. We need to work together as a Congress. You know, we all rise and fall in the same tide. And we all love our public lands and the duty of the Department of Interior, as the secretary, is to make sure we have broad consensus of what we're doing. And every state is different.

HOEVEN:

Thank you.

My final question is, one-size-fits-all. Too often in federal government, we see a one-size-fits-all, versus empowering states and people at the local level to do what makes the most sense, given their part of the country. And I would ask you to just give your opinion on the one-size-fits-all versus working with states and localities and tribes to do what works across the country.

ZINKE:

Well, I would characterize it, the view from the Potomac is a lot different than the view from the Missouri. And you do need to listen to the local folks and state because they live there. The consequence of an action that is one-size-fits-all affects real people.

And I do think you need to have a voice. You need to listen. And you make sure that you involve the communities at the lowest level. And again, in some cases, you know, I -- we have a lot of BLM assets. We have, I know, a lot of rangers -- there's a lot of frustration on the frontline, too. They don't feel like they're empowered to make a decision. And their kids go to the same schools.

But when they don't have the power or the flexibility or the resources to make the decision, and everything is four or five layers above, that's part of what we face. And we've got to re-incentivize the line, remove some of the middle management and get them out where they're necessary. That's the frontline.

And that's from, you know, basic 101 as being a SEAL. If your frontline is not happy, and that's the chiefs and the sergeants, then I can tell you the rest of the force isn't doing very well either. So in this case, the frontline of BLM and the Park Service needs to be shored up, with flexibility to make the right call.

HOEVEN:

Thank you, Congressman.

MURKOWSKI:

Thank you.

We will next turn to Senator Sanders. I will just advise committee members, we've always operated under this early bird rule, and perhaps there's been some discussion about what really counts for early bird. But I am going by what the clerk has observed when members came in. So Senator Sanders will go next and he will be followed by Senator Gardner.

SANDERS:

Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

And Congressman Zinke, thanks very much for your willingness to serve.

Let me -- I have three areas that I want to touch on. President-elect Trump has suggested -- more than suggested -- stated in his view that climate change is a quote/unquote, "hoax," end quote. Now, I know that you're not here to be administrator of the EPA or secretary of energy, but the issue of climate change is in fact very important for issues that the Department of Interior deals with.

Is President-elect Trump right? Is climate change a hoax?

ZINKE:

I could give you -- the best answer is three things. First of all, the climate is changing. That's undisputable. I'm from Glacier National Park. And...

SANDERS:

You don't have any more glaciers there.

ZINKE:

Well, and I've seen -- I've seen glaciers over the period of my time recede. As a matter of fact, when my family and I have eaten lunch on Greenough Glacier, the glacier has receded during lunch.

SANDERS:

All right. I -- if you could.

ZINKE:

Yes?

SANDERS:

Is the president-elect right? Is climate change a hoax?

ZINKE:

Well, if I can continue, two more points. I'll make it short.

The second thing is man has had an influence. I don't think -- I think that's undisputable as well. So, climate is changing; man is an influence. I think where there's debate on it is what that influence is; what can we do about it.

And as the Department of Interior, I will inherit, if confirmed, the USGS. We have great scientists there. I'm not a climate scientist expert, but I can tell you I will become a lot more familiar with it, and it will be based on objective science. I don't believe it's a hoax. I believe we...

(CROSSTALK)

SANDERS:

You do not believe it's a hoax.

ZINKE:

No. I believe we should be prudent to be prudent. That means I don't know definitely. There's a lot of debate on both sides of the aisle.

SANDERS:

Well actually, there's not a whole lot of debate now. The scientific community is virtually unanimous that climate change is real and causing devastating problems. There is a debate on this committee, but not within the scientific community.

Next question. But dealing with climate change, if climate change is already causing devastating problems, should we allow fossil fuel to be drilled on public lands?

ZINKE:

Again, we need an economy and jobs, too. And I have -- in my experience of probably seeing 63 different countries, I've seen what happens when you don't have...

(CROSSTALK)

SANDERS:

Taking -- I don't mean to be rude, but there's just not a whole lot -- I'm taking your answer to be yes, we should allow fossil fuel to be drilled on public lands.

ZINKE:

I'm an all-of-the-above energy -- and I want to be honest with you. I'm all-of-the-above.

SANDERS:

Will you encourage wind and solar on public lands?

ZINKE:

I will encourage absolutely, when it's -- all-of-the- above. I think that's the better solution going forward is all-of- the-above energy.

SANDERS:

Some of my conservative friends believe that the day should come when we should privatize the national park system. What's your feeling on that?

ZINKE:

I want to be clear on this point. I am absolutely against transfer or sale of public land.

SANDERS:

Good. That's a clear answer.

ZINKE:

I can't be any more clear.

SANDERS:

No, you can't. Thank you.

I have had the opportunity in the last year or so to get around the country. And in that -- with that opportunity, I've met with many Native American tribes. And you've discussed this issue. I think it is not debatable that throughout history, including today, that the United States government has treated the Native American people with disrespect, has ripped them off, has abrogated treaties.

And right now, we have in many Native American communities and reservations people living in unbelievable poverty; incredibly high unemployment rates; youth suicide unspeakably high. Do you agree with that assertion? And if so, what do you propose to improve life for the Native American people throughout this country?

ZINKE:

Well, I have great respect for the Indian nations. And Montana has some of the great nations. The gentleman behind is from the great Crow Nation. And I think there's three things: sovereignty should mean something. When we say a nation is sovereign, it should have weight.

Secondly...

SANDERS:

Stay on that one. Because you're right. Sovereignty should mean something. What does that mean if you in fact receive the nomination?

ZINKE:

Well, I can tell you from the perspective of a Montana congressman, the paperwork, the bureaucracy within reservations far exceeds what's outside. And perhaps at one time we viewed the Indian nations as almost children-like where we have to manage every aspect of their affairs.

And it has affected their ability for self-determination. They don't -- we haven't...

SANDERS:

I agree with you.

Let me just -- also healthcare and education are serious problems on many reservations. Will you take a hard look at those issues and try to improve the quality of healthcare and education for the Native American people?

ZINKE:

Yes, I will. And I take it seriously, because I've been to Lame Deer, and as bad as the V.A. is, and I...

SANDERS:

Well, some of us don't accept that assessment.

ZINKE:

Well, as bad as the V.A. is, Indian Health in Montana is worse. Let me repeat that. It is worse. I think when you have -- individuals need care, the line-up, and you have only a few doctors. And if you don't see the doctor and the next day they come back and they don't see the doctor, and they don't see the doctor, and the doctor...

SANDERS:

So that's an issue you're are going to address?

ZINKE:

I'm sorry, sir?

SANDERS:

You will address that issue of healthcare?

Good. OK. Thank you very much.

MURKOWSKI:

Senator Gardner?

GARDNER:

Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thank you, Ranking Member Cantwell.

Congressman Zinke, thank you very much for being here today, and your commitment to service to this nation. And to your family, welcome as well.

I was pleased to hear your comment to Senator Cantwell regarding making LWCF, Land Water Conservation Fund, permanent. I believe that LWCF is the most important conservation program in this country. Every state has been touched. Every state has had iconic landscapes preserved by LWCF for the enjoyment of generations to come. And that's extremely important.

The outdoor recreation economy in Colorado is about \$13.2 billion in economic impact, creating over 125,000 jobs in our state. LWCF is a very important part of that. Would you reiterate your commitment to me that you will work with Congress to make LWCF permanent?

ZINKE:

You have my full commitment and on all three of the Montana delegation voted in favor of it. I -- it -- it's an important program, especially in the west, and in Montana, it's particularly important in public access. The checkerboard system out west has made it difficult, sometimes to transit between forest service and BLM, and you -- you need a bridge to go between the two. And the LWCF has been important in doing it, so I would support that.

GARDNER:

Thank you very much. And I've always told Coloradans that one thing we need to do is have more Colorado in Washington and less Washington in Colorado. But one of the things I think we could do, is maybe take a little bit of Washington and make it less Washington. Perhaps, we can cure some agencies like the BLM of Potomac Fever by moving them out of Washington. For example, if you just look at the numbers Congressional Research Service uses, the Bureau of Land Management administers -- administers over 200 -- roughly 248.3 million acres of public land, 248.3 million acres. 248.2 million acres are located west of the Mississippi River, that's over 99 percent of BLM lands located out west. No question to having some headquarters out west would, I think, vastly improve and result in better policies for ranchers, for landowners, for energy producers, for constituents who enjoy these lands. BLM Planning 2.0 is great example of how little Washington understands about the west and how bureaucrats get in the way of how things work in the west, and the one size, fits all approach has failed public policy. Do you believe, Congressman Zinke, do you believe in the notion of putting our -- our federal workforce, at least portions of it at the Department of Interior, that specializes in public lands initiatives closer to the lands and the people they affect?

ZINKE:

I -- I think they should be close to the land, and in some instances, in Utah, where you have 67 percent is BLM. You could different management schemes on it, the Department of Ag has stewardship programs. There's a lot of tools that we can use, but I think the bottom line is, the decisions often times are better at the front line, if you empower your people to do it. You know, and, there's a saying in the military, you know, centralize, direction, decentralize, execution. That means we should hold true NEPA, we should hold true the values that -- that we believe as a country we should uphold, public access, clean air, clean water. But how you execute day to day operations sometimes, often times it's better if it's -- if it's done on the front line. You live it everyday.

GARDNER:

So your commitment to work with me on moving agencies like BLM to the west.

ZINKE:

I'm committed to look at our organization across the board. Of what we're going to look like as a department 100 years from now. You know, Roosevelt, I keep going back to Roosevelt, because I'm a great admirer, but I think he did a lot of things right. I mean, Roosevelt about 100 years ago, decided to take a -- a bold move and it wasn't particularly supported at the time, not by all parties, but he did do a lot, which we live in the legacy of Roosevelt today. And I think we'd have to be bold and look at what the Department of Interior should look like 100 years from now, to better manage the problems that we have coming, and there's a lot of problems. No doubt, recreation is going to be a bigger piece. They're not making anymore land. We need to -- we need to make sure what we're doing is appropriate. We need to make sure that clean air, clean water, those type of things. Again, so, my daughter's children will look back and say we did it right. I think that has to be a goal that we all share.

GARDNER:

Final question in the time remaining is this, if you go into the Colorado state capital, there's a saying written on the wall that says, "Here is a land where history is written in water." All the water in Colorado flows out of the state, no water flows into the state, and so that's an incredibly important part of who we are as a state. And so, I would like your commitment today to work to protect the private water rights, when it comes to our water rights system, understanding that federal overreach into water is dangerous for our municipalities, our industries and our individual water right holders. But also to continue to work with us on permits and water storage projects, as we work along with water conservation. The need to store more water in the west is real.

And so we need additional help protecting water rights from the Federal government, but also being able to store more water for the future enjoyment, growth, development and opportunities in the American west.

ZINKE:

There's no doubt that water today is a commodity and will be a more important commodity tomorrow. There's a saying in Montana that whiskey's for drinking and water's for fighting. Because water is incredibly important across the west and almost every state, even Michigan with -- with their recent thing. My commitment is to work with you. We're going to have to and part of the infrastructure bill, we're going to look at water storage. We're going to have to look at better ways to use water, have line (ph) on some of our aquifers are at risk on that. But water, particularly if you're an ag community, a recreation community out there, today, water is an issue. Tomorrow it's going to be a bigger issue, unless we invest in the infrastructure and policies that make sense for tomorrow.

GARDNER:

Thank you Madam Chair.

MURKOWSKI:

Senator Heinrich and he will be followed by Senator Alexander.

HEINRICH:

Thank you Madam Chair. Congressman Zinke, you said earlier in the hearing that you oppose selling off for public lands, or turning them over to the states. However, on the opening day of the 115th Congress, you voted for a House rule that makes it easier to give away our public lands, based on the idea that those public lands have no financial value, no score. How do you square the two things?

ZINKE:

The vote was a rule vote in the House, that was one of many rules. And I would -- I would characterize it as, it was an indicator how upset people are about our land policy at the moment. Particularly, if you were in Utah, Nevada, Wyoming, Colorado in some places, people are upset. Idaho, I'm sorry, Montana. But it has no weight unless it's executed. So I think it's a shot across the bow that we have to do something. And I started out my -- my remarks by saying my number one is trust, is that I have to go out there and restore trust. The reason why, and one of the reasons why people want to sell or transfer public land is there's no trust, because they feel like they don't have a voice. They feel like that -- that they don't matter. Well they should matter.

HEINRICH:

Congressman, if that rule wasn't part of a bigger package, if it stood alone, would you support it?

ZINKE:

I would not. I think I voted 17 times against, either transfer or sale of public land or in favor of LWCF.

HEINRICH:

Now, that's a great answer. You mentioned that you're a big Teddy Roosevelt fan, many of us are. In 1906, he signed the Antiquities Act, 18 states have new national monuments established in the past six years. In my home state of New Mexico, we have two new monuments that have already proven to be incredibly popular with local communities and which are already driving economic growth for businesses. And frankly, my Navajo and Pueblo constituents are also very supportive of the new Bears Ears National Monument, because it protects some of the most sacred sites in their historical homeland. I have letters from business owners, sportsmen, faith leaders, county commissioners, and veterans in New Mexico, asking for your support for the Rio Grande Del Norte and the Oregon Mountains Desert Peaks National Monuments. Madam Chairman, I just ask that you allow me to submit these for the record.

MURKOWSKI:

(OFF MIKE)

HEINRICH:

The Antiquities Act is the law of the land and communities in New Mexico are already in the process of developing management plans for those monuments. Will you simply commit to working in good faith with these gateway communities, including tribal communities, to make sure that these monuments are a success or some might say, even to make sure that these monuments are great?

ZINKE:

Sir, I will absolutely commit to working with you -- there's some monuments that are more controversial than others. I think, a monument, when it falls in a state, I think the state should have a say on it. To me, I've always kind of considered monuments, as I drive across Montana, pretty big state, between here and Chicago plus two miles. When you see a sign that says monument, generally, it's a -- I always envisioned as a battlefield, a location that deserves special recognition. Larger monuments that are millions of acres that don't have support of the community, you know, there's no doubt the President has the authority to amend a monument. It's always in the papers. It will be interesting to see whether the President has the authority to nullify a monument, but certainly my counsel --

GARDNER:

What is your view on that?

ZINKE:

Legally, it's untested. What I would prefer, is again to work with -- in a collaborative effort with the states. The states, you know, like their monuments and we've talked a great -- the state of Maine on it. And if the state's comfortable with the monument as it is and they have a management plan, I think we should work with the state and be an advocate. If the state is upset about a monument, and they had a plan that's different from what was -- what was done, then I think we should defer a lot of that to the state.

GARDNER:

Can you -- can you point to a sentence within the Antiquities Act, which as you know is very short, that authorizes rescinding a monument?

ZINKE:

There is no statement that authorize rescinding. And that's -- I'm not an attorney, thank God, but...

HEINRICH:

That makes two of us.

ZINKE:

But I think at the end of the day...

HEINRICH:

I would think we're both grateful and our constituents probably are too.

ZINKE:

I think it -- I would think that the president would nullify a monument -- it would be challenged and then the court would determine whether or not the legal framework allows it or not. I would hope the right path is we work with the states where that monument is.

And I've -- I think we've all benefited from a lot of our monuments. Certainly in Montana, the battlefield of Little Big Horn has been -- has been enormously important for the state of Montana and the Crow nation, and they're very happy with it, although it needs some work.

HEINRICH:

Thank you, Congressman.

MURKOWSKI:

Thank you.

Senator Alexander.

ALEXANDER:

Thanks, Madam Chairman.

Congressman Zinke and to your family, welcome. I'm impressed with your record of service and with you and our views and I look forward to supporting you. I think you have a chance to be a terrific secretary of the interior.

Thirty-two years ago, President Reagan asked me to head up something called the President's Commission on Americans Outdoors and we worked on it for two years looking ahead for a generation to see what our outdoor recreation opportunities should be. And the -- one conclusion I came to was there ought to be one policy for the west and one policy for the east because there's so many differences.

This committee is filled with westerners, so let me give you a little bit of an eastern perspective from my side. We don't have much federal land in Tennessee and North Carolina. We like what we have. One area that I would ask you is that in the newspaper today, the National Park Services established a panel to review the devastating chimney tops fire we had in the Great Smoky Mountain National Park so we could learn from it, if there were any lessons to prevent such a thing.

Unexpected for us, we're not used to that. We have 80 inches of rain a year and this fire started on chimney tops and a hurricane blew it and nearly burned up -- well, burned up half (inaudible). Will you commit to pay close attention yourself to that review so that we can see if there are any lessons to be learned for the future?

ZINKE:

Senator, I will absolutely commit to that. I think it's important. I've been that beautiful park and been to Gatlinburg and (inaudible) and it's a wonderful place and a special place in America. I'm glad it's a park and I'll work with you to make sure we -- we figure out what the road work (ph) or best path is forward on making sure that incidents like that don't happen again.

ALEXANDER:

Thank you very much. I'm very impressed with the heroism really of those who responded to it. But they -- they too want to know what can we do better.

Now, on the Smokies, the difference between the Smokies and Yellowstone or Glacier (ph) in your territory is that land was already owned by the United States. The Smokies were bought by the people of Tennessee and North Carolina and given to the national park. And the other difference is we have a lot more visitors because of our location. Twice as many, for example, as Yellowstone, which is such a prized place.

Yet our funding, our appropriation-- appropriation for Yellowstone is more than twice the total funding for the Smokies, and because of the restrictions that were established when people gave it to the federal government, we can't charge an entrance fee, so we have a lot less money to deal with a lot more people.

Will you, during your time, take a careful look at the allocation of funding between the Smokies and other parts to try to make sure that our most visited national park gets its fair share of funding?

ZINKE:

Senator, we talked about this in your office. And yes, I think we need to look at the formula. Clearly -- again, the Smokies is different than the other parks. It should be recognized that -- again, working forward with this committee on the infrastructure bill, we're hoping we can -- we can take a big bite out of the deferred maintenance on infrastructure. There's a number of roads and facilities in there.

But if we're \$12.5 billion behind in our parks, certainly we as a great nation can do better, and it's gonna take this committee's guidance with the chairman's leadership to make sure that that infrastructure's part of the package.

ALEXANDER:

My last question has to do with the recommendations on the Commission on Americans Outdoors 32 years ago. We reaffirmed the recommendation of the earlier Rockefeller Commission on the Land and Water Conservation Fund, so I hope you'll count me in along with other senator here in -- in wanting to help you come -- find a way to permanently authorize that. It makes a lot of sense to take money from oil and gas expiration, a burden on the environment, and use it for a benefit for the environment.

It's made sense the 1960s. The problem is, we've got a \$20 billion backlog that, because of our rules, we haven't appropriated. So it's important to do that.

We found that 30 years ago that 80 percent -- most of us -- most outdoor recreation occurs near where we live and that about 80 percent of us live near city parks, not near Yellowstone or Glacier or the Smokies, as we were privileged to -- to grow up, and that's the importance of the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

Another important set of recommendations had to do with land trust, greenways and scenic biways, all of which were state and local, not federal.

So will you use this opportunity to look ahead another generation and ask the question what outdoor recreation opportunities will our children and grandchildren have? I think you're in a wonderful position to do a follow-up to the American -- the Commission on Americans outdoors. This is the 30th anniversary of that report and a generation has passed and it's time for the next look.

ZINKE:

Yes, sir. I will, which brings a smaller point about the next generation of millennials. We have to motivate and incentivize outdoor activities to teach our millennials the importance of the great outdoors. If you look at the numbers and the demographic's actually a little different, is that people that are visiting the parks are the older generations.

So we have to look at new ways of incentivizing younger millennials to experience the parks, to experience the outdoors, to teach them the value of our public lands. So that's a concern just looking at numbers forward of how do we -- how do we get our kids out there and enjoying the great outdoors. In many cases, I would argue it's better than being in front of a TV watching video games.

MURKOWSKI:

Absolutely.

Senator Duckworth?

DUCKWORTH:

Thank you, Madam Chairman.

Congressman, welcome. In 2013, Mr. Trump tweeted on the issue of military sexual assault by blaming the women who served and he said in his tweet, 26,000 unreported sexual assaults in the military. Only 230 (ph) convictions. What did these geniuses expect when they put men and women together? Then later in 2016, at the Commander-in-Chief Forum, he descended that tweet and said, "Well, it is a correct tweet. There are many people think that that that's absolutely correct."

Following that commander-in-chief tweet -- Commander-in-Chief Forum tweet, you put out a statement of praise for Mr. Trump and at no point did you call him out on that tweet. At no point did you call on him to apologize for that tweet.

I wonder, as someone who's about to take charge of a major federal agency with both men and women serving, sometimes in extremely rugged conditions, as our rangers do, I wonder what that says to the employees of our Natural Park Service? And you in fact, even more recently, defended the president-elect's bragging about his own commitment of sexual assault by dismissing it as "locker room talk" and you are now nominated to oversee the National Park Service, which currently has a major sexual harassment problem that the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee, which I used to sit on, has been investigating on a bipartisan basis.

If confirmed, how can we be sure that you just won't look the other way in dealing with this issue of sexual assault at the National Park Service like you did with your own potential boss, the president-elect?

ZINKE:

Well, thank you for the question, and I take issues of sexual assault and harassment absolutely seriously.

As you know, as a military commander, the tolerance is zero.

DUCKWORTH:

Have you had a conversation with the president-elect about his statements?

ZINKE:

No, Senator, I have not. But I can -- but I have had conversation about the park service, and there are problems in the park service. There are problems in sexual harassment, there's problems in morale.

If you look at the park service -- I mean, who would not be -- want to be a ranger? Historically, the -- the job of -- of a ranger in the park service has been one of the top positions as far as employee satisfaction. Today, they rank at the bottom. Now, something's going on, whether it's sexual harassment has an influence on it, whether they feel like they don't have the flexibility to make decisions, whether they feel -- there's a lot of reasons, but I got to get to the bottom of it because it's the front line.

And you've served, and thank you for your service. You've served and you understand if the morale is bad at the frontline, it makes sure that -- that mission success isn't gonna happen. And sexual harassment is part of what's killing morale, I believe. But I'm gonna go out on the front line and talk and listen to what's happening because it -- one is on the sexual harassment issue, they have to know from leadership, from the top and the bottom, that we have zero tolerance.

DUCKWORTH:

Can you describe a little bit what you will do beyond listening? What type of policies will you put into place? Because I have some concerns because you have a history of being willing to participate in gimmicks. In fact, you cosponsored legislation with Congressman Duncan Hunter to require women to register for the draft, despite not supporting it yourself, because you wanted to send a gimmicky message that actually backfired on you, and that bill actually passed. And it was the Republican House leadership had to come to your rescue and pull that out of the conference report on the NDAA.

I'm concerned because you, yourself, have a history of saying that women who served in combat provide a distraction and it weakens the force. In that debate, I was there that night. I think we were both there until well after three a.m. You said that the enemy don't recognize men and women in uniform. They recognize weaknesses, (inaudible) talking about women and men serving together in combat.

You know, again, men and women serve in very rugged conditions in the National Park Service. And I just worry that you, with a history of being willing to participate in what the Montana Defense Alliance called a "reckless piece of legislation," this gimmicky bill that you passed through that backfired on you, what you're going to do when you lead federal employees at the National Park Service.

ZINKE:

Well, I think the topic of women serving in the military and signing up for Selective Service isn't a gimmick. So, I would say that's the mischaracterization of the importance of the issue.

DUCKWORTH:

But you did introduce a bill that you did not support.

ZINKE:

And I -- because I think -- I think it's important for America to have that discussion. And during that period, every table around Montana was talking about it. And so I don't think it's a gimmick to talk about in open discussion whether or not women should be part of the Selective Service.

My daughter is a Navy diver. And I have served in combat with women. Everyone has a role, as you know.

DUCKWORTH:

Do you think that women serving at the frontlines of the Park Service weaken that force?

ZINKE:

Not at all. I think everyone should have the same respect. I think there is jobs that are different. Within the Park Service, there are women that I think assume every role. And I think that's an opportunity that has been given to women long before -- I'm not sure when -- but a long time. I think we should be comfortable with it. I certainly am.

And the issue of gimmicks, again, I don't -- as a matter of fact, I take offense that discussion about Selective Service is a gimmick. I think it deserved our vote and it deserved a discussion.

DUCKWORTH:

I take that (inaudible) out of time.

MURKOWSKI:

The senator's time has expired.

Senator Lee?

LEE:

Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thank you, Congressman, for being here. Thanks to your service for our country. We appreciate all that you've done to protect us, to keep us safe.

I agree with what one of my colleagues, Senator Alexander, said a minute ago, that public lands issues very often are different. When you ask people from different states, the reaction they might have might differ depending on what part of the country they come from. Those who are from east of the Mississippi are likely to feel a little bit differently than those west of the Mississippi.

There's a reason for this. There are a lot of reasons, but one in particular has to do with the fact that of this land that the federal government owns -- you know, we're talking roughly 30 percent of the land mass in the United States -- the overwhelming majority of the federal land is in the western United States.

It affects many in the western United States in a very real, very personal way. And very often, it's the poor and middle class who bear the greatest burden associated with mismanagement and overreach when it comes to our federal land.

For this reason, the seemingly limitless power granted to the president of the United States under the Antiquities Act is particularly troubling to some of us. With the stroke of his executive pen, the president of the United States can up-end communities; can change traditional ways of life; change even religious practices and lock up hundreds of thousands of acres of land with one action; in some cases, over a million acres.

So to begin, I want to ask you the same question I asked the person who will be your predecessor if you're confirmed, Sally Jewell, currently serving as secretary of the interior: Do you view local support as a necessary precondition -- a condition precedent, we might say, to the creation of a national monument under the Antiquities Act?

ZINKE:

I view it as absolutely critical to have state and local support on a monument that they are -- they participate in. In the case of Salt Lake or Utah, I'm concerned about the schools and the funding mechanism to the schools are -- that's been largely taken away, as I understand. So that's a concern.

But if you -- if you start at the local community level, the grassroots, and you build, and there's participation, then we get ahead of the problem. As a military -- former military officer, you plan. And planning prevents a lot of miscues in execution. And part of the planning process is go out, get community support, make sure your governor and your elected leaders are behind you, and then petition -- talk to the president who makes a decision, and everyone should be on the same page, or at least about on the same page.

LEE:

I appreciate that. And I -- I hope, Congressman, that if you're confirmed for this position, that one of the first things you'll do is come to Utah. And I'd encourage you to talk to some of the people who have been affected by the monument designation by the president on December 28th, when he designated 1.35 million acres in southeast Utah, in San Juan county, our state's poorest county, against the overwhelming opposition of the local population of San Juan county; against the opposition of all six members of our state's congressional delegation; against the opposition of our governor, lieutenant governor, attorney general; all of our statewide elected officials within the state of Utah.

And I think what you're going to hear from them is, "Please, Mr. Secretary, do something about this." So, Congressman, if you're confirmed, will you consider visiting Utah, talking to the people affected by this monument designation? And based on what you hear from the affected population, consider having a conversation with President Trump about revisiting this unfortunate step?

ZINKE:

Thank you for the question. I'm absolutely committed to restoring trust. And if confirmed, I've committed to go out to Utah first and talk to the governor, talk to the people on the ground. And come back and make a recommendation to the president on that. I think that's important.

LEE:

Thank you.

ZINKE:

I might be a very busy guy. I'm going to out to the state of Washington. I'm going to go out to Alaska. I don't think I -- I think I've committed to go to everywhere. So I'm -- I'm going to remote -- it's going to be deployment. I apologize to my wife in advance, but I'll be gone a lot.

LEE:

Thank you. Thank you for your willingness to do that. I've got seconds left, so I will have to forego the rest of my questions. I do want to say in closing I appreciate you visiting with me about this. I want to point out that there is nothing in the Antiquities Act that prohibits revisiting.

And I also want to point out there is a distinction between talking about who should own and manage public land, those close to it or those thousands of miles away from it. And on the other hand, suggesting that ExxonMobil should set up a drilling rig underneath Delicate Arch. That is a straw-man argument and not one that anyone that I know of raising this issue wants to advance.

Thank you.

MURKOWSKI:

Thank you.

Senator Stabenow?

STABENOW:

Thank you, Madam Chair.

And welcome, Congressman.

First, let me just echo concerns that Senator Duckworth said about what is happening in terms of sexual in-office harassment incidences. These are very serious, and I hope in addition to listening, you'll create a work environment so that victims will be willing to come forward without fear of retaliation. Because we are hearing, you know, very, very serious things related to that.

ZINKE:

Yes, ma'am. And you have my absolute commitment. I do take it seriously. The work environment is incredible. And we have, you know, there's 70,000 professional men and women in the Department of Interior. And when you walk in the door in the morning, you should absolutely have the right expectation of a work environment that is conducive to success. And if there is a culture of sexual harassment, that's just flat wrong. And I'm going to stamp it out, if confirmed.

STABENOW:

Well, we're going to hold you to that.

Let me switch, and not a surprise, talk about water from a different standpoint. In Michigan, we have a lot of it around us and we like that and we're very concerned about water quality, and certainly water relates to our economy in very, very big ways. In fact, not just in Michigan, but we have actually -- four of us on the committee, Senator Portman, Senator Franken, Senator Duckworth and I, who all represent 20 percent of the world's fresh water and these are very serious issue for us.

So when we look at -- and you and I talked about this in my office -- various threats Great Lakes, one of the big ones relates to what's happening in terms of invasive species, including this big up to 100-pound fish with no functioning stomach that is something of great concern to us. So if confirmed, will you commit to advocating for the necessary funding for programs and agencies at Interior like Fish and Wildlife Service, Geological Survey, that's critical to early detection, prevention and control of invasive species?

ZINKE:

I will absolutely commit to the right for clean water. And -- and checking the invasive species -- I understand that in Michigan and after our conversation, I had the opportunity to look at it in more detail, it's a threat. I got the message, and it's a threat. Having a 100-pound carp jump out of the water is a big issue. And to make sure that we isolate, eliminate and control it.

And there is -- invasive species is a problem all -- you know, all the way into Hawaii.

STABENOW:

Sure.

ZINKE:

But we do need to shore up, and part of the president's (sic) infrastructure bill I think is looking at that on our -- on our water networks. And part of redoing our water to make sure one, our water's clean, it's abundant and to make sure we protect our watersheds and our difference areas to make sure that invasive species is part of that -- those programs.

STABENOW:

Well -- and Interior has played an important role in a partnership -- when you talk about partnerships with agencies, we have had every agency, every department that in any way touches on this issue working together for a number of years now and laser focus on the question of Asian carp as well as other invasive species. We have a \$7 billion recreational and commercial fishing industry, \$14 billion boating industry. So this is critical for us.

And one of the other areas that is very important in terms of fish and wildlife and U.S. Geological Survey working together with state and local fisheries and natural resource managers relates to sharing scientific information. You've talked about working with the states, working with local communities. These are very, very important areas and we want decisions made based on science, about what's really happening.

And so as we look at scientific information being shared, if confirmed, will you commit to advocating for funding levels that ensure that the availability and exchange of critical scientific information without regard to political or philosophical ideology, we need to be focused on science when we look at how to address these issues?

ZINKE:

Well, yes I will, because management decisions should be based on objective science. As a geologist, that's step one. You need to know the numbers if you're gonna manage an endangered species. What's our numbers that we should have, we strike to?

And having objective science -- and part of the good thing about the job, if confirmed, is I do have a lot of very, very talented people within the Interior Department that are objective, that want to do the right thing, that want to share information and I want to make sure that we do coordinate and open up the channels between the different agencies and public and private institutions that have a lot of talent too.

There's a lot of people working on things, but just like the intelligence community that I'm more familiar with, sometimes we get stoned piped (ph) and sometimes the information sharing isn't as it should be.

STABENOW:

Thank you.

MURKOWSKI:

Thank you.

Senator Barrasso.

BARRASSO:

Thank you, Madam Chairman.

Representative Zinke, congratulations on your nomination. I look forward to working with you. You know, as a westerner, I believe you have a unique understanding of the -- the gravity of the position that you've been nominated to fill. The Department of Interior is tasked with managing an incredible amount of acreage, thousands of species, countless water resources. Thanks for coming to visit with me about this before the hearing.

As we've discussed, the Obama administration has used the Department of Interior as a department of preservation, locking up lands with the goal of preserving them as if they existed in a vacuum. I believe these bad policies have damaged landscapes, have failed to protect dangerously imperiled (ph) species and disenfranchised the people who I believe are most invested in the good stewardship of our resources, the people that live on the land. So I look forward to you and your new approach and the approach of the incoming administration.

The war on coal. It is real for communities across the west, including Wyoming, including Montana. It's devastated small towns, ultimately threatens our country's energy security. If confirmed, will you commit to ending this moratorium on federal coal leasing?

ZINKE:

The war on coal, I believe, is real. I have Decker, Montana in my area and behind me is a gentleman that works in the coal mines of the (inaudible), which by the way, Crow Agency, if you were to take coal out of the picture, the unemployment rate would probably be in the 90 percent. So they're very keen on making sure they have their jobs and we give them the ability for self-determination.

The moratorium I think was an example of (inaudible) one-size- fits-all. It was a view from Washington, not a view from the states. Particularly, if you're a state such as Wyoming, you know, parts of Montana, West Virginia that -- where coal is important.

So you know, overall, the president-elect has made a commitment to end, quote "the war on coal." I think we should be smart on how we approach our energy. All of the above is a correct policy. Coal is certainly a great part of that -- of our energy mix. To your point, I'm also a great believer that we should invest in the research and development particularly on coal because we know we have the asset. Let's work together to make it clean, better. We should be leading the world on clean energy technology and I'm pretty confident that coal can be a part of that.

But it is about science, it's about investing in our future and not looking at our past.

BARRASSO:

With the use of the Congressional Review Act and -- I'm planning on introducing a disapproval resolution on the BLM's venting and flaring rule. To me, that rule far exceeds the authority of the BLM. It will ultimately put federal lands at a greater competitive disadvantage to state and private lands. Will you support our efforts to reverse this rule under the Congressional Review Act?

ZINKE:

Yes. And I think what's -- what the driving force is is we're venting a lot and we're wasting energy, and that is troubling to me. The amount of venting in North Dakota alone almost exceeds what we get out of the fields. So a lot of the wasting can be approached by having an infrastructure. So let us build a system where we capture that energy that's otherwise being wasted.

And that's an enormous opportunity. It's an enormous opportunity for our (ph) natural gas. If he -- and geopolitically as well. You know, we haven't talked a lot about overseas, but energy is so critically important. If we want to check Russia, then let's do it with liquid natural gas. If we -- if we want to put pressure on Iran (inaudible) supplant every drop of Iranian crude. This is all part of a larger package and it cannot be done without the great state of Wyoming and their assets or Alaska.

But we have to think globally on it, and it is better, and I've said this once before, but it is better to produce energy in America under reasonable regulation and get better over time than to watch it be produced overseas with no regulation. That is undisputable.

BARRASSO:

Final question. I want to talk about sage-grouse management plans. The administration has ignored input from key stakeholders, including western governors, during the development of their plans, plans which were used to justify what they called non-warranted status under the Endangered Species Act. But at the core, the plan's fundamentally opposed the multiple use mandates of the BLM, which includes grazing, recreation, energy development.

Will you commit to returning conservation and management authority of the sage-grouse back to the states and preventing this top-down mandate like -- like this in the future?

ZINKE:

My understanding is the sage-grouse decision is going to come before the Department of Interior sometime in March. I understand there's going to be options and alternatives -- proposed alternatives. I will work with you when I see those documents and I'll work with all of you when I see those documents to make sure we're doing the right thing.

But concerns about sage-grouse is there's no target number. I'm not sure how you can manage without a number.

So, if we -- do we grab on management of property without a number, I look at that with a suspect eye. I think we've got to look at everyone loves the sage grouse. Everyone understands that we have to protect the species.

Generally, those living on the ground are in a better position and we should be an advocate and a partner in this rather than heavy handed and just dictate terms, particularly when we don't have a number.

BARRASSO:

Thank you, Madame Chairman.

MURKOWSKI:

Senator Wyden, who has been very patient. Thank you.

WYDEN:

Thank you, Madame Chair. Congressman, as a fellow Oregon duck --

ZINKE:

Go Ducks. Rough -- rough season, sir.

WYDEN:

-- I appreciated the visit in the office and as we talked about -- when you go into a small western town today. You head to the coffee shop where it seems most of the decisions usually get made. You will now see ranchers and timber mill owners, environmental folks, and they'll all be sitting around and you will ask them what they are doing.

One word -- and this is true all over the west -- and that word is collaboration because they have decided that everybody's got just enough clout to block the other side and nothing happens unless they collaborate. And we really set the model for this, in this committee, with secure rural schools, with our resource advisory committees.

And this is really, probably, what I'm more interested in. And I remember being on this committee when Chairman Markowski(ph) was getting us involved in these resource issues and maybe we have some kind of club for ex-chairs of this committee or something. But the point was, we started talking about collaboration then.

And on this sage grouse issue, which we are all deeply committed to making sure that there is not a listing on the -- under the Endangered Species Act. We're going to have to have a federal, state, local collaboration. And this apropos of the questions from my friend in Wyoming.

I think you just mentioned one of the roles that the federal government better play. And that is setting a target. Now, I've always said when the federal government sets a target and then we say to local folks you all go do your thing because what works in Roseburg, Oregon or Coos Bay, Oregon may not necessarily work several thousand miles away.

Tell me a little bit about how you're going to approach setting up the federal, state collaboration on what is one of the biggest, most important collaborations we've seen in years.

ZINKE:

Well, thank you for the question, and I do believe the Oregon Ducks are going to be better. The collaborative efforts, you have to reward getting together in collaboratives because it takes a lot of resources, it takes time, it takes effort. And the frustration is as you get together -- farmers, ranchers, environmental, all stakeholders -- and after a two year venture where you come up with a plan and there's fighting and there's discussion and there's compromise; you come up with a plan and that plans ignored.

Or it's sued multiple times. So, we have to incentivize coming together for plans. From the federal government, I've been an advocate of empowering the plan based on broad central goals. In the case of the sage grouse --

WYDEN:

Like targets.

ZINKE:

Like targets, yes, sir. Management numbers, what's the goal?

WYDEN:

OK.

ZINKE:

And I don't know how you -- you make a management plan unless you have a goal. So, the goal needs to be scientifically, objectively based to protect the species, and --

WYDEN:

Let's move on to forestry because I like the answer. You laid out that there was a role for the federal government as it relates to targets. And I want understood that I'm very much sympathetic to your point and Senator Barraso's point that we also have to have a strong role for local folks in the states and the like.

Apply it now to forestry, where once again we're trying to find a way to get beyond years of gridlock. Now, I've written a proposal for our state. You and I talked about it, it's called the Owen(ph) Sealand(ph). Doubles the harvest in a sustainable way, on average, each year, for decades while protecting our treasures.

There are other ways to go about doing it as well. The Oregon delegation's trying to find some common ground. How do you do it, in your view, without going to sufficiency language, which basically has generated, ever since the spotted owl, all the polarization and all the fighting?

ZINKE:

Well thank you for the questions, an excellent question. On the house side we had the resilient federal forest act. And what we'd hoped would happen was the Senate would pick it up and then we'd work about (ph) between the -- on the committees we work together and fine tune it, because there was parts that neither party liked, but overall it was a pretty good vehicle.

In that bill it did not exclude any stake holder in our forest. And our forest as you recognize -- I'm pretty good friends with Chief Tidwell, he was a region one guy, where 71 million acres behind in removing dead and dying timber. We need to get it because the goal should be healthy forests. So you won't have the catastrophic fires every year.

ZINKE:

Let's do this, would you furnish that answer to me in writing? I want to know how we bring about the collaboration without sufficiency language. My time is up. I also want to thank you for your support in our bipartisan effort in fire borrowing, which is this insane budget practice, which actually discriminates against preventive forestry and I appreciate your help. Thank Madam Chair.

MURKOWSKI:

Thank you Senator Wyden. Senator Daines.

DAINES:

Thank you Madam Chair and Senator Wyden, I echo your comments on collaboration. The other word I hear around tables at coffee shops at Montana, besides collaboration is litigation. We collaborate and then we have agreements, and then some extreme groups stop it in court. We've got to address this litigation issue too if we're going to solve the problem. Representative Zinke, welcome the committee. It's been a long path from Boise State 1979, as two juniors in high school to being here today with you, what an honor. Thank you it is wonderful to see your family here. I could not be a prouder Montanan. In fact when confirmed, you'll be the first Montanan to ever serve in a cabinet position in the United States history, going back to our state hood in 1889. So history will be made when you are confirmed.

With you at the helm of the department of interior, you're going to be a strong advocate for our public lands, and a strong advocate for American energy, you've made that clear here today. And you have been tenacious in working on behalf of Indian country in the house, representing our twelve federally recognized Indian tribes and (the little shell tribe) and I know you'll be committed to bringing prosperity to their communities.

As they say about Montana, we're a unique blend. We're a blend of Merle Haggard and a blend of John Denver. In mastering that melody is always a challenge, but it does result in a common sense approach on management of our federal land and minerals that can make our country stronger.

And I think you have mastered that melody, which is why I think you've secured the support from such a diverse number of sportsmen, of industry, of tribal groups. There's an impressive list here representative Zinke. That is single spaced two columns wide, of groups that range from the American Fly Fishing Trade Association, who have written letters in your support on your behalf. Boone and Crocket Club, the NRA, the Mule Deer Foundation, the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, the National Shooting Sports Foundation, the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership, the National Cattleman's Beef Association, and these are just a few of the many on this list, not to mention tribesmen across the country, the Confederated Sailor in Kootenai (ph) for Belt map, the Shakopee, the Choctaw, and the list goes on. That is a tough balance to walk. It's a walk of wisdom and you've walked it well sir.

And I'd like to submit some of these letters of support for your nomination on their behalf today to the committee if I could Madam Chair. Thank you.

Representative Zinke, why do you want this job?

ZINKE:

Well I've been asked that. Thanks for the question and thank you for the remarks. I love my country. And I love public lands and I love Teddy Roosevelt's idea that we should think bold and big and prepare for the future.

And this job I take very seriously if confirmed because it's all that. Our country loves our parks and our lands. Our nation should be better equipped, our Indian tribes with the ability for self determination. And when the department of the interior has an influence over a fifth of our territory, that means influencing the beaches in Maine, with clams to our fisheries outside of Hawaii and even this body, we're all different but we all share a common purpose, to make our country great again.

And I think as a secretary of the interior, I think I'll have inherited 70,000 hard charging dedicated professionals that want to do the same thing. And my task is to organize for a better future, for interior and our country. I'll work with anybody, as the list would indicate. I've never been red or blue, to me it's always been red white and blue.

Politically I'd never asked an individual serving me, next to me whether they're Republican or Democrat. What's mattered to me is they're American and they love their country and they're committed to mission success. And we have a very important mission in the Department of the Interior ahead of us.

DAINES:

Representative Zinke, a lot of concerns that Montana's have had with previous Department of the Interior leaders, is that a lot of land use decisions are done with disregard -- with disregard for the impacts to those who live close to the lands. You've made that clear today as an issue of trust and so forth. In fact as we travel around the state together, one of your favorite lines is, a lot of the bureaucrats back here in D.C. couldn't find Montana on a map, whether it's national monument designations, sage grouse (plans), moratorium or coal leasing, too often Montanan's face decisions on their public lands that are made by out of touch Washington D.C. bureaucrats.

My question is two parts, what are your views in facilitating more local control and management of our federal lands out west, and by west, we have a true westerner here, somebody from Montana. And how can we make the Department of Interior look more like Montana and get it closer to the people?

ZINKE:

Great west -- great question. And I would say we need to shore up our front line. If our front line managers don't have the resources, they don't have the flexibility nor the authority to make the decisions they know is right, there's a problem. In the military it's like being in the front line and asking for a bullet. You got to go all the way to the back to headquarters to get a bullet, and when you finally get it, then you got to ask permission to shoot it. And if you get permission to shoot it, then you got to ask permission to shoot at what. And that's what's happened a lot of times with our front line managers.

We're losing a lot of BLM folks, because they've just had it. And so, we need to shore up the front line, to empower the front line to do good things, with broad guidance and understand that their guidance they should be incentivized on their evaluations of working with local communities. And that's how you do it, you reward on an evaluation, how did you collaborate? Did you talk to the local community? Do you have the local communities support? That's a part of it.

So I think collaborative efforts work. I think generally they deliver the better outcome. But again, my job or I think my most important task is restore trust, that when a BLM truck or a Fish and Wildlife service truck shows up, one is you want to see management in your eyes, and then you want to know that it's in good hands.

I think in many cases we've been too heavy handed as a nation and there's a separation between those living in the land and those managing it and unfortunately a lot of times those managing it, decisions are made here.

And you're right, if you don't know the different between Butte and Bozeman, maybe you're not in the right position to make those decisions.

MURKOWSKI:

Thank you. We'll next go to Senator Cortez Masto.

CORTEZ MASTO:

Thank you. Congressman, nice to meet you for the first time, it's unfortunate we didn't have a chance to meet prior to today. So with your indulgence I'm going to jump right in because I'm one of those western states, particularly in Nevada where 85 percent of the land is owned by the federal government and we deal with 8 federal agencies on a regular basis.

So your role as potential Secretary of the Interior is very important to us in Nevada. So I've heard what you had to say about the Antiquities Act, and let me get one more commitment from you. Just recently we had two national monuments declared, the basin in range and gold butte would love for you to come out to Nevada and take a look at those monuments. There was some vocal opposition, but I will tell you the vast majority or Nevadan's support these designations. So if you would make a commitment to come out, we would love to host you.

ZINKE:

I will make a commitment that -- and I will make a commitment also to every member, if you have a monument in your state, before I make a recommendation to the President, I want to talk to you. I want to talk to the delegation; I'm going to make sure we're all working together on this. And, that's what a Secretary should do, up front.

CORTEZ MASTO:

Thank you. Thank you congressman, I appreciate that. And I appreciate that your talk on discussion and collaboration and your goal of restoring trust by working with locals and local communities and the state. And we look forward to that.

And one of the areas is in Nevada, most people don't realize there are 32 tribal reservations in Nevada. And I just would love a commitment if you would guarantee that tribal members would have a seat at the table when it comes to decisions, activities and land management near their communities when it involves the Department of Interior.

ZINKE:

Yes, ma'am. And I've -- you know, I've had that same discussion with the great state of Minnesota, is that I think we all would like to see BIA be better. How we do that, because they have not been better -- we need improvement on that. And I think we need to do three things.

Again, sovereignty should mean something. So when we say you're a sovereign nation, let's have the discussion of how to empower that. Secondly, respect. In many cases, our Indian nations have not had the respect that I think they deserve. And lastly, how do we empower great nations for self-determination? What tools do they need? The education oftentimes is lacking, but it's state by state.

Some of the education opportunities in Alaska to tribes, you know, far exceed anything in the lower 48. That's not always the case. So I think...

CORTEZ MASTO:

Thank you. Thank you, Congressman, I appreciate your comments.

Wild horses haven't been brought up yet. And as you may or may not know, in Nevada this is a big issue. In fact, the wild horse population in Nevada is over 31,000. I'm curious, how would the BLM under your direction humanely handle the wild horse and burro population crisis?

ZINKE:

Great question. I've learned more in the past couple of weeks about burros and horses from multiple states. And this is where we're going to have to have a discussion and work together. Clearly, the present policy is a disaster. It's enormously expensive. I'm a great horseman and I'm very sensitive to making sure that horses don't starve; that we treat animals in a humane way.

But kicking them out and then spending millions of dollars every year on a program that's not working, let's work together to figure out how to fix it. We're a great nation. We can fix the burro problem. We can fix the horse problem. And it's not just in Nevada, as you know. It's -- it's western. And I understand there's a problem in Florida, too.

CORTEZ MASTO:

Thank you.

And then water rights, obviously, is an important issue for the western states. So, let me -- and this hasn't actually -- I don't think has been brought up. But seven in 10 people in Nevada get a majority of their water supply from Lake Mead. And the last 15 years of droughts has exposed a bathwater kind of like ring around Lake Mead to show the level has decreased. And it's obviously a concern of ours and many of those states up and down the Colorado.

Arizona, California, Nevada are in principle agreement on a drought contingency plan. And our concern is that with this transition, there's going to be a real impact on the water supply for Nevada if there's lag-time during this transition. So, I would like to know how you will exercise your authority and leadership to help the states finalize and implement their drought contingency plans?

ZINKE:

And thank you for the question.

As I mentioned earlier, water is critical for a number of reasons. We have to look at storage. We have to look at efficiency. We have to look at our infrastructure. All of which are behind. And then negotiate in good faith. When everyone walks in a room with an agenda, and they're unwilling to budget from that, that's not good faith.

So leadership is recognizing the importance of having a win-win, and also recognize that we have to do better on our infrastructure. We waste an enormous amount of water in this country just not having enough, especially in the west, not having a holding capacity. Some of our dams are lacking. There's a lot of opportunity, but we need to manage our resources I think better and DOI can have a huge role in that.

CORTEZ MASTO:

Great. So you're committed to working with the states on the drought contingency plan?

ZINKE:

Absolutely.

CORTEZ MASTO:

Thank you.

MURKOWSKI:

Thank you.

Senator Risch?

RISCH:

Thank you very much.

Congressman Zinke, thank you for your willingness to take this on, to what as you know, and you can see from today, it's going to be a very contentious job from time to time. But somebody's got to do it and I'm glad you're there.

I'm particularly thankful to the president-elect for picking a westerner to do this, who understands western issues. My years here have taught me what a difference between east and west. I've come to the conclusion that the Mississippi River gets wider every year. And I watched -- I watched in Tennessee as a forest fire burned this year. And your heart goes out to those people. And everyone in Tennessee was just aghast at this.

We live with this every year. A number of the -- a number of the senators up here have fires that are substantially bigger than what happened in Tennessee. And I don't mean to denigrate what happened there. It was a terrible disaster. But we live with this

all the time, and yet we have fought in a bipartisan fashion to try to get fire funding straightened out, and we haven't been able to do it. Hopefully, with a new administration, we have some change and we are going to be able to do it.

You know, when you -- when you look at the percentages of our states that are owned by the federal government -- two-thirds in Idaho; substantially more in Nevada -- it -- and I think Senator Masto, you're going to find that it's frustrating because the people who live east of the Mississippi are sometimes very cavalier about our problems.

And probably one of the poster children for that is the -- is the monument situation. The president with a stroke of a pen, be he a Republican or a Democrat, sets aside a million or more acres. If this happened to a state back east, people would be up in arms about it. And yet it happens; winds up on the front page of the paper, and it's gone. Nobody ever thinks about it again.

And the collaborative method that has been discussed here is really critical in these public lands situations. I did it when I was governor. Senator Wyden has referred to how they've been doing it in Oregon. And that's the way these things get done; they're going to get done in the future, and the only way that they're going to get done. And a lot of us have introduced a bill that is going to do something about that as far as the monuments are concerned. The states really have a role in this.

And that brings me to my next point that I want to make before I run out of time. And that is to talk about management in the Department of Interior. They don't call it the "Department of Everything Else" for nothing. I mean, it's got lots and lots of different responsibilities and what have you.

One of the most frustrating things that happened to us on -- with the Department of Interior was with the sage-grouse. Secretary Salazar, to his great credit, went out and said, "Hey, we've got a big issue here with sage-grouse; Governors, why don't you sit down and see if you can't do something about this?"

And they did. And in Idaho, I don't know about the other states, but I can tell you in Idaho, that thing was done incredibly well, bringing all sides to the table; using the collaborative method, including people from the United States Fish and Wildlife Service -- Fish and Wildlife Service. They had a seat at the table. They constructed a plan. It was a give-and-take process. When they were all done, the plan was approved by everybody, unanimously, including the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

So now the plan comes back to Washington, D.C. and the BLM says, "Wait a second; not so fast." When I first met Sally Jewell, the first thing I said to her after niceties, was: Have you ever heard of sage-grouse? She said, "No, I haven't." Obviously, I was one of the first ones she talked to. And I told her the problem that we had between the BLM and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. I said, "When you were head of REI, if the marketing people were fighting with the accounting department, you'd step in and do something about this; I want some help on this."

"Fish and Wildlife Service says it's all right; BLM says well, we have experts over here that says that this plan is (inaudible). Well, what are we doing there? One agency and they're employing scientists on both sides, they're going to fight with each other. Why bother have a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service if the BLM can come in and overrule?"

Well, at the beginning we made some progress in that regard, but lately that's fallen off the chart. So, I guess what I want to talk to you about is management. My good friend here on my right says that there's going to be wholesale changes at the EPA. Boy, I hope you can do the same thing at the Department of Interior.

It is frustrating and it makes us angry. When you get two federal agencies that are in disagreement with each other, and the head of the department won't step in and say, "Hey, I'm going to resolve this; I'm the head of this; BLM, stand down; these people are in charge of wildlife."

So -- and if you don't want to do that, fine. Let's get rid of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. We're paying a lot of money for it. Let the BLM do it if they're going to be the ones that can overrule.

I'm -- I'm encouraged by what I've heard today. One thing we didn't talk about when we met was NIFC. I don't know, have you ever visited the National Interagency Fire Center in Boise?

ZINKE:

No, sir. Although I've been on the frontlines on multiple fires in the Rocky Mountains, I've not...

RISCH:

So have I. And you're going to be impressed when you visit NIFC. I know that you're going to do that. We'll be interested (inaudible).

It falls in line with one of the things you and I talked about, and that is they have a map at NIFC with little dinky red dot for every fire started in America each year, and it's thousands of them. Right in the center of it is NIFC, and it's located there for a reason and a good reason.

Anyway, thank you. My time is up. Thank you very much.

MURKOWSKI:

Thank you, Senator Risch.

Senator King.

KING:

Thank you, Madam Chair.

Welcome to the committee. I enjoyed your testimony today. I first want to thank you for your straight-forward recognition that climate change is happening, that human activity is contributing to it and for also the image of the glacier retreating during lunch. I'm gonna add that to my arsenal of climate change anecdotes.

The theme of the hearing today in many ways has been one size doesn't fit all and collaboration and consultation and communication. You alluded to an issue we have in Maine with a national park. There's a national national park rule about you can't exploit natural resources on national parks. On the other hand, in the intertidal zone at Acadia National Park, where people have been digging clams since time immemorial (ph), suddenly the park decided you can't do that anymore.

That to me is an example of how there should be a better communication and relationship between the park, which is an enormously important asset to the state of Maine, and its neighboring communities. Do you agree?

ZINKE:

I agree, and I'm glad you appreciate the theme has been collaboration, restoring trust, infrastructure and making sure our front lines have the right tools to make the decisions and work with the local communities.

KING:

And I hope you will take that message throughout the department about listen first and act later, and I think we can have, as you say, restoration of trust and a lot more confidence in the decisions wherever they are made.

By the way, if you're gonna move BLM out west, you can -- you're welcome to move the park service headquarters to Maine if you choose. Too far away, somebody said. Come on..

Backlog. The backlog in the parks is a straightforward problem of funding. We should be funding to pay the maintenance of the parks. We've basically been putting it off for -- for 10 or 15 or 20 years and I hope that you'll approach the next -- the upcoming budget as saying this is part of our obligation to pay park rangers and to pay all the expenses of the parks and to chip away at this backlog. Will you consider that?

ZINKE:

Absolutely, and that is why this committee is so incredibly important, and the chairman in Alaska is so incredibly important, because I may own the helicopter, but I have to ask you for the gas. And in order to fund the parks at the level, it goes through this body, and I have to convince you that the money is gonna be spent -- it will be prioritized. I have to convince the president-elect that the parks are his priority as well because they should be America's priority.

KING:

Well, one point that was made earlier about the backlog, the -- I think the chairman talked about the return on investment is gigantic in terms of what we put into the parks versus what they -- the economic activity that they generate in their areas. So it's a -- it's a good investment for the public and I believe for the government itself.

Similar concern -- we've know -- we're now talking about in recent days about a major defense build-up. We're talking about a major infrastructure investment. We're talking about major tax cuts. All of those together don't really add up in terms of the arithmetic and the budget and the deficit and the debt. Therefore, there's going to be a lot of pressure on various areas of the federal government, particularly the non-defense areas.

Will you resist stoutly with the heart of a Navy SEAL efforts to raise -- to raid the Land and Water Conservation Fund to fund other government priorities?

ZINKE:

I'm on record of supporting full funding of the Land and Water Conservation Fund for a reason. I think it's an incredibly important program. It has done great work. This is probably one of the reasons why the president-elect put a former Navy SEAL in place. I don't yield to pressure. Higher principle, yes. But my job is to advocate for the Department of Interior, to make sure we have the right funds and be a voice in the room on great public policy.

There is gonna be a lot of times where I'm gonna need the help of this body because by myself, I don't have the authority. I have to follow the law and I will follow the law. I think the law needs to be adjusted in some areas, as this -- as this body has often said. In order to adjust it, one, we have to have trust whoever's gonna execute it is gonna do it well. And two is that I need bipartisan support to make sure the law is adjusted appropriately so we can move the ball to field, if that's the right terminology, to make our park system make DOI better.

KING:

Well, I for one can't speak for the committee, but we certainly want to work -- work with you. I learned as a -- as a lawyer in Maine, when you get the answer you want, you sit down and shut up.

So I yield back my time, Madam Chairman.

MURKOWSKI:

Thank you, Senator King.

Senator Flake, right on time.

FLAKE:

Thank you, Madam Chair.

And thank you. I've enjoyed hearing the testimony. Sorry, I had to step out for a minute. I hope I'm not replotting old ground here.

But as you know, Arizona is home to a lot of public land between the land that the Department of Interior administers directly and then that that it holds in trusts or administers for the tribes. That's about half of the state right there. When you take into account federal, state and tribal land, that's about 85 percent of Arizona, so we've only got about 15 percent in private hands, and that means that decisions made by the federal government, including the Department of Interior, have a real outsized impact on the state.

And we talked about a lot of the issues, and thank you for coming to my office. And I know you committed to me and it sounds like everybody else to visit their state in the early stages, so you will have a busy travel schedule.

We mentioned -- I know it was brought up a little bit -- in terms of the drought and the Colorado River and the basin states are very close to an agreement on a drought contingency plan to leave additional water behind the dam at Lake Mead so that we don't hit that -- that troubled -- the stage where there are arbitrary cuts that would hurt us badly. It's crucial for Arizona, obviously, that we work with the Department of Interior to ensure that Arizona water users, to the extent they leave water behind the dam, that that water doesn't disappear down some canal in some other state. That's the only basis on which some contingency plan would work.

Will you commit to continue to work with us in that regard? We got assurance last year from the Department of Interior, that assurance we'll (ph) have to go forward until there is a drought contingency plan.

ZINKE:

I will commit to working (inaudible). As earlier discussed, I do recognize that water, particularly in the west, is a big issue in every state in the west and we've got to get together to figure this out, and I think some of it is infrastructure. The best (ph) plan on water requirements are going to be -- and that's make sure we have the infrastructure to reach those requirements. And it's gonna be probably trifold (ph), some is gonna be efficiency, some of that's gonna be building better capture facilities and then look at the infrastructure we have.

We're wasting a lot of water. There's no question of that. So let's make sure that every drop is precious and let's make sure that our water is clean. I think we can do that.

FLAKE:

Still on the subject of water -- on water -- Indian water settlements, last year I introduced the Hualapai Tribe Water Rights Settlement Act. Last week, I introduced the -- a bill to make necessary clarifications to the White Mountain Apache Tribe Settlement. I know that you were the sponsor of the Blackfoot Water Rights Settlement Act, so you understand the importance of these settlements for both the tribal and nontribal users.

Can we count on you to work with me and with the tribes and other parties in Arizona to make sure the Hualapai settlement moves forward and also that we get the necessary clarifications to the White Mountain Apache Tribe Settlement?

ZINKE:

I do and I'd like to say also -- thank Senator Daines for his work on the Blackfoot Water Compact. I view water compacts as a treaty obligation, and I think we need to uphold our part of that treaty obligation. The water compacts, as you know, are difficult. They involve the state, the tribes and the federal government, and then within the federal government, it's not easy.

So -- but I do recognize the importance of working with you on the compacts and also the importance of getting them resolved. They are an -- a liability that's out there. We need to recognize they're a liability. They're not (inaudible) treaty obligation and let's work together to get them done.

FLAKE:

Thank you.

As you know, cattle ranching has a long history in Arizona, continues to hold a prominent place in our present-day state, as well as our history. I come from a ranching family. In fact, this last weekend I was back on the F Bar where I was raised near Snowflake.

Ranching is never an easy business, but it's made more difficult with issues like was already raised, with the burros in northwestern Arizona, and the Mexican gray wolf in southeastern Arizona. What we continue to hear is a lack of cooperation and coordination between federal agencies and the local land-users.

I know that you've already committed to work on this. You'll be hearing a lot when you come to Arizona, the issues that we have with wild burros, as well as the Mexican gray wolf issues.

ZINKE:

I am concerned, quite frankly, about the object of whether it's BLM or the Forest Service. I grew up where Smokey the Bear was revered. I mean, who could not like Smokey the Bear? And now in some parts of our great nation, it's feared. When they see Smokey the Bear, they think of law enforcement, rather than managing our forests.

So I'm very concerned about that because it has implications of the next generation. So, we have to -- we have to come together and make sure that the management, our team out there, is viewed as helpful; is viewed as land managers, and not to be feared.

You know, you want to stop by and say hello. You don't want to avoid. And in some places -- and the further you get out, you know, in parts of Alaska and parts of Montana, they're viewed as law enforcement and obstructionists. And I think we need to

be really careful as leaders of this great nation to recognize it and go forward with solutions to make sure the next generation looks at law enforcement, be it BLM or Fish and Game, as good neighbors and helpful, rather than to be feared.

MURKOWSKI:
Thank you.

FLAKE:
Thank you.

MURKOWSKI:
Senator Franken?

FRANKEN:
Thank you.

Let me get this straight. Smokey the Bear isn't real, right?

ZINKE:
He's real to me, sir.

FRANKEN:
OK.

(LAUGHTER)

That might be disqualifying.

(LAUGHTER)

Thank you for your service as a Navy SEAL; to your daughter's service as a Navy SEAL; to your son-in-law who frankly terrifies me. I don't know if anyone has looked at him. He's out with one of your granddaughters. Who by the way, the granddaughters -- you are the unsung heroes of this -- of this hearing. You've been wonderful. You have a beautiful family.

ZINKE:
Thank you, sir.

FRANKEN:
And I -- I want to -- I want to get into what I consider a false choice. And the false choice that I hear you iterated a couple of times is between addressing climate change and the economy. I think that is a false choice. I think it's a false choice because, one, if we don't address it, it's going to cost us a tremendous amount of resources.

Hurricane -- or Super Storm Sandy cost like \$60 billion because sea level has risen. Glacier National Park is going to be mount -- I don't know -- Lake National Park or Mountain National Park. But it isn't going to be Glacier in 30 years.

In Minnesota, we have built lots and lots of clean energy jobs. And we're addressing climate change. And we've put in a renewable energy standard. And it's been very successful for our businesses. You signed a letter that -- that -- in 2010, and I just want to get your -- clarify your stance.

FRANKEN:

In this letter that you -- you urged federal lawmakers -- this is a bunch of state legislators who did this; hundreds and hundreds of state legislators -- to, quote, "pass comprehensive clean energy jobs and climate change legislation." Now, this letter also stated that, quote, "climate change is a threat-multiplier for instability in the most volatile regions of the world." And that, quote, "the climate change threat presents significant national security challenges for the United States, challenges that should be addressed today because they will almost certainly get worse if we delay."

I completely agree with that letter, and I ask unanimous consent Madam Chair to include this in the record. Thank you. You were a Navy seal for 23 years. So you probably know, better than most people here about protecting our country. I completely agree with your stance in this letter. That climate change threatens our national security. That the Defense Department certainly knows that. It needs to be addressed as quickly as possible. So I want to ask you, do you still feel that climate change is a significant national security threat, and one that requires immediate action or has your position changed since you're been in Congress?

ZINKE:

That's a great question.

FRANKEN:

Thank you.

ZINKE:

And, I want to be honest with you. The three tenants of climate change, one as we both agree that the climate's changing. We both agree that man has had an influence.

FRANKEN:

I think a major influence. If you just look at CO2 levels do have a parallel with temperature rise. This is -- last year was the hottest year on record. The year was the hottest year on record then. This is going to be hotter. This is happening and sea level is rising.

ZINKE:

And -- and I'm not -- I'm not an expert in this field. What I do know --

FRANKEN:

But that to me is a cop out.

ZINKE:

No. I want to -- I want to be honest with you.

FRANKEN:

I'm not -- I'm not a doctor, but I have to make --

ZINKE:

Well I realize --

FRANKEN:

-- but I have to make healthcare decisions.

ZINKE:

And I -- I too sit on -- on the National Resources Committee. And I have went through hundreds of hours of testimony on -- on all topics. Is that there's no model today that can predict tomorrow. So, where we agree, we need objective science to one, figure

a model out, and two, determine what are we going to do about it? What do we do? And when you -- when you say we want to, on CO2, recognize that's CO2's level absolutely, recognize also that the ocean is a contributor to it. When a small rise in temperature in the ocean makes a big difference in CO2.

FRANKEN:

It absorbs CO2. It makes a big difference in a sea level. And that means storm surges create tremendous damage and are going to create climate refugees and are going to require, and I know I'm out of time. They're going to be requiring the use of our military if we don't do something about it. And I don't -- I think this is a false choice. We can build an economy, sell to the Chinese, sell clean energy technology, that's what we should be doing. I'm sorry I've gone over my time.

MURKOWSKI:

Thank you. We -- we do have a vote coming up shortly and I would like to get to the two remaining members who have not yet had a chance to -- to ask questions. It is my intention that we have a second round after this, but we'll be able to take a quick break as well. Let's go to Senator Portman.

PORTMAN:

Thank you Madam Chair and Commander Zinke. Thank you for your willingness to step forward to serve in a very different capacity. We have had a lot of discussions today about issues relating to the Department of Interior and your role, one that I want to focus on is the national parks. I think it's a great opportunity for you and for our country, to do more to deal with the \$12.5 billion maintenance back log we talked about, to preserve and protect these great treasures. We just went through a process in Congress of considering this. In fact, the legislation which was tied in with the Centennial last year, the National Parks Centennial Act, passed in the wee hours of the morning just about a month ago. It passed with the indispensable help of the chair and ranking members here today. It's something I've worked on for nine years, going back to my time as Office Management and Budget Director. We put a centennial challenge together. The challenge is, it's actually in two parts. One, it helps with regard to the park service by allowing private sector funds to be raised to match federal funding. And then second, it helps the foundation to be able to raise funds. That money, by the way, will be within your discretion and I hope some of it will be used for this deferred maintenance. And I hope some of it will be used for some other special projects to enhance our parks. So my question to you today is, are you aware of this program and -- and it's potential? Let me give you an example, thanks to Lisa Murkowski and others on the Appropriations Committee even before it was authorized. A month ago, some of this was happening and the match expected to be one to one was almost two to one. In other words, a dollar of federal funding resulted in \$2 of private sector funding coming into the parks. I think it could be much greater than that and the foundation is an example. So how do you feel about the program? Are you supportive of it and specifically, would you support funding this in our appropriations cycle?

ZINKE:

Thank you for the question. And I am aware of it. I think it's a great opportunity. One is the -- as the Secretary of the Interior it turns out, I have a number of boards with the diversity of talent both in business and in conservation. And foundations like this offer a unique opportunity for innovation and looking at different ways of not only funding our parks, but also looking at protecting our parks. Trail building is, I think, an opportunity we need to look at. You know, how do we re-establish a national trail building program. A lot of that, I would assume is going to come from private sector. So I think the foundation and other boards are a unique opportunity to leverage and I'm a strong proponent of it.

PORTMAN:

Well I was -- I'm glad to hear that and we will need your help as we get in the appropriation cycle. There are so many other priorities and this one is -- is crucial given the state of the parks. I will say, in Ohio, we don't have a lot of federal public lands, as you and I discussed. We do have a beautiful park, Cuyahoga Valley National Park, which is top 10 in visitation. And so when you're on your tour, somewhere between Hawaii and Montana, we expect you to drop into Ohio and to see one of the great suburban parks in -- in America. We're -- there's access to a huge population in the area. And a lot of young people and a lot of schools are involved and engaged, which is exactly what we need more of as you said getting the millennials involved. With regard to rules and orders that the department has finalized in the last 60 days, prior to your confirmation, should you be confirmed, I'm concerned. I've heard some constituents worried about job losses, other economic impacts. In general, what is your plan with regard to, sort of 11th hour rules that have come in and specifically with regard to the Stream Buffer rule, what are your thoughts?

ZINKE:

Well, I find the 11th hour rule to be problematic. Because what it shows to me, that previous to that, there was no either collaboration or the collaborate effort was not -- was not effective. And so, generally the last hour rules result in distrust and policy that, I think, is -- is not conducive of a collaborate and trust relationship. If confirmed, we -- we'll look at whatever is -- is in my power, my authority, and evaluate. You know, everything's on the table, as it should be. You know, specifically different rules, but I -- but in general, when you have a last minute rule, that means it was a last minute decision and there wasn't working with this body to make sure we have a solution that -- that should stand.

PORTMAN:

Thank you. I appreciate that, and particularly on the Stream Buffer rule in Eastern Ohio in coal country, it's problematic. Finally, Great Lakes, I want you to answer because my time is expiring, but Senator Stabenow asked you a little about invasive species part of this. Station (ph) Wildlife there is very helpful. They do the monitoring for us. And you know, they are the early warning signal really for the big head carp coming up and other invasive species. So we look forward to working with you with that and I appreciate your commitment to her and to us. Those of us who want to preserve that great treasure of our Great Lakes. Thank you.

MURKOWSKI:

Thank you Senator Portman. For the information of members the vote has started. We will have Senator Hirono ask her questions and we will take a break and we will be back at five o'clock. Senator Hirono.

HIRONO:

Thank you Madam Chair. Congressman, you're going to be awfully busy because when you came to see me, you committed to coming to Hawaii. And I think you also mentioned visiting the territories which include, Guam, Puerto Rico, a number of other places, as well as I think the compact nations, Pulau, Marshall Islands and Micronesia. They would love to see you, should you be confirmed, I know that. In the discussion about energy, you said a number of times that you support all of the above, which sounds really great, except that in -- in all of the above what's happened is the fossil fuel side of energy has gotten a lot of support over decades. So I hope that when you say all of the above, that you will also be committed to providing more resources and support, particularly RND for alternative and renewables, aside from or in addition to fossil fuels. So we need to have a more level playing field for policies that truly reflect support for all of the above.

ZINKE:

Yes. I -- I'm -- I've always been a strong proponent, on the record, for research and development of different technologies, different innovations, different opportunities in -- in -- in the complete spectrum of the energy, to include looking at -- at traditional sources to make sure we're -- we're better at doing that, you know, certainly horizontal drilling, fracking, coal. But all the above, I think, is the right approach. It -- it -- when it comes out of the test tube and into fielding, energy needs to be affordable, reliable and abundant.

HIRONO:

I think though, when you look at the 100 years in the future and you recognize that climate change is upon us and it is a -- a multiplier, it's a threat multiplier. And Admiral Locklear has testified to that, so I know serving in the military, you're well aware of 100 years or 30 years from now we need to do more than to continue to provide the kind of sustained support that we have provided to the fossil fuel side. Let me get to the question of infrastructure. Because I'm all for what you're saying about the need to pay attention to the infrastructure needs of the -- of DOI, but then it's always an issue of how we're going to pay for it. And I'm glad you're not going to raid the land and the LWCF, in order to pay for some \$11 billion in infrastructure needs. But since departments do not operate in a vacuum, would you support privatizing Social Security or privatizing, voucherizing Medicare, in order to pay for DOI's infrastructure needs?

ZINKE:

So how are we going to do it? My -- my question, and not to evade the answer, but, you know, looking at our budget, we spend 70 percent of our budget, you know, in entitlements, 3 percent in -- in non or -- or discretionary. We're not going to be able to cut our way out of the problems we have. Nor are we going to be able to tax our way out. The only hope of America is to grow

our way out, and we can. Energy is part of it. Innovation is part of it. But we're going to need an economy that grows, and we can compete. Not only can we -- we can compete, we can dominate. God has given us so much.

HIRONO:
So -- I --

ZINKE:
And I -- I think we can, the way out of this problem --

HIRONO:
I hate to interrupt, but I'm almost running out of time and I've waited along time. So thank you.

ZINKE:
Yes you have, very patient.

HIRONO:
So, it sounds to me, you would look to grow the economy rather than cutting back on -- on these kinds of programs that so many people, especially our seniors rely upon. You know, talented as you are, you're not going to be able to do the job all by yourself. So you will have an opportunity to weigh in on the people who will become your deputies, assistants, etcetera. What kind of qualities would you look for in those people?

ZINKE:
Loyalty, teamwork, trust, confidence, commitment, and I think and -- and you know, in each of the divisions have different challenges, but challenges in DIA is very different than challenges in Fish and Wildlife and BLM. So you have to put the right person in the right spot. From a CO perspective, we need fearless rough riders that will make the decision, regardless of whether you're going to get sued or not. Our policy has been, whether we're going to get sued, whether it's a right or wrong policy. And this is where I'm going to need your help, in order to develop the right policy, we should not be in fear of being sued time after time after time again. We should develop the right policy and have people in place that are willing to make the right decision.

HIRONO:
I hope so. I agree with you. With the chair's indulgence I'd like to ask just one more question --

MURKOWSKI:
Very quickly.

HIRONO:
-- make a point regarding sexual harassment in the -- in the department. And clearly this has been going on for way to long, over a decade when it first came to light in your park service. And so, as in the military, sexual assault in the military is a huge scourge on the military and I would want your commitment that you will do whatever you need to do to prevent, which includes changing the culture by the way. It's a culture within the park service that lends itself to sexual harassment to that there will be prosecution, meaning that there will be accountability for the perpetrators of this kind of behavior. And the third is that you will do specific things to prevent retaliation, because these are the very kinds of occurrences and factors that have been a scourge in the military. So I'd like your commitment to, toward the making those kinds of changes and I certainly will be following up with you.

ZINKE:
And you have my commitment, it will be zero tolerance. And I will be fearless in this.

MURKOWSKI:

Thank you.

HIRONO:

Thank you Madam Chair.

MURKOWSKI:

With that, we will stand at ease hopefully until just about 5 o'clock when we will come back for a second round.

MURKOWSKI:

Thank you.

(RECESS)

MURKOWSKI:

OK. We are back for round two. Everyone has had a little bit of a stretch.

Congressman, we appreciate the endurance here and you're probably thinking it's nothing like what you are used to, but we appreciate the fact that you have been generous with your time in your questions here. So we will allow for members to ask another round of questions.

We actually have another confirmation hearing that has just started up at 5 o'clock that I'm going to be heading off to when this one has concluded. So we're working full time here today.

ZINKE:

It maybe more popular than I.

MURKOWSKI:

No. No. This has been very important.

Congressman, I want to ask you about an issue that Alaskans care a great deal about and given the makeup of our lands and the fact that so much of our lands are -- are held in -- in the federal estate, under the Alaskan National Interest Lands Conservation Act that it specifically provides for a no more clause. And makes -- makes very clear that within the state of Alaska, when it comes to -- to those areas that had been withdrawn for public land that we've given, we have done what more than any state should be asked to do.

And so it is -- it is abiding by ANILCA that it's a very, very strong and firm commitment that Alaskans want to see. You have stated very clearly on the record here and I think you're -- the words that you used was you said, you are absolutely against transfer sale of public lands.

Now we have had a conversation in my office and you've met with the full delegation and had discussion about where you're coming from on this issue and understanding and the Alaska lands on this.

As you know and as made clear in my opening statement, there were promises made to the state of Alaska at statehood, promises that are inherent in ANILCA and in the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, promises made to our natives and the native people, promises made to the native veterans who are serving in Vietnam who were not able to receive their native allotments.

These are commitments that have been made to this state that have not yet been fulfilled and part of my real mission here, in the Senate since I came, was to make sure that this promises have been kept.

Can you give some assurance to the people of Alaska that when we are -- we're talking about these issues, these promises, these commitments that have been made to our state, to our native people, to our Vietnam veterans that you will work with us to fulfill those promises.

ZINKE:

Absolutely. And transfer or sale of public land is different in treaty obligations. I am very familiar, thanks to your staff, about the Vietnam issue.

They were serving their country and therefore did not have the opportunity and that's a treaty obligation and a commitment and a promise. So I will work with you and I look forward to work with you on this particular issue.

MURKOWSKI:

And you understand that the -- the effort, if you will, to address the potential for a state forest is because of the frustration that we have had as a state in gaining access to -- to any -- any viable opportunity for timber harvest within our nation's largest national forest.

ZINKE:

And that's been their frustration a lot, is that the people are so frustrated with this last hope that the federal entity was BLM or another entity force service is capable of manning some land or even capable of properly manning some land, remove even the dead and dying timber. So my job -- number one job, is restore trust as we can.

There are -- within the Department of Agriculture, there's stewardship programs that allowed management and who's better to manage it. These are collaborative efforts that we should look about who's in the best position to manage the property.

There's a difference between switching title and having ability to manage. I think we can carefully go through that and I'll work with you on it. Some has legislative to do it.

MURKOWSKI:

And when we talk about frustration and we talk about who is best to manage something, another area of extreme frustration right now is with the decision from this administration to basically seize the authority for fish and wild life management in our parks and in our refugees even though those authorities are very specifically and very clearly reserved to Alaska under ANILCA.

So this is something that again I will ask you -- I'm assuming that you think that states are better positioned to manage fish and game decisions and that it's not the federal government. I understand that while you may have not worked that much on some assistance issues, but given the importance of this issue to Alaska, I need to have your commitment to a formal review with the parks service and with fish and wildlife on their regs and really work with the state of Alaska to get us to a better place when it comes to an approach to the Fish and Game management decisions within the state.

ZINKE:

I look very much forward to reviewing -- formal review of the process. As well, I look forward to reviewing, you know, our management.

Again, I -- from a perspective of wildlife and management, centralized direction decentralized execution. That means giving local people, local communities a say, so there isn't a divide that's occurred.

As you know, we talked about different parts of Alaska, especially in the lower part, where the opportunity to harvest timber in a reasonable, sustainable traditional method has been taken off the table. Now that's hurting real communities.

And some areas in Washington, the catastrophic fires, why do we have fires at the extent and magnitude that we do each year. Senator Franken talked about global warming. The statistics I have from a single summer of forest fires in Rosebud County which very few people know where Rosebud County is other than Senator Daines, he made it more particular in their -- during that season that run in 3,000 of coal strip.

So that's manage our forest, that's manage our fires, that's manage our lands the way it was intended to. That means having the voice of Alaska and the voice of people that live there.

MURKOWSKI:

Well, and if I may, when we say how it was intended to, ANILCA lays out very, very clearly again the reservation to the state of Alaska with regard to the fish and wildlife management authorities. So I look forward to discussing this more with you.

Senator Cantwell.

CANTWELL:

Thank you, Madam Chair.

And if I could in the second round go back to some of the things that have been brought up in some of your testimony and then to clarify more on some issues of great importance to the state of Washington.

If we could on this chart, if I could, you know, somebody mentioned there's been a war on coal and in reality -- I think this chart will show you that there's been 23 percent -- the first one there -- 23 percent decline in coal and an increase in natural gas.

So you can see -- I might turn it the other way so people can see it. Thank you. And according to the energy information agency, between 2000 and 2008, coal was significantly less expensive and supplied about 50 percent of our generation.

But since the beginning of 2009, that gap between coal and natural gas prices had narrowed and large amount of gas produced from shale formations -- I don't know if you want to blame fracking -- but guess what, it has led to a lot more natural gas and a lot more lower natural gas pricing and a lot more consumption of natural gas than coal.

So I don't know if you want to say that natural gas is having a war on coal. I'm not going there. I'm simply saying that this is the fact that this has been driven by the market and according to the energy information agency as well, this is a -- this is a market function.

OK. The reason why this is an important question is, as we've discussed this issue about getting a fair deal for taxpayers, it's -- the GAO and the interior inspector general have both found that BLM recently undervalued federal coal at a cost to the taxpayers or something like \$60 million over 10 years.

So I want to make sure that when I asked you earlier you said you were committed to reviewing this issue, I think one or more colleagues try to get you to say you're ready to end the moratorium.

What I want to know is are you going to make sure that taxpayers, in the fairness of taxpayers that the GAO and inspector has laid out, is going to get your attention and the attention of this administration?

ZINKE:

Absolutely. You know, I think using the objective statistics is important and making sure that our taxpayers get value and I'm very sensitive with that.

CANTWELL:

OK.

ZINKE:

I'm also sensitive to the great state of Washington...

CANTWELL:

Right. So let me ask you about -- let me ask you about this, because you also said and I believe you, I think anybody who's represented Indian country -- well, I can't say everybody, but most people who've represented Indian country have had to deal with the issue of tribal sovereignty and have come down one way or another in understanding that you seem to have articulated a very strong view in view of tribal sovereignty and tribal rights particularly for treaty tribes that those treaties have outlined our obligations as a nation-to-nation status, is that right?

ZINKE:

That is correct.

CANTWELL:

So you believe that the Lummi Nation has a right to object to a coal terminal in Washington state based on their fishing right and abrogation of their fishing rights?

ZINKE:

And I have obviously familiar with this and I've -- when I was a -- represented Montana as I still currently do, I've always taken the position that I'm strong on Indian issues, I'm stronger on Montana Indian issues.

As a secretary of Interior, now I have to be strong on all issues. And on the gateway -- Pacific Gateway terminal, what I raised more eyebrow strongly are on is I didn't take a position whether yes or no in the terminal. I took a position to make sure the NEPA process was followed and the EIS was completed before making a judgment.

What I found was we were close to ending the NEPA process with the EIS after years and millions of dollars were spent on it and then that was truncated and stopped by affidavits and I didn't judge whether the affidavits from the tribe were true or not true. It's just if you don't finish the NEPA process and don't finish an EIS and then all of a sudden that process can be interrupted and a permit can be pulled on the basis of something outside EIS, why would you ever consent to spend millions of dollars on an EIS?

That was my objection. I don't mean to speak for...

CANTWELL:

So you believe in the tribal sovereignty of the Lummi tribe to object in this case?

ZINKE:

They certainly had every right to object, as well as, in this case, the Crows who also have a treaty obligation. So I also found that you were picking one tribe over another and believe me, I'm from a state where there's -- where great tribes, great warrior tribes -- tribes are not monolithic even in Montana.

There's traditions, there's cultures, but one should not be in the business of picking one treaty over another least arbitrarily. This is where we're working together and...

CANTWELL:

Yes. I don't -- yes, that's not -- definitely not where we're going here. We're more about whether we're going to uphold their rights in the region on their ability to object on various developments that affect their ability to fish and...

ZINKE:

And we do agree absolutely.

CANTWELL:

Thank you. Thank you. I appreciate that.

I do have another question about the Yakima Basin and it's on my...

(CROSSTALK)

CANTWELL:

OK. Well, then I'll pass to my colleagues and I'll come back.

MURKOWSKI:

Senator Daines.

DAINES:

Thank you, Madam Chair.

I had one more question I want to get to and I ran out of time in the first round and it was related to Indian country and economic prosperity. Congressman Zinke, you've been a great partner working together on behalf of Indian country whether it's fighting to an act the Blackfeet Water Settlement and I think it's important for all of us to realize that that was approved by the Montana legislature seven years ago.

And with your leadership in the House to work with it here in the Senate, we came together and got that passed in December. That is a monumental effort. It was a great win for the Blackfeet tribe and it's an example I think of the partnership that we have had going forward here to help Indian country.

You have been a champion fighting on behalf of the Crow tribes as you mentioned here in that last exchange, their sovereign right to develop their core resources. And as you said in your testimony, the unemployment rate in Crow country will go north of 90 percent in they lose those jobs.

You've been fighting for federal recognition for the Little Shell tribe. The bottom line is Indian country should be very excited to have you in their corner as the next secretary of the Interior.

My question is, tell us what you have done to help bring economic prosperity to Indian country.

ZINKE:

Great question.

You know, not enough. As you know, Montana is an awful big state. The first thing I have done is visited and been around and looked at the tribes and again, they're not monolithic.

The challenge in the Fort Peck tribe, a lot of drugs from the Bakken and to a degree the Fort Peck tribe is very materialistic. They rely on the mothers and grandmothers, the kind of the fabric of the tribe. Drugs have gone inside and they've created a havoc where maybe one generation or two generations has been at risk of that.

And that's caused enormous upheavals in the culture of the tribe, as well as opportunity -- economic opportunity. Not everyone lives in an area where you can develop casinos. A lot of the Montana tribes are isolated so they rely on their resource centric on their -- there's a couple exceptions.

But first I think is to understand and respect. Just go to the tribes and empower, figure out what a specific tribe that needs, what are the hurdles. This is a challenge and this is why BIA is so important. They get really good people in BIA that are willing to sacrifice and stay late and come to work early.

And it's been attempted multiple times before, without a lot of success I would say. So, you know, talking to the great nations is -- you got to listen and develop a plan with the tribes because again, not every tribe has been -- are the same.

Tribal health care is an issue, tribal education is an issue, prosperity, self-determination and this is an issue that we should all care very deeply about on it because it is important.

From a military point of view, I'm adopted Assiniboine. Michael Bell was a SEAL, I put him to training at Assiniboine, went home on break and was stabbed in the back and killed on the reservation. A needless, pointless, painful death of a lawyer.

And in a lot of tribes, being a military member has standing. Every time you would go in and do either a pow-wow or a ceremony, military members always come in first. And here lies an opportunity for the military to help these tribes become leaders and go back to the different tribes and form the basis for lifting themselves and having self-determination.

So I think there's an opportunity for military. I think there's an opportunity in DOI and looking at our trail systems. My wife was sat on the landing team and will quickly as the trails -- the landing team and the V.A. looked at opportunities for homeless veterans and veterans to do cemetery repair. They have whole program to it. A lot of it is being in the right uniform and show up on time.

I think that program can be looked at in the DOI of our trails. You know, we're way behind in maintenance of our trails. A lot of the Indian cultures have a strong tie to our trail systems to our land and it's a metric. The trail systems start in one point, ends in another part.

This is a great opportunity for Indian nations to participate in the program that will get them out and work. But this is -- they have to work together with the tribes and they have to have buy-in.

DAINES:

I think and I'll wrap it as a comment, the prospective you will bring to this job when you are confirmed, as a Montanan living in the shadows of Glacier National Park, actually were born near Yellowstone National Park and grew up near Glacier National Park. But I think what you will also bring is, you know, military background when we talk about Indian country, it has -- the Native Americans have the highest percentage veteran populations of any ethnic group in our country.

And having your military service will bring, I think, an added dynamic to help out Indian country. And with the BIA, where we have these men and women -- you mentioned the story of Mr. Bell that these men and women who come home from serving overseas with security clearances and then it takes us a year and a half to get their clearances, they want to get involved in law enforcement back on the reservation and the BIA takes 12 to 18 months to clear when they already have security clearance fighting for their country overseas.

When we have all the drug problems and crime problems in the reservation that they could help by having more law enforcement, we have open headcount there, you can do a lot to help Indian country and I'm grateful they're going to have a champion there with our new secretary of the Interior.

ZINKE:

I look forward to it.

DAINES:

Thank you.

MURKOWSKI:

Thank you, Senator Daines.

Senator Heinrich.

HEINRICH:

Thank you.

And I want to start by giving you an opportunity to correct the record on something my colleague Senator Franken said. I believe while I was gone and I don't want to misquote him that he said, that Smokey the Bear was not real.

And I want to read to you from Wikipedia the living symbol of Smokey the Bear was an American black bear, three-month-old cub, who in the spring of 1950 was caught in the Captain Gap fire in the Lincoln National Forest in the New Mexico.

Do you dispute that?

(LAUGHTER)

ZINKE:

I do not. And my grandchildren behind me and I also believe in Santa Claus.

(LAUGHTER)

HEINRICH:

I just want to establish that.

I want to go back to this tribal sovereignty theme and bring up an issue that the Department of Interior, I think, actually deserves great credit for over the last few years. One of the most important duties for any secretary is to uphold our nation's trust responsibility.

And tribes have been facing a tragic loss of their cultural patrimony to a growing international market for tribal religious objects. These objects are not art. They were not created to be sold. They are sacred objects that are essential to tribes' cultural and spiritual practices and they were illegally stolen from the communities to which they belong.

Acoma Pueblo in my home state is fought is to repatriate a sacred shield from an auction house in Paris and I give great credit to the Department for doing the right thing for being a stalwart ally and working with the State Department and Department of Justice to obtain a warrant for the shield to return.

That's an ongoing investigation, but I just want to ask you if you will commit to continue to work with the Department of Justice, the attorney general, the secretary of State to ensure that this remains a priority for all three of these departments.

ZINKE:

It remains -- repatriation is an important issue and I first became familiar with it when the Blackfeet had some of their ancestors actually in Smithsonian and the process of repatriation, because the tribe itself had different orders, they had behavioral order, they had different sects within the tribe and the repatriation process is enormously complicated and one that I don't pretend to understand.

But I do understand that it's just complicated and even the tribe itself had to go a number of rituals. Repatriation and making sure that artifacts that are important to their cultural identify, we need to pursue and we need to facilitate the return on it.

You know, if someone bought, you know, rather than being stolen, if someone bought, that something we got to work through legal framework. If someone buys something legally with every good intent that's different to someone who is pillaged and profited. I think the pillage and profiting side is absolutely without a question an area that we need to pursue.

HEINRICH:

I look forward to working with you on that.

You made the statement about water in the west and federal water projects that the Bureau of Reclamation constructs, the ministers are really critical for states all up and down the Rocky Mountains.

In New Mexico, the Navajo-Gallup Water Supply and the new pipeline projects will bring much needed water and infrastructure to parts of our state that truly deserve and need it, communities like Portales and Clovis have seen wells run dry and groundwater reserves dwindle to only a 20-year supply. In addition, many Navajo families have literally never had running water.

How are you going to ensure that the Bureau of Reclamation brings these kinds of critical infrastructure projects to completion -
- cost- effective completion?

ZINKE:

Well, first, clean water I think is a right. It's not a privilege. So we'll start there. Our water challenges particularly in the west are immense, but we're a great nation. Let's prioritize what we need to do.

Part of it -- as I've always looked at infrastructure is not an expense, but it's an investment and having an investment now will prevent a lot of heartburn, heartache and unintended consequences in the future particularly when it comes to water. And expanding recreation, Americans want to go outside we need to give them the opportunity to do it.

I go -- keep on going back to the Jobs Bill. It's very difficult, as you know, is on the House side is probably more difficult than the Senate side on some areas. Spending money in the House side is extraordinarily difficult on things.

But we're going to have to meet in the middle on making sure we have priorities set and making sure those water issues are enough of a priority -- especially when it comes to isolated areas. There's places in Montana, you know, popular (ph) that really don't have access to water any other way than to pipe it from long distances.

And population as noble (ph) tribe -- not a lot, they're not going to be able to do it on their own. So you need a system in there to do it. It's expensive -- recognizing that it is expensive and recognizing also that you don't need to over engineer everything so it's so cost prohibitive where, you know, there's new technology, there's new piping technology, let's look at innovative ways that are more cost effective.

And we need to put a little pressure on perhaps the Army Corps of Engineers to faster adapt standards on some lacing, especially piping when it comes to water so we get there -- that a better price.

MURKOWSKI:

Thank you, Senator Heinrich.

Senator Barrasso.

BARRASSO:

Thank you, Madam Chairman.

Last Wednesday, final days of the Obama administration, the BLM released a report detailing their review of the federal coal program. The report laid out a roadmap for administrative action.

The problem is this, the environmental impact statement on the federal coal program has not yet even been completed. So the Obama administration once again shows its hands demonstrating that they believe the facts shouldn't get in the way of their pre-determined outcome.

So just as a comment from me, I am very hopeful that the Department of Interior, under your direction once confirmed, will operate differently under you and the new administration.

A lot of this hearing today concerned things that we're able to repeal, rollback, otherwise, eliminate. But as secretary of the Interior, you're going to have the opportunity -- an incredible opportunity to create a real culture of change in an agency that I believe desperately needs it.

And while the Department of Interior houses the BLM, the Bureau of Reclamation, Fish and Wildlife and others, the Forest Service is part of the Department of Agriculture and we talked and Senator Wyden brought up the issue earlier today about forestry, about fire borrowings. Senator Cantwell and I held a hearing in Seattle about the issues of wildfire and the concerns.

So given that so given that so many of the forested lands are outside of the Department of Interior's control, what would you do as secretary of Interior to improve forest health on lands in your jurisdiction and how can we coordinate efforts with the Department of Agriculture and the forest chief?

ZINKE:

Well, upfront, I think we need to look at the Forest Service and our land management policies and have the discussion about what is the best method of managing our lands.

As you go out west the check report system, when it was put in, you know, and there was a reason why Ag has Forest Service at that time, I think we need to reevaluate it and look at what's the best method to make sure we have efficiency, making sure our fire policy is consistent between BLM land and Forest Service land, making sure our access is consistent between Forest Service and BLM.

You know, in Montana, we have a lot of the Canadian border and it turns out the Forest Service doesn't even give a key to the Homeland Security guys to do a security run along a road on the border. So even between the agencies, there's a cultural roadblock to work with each other, even when it comes to borrowing set of keys to go on a road.

So I think everything should be on the table and again, I talked about a roadmap for the next 100 years or over the next 100 years. Let's be bold, that's not coming with agendas. That's coming with where we want to be hundred years from now on our public lands.

And there's certain things we're going to agree on. I think there's going to be a lot more we're going to agree on and disagree. But on those things, we can agree let's look at a roadmap going forward and have the discussion.

BARRASSO:

You know, you may be familiar with President Obama's 2015 presidential memorandum on mitigation. The memorandum called for new mitigation policies from the Department of Interior and Fish and Wildlife Service.

Last May, a Wyoming rancher came, sat here, testified before this committee on one of those policies, the one focused on compensatory mitigation and basically he called it amounted to extortion.

So are you going to commit to revisiting the department's various mitigation policies to ensure that future requirements are more practical?

ZINKE:

I'm going to have a very, very busy, if confirmed and I'll work with every state because you matter, Wyoming matters and every state matters. And if there's policies that are perceived as punitive that are working in your state, my obligation is to work with you because you matter.

Wyoming matters, Alaska matters, Washington matters, West Virginia matters and New Mexico matters, not only members of this committee, but Congress matters. And on my opening statement, I meant what I said about the arch for the benefit and enjoyment of the people.

I also absolutely meant when I said it was erected by Congress -- by an act of the Congress, that's an important point that we need to go back to about making sure you represent your great state and your constituency and that should be respected in our policies.

BARRASSO:

And in terms of being very busy and what matters, I'm going to tell you, as a former chairman of the Indian Affairs Committee, former chairman of the -- the three of us have been former chairman of the Indian Affairs Committee, I think that it's going to require -- the Bureau of Indian Affairs is going to require significant attention from the next secretary of Interior.

I think I get an agreement here, we have also seen how a culture of dysfunction within the BIA has real disastrous human implications. So I appreciate your efforts there as well.

And, Madam Chairman, I see my time has expired so Senator Heinrich and I will come together and compose written questions regarding Smokey the Bear, Yogi Bear, and the Teddy Bear. So we'll submit those. Thank you.

Thank you, Madam Chairman.

MURKOWSKI:

Thank you, Senator Barrasso.

Senator Manchin.

MANCHIN:

Thank you, Madam Chairman.

Thank you, Congressman, for being here and putting yourself on the line. I appreciate it very much. And also I want to commend you for having bipartisan introduction, now that didn't that often.

ZINKE:

Well, thank you and...

MANCHIN:

I don't know if you want to call me on that one or not.

ZINKE:

Well, you know, I'm glad because I have support -- hopefully, I have support, you know, bipartisan, but I think that's what we need for this job because the job isn't Republican or Democrat, it's America.

MANCHIN:

Right.

ZINKE:

This job, it's also...

MANCHIN:

Let me say the word, you came and visit me and we had a great visit and great talk about things we've hope for that are near and dear to us, you know. Also you promised that you would come to the state of West Virginia.

ZINKE:

Yes, sir.

MANCHIN:

And I also noticed everyone else asked for the same, so I need to know in what order?

(LAUGHTER)

ZINKE:

My -- well, my first order is the great state of Utah and then there's some real -- the SEAL call the five-meter targets. Up close, we have problem out North Dakota because that could go bad in a number of different ways. We have a problem in basically the great state of Utah and Alaska is always important to me.

MANCHIN:

I still don't know where I -- I'm anywhere in the packing order, but I know...

ZINKE:

West Virginia is an easy drive.

MANCHIN:

I know you're coming. I know that. Now let me talk about the Stream Protection Rule because I think that a lot of times, especially coming from the state of West Virginia and extraction state like Montana, a lot of people think we don't care about the Clean Water Act or the Clean Air Act, Safe Drinking Water Act and many other laws and -- that have been fundamental in improving all of our lives and I want everyone to know that there's no way to rolling back any of those.

But there's some of these that's just so far reaching and make no sense whatsoever. I can't even get some people to tell me what the definition of a stream is. So if you can get me a little bit just quickly as your Stream Protection, what's your position on using the Review Act, CRA (inaudible) this regulation?

ZINKE:

Well, thank you for the question. It is important to me and oddly enough as I was reviewing the transcript from Secretary Jewell as she came in before this Committee, one of the questions was, can you define a stream. So that is a question.

The Stream Protection Rule in my mind is about water. All of us should agree that we want clean water and all of us should also recognize that geology is different. As a geologist, the geology in Appalachia is much, much different.

And a policy about stream protection, when it's looked at specifically on the Appalachians, I think quite frankly we can do better. This is where one size doesn't fit all.

We're going to make sure that if we're going to mine, drill, harvest that we want to do it right. Protection of water is -- has to be a priority with it. So there are ways absolutely -- to make sure absolutely that we do it right and protect our water. And I'm willing to work with you...

MANCHIN:

But the stream should have water in it, right?

ZINKE:

The stream should have water. Interconnectivity...

MANCHIN:

That's -- it all helps.

ZINKE:

Yes. In a subsurface connectivity movement of water and again, you can isolate different areas. When they talk about runoff, what is runoff if it's captured in a holding pond, what is runoff during a storm drain.

These are issues you can take it too far in every case where it becomes punitive and you're not going to get anything done.

MANCHIN:

You can imagine in our state with the terrain that we have -- topography that we have, how difficult is to do anything. You can't even build a house. If they want to shut you down, they can shut you down everything.

It's just absolutely so onerous it's just ridiculous and I'm glad to hear that you...

ZINKE:

And I've climbed on Seneca Rocks and been the...

(CROSSTALK)

MANCHIN:

So I got one more -- when on release, the banning mine AML money, banning mine reclamation and that's under (inaudible) that's one of the biggest things you have. Since 1977, there's been \$10.5 billion in fees from coal production, OK, \$10.5 billion.

Eight billion of that has been distributed as grants to states and tribes, to land and water reclamation projects administered by the OSM and the UMWA retiree plans. There's still large amount of high priority sites that remain in the OSM's inventory that must be reclaimed.

So I want to ask your opinion on AML, the way it's been distributed and should that money be used for the purpose it was designed to be used for, all coal related or should it be able to use by states for other things that basically are not coal related?

ZINKE:
Great question.

MANCHIN:
Since all the money comes from coal.

ZINKE:
Right. And this is the same argument with Land and Water Conservation Fund that we both support.

MANCHIN:
Sure.

ZINKE:
I think when the revenue storage is narrowed and used outside of that, I think there's a legitimate argument about that. Our Montana -- from a Montana congressman perspective, we have hundreds of mines that were mined during the turn of the 18th or 19th century, that our reclamation list of going through and cleaning up the sites is long.

So that fund that has been used to clean up sites in Nevada and I'm sure New Mexico most of it. So there is absolutely a requirement to clean it up.

The discussion should be I think how do we appropriate the funds correctly. So one industry doesn't bear the full burden as in the Land and Water Conservation Fund offshore bears almost entire burden of revenue yet the funds don't go along the coast.

Should hard rock mining, you know, also contribute to that? Should....

MANCHIN:
They don't pay anything.

ZINKE:
And this is where we need to have the discussion and this is where I have to -- I should work with you because this is a change in the law. The law should be fair. It should be appropriate.

But we all have to recognize that reclamation of these sites is incredibly important because these sites often times -- and we have hundreds of sites in Montana, I do not know what the inventory is nationwide, but I'm sure in every state there's probably something that we need to attend to.

MANCHIN:
Well, let me just say I want to thank you for your testimony and being so frank and direct with us, but -- and in fairness put to the system. That's all I've ever said, treat us all the same, fairness to it because some mining pays nothing, but they do receive and that's not right.

ZINKE:
And I'll...

MANCHIN:
It's all because of politics here. All because of politics. That could be changed.

ZINKE:
And I'll be glad to work with you on it because I think it needs to be fair. Our lives need to be transparent and fair.

MANCHIN:

Thank you so much, sir.

MURKOWSKI:

Thank you, Senator Manchin.

Chairman's prerogative says that we can do one more real quick -- one more quick go around. I have just two more questions and I hope it will be brief here.

But when we deal with some of the projects that have so much potential, whether it's the potential to be able to utilize the natural gas that we have in Alaska's North Slope, we're going to have to figure out the way that we move that gas to tide water, move it to the market and that will require a process.

You got to get a host of timely issued federal environmental permits. The longer the delay for the permits, the more expensive the project is. So I'd like your commitment to be working with us not only for projects like the Alaska LNG Project, but also recognizing that when it comes to our domestic mineral production, we're sitting dead last in the amount of time it takes to get to yes or no answers to get these permits for our domestic minerals production.

And I think we recognized, we talked a lot about the vulnerability that we have as a nation, looking to other nations for oil and relying on oil. Well, we're headed that same direction when it comes to minerals because we need the minerals that will make things like this or the vehicles or the wind turbines that we're relying on for renewable energy.

But this permitting process that we're dealing with can often times just end up being this dead zone where the cost pile on, the projects get delayed and folks give up.

So I'd like your focus, your muscle behind ensuring that we have a fair process that it is an expeditious process and one that really works efficiently because so much of the frustrations, so much of this lack of trust you've talking about, I think some esteems from much of what people see that they term bureaucratic delay and unnecessary red tape.

ZINKE:

Well, I agree and when the process becomes arbitrary and we talked about taxpayer value. When you're bidding on a piece of property to either mine or drill and that value is significantly reduced because of uncertainty, the taxpayer doesn't get its full value on it.

So on a permitting process, it has to be fair. It has -- it can't be arbitrary, but there has to -- I'm not going to certainty, but certainly you -- when you're bidding on a project, the value of that bid is in the basis that you can execute it. And when there's no certainty of execution then as a taxpayer we don't get the right price for it.

So our permitting process is broke. It is somewhat to be -- it's somewhat arbitrary and I do think we need to focus on it. But it needs to be fair and it needs to be a process where NEPA considerations do need to be taken because we all want the same thing. I'm hopeful that we do. We all want clean air, clean water and make sure that we understand consequences.

MURKOWSKI:

I look forward to working with you on that.

Last question, the current secretary of the Interior knew that she could not come in to this committee room without me asking a question about the status of her effort to assist to some -- close to some thousand people that live in the little Aleut community of King Cove and how we are going to make sure that they too have access to what most Americans would consider just an essential part of living and that is access to a life-saving road that could get them out in the event of medical emergency.

The fine people of King Cove have been fighting this fight for over three decades. They have been let down repeatedly by their federal government. They do not trust their federal government because repeatedly, they have been told that there is higher value to the animals and the birds than there is to their human life.

That's pretty hard. So I'm going to ask you, recognizing the federal trust obligation that you have as you begin this new role, recognizing that you have clear compassion for our native people, I'm asking you to do everything that you possibly can to work with us to reopen, review this decision that has led to a rejection of this life- saving road.

ZINKE:

You have my absolute commitment that I will restore trust and work with you on this issue because it's important.

MURKOWSKI:

Thank you.

ZINKE:

I didn't know where King Cove was before I was nominated for the job. I know where it is now.

MURKOWSKI:

I'd like to take you out there when we open a road and you'll know it firsthand.

ZINKE:

I can't wait to meet the great people of -- the thousand people of King Cove.

MURKOWSKI:

They're beautiful.

ZINKE:

I know where it is in the map. Now I don't know the ground, but I look forward to being there.

MURKOWSKI:

Thank you. Thank you.

Senator Cantwell.

CANTWELL:

Thank you, Madam Chair.

A couple of last issues and again, thanks to your family for sustaining what probably is going to be a four-hour hearing, but these are important land issues for our nation and we thank you for your willingness to serve.

The Bureau of Reclamation is already funding critical work on what's called the Yakima Basin project. It is funding fish passage and reclamation and water conservation projects and I want to get your commitment to continue the work of and recommendations of the Bureau on the outcome on basin project on its innovation and conservation and like the same understanding that you gave to my colleague, that these water issues are not your marks, they are moving forward on serious drought issues for our nation.

ZINKE:

Thank you. I think you have a wonderful staff because I have begun to be familiar with the issue and I look forward to work with you on it because this is important.

Montana is not that far away and issues of water, the Snake River begins -- drainage begins at Montana all the way across the Columbia, I get it and I'm looking forward to working with you and making sure it's done.

CANTWELL:

Thank you. I appreciate that.

You mentioned the, you know, efforts of your agencies, USGS specifically on the science side and one of the key interest of the Pacific Northwest unfortunately after an incredible very unfortunate disaster (inaudible) where 43 people were killed, the notion of LIDAR, being able to use light detection ranging as a key way of looking at landslide possibilities.

Will you continue to push LIDAR funding as part of your next budget request for USGS?

ZINKE:

I will. I have to review it because there are some emerging technologies particularly in the UAVs that actually maybe better suited. But I'm committed to making sure we have the right data.

CANTWELL:

OK.

ZINKE:

This specific method of how we get there I think there's a discussion as technology goes forward. There's some promising technology on survey.

CANTWELL:

I like the fact that you're committed to ongoing technology to help us on these issues. I think technology is emerging that's going to give us a much clear picture about both drought and its impact and warming conditions on fire and our water resource issues and I think it can help us greatly. So I'm glad you're willing to use that.

The Spokane Equitable Settlement Compensation is also that's been in the Department of Interior. It's literally passed both the House and Senate. It's been supported by the last agency and previous secretaries. Will you take a look at this and look at ways to support the Spokane Tribe on their settlement for the construction of dams that caused flooding in the region taking away their opportunities?

ZINKE:

I look forward to looking at it. I choose to shop at Devon Mercier in Spokane so I'm familiar with the area, but I'm not familiar with the specific thing, but I look forward to looking at it.

CANTWELL:

OK. Thank you.

MURKOWSKI:

Senator Heinrich, a final question?

HEINRICH:

Congressman, I know you're a passionate sportsman. It's one of the things I like about you. I think mentioned in our meeting that I spent four days with my two sons over the holidays on one of the Department of Interior's BLM Wilderness Study Areas and I'm proud to say on that trip, my 13-year-old took his first elk and I think both boys will never forget that trip.

But I suspect if Montana is like New Mexico, you've also experienced losing legal access to public land, experienced the -- what is like to drive up on a maintained road that you always knew is there and find for the first time a locked gate.

I have a bill called the HUNT Act to help address this kind of issue and I'm not going to ask you about my bill. But I will ask you to commit to working with me on those kinds of access issues that have really moved to the forefront of concerns by sportsman up and down the Rocky Mountain West.

ZINKE:

I will absolutely. And in my opening remarks, I specifically mentioned access for a reason. I'm concerned and I'm concerned that not only our generation, but our next generation who continuously sees closed roads, fences and lack of access. So traditional hunting and fishing almost are positioned as an elite sport.

HEINRICH:

I think I've seen a television show filmed in your state where Randy Newberg in order to access BLM land literally had to rent a helicopter to get dropped in because over the years, access to the private lands around had been cut off and I think it's something we need to just understand the scale of so that we can come up with strategies either through, you know, for example, using LWCF for easements as supposed to outright land purchases or other strategies to make sure that we don't have public land that the public can't use.

ZINKE:

I agree with you. I think Americans should not be locked out of their national treasures and we're seeing that more and more that access is becoming more difficult and restrained and that -- and I share your concern with it.

HEINRICH:

Thank you, Chairman.

MURKOWSKI:

Thank you, Senator Heinrich.

Senator Manchin.

MANCHIN:

One final question, Congressman, your jurisdiction is over an awful lot of timber land and national parks, wildlife refuge, fish and wildlife.

Our newly sworn-in -- newly inaugurated Governor Jim Justice yesterday was giving a speech, very interesting, West Virginia is one of the most covered forest states in the nation and we have an awful lot of environments about -- environmentalists who are upset with the CO2 which we're doing everything we can with technology; however, we use our energy.

What they failed to recognize is that we have an awful lot of timber that's not going harvested and by not having select timber harvesting, you cut this tree down and you make this right here, the carbon inside here restored is not going anywhere. You let that tree fall and it will decay and rot like some people want, CO2 is all omitted (ph), every bit of it.

And I know it's a big thing what we can't cut here and we can't go in here and we're omitting so much CO2 into the air. They're very concerned if we burn one month of coal, my God, shut it down.

But don't let the timber just rot and go to waste without ever trying to use it for productive and also the environmental consequences. And I don't know what we're -- how we're managing and do we have select timber harvesting and things of that sort in the government properties that you're over.

ZINKE:

Well, currently, I would say that management policy has been fire and I'm...

(CROSSTALK)

ZINKE:

... for management by catastrophic fire. That's the group that believes that we should naturally manage by a natural regulation. I'm going to advocate for healthy resilient forest...

MANCHIN:

Do you think if we got the environment -- really, really good environmentalists, concerned environmentalists together and they could see scientifically what's happening that they might be able to work with you or are you willing to try and go down that path or...

ZINKE:

I think for most of Americans we want good policy.

MANCHIN:

Yes.

ZINKE:

There's extremes on both sides that simply won't negotiate. There's extreme on both the right and left that simply are driven and they are not negotiable in their views.

I think anyone who serves the country, serves (inaudible) and within, you know, the public, there are broad views but you look at what the best policy is.

And I think, you know, we ought to look at, you know, my wife and I and family spent some time in Germany. They have different management policies. Canada has different management policies to their forest.

We have great people that go to the forestry programs, but they're frustrated, too. I've talked to the forest rangers that they feel like they don't have the tools and they don't have the authority to manage the forest (inaudible) healthy and they're too concerned about even removing dead and dying timber...

MANCHIN:

I know.

ZINKE:

... when the Forest Service is 71 million acres behind and just removing dead and dying timber, something has gone wrong.

MANCHIN:

And here's the thing, he -- in his speech yesterday, he made it so crystal clear and he held up a piece of wood and he says -- and in the podium he was speaking and he says, a lot of CO2 here, but it's right here. He says, everything you all make as waste and let fall and let nature take its course, he (inaudible) to the air and he says, so someone is going to make a decision pretty soon.

Thank you, sir.

MURKOWSKI:

Senator Manchin, thank you.

Representative Zinke, thank you. Thank you for being here today. Thank you for your willingness to serve. We thank you and we thank your family because public service, you are the face, but we know that the family stand behind you, allow you to be that public servant.

So to all of the family, thank you. Mrs. Zinke and to the family, to these granddaughters in the back, you get gold stars for absolute best behavior. Yes.

(APPLAUSE)

And we thank you for supporting your grandpa in such a good way. We appreciate that.

I do thank the members of the committee. We had great participation this afternoon and the questions were truly broad ranging, but I think you can tell, Congressman, this is a committee that likes to get in to the real meat of the issues, the policies.

We try to do good work. We try to do work here on a very cooperative, collaborative bipartisan basis and should you be confirmed as I believe you will be, we look forward to continuing a dialogue that is really very open and one that is designed to be collaborative and bipartisan and so we would welcome that.

I'd like to remind my colleagues, we have agreed that members may submit additional questions for the record. We kind of held it open for another couple of hours. So let's just say by 8:30 this evening, all QFRs would be in.

I would also ask unanimous consent to submit several letters of support for Representative Zinke for the record of this hearing that we have received. We'd ask that members submit any of their own to our chief clerk, to Darla Ripchensky.

And with that, again, we thank you and the committee stands adjourned.

CQ Transcriptions, Jan. 17, 2017 **List of Panel Members and Witnesses**

PANEL MEMBERS:

SEN. LISA MURKOWSKI, R-ALASKA CHAIRMAN

SEN. JOHN BARRASSO, R-WYO.

SEN. JIM RISCH, R-IDAHO

SEN. MIKE LEE, R-UTAH

SEN. JOHN HOEVEN, R-N.D.

SEN. ROB PORTMAN, R-OHIO

SEN. JEFF FLAKE, R-ARIZ.

SEN. LAMAR ALEXANDER, R-TENN.

SEN. BILL CASSIDY, R-LA.

SEN. SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO, R-W.VA.

SEN. CORY GARDNER, R-COLO.

SEN. STEVE DAINES, R-MONT.

SEN. JEFF SESSIONS, R-ALA.

SEN. MARIA CANTWELL, D-WASH. RANKING MEMBER

SEN. RON WYDEN, D-ORE.

SEN. DEBBIE STABENOW, D-MICH.

SEN. AL FRANKEN, D-MINN.

SEN. JOE MANCHIN III, D-W.VA.

SEN. MARTIN HEINRICH, D-N.M.

SEN. MAZIE K. HIRONO, D-HAWAII

SEN. ELIZABETH WARREN, D-MASS.

SEN. CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO, D-NEV.

SEN. TAMMY DUCKWORTH, D-ILL.

SEN. BERNARD SANDERS, I-VT.

SEN. ANGUS KING, I-MAINE

WITNESSES:

SEN. JON TESTER, D-MONT.

REP. RYAN ZINKE, R-MONT., NOMINATED TO BE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR

From: Domenech, Douglas
To: [Scott Hommel](#); [James Cason](#); [Daniel Jorjani](#)
Subject: Fwd: Senate Update
Date: Tuesday, February 14, 2017 3:46:49 PM

Doug Domenech
Senior Advisor
US Department of the Interior

From: "Suarez, Erica (McConnell)" <Erica_Suarez@mcconnell.senate.gov>

Date: February 14, 2017 at 11:51:58 AM EST
To: "Suarez, Erica (McConnell)" <Erica_Suarez@mcconnell.senate.gov>
Subject: Senate Update

Good morning,

The Senate convened at **10:00 am today** and voted at 11 am on the confirmation of **Linda E. McMahon, of Connecticut, to be Administrator of the Small Business Administration (confirmed, 81-19)**.

ICYMI: Last night the Senate confirmed **Mnuchin to Treasury (53-47)** and **Shulkin to VA (100-0)**.

The Senate has now proceeded to a **Congressional Review Act Resolution of Disapproval (H.J. Res. 40 re: SSA/ NICS database)** – there are 10 hours of debate, equally divided.

Also last night, **Leader McConnell filed cloture on the following nominations:**

- Mick Mulvaney to be Director of the OMB
- Scott Pruitt to be Administrator of the EPA
- Wilbur Ross to be Secretary of Commerce
- Ryan Zinke to be Secretary of the Interior
- Ben Carson to be Secretary of Housing and Urban Development
- Rick Perry to be Secretary of Energy

Timeline: The cloture vote on the Mulvaney nomination would occur under the regular order one hour after the Senate comes into session on Wednesday (so as early as 1 am tonight). If this cloture vote attains a simple majority, up to 30 hours of post-cloture debate time will follow. At the end of post-cloture debate, the Senate would then vote on confirmation of Mulvaney, followed by a cloture vote on EPA nominee Pruitt, and then up to 30 hours of post-cloture debate,

and so on...

Looking Ahead:

Nominations and Resolutions of Disapproval under the Congressional Review Act (for rules finalized between June 13, 2016 and January 19, 2017)

Please read several resources below from Leader McConnell.

Happy Valentine's Day!

Erica

Erica Soares

Policy Advisor

Office of the Majority Leader

U.S. Senator Mitch McConnell

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For Immediate Release, Tuesday, February 14, 2017
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Release: <http://bit.ly/2ILX6iC>

YouTube: <http://bit.ly/2IGCIYR>

**Senate Democrats Causing Slowest Cabinet
Confirmation Process in Modern History**

'It's left several key departments without a permanent secretary at the helm for far too long. And what's the point other than needless delay? Our friends are slow-walking votes, not changing outcomes.'

WASHINGTON, D.C. —U.S. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) delivered the following remarks today on the Senate floor regarding several of President Trump's remaining Cabinet nominees:

"Over the past several weeks we've seen unprecedented obstruction from our colleagues across the aisle. It's made the confirmation of this president's nominees the slowest in modern history. It's left several key departments without a permanent secretary at the helm for far too long.

"And what's the point other than needless delay? Our friends are slow-walking votes, not changing outcomes. Well, we took several important steps last night to move the nominations process forward.

"First, we confirmed Steven Mnuchin as Treasury Secretary. After eight years of failing economic policies, stagnant growth, and a tough job market, it's clear we need a new direction to get our country back on track.

"We need a new direction on regulations — smarter and pro-growth. We need a new direction on taxes — simpler and pro-jobs. And, if we're going to accomplish either of those goals, we're going to need new leadership at the helm of the Treasury Department. Secretary Mnuchin has real-world understanding of the private-sector, and he's ready to work with both sides to get the economy moving.

"Second, we confirmed Dr. David Shulkin as Secretary of Veterans Affairs. The debt we owe our servicemembers and their families extends far beyond any program or benefit that the government can provide.

"But through the VA, we should be doing everything we can to fulfill our commitments to veterans and their families — like the more than 300,000 veterans who call Kentucky home. Secretary Shulkin will be tasked with overseeing that our veterans in Kentucky and across the nation receive quality and timely care. This is a heavy burden, but he seems up to the task.

"The Chairman of the Veterans' Affairs Committee, Senator Isakson, has a well-deserved reputation for working tirelessly on behalf of our veterans, which makes it notable that his committee voted unanimously to recommend Dr. Shulkin to the full Senate. The full Senate just confirmed him unanimously too. I'm confident that Secretary Shulkin will work with Congress to build on the progress we've already made in expanding accessibility and improving accountability at the VA.

"Third, I took the necessary procedural steps last night to allow us to confirm the rest of the nominees on the calendar.

"Like Rep. Mick Mulvaney — nominee for Director of the Office of Management and Budget — who can help get our nation back on track fiscally.

"Scott Pruitt — nominee for Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency — who can bring much-needed change after eight years of heavy-handed, job-killing regulations.

"Wilbur Ross — nominee for Commerce Secretary — who can help promote job creation and

economic growth.

“Rep. Ryan Zinke — nominee for Interior Secretary — who can help improve our nation’s land use and conservation policies.

“Dr. Ben Carson — nominee for Housing and Urban Development Secretary — who can help reform HUD to better serve the American people.

“And Gov. Rick Perry — nominee for Energy Secretary — who can help guide us toward smarter energy policies that grow our economy and strengthen national security.

“Beginning with Rep. Mulvaney, we can get each of these nominees confirmed soon. With cooperation from across the aisle, we can put them to work for the American people even sooner. We’ll be able to put another important nominee to work just this morning — one who understands how to help businesses flourish.

“The last eight years have been very difficult for our economy, for workers, and for small businesses. I’m confident that the president’s pick to lead the Small Business Administration, Linda McMahon, will prioritize growing jobs over growing government bureaucracy. In so many states, including mine, that’s a welcome change of pace from Washington.

“Small businesses help drive America’s economy and they help drive Kentucky’s economy as well. Almost half of all the private sector jobs in Kentucky — about 700,000 — come from the more than 340,000 small businesses across the commonwealth. These small businesses not only grow the economy, they also serve important roles in our communities.

“Mrs. McMahon, who built a company from the ground up, understands the many challenges small businesses can face. She’s certainly come a long way from sharing a desk with her husband and leasing a typewriter. I commend her for her willingness to serve her country and look forward to confirming her later this morning.”

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For Immediate Release, Monday, February 13, 2017
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Release: <http://bit.ly/2kM6OD8>

YouTube: <http://bit.ly/2l8BPIC>

Senate Democrats Should Follow The ‘Ginsburg Standard’ and Not A ‘Double Standard’ in Considering the Gorsuch Nomination

‘This new “special test” and “special obligation” aren’t about ensuring Judge Gorsuch’s judicial independence; they are about compromising it.’

WASHINGTON, D.C. –U.S. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) delivered the following remarks today on the Senate floor on the need for cooperation between Republicans and Democrats in confirming the president’s SCOTUS nominee, Judge Neil Gorsuch:

“When President Clinton took office in 1993, he named his first nominee to the Supreme Court: Ruth Bader Ginsburg. Ginsburg’s nomination was not without controversy. She had argued for positions that are still quite controversial today.

“For example, she had questioned the constitutionality of laws against bigamy because they implicated private relationships. For the same reason, she had opined that there might be a constitutional right to prostitution. She also had advocated for co-educational prisons and juvenile facilities. And she had even proposed abolishing Mother’s Day.

“So you can understand why Senators wanted to get her views on issues that might come before her as a Justice. But, when pressed at her confirmation hearing, here’s what she said:

“You are well aware that I came to this proceeding to be judged as a judge, not as an advocate. Because I am and hope to continue to be a judge, it would be wrong for me to say or preview in this legislative chamber how I would cast my vote on questions the Supreme Court may be called upon to decide. Were I to rehearse here what I would say and how I would reason on such questions, I would act injudiciously. Judges in our system are bound to decide concrete cases, not abstract issues.’ She went on, ‘a judge sworn to decide impartially can offer no forecasts, no hints, for that would show not only disregard for the specifics of the particular case, it would display disdain for the entire judicial process.’

“So summing it up, Mr. President, she said no hints, no forecasts, no previews. That’s what became known as the Ginsburg Standard. Supreme Court nominees of presidents of both parties have adhered to it. For example, President Clinton’s second nominee, Stephen Breyer, noted that ‘there is nothing more important to a judge than to have an open mind and to listen carefully to the arguments,’ and so, he told the Judiciary Committee, he did ‘not want to predict or commit myself on an open issue that I feel is going to come up in the Court.’ That meant, he said, not discussing ‘how’ a ‘right applies, where it applies, under what circumstances’ it applies.

“When his nomination to be Chief Justice was pending, John Roberts said that adhering to the principle embodied in the Ginsburg Standard is ‘of great importance not only to potential Justices but to judges,’ which most nominees to the Supreme Court are. ‘We’re sensitive,’ he said, ‘to the need to maintain the independence and integrity of the Court.’ Let me repeat that. The Chief Justice said this principle was necessary ‘to maintain the independence and integrity of the Court.’ He then explained how the Ginsburg Standard helps maintain that independence: Nominees, he said, ‘go on the Court not as a delegate from [the Judiciary] Committee with certain commitments laid out and how they’re going to approach cases.’

“Rather, ‘[T]hey go on the Court as Justices who will approach cases with an open mind and decide those cases in light of the arguments presented, the record presented, and the rule of law. And the litigants before them,’ he concluded, ‘have a right to expect that and to have the appearance of that as well. That has been the approach that all of the Justices have taken.’

"Now, at the time, my colleague from New York and other Senate Democrats were upset that the Chief Justice followed Justice Ginsburg's approach — even though many of them didn't complain when she refused to preview or prejudge legal issues during her own confirmation hearing. But guess who came to his defense? Justice Ginsburg. She felt compelled to depart from protocol and weigh in on the matter. She said 'Judge Roberts was unquestionably right' in refusing to preview or prejudge legal issues at his confirmation hearing.

"Both of President Obama's nominees adhered to the Ginsburg Standard as well. His first nominee, Sonia Sotomayor, explained that what her 'experience on the trial court and the appellate court have reinforced for me is that the process of judging is a process of keeping an open mind. It's the process,' she continued, 'of not coming to a decision with a prejudgment ever of an outcome...' That process, she said, applied not only to cases that could come before her on the Supreme Court if she were confirmed, but that could come before her in her then-current capacity as a circuit court judge.

"Most Senators, of both parties, have respected the Ginsburg Standard. For example, during her hearing, Senator Leahy told Justice Ginsburg that he 'certainly' didn't want her 'to have to lay out a test here in the abstract which might determine what [her] vote or [her] test would be in a case [she had] yet to see that may well come before the Supreme Court.' And even my friend from New York has recognized that the Ginsburg standard is a 'grand tradition.' But the Far Left has been pushing him and other Senate Democrats to oppose anyone whom the President nominates to the Supreme Court. So the Ginsburg Standard has given way to the Double Standard.

"My friend from New York now says that this Supreme Court nominee has to pass some 'special test' to show his judicial independence. He says Judge Gorsuch, a highly respected, experienced jurist, must preview his approach or even prejudge legal issues that could come before him, like whether the president's executive order on refugee vetting is 'constitutional.' This is clearly an effort to get Judge Gorsuch to prejudge not on a matter that could be in the federal courts, but to prejudge on a matter that is in the federal courts right now.

"Senator Schumer is not alone in wanting to replace the Ginsburg Standard with a new Double Standard. His colleague who serves on the Judiciary Committee, the senior Senator from Connecticut, also says that Judge Gorsuch, for the first time with Supreme Court nominees, has some 'special obligation' to give his views on 'specific issues,' without the benefit of the judicial process that Justice Sotomayor noted was so important.

"Under our colleagues' approach, there is no need to review the record in the case. No need to do any legal research. No need to hear the best arguments from each side. No need to deliberate with your colleagues on the bench to arrive at the correct result. Nope. Just give a drive-by legal conclusion on a complicated, and consequential, matter of constitutional law.

"Mr. President, let's be clear about what's going on here. This new 'special test' and 'special obligation' aren't about ensuring Judge Gorsuch's judicial independence; they are about compromising it. Our friends on the other side of the aisle want to constrain his ability to rule in a later case according to the facts and the law by holding him to what he said in their meetings or what he said under oath at his hearing. So in the upside down world of my Democratic friends, Judge Gorsuch must lose his judicial independence — both as a sitting circuit court judge and as a future Supreme Court Justice — in order to prove his judicial independence.

"As Justice Ginsburg and Justice Breyer and Justice Sotomayor all noted, the process of judging is about having an open mind, seeing what the facts are in a particular case, hearing the arguments on both sides, and making what the judge believes is the correct ruling according to the law. It's not about a judge hemming himself in before a legislative body by previewing how he would view a legal issue, or as Senator Leahy noted, announcing the legal test he might apply in a particular case. And it's definitely not about that judge saying whether something in the abstract is constitutional.

"So under this Double Standard, Senators must respect the need for judicial independence of the Supreme Court nominees of Democratic Presidents, even when those nominees espouse views that are far outside the mainstream, like suggesting there is a constitutional right to prostitution and urging the abolition of Mother's Day.

"But under this Double Standard, Senators can compromise the judicial independence of clearly mainstream Supreme Court nominees of Republican Presidents, even when those nominees are, like Judge Gorsuch, well-known proponents of maintaining judicial independence who have a long record on the issue. And that's not just my view of Judge Gorsuch's commitment to judicial independence, by the way, that's according to prominent Democrat lawyers, like President Obama's top litigator in the Supreme Court.

"This Democrat Double Standard, though, is not surprising. Recall that the Democratic Leader said he was prepared to keep Justice Scalia's seat open for four years. That was made difficult by the nomination of an outstanding candidate in Judge Gorsuch. So our colleague came up with a new, super-majority standard for his confirmation — a standard that didn't exist for seven of the eight justices currently on the Court, a fact my friend later had to admit. The Democrat Double Standard on requiring nominees to prejudge issues is just the latest attempt to come up with something, with anything, to justify opposing an exceptional nominee in Judge Gorsuch.

"Judge Gorsuch is one of the most impressive, most highly qualified nominees to come before us. He's won kudos from across the political spectrum. Even the top Democrat on the Judiciary Committee couldn't help but praise him. Instead of appreciating that our new president has nominated an accomplished, independent, and thoughtful jurist, Democrats are viewing this outstanding nominee as a political problem. Their base is demanding total resistance to everything. But they can't find a good reason to oppose Judge Gorsuch on the merits. They're in a pickle.

"So we have this attempt to replace the bipartisan Ginsburg Standard with a Democrat Double Standard. I understand the difficulty of their situation. But the standard we're going to follow with this nominee is the same one we've followed for Ruth Bader Ginsburg and every other Justice on the Court since then. No hints. No forecasts. No previews. Fair consideration. And an up-or-down vote."

###



Contact:

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<http://bit.ly/2IBCxZ6>

The 'Grand Tradition' Of The Ginsburg Standard

No Hints, No Forecasts, No Previews... And No Special Obligations

THE GINSBURG STANDARD: ‘Judge ... Are Bound To Decide Concrete Cases, Not Abstract Issues’

JUDGE RUTH BADER GINSBURG: “You are well aware that I came to this proceeding to be judged as a judge, not as an advocate. Because I am and hope to continue to be a judge, it would be wrong for me to say or preview in this legislative chamber how I would cast my vote on questions the Supreme Court may be called upon to decide. Were I to rehearse here what I would say and how I would reason on such questions, I would act injudiciously. **Judges in our system are bound to decide concrete cases, not abstract issues;** each case is based on particular facts and its decision should turn on those facts and the governing law, stated and explained in light of the particular arguments the parties or their representatives choose to present. **A judge sworn to decide impartially can offer no forecasts, no hints, for that would show not only disregard for the specifics of the particular case, it would display disdain for the entire judicial process.”** ([U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee, Hearing, 7/20/1993](#))

JUDGE STEPHEN BREYER: “Let us imagine, if I am lucky and if you find me qualified and vote to confirm me, I will be a member of the Supreme Court, and, as a member of that Court, I will consider with an open mind the cases that arise in that Court. And **there is nothing more important to a judge than to have an open mind and to listen carefully to the arguments...** I will try very hard to give you an impression, an understanding of how I think about legal problems of all different kinds. At the same time, **I do not want to predict or commit myself on an open issue that I feel is going to come up in the Court.”** ([U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee, Hearing, 7/12/1994](#))

- **FORMER SEN. STROM THURMOND (R-SC):** “Judge Breyer, it is likely that Justice Blackmun is most widely known to the public as the author of *Roe v. Wade*. What was your impression of his majority opinion in that landmark decision? In particular, give us your thoughts on where he draws the line at different points during pregnancy as it relates to the State's interest in the regulation of abortion-related services? For instance, do you agree that the first trimester of pregnancy is distinctive and that the State should not be able to prohibit abortion during that period?” **JUDGE BREYER:** “**You are asking questions, Senator, that I know are matters of enormous controversy... The questions that you are putting to me are matters of how that basic right applies, where it applies, under what circumstances. And I do not think I should go into those for the reason that those are likely to be the subject of litigation in front of the Court.”** ([U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee, Hearing, 7/12/1994](#))

JUDGE JOHN ROBERTS: “It's a matter of great importance not only to potential Justices but to judges. We're sensitive to the need to maintain the independence and integrity of the court. I think it's vitally important that nominees, to use Justice Ginsburg's words, ‘**no hints, no forecasts, no previews.**’ They go on the Court not as a delegate from this committee with certain commitments laid out and how they're going to approach cases, they go on the Court as Justices who will approach cases with an open mind and decide those cases in light of the arguments presented, the record presented and the rule of law. And **the litigants before them have a right to expect that and to have the appearance of that as well. That has been the approach that all of the Justices have taken.”** ([U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee, Hearing, 9/13/2005](#))

- **ABC'S TERRY MORAN:** “...this week, in an extraordinary statement, Justice

Ruth Bader Ginsburg, a Democrat nominated by President Clinton, took Roberts's side." JUSTICE RUTH BADER GINSBURG: "Judge Roberts was unquestionably right." (ABC's "World News Tonight," 9/29/2005)

JUDGE SAMUEL ALITO: "But the line that I have to draw, and I think every nominee, including Justice Ginsburg, has drawn, is to say that, when it comes to something that realistically could come before the Court, they can't answer about how they would decide that question. That would be a disservice to the judicial process." ([U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee, Hearing, 1/11/2006](#))

SEN. CHUCK GRASSLEY (R-IA): "Well, then maybe it would be fair for me to ask you what is your understanding of the constitutional limitations then on government entity -- any government entity taking land for public purpose?" **JUDGE SONIA SOTOMAYOR: "...As I've indicated to you, opining on a hypothetical is very, very difficult for a judge to do. And as a potential justice on the Supreme Court but, more importantly, as a Second Circuit judge still sitting, I can't engage in a question that involves hypotheses."** ([U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee, Hearing, 7/14/2009](#))

- **JUDGE SOTOMAYOR: "What my experience on the trial court and the appellate court have reinforced for me is that the process of judging is a process of keeping an open mind. It's the process of not coming to a decision with a prejudgment ever of an outcome,** and that reaching a conclusion has to start with understanding what the parties are arguing, but examining in all situations carefully the facts as they prove them or not prove them, the record as they create it, and then making a decision that is limited to what the law says on the facts before the judge." ([U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee, Hearing, 7/14/2009](#))
- **SEN. DIANNE FEINSTEIN (D-CA):** "My question to the chief justice and now to you is: do you agree with the direction the Supreme Court has moved in more narrowly, interpreting congressional authority to enact laws under the Commerce Clause? Generally, not relating to any one case." **JUDGE SOTOMAYOR: "No, I know. But the question assumes a prejudgment by me of what's an appropriate approach or not in a new case that may come before me as a Second Circuit judge or, again, if I'm fortunate enough to be a justice on the Supreme Court. So it's not a case I can answer in a broad statement."** ([U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee, Hearing, 7/14/2009](#))

SOLICITOR GENERAL ELENA KAGAN: "[T]he Senate has a very significant role to play in picking Supreme Court Justices ... and part of that is getting some sense, some feel of how a nominee approaches legal issues ... But I would say that there are limits on that. [S]ome of the limits I talked about in [a law review] article ... I mean, that article makes very clear that it would be inappropriate for a nominee to talk about how she will rule on pending cases or on cases beyond that that might come before the Court in the future." ([U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee, Hearing, 6/29/2010](#))

Senate Democrats Have Acknowledged The Importance Of The Ginsburg Standard

SEN. PAT LEAHY (D-VT), Former Judiciary Committee Chairman: “I certainly don’t want you to have to lay out a test here in the abstract which might determine what your vote or your test would be in a case you have yet to see that may well come before the Supreme Court.” ([U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee, Hearing, 7/21/1993](#))

SEN. CHUCK SCHUMER (D-NY): “There is a grand tradition that I support that you can’t ask a judge who’s nominated for a -- or a potential judge who is nominated -- for a judgeship about a specific case that might come before them.” (Sen. Schumer, Press Conference, 2/7/2017)

THE NEW DEMOCRAT DOUBLE STANDARD: ‘This New Nominee To The Supreme Court Has To Pass A Special Test,’ ‘Special Burden On This Nominee’ To ‘Be More Forthcoming With His Views On Specific Issues’

“Voters from the liberal base apoplectic over Trump’s presidency are demanding opposition at any cost.” ([“Democrats In A Vise Over Trump’s Supreme Court Pick,” AP, 2/2/17](#))

- “Democrats, pushed by their base, are under pressure to not cooperate with the new president—on anything.” ([“Donald Trump, Democrats Dig In For Fight,” Wall Street Journal, 2/1/17](#))

“Several Senate Democratic officials ... said the party’s strategy moving forward is to further raise the bar as Gorsuch asserts his judicial independence.” ([“Gorsuch’s Criticism Of Trump May Be Winning Him Democratic Support,” The Washington Post, 2/09/2017](#))

“Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer said President Trump’s Supreme Court nominee, Neil Gorsuch, ‘avoided answers like the plague’ during their meeting Tuesday. The New York Democrat told reporters he pressed Gorsuch for his views.” ([“Schumer: Supreme Court Nominee Gorsuch Avoided Answers Like The Plague,” USA Today, 2/7/17](#))

- **SCHUMER:** “This new nominee to the Supreme Court has to pass a special test, in my opinion, of true independence from the president.” (Sen. Schumer, Congressional Record, S.997, 2/9/17)
- **SCHUMER:** “...there is a special burden on this nominee to be an independent jurist...” (Sen. Schumer, Congressional Record, S.610, 2/2/17)

SEN. DICK BLUMENTHAL (D-CT): “I understand that Supreme Court nominees are expected to avoid some questions, especially about future cases. But, we are in a very unusual time. ... There is a special obligation for Judge Gorsuch to set the record straight and be more forthcoming with his views on specific issues.” ([Sen. Blumenthal, Press](#))

[Conference, 2/8/17\)](#)

- **BLUMENTHAL:** “I said to Judge Gorsuch, and I believe that ordinary a Supreme Court nominee would not be expected to comment on issues or political matters or cases to come before the court. But we're in a very unusual situation. ... **I think he has to be specific, direct, explicit.**” (CNN, 2/9/17)

Judge Gorsuch Is Following The ‘Ginsburg Standard’ Supreme Court Justices Have Embraced At Their Own Confirmation Hearings

SEN. CHUCK SCHUMER (D-NY): “**I spent a great deal of time, in our meeting asking Judge Gorsuch straight forward and direct questions...** I asked him about whether a Muslim ban could in concept be constitutional.” (Sen. Schumer, Press Conference, 2/7/17)

- “**A federal appeals court will decide whether to reinstate President Donald Trump's travel ban after a contentious hearing** in which the judges hammered away at the administration's motivations for the ban, but also directed pointed questions to an attorney for two states trying to overturn it... A ruling could come as early as Wednesday and **could be appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court.**” ([“Travel Ban Decision In Hands Of Federal Appeals Court Judges.” *The Associated Press*, 2/08/2017](#))

SEN. DICK BLUMENTHAL (D-CT): “**The biggest red flag for me was his lack of specificity in response to a number of my questions. For example, on Roe v. Wade... he was less specific than I thought he should be.**” (MSNBC, 2/9/17)

###

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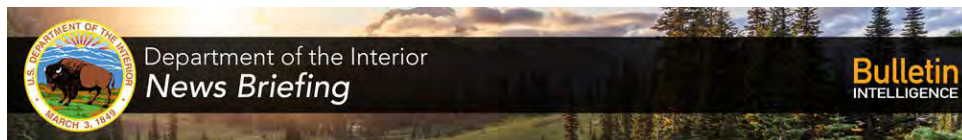
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DOI In The News

Zinke Among Next Batch Of Cabinet Nominees To Receive Senate Vote.

The "Morning Energy" blog of [Politico](#) (2/14) reported Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell formally "teed up final votes on the nominations of Scott Pruitt to run EPA, Rick Perry's selection to lead DOE and Rep. Ryan Zinke's pick for Interior" Monday night, "but the exact timing of votes remains fluid, as Democrats could use procedural rules to draw the process out for more than a week." Zinke received the fourth position, while "Perry holds the sixth and last spot among the current batch to move forward."

[E&E Daily](#) (2/14) reports Democrats haven't signaled yet "how they will handle the nominations" of Zinke and Perry, though many have made their opposition on Pruitt known.

Additional coverage was provided the [Bozeman \(MT\) Daily Chronicle](#) (2/14, Carter), [Sputnik News](#) (2/15), [KTVH-TV Helena \(MT\)](#) Helena, MT (2/14, Dennison), and [KTVQ-TV Billings \(MT\)](#) Billings, MT (2/14, Dennison).

US News Posts Facts About Zinke. [U.S. News & World Report](#) (2/14, Mirza) published an article titled "10 Things You Didn't Know About Ryan Zinke." Among the items that made the list are that Zinke is the "first Navy SEAL to be elected to the House of Representatives" and that "he is the author of the book 'American Commander,' which he wrote with Scott McEwen, author of

'American Sniper.'"

Outdoor Recreation Industry Roundtable Supports Zinke Confirmation. [RVBusiness](#) (2/14) reports that the Outdoor Recreation Industry Roundtable "sent letters to Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., and Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., on Monday (Feb. 13) requesting that the nomination of Rep. Ryan Zinke for Secretary of Interior be taken up and approved as soon as possible." RVIA President Frank Hugelmeyer said, "Secretary-nominee Zinke understands the significance of the outdoor recreation economy and how to help our diverse industry sector reach its full potential. We urge a speedy confirmation by the Senate so we can focus on expanding outdoor recreation jobs and providing high-quality experiences on our public lands for all Americans."

NRA Supports Confirmation Of Zinke. In an op-ed for [Roll Call](#) (2/14, Cox), Chris W. Cox, the executive director of the National Rifle Association's Institute for Legislative Action, writes that "the five million men and women of the National Rifle Association are eager to see Rep. Ryan Zinke confirmed as the 52nd secretary of the Interior." According to Cox, "his confirmation will mark the end of an era of hostility toward hunters and sportsmen at the Interior Department."

Trump Signs Repeal Of Transparency Regulation.

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/14, Radnofsky) reports President Trump signed a joint resolution on Tuesday repealing part of the Dodd-Frank regulation that required resource extraction companies to report payments made to governments for developing oil, natural gas or minerals.

The [Washington Post](#) (2/14, Mufson) reports Trump said as he signed the order, "It's a big deal. ... The energy jobs are coming back. Lots of people going back to work now." President of the API Jack Gerard said, "We think it's a regulation that would have an unintended consequence of hurting U.S. business's ability to compete." However, Oxfam America's senior policy adviser for extractive industries Isabel Munilla said that "under the guise of deregulation, senators gutted a major bipartisan accomplishment that would bring sunshine to the payments oil companies make to despots and dictators."

The [Washington Times](#) (2/14, Miller) quotes Trump saying, "We're bringing them [jobs] back at the plant level. We're bringing them back at the mine level. ... You see what's going on with the stock market - they know that we know what we're doing so it's going up."

[Politico](#) (2/14, Guillén) reports the repeal marked the first time in 16 years that the Congressional Review Act has been used successfully to roll back a regulation, and Congress is preparing several more for the president's desk.

[U.S. News & World Report](#) (2/14, Soergel) reports House Speaker Paul Ryan said, "This is the first of many Congressional

Review Act bills to be signed into law by President Trump. ... Congressional Review Act legislation provides relief for Americans hurt by regulations rushed through at the last minute by the Obama administration."

[The Guardian \(UK\)](#) (2/14) reports Zorka Milin, senior legal adviser at Global Witness, said, "Trump has given an astonishing gift to the American oil lobby. Oil, gas and mining companies listed across the EU, including Russian companies, have already disclosed \$150bn of payments in resource-rich countries, with no ill effects. This makes a mockery of claims by US oil companies such as Exxon that greater transparency would damage companies' competitiveness."

[The Hill](#) (2/14, Cama) quotes White House Press Secretary Sean Spicer saying, "Misguided federal regulations such as the SEC rule addressed by H.J.R. 41 inflict real cost on the American people and put our businesses, especially small businesses, at a significant disadvantage. ... It's a priority for the Trump administration to fix our broken regulatory system so that it enhances American productivity and well-being without imposing unnecessary costs and burdens."

Time: Questions Remain About Trump Energy Policy. [TIME](#) (2/14, Worland) reports though the Trump Administration "has moved quickly to unravel a raft of environmental regulations," questions exist about important energy industry issues "such as his tax policy, level of support for renewable energy and how he'll approach international trade." The Administration "has offered little indication how it might act" on the matter of renewable energy. Perry, the nominee to be the next Energy Secretary, "oversaw rapid growth in renewables during his time as Texas governor and renewables remain popular with many Republicans in Congress." According to Time, the "lack of direction" from the Administration "has sunk in with friends and foes alike."

Outdoor Retailers Ramp Up Pressure On Utah Over Public Lands Issue.

The [AP](#) (2/14, Price) reports that "a coalition of major outdoor companies on Tuesday ramped up a threat to get a lucrative outdoor trade show to leave Utah unless the governor and elected officials back away from policies they say threaten public lands." According to the article, "leaders of Black Diamond Equipment, Osprey Packs and 28 other outdoor companies sent a letter to Republican Gov. Gary Herbert that says Utah leaders are threatening the outdoor industry by pushing back against federal land control and management." It "comes two days before Herbert is expected to meet with outdoor retailers to try to smooth the discord."

Additional coverage was provided by the [Boulder \(CO\) Daily Camera](#) (2/14, Brennan) and the [Puget Sound \(WA\) Business Journal](#) (2/14, Garnick).

Oregon Counties Sue Over Cascade-Siskiyou Expansion.

[KUOW-FM](#) Seattle (2/14, Blanchard) reports that “a group of counties that gets revenue from logging lands” within the new boundaries of the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument is “suing the federal government.” Tim Freeman, the president of the Association of O&C Counties, said the lost revenue will result in fewer county services “like public health and mental health and libraries and museums and law enforcement and really creating important livability for communities around the state.” Freeman “said it’s unclear if the Trump Administration could eliminate the monument entirely, but he hopes the administration could shrink it.”

Phoenix Urban Garden To Close After Silence From Interior.

The [Arizona Republic](#) (2/14, Goth) reports that “the urban garden at the heart of a Phoenix initiative to activate empty lots will vanish this week, after the U.S. Department of the Interior failed to give community groups permission to stay on the 15-acre property at Central Avenue and Indian School Road.” Leaders including Sen. John McCain and Phoenix Mayor Greg Stanton “lobbied the Department of the Interior for the authorization to stay.” However, Tom Waldeck, president and CEO of Keep Phoenix Beautiful, which operates the project, said that “organizers never heard back from the department.”

Coalition Urges Daines To Protect Federal Lands.

[E&E Daily](#) (2/14) reports a coalition of more than 130 Montana businesses is urging the new Senate Western Caucus chairman Sen. Steve Daines “to reject efforts to diminish the federal public lands portfolio.” The letter from Business for Montana’s Outdoors urges Daines to “lead your colleagues in standing firm against selling our public lands to the highest bidder.”

Additional Coverage: Hiring Freeze Raises Firefighting Concerns.

Additional coverage that Sen. Ron Wyden “wrote a letter Monday to Kevin Haugrud, acting secretary of the Department of the Interior, asking for clarity about how the Bureau of Land Management will be affected by the hiring freeze, particularly when it comes to firefighters,” was provided by the [East Oregonian](#) (2/14, Plaven) and the [St. Helens \(OR\) Chronicle](#) (2/14).

Protection Of Public Lands Urged.

For “The Blog” of the [Huffington Post](#) (2/14, Forum), University of Central Florida Forum columnist Nathan Vink, supports the use of the Antiquities Act of 1906, “which gives a president power to protect areas that hold significant historical, prehistorical and scientific features.” Vink is concerned about a movement that would “like control of public lands to be given to the states to allow each

state to manage the land as they see fit, including selling to private investors." According to Vink, "this can be hazardous to accessibility, as partials of land being sold off can block and limit access, not to mention the environmental implications from how the land is used."

In an op-ed for [Philly \(PA\)](#) (2/14, Stuart), outdoorsman Doug Stuart writes that "Congress is moving to privatize millions of acres of public lands across the country." So "to protect their public lands," Stewart says that "Americans need Donald Trump." Stuart argues that if Trump "truly wants to give power to the people, as he said in his inaugural address, he should block any public land transfer."

America's Great Outdoors

National Park Service

National Parks Offering Free Admission On President's Day.

The [Atlanta Journal-Constitution](#) (2/15, Toone) reports that the National Park Service is "commemorating it's 100th birthday by offering free admission to several nature and historical sites" on President's Day.

Additional coverage was provided by the [Poughkeepsie \(NY\) Journal](#) (2/14, Barry).

Melania Trump Says She Will Maintain White House Garden.

The [Christian Science Monitor](#) (2/14, Sun) reports that "after touring the Morikami Museum and its six Japanese-inspired gardens in Delray Beach, Fla., with Akie Abe, wife of Japanese Prime Minister, Melania Trump on Saturday signaled that she will continue and preserve both the Kitchen Garden and the Rose Garden in the Oval Office." Mrs. Trump said in a statement, "Both our countries histories and cultures are steeped in the nurture and nature of gardening. Gardening teaches us the fundamentals in care and the evolution of living things, all while inspiring us to nurture our minds and to relax and strengthen our bodies." That announcement was "followed by another statement from her senior adviser, Stephanie Winston Wolkoff, affirming the first lady's devotion to sustain the gardens." Ms. Wolkoff said, "The First Lady has a deep personal commitment to her role as caretaker and nurturer, beginning with her family. She believes there is a connection between a child's mind and places of calm and beauty to be used as a tool for us all."

D.C. Cherry Blossoms Could Return In March.

[WRC-TV](#) Washington (2/14, Aderoju) reports that "the mild winter may bring an early cherry blossom bloom to D.C., a National Park Service (NPS) spokesman said Tuesday." According to Mike Litterst of the NPS, "the warm winter will likely get the blossoms to bloom in the last week of March – unless we get a lot of snow or a major

cold snap." Litterst said, "Like you know, it's dependent on the weather. If you can tell me exactly what the high temperature's going to be for the next six weeks, we'll tell you exactly when the trees are going to bloom, but that's a little bit of a challenge."

Additional coverage was provided by [WRC-TV](#) Washington (2/14, Bell).

NPS Plans More Paddling Access To Potomac.

The [AP](#) (2/15) reports that the National Park Service "says it plans to expand public access for kayaking and rowing on the Potomac River in the District of Columbia's Georgetown neighborhood." The park service "said in a statement this week it has approved a plan for the phased development of 42,000 square feet of facilities near the confluence of Rock Creek, the Potomac River and the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park."

Construction On Crissy Field Promenade To Start Next Month.

The [San Francisco Examiner](#) (2/14) reports that San Francisco's Crissy Field is "about to get a new promenade as construction to rebuild the oceanfront path is set to begin in March, National Park Service officials announced Monday." According to park officials, "since the promenade opened in 2001, it has degraded beyond repair due to harsh weather and high use by its more than 18 million visitors." The new project, "which will be implemented in four phases in order to minimize impact to visitors, will see the granite promenade converted into one made of a more durable compacted shale material." The article notes that "the \$5 million project was given \$2.5 million by the NPS' Centennial Challenge Project, according to NPS officials."

Bison, Motorists Endangered By Deep Snow In Grand Teton.

The [AP](#) (2/14, Gruver) reports that "unusually deep snow in Grand Teton National Park has made life dangerous for bison lumbering on the park's only plowed highway and for motorists traveling the route, prompting park workers to escort the big animals to safer areas and urge drivers to slow down, park officials said Tuesday." The issue is that "bison, which can weigh up to 2,000 pounds, prefer to use the road rather than struggle through the 3 feet of snow that accumulated recently." According to the article, "hoping to prevent a run of collisions that can be just as dangerous for motorists, park officials in trucks guided small groups of bison along several miles of the highway twice over the last four days."

Petrified Forest National Park Worker To Be Sentenced For Fee Theft.

The [White Mountain \(AZ\) Independent](#) (2/14, Madden) reports that the National Park Service has "filed felony charges against Sharon Baldwin, the agency's former Petrified Forest National Park fee supervisor, on its discovery that, in the role, she allegedly stole \$313,000 of visitor entrance fees between February 2011 and

March 2016.” The U.S. District Court in December “set the terms of Baldwin’s prosecution, when she pleaded guilty to theft of government money, which, in part, included ‘alter(ing) electronic records and documentation to conceal the theft,’ the records state.” According to the article, “in addition to paying full restitution, Baldwin faces a maximum fine of \$250,000, a maximum imprisonment term of 10 years, or both, and a maximum of five years probation.”

“Firefall” Optical Illusion Returns To Yosemite National Park.

[CNN](#) (2/14, Jackson) reports that “it’s the time of year for the mesmerizing phenomenon ‘firefall’ to illuminate Horsetail Fall in Yosemite National Park.” According to the article, “the natural effect gives the illusion that bright orange lava is flowing off the cliff at the park in California.” The illusion is “a natural occurrence that only happens for a couple of weeks each February and draws hundreds of visitors each night.”

Sandburg Home Superintendent Departing For Harpers Ferry.

The [Hendersonville \(NC\) Times-News](#) (2/14) reports that Carl Sandburg Home National Historic Site Superintendent Tyrone Brandyburg has been selected to serve as the superintendent of Harpers Ferry National Historical Park. Brandyburg said, “I truly enjoyed the work we accomplished and the plans we developed to preserve the history of Carl Sandburg. I am very proud of the conservation work on the main house, which included the repair of the conservatory and the design of a new ventilation system. I will remember well working with the park team to find solutions to issues within the park.” He added, “I am also excited about the opportunity to work with the staff at Harpers Ferry National Historical Park. I look forward to working with partners and the local communities in an effort to continue telling the stories of more than 1,000 years of human history in the region, which includes its military significance, John Brown and Storer College.” According to the article, “a farewell event will be held the evening of Friday, Feb. 24.”

Film Explores “The Pursuit Of Silence”.

[ABC Radio National Canberra \(AUS\)](#) (2/14) reports that “in his new film *The Pursuit of Silence*, Patrick Shen goes on a journey to seek an antidote to our cacophonous, sometimes deafening, world.” During his travels “Patrick meets a range of silence activists – from a young man whose taken a vow of silence and is walking across the US to a bio-acoustical scientist employed by the American National Park Service to record sounds in the wilderness- but he discovers that ‘finding silence’ or even defining it is not as simple as it may seem.”

Fish and Wildlife Service

Environmental Group Sues Over Delay Of Bumblebee's Endangered Listing.

The [AP](#) (2/14) reports that "an environmental group is suing the Trump administration for delaying an endangered-species designation for the rusty patched bumblebee." The Natural Resources Defense Council says the Interior Department "broke the law by postponing the listing without public notice and comment." According to the article, "it was scheduled to take effect Feb. 10," but "one day before that, the department put off the effective date until March 21 because of the administration's temporary freeze on new regulations."

[Reuters](#) (2/14, Zuckerman) reports that "the lawsuit seeks to have a judge declare that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service acted unlawfully and to order the agency to rescind the rule delaying the bumble bee's listing."

Coverage by the AP was also picked up by the [Detroit \(MI\) Free Press](#) (2/14), [Philly \(PA\)](#) (2/14), the [Sioux City \(IA\) Journal](#) (2/14), [U.S. News & World Report](#) (2/14), the [Washington \(DC\) Post](#) (2/14), the [Washington \(DC\) Times](#) (2/14), the [Huffington Post](#) (2/14, McLaughlin), [WPBN-TV Traverse City \(MI\)](#) Traverse City, MI (2/14), and [WWJ-TV Detroit \(MI\)](#) Detroit (2/14).

Jury Selection Begins In New Malheur Takeover Trial.

The [AP](#) (2/14) reports that "jury selection has begun in a trial for four men who joined Ammon Bundy at last winter's armed takeover" of the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge. According to the article, "the panel of 12 jurors and four alternates is expected to be in place by Thursday, with opening statements to start next week." Federal prosecutors have "hired an outside consultant to help them with the jury-selection process." The article notes that "it's a step they didn't take last fall, when jurors surprisingly acquitted Bundy and six others."

Additional coverage was provided by the [Oregonian](#) (2/14, Bernstein).

Bill Would Soften Law Used In Hammond Case. The [AP](#) (2/14, Hammers) reports that Rep. Greg Walden is "sponsoring a bill that would soften the federal statute used to convict the Harney County ranchers whose imprisonment was central to last year's Malheur National Wildlife Refuge standoff." The legislation would "exempt from prosecution people who violate the law under circumstances similar to Dwight and Steven Hammond." According to the article, "Walden's bill defines the circumstances under which the law would not apply, carving out exemptions that would likely have spared the Hammonds had they been in place at the time."

Plan For Grizzlies In North Cascades Draws Mixed Reactions.

The [Yakima \(WA\) Herald-Republic](#) (2/15, Thompson) reports that "a federal proposal to return grizzly bears to the North Cascades drew mixed reaction in Cle Elum, where the first in a series of meetings was held this week." According to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

state supervisor Eric Rickerson, “opponents probably outnumbered supporters.” The article notes that “the majority of concerns focused on safety.”

Additional Coverage Of Ban On Lead Ammo.

Additional coverage of the lead ammo ban was provided by [Outdoor News](#) (2/14, Raykovicz).

Additional Coverage: Appeals Court Denies Petition To Hear Dusky Gopher Frog Case.

Additional coverage that “a federal appeals court declined to rehear a case brought against the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) for designating private property as critical habitat” for the dusky gopher frog was provided by the [Daily Caller](#) (2/14, Bastasch).

Additional Coverage: FWS Proposes An Emperor Goose Subsistence Hunt.

Additional coverage that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service submitted a proposal to for an Emperor Goose subsistence hunt was provided by the [AP](#) (2/14).

Additional Coverage: Invasive Pythons Found Living In Abandoned Missile Shelters At Crocodile Lake National Wildlife Refuge.

Additional coverage that four pythons were discovered “an abandoned missile base” at the Crocodile Lake National Wildlife Refuge was provided by [USA Today](#) (2/14, Hafner).

Bureau of Land Management

House Bill Would End Red River Land Dispute.

The [AP](#) (2/14, Daly) reports that the House on Tuesday “approved a bill that supporters say would block the federal government from improperly seizing control of hundreds of thousands of acres along the Red River in Texas and Oklahoma.” The legislation “approved by the House Tuesday would commission a survey of the disputed area under a method backed by the Supreme Court.” Rep. Mac Thornberry “sponsored the bill in response to complaints from property owners that the federal Bureau of Land Management was seeking control of disputed land along a 116-mile stretch of river.” Opponents of the bill, “mainly Democrats, said the measure would strip the interior secretary of authority over federally owned land and could negatively affect Native American tribes who own mineral rights in the area.”

Coverage by the AP was also picked up by [Philly \(PA\)](#) (2/14, Daly), [U.S. News & World Report](#) (2/14, Daly), the [Washington \(DC\) Post](#) (2/14, Daly), the [Washington \(DC\) Times](#) (2/14, Daly), the [Albuquerque \(NM\) Journal](#) (2/14, Daly), the [Oklahoman](#) (2/14, Daly), [McClatchy](#) (2/14, Daly), and the [Daily Mail](#) (2/14).

Additional coverage was provided by the [Dallas \(TX\) Morning News](#) (2/14, Leslie).

Continuing Coverage Of Bundy Ranch Standoff Trial.

The [AP](#) (2/14) reports that “testimony has resumed in federal court in Las Vegas in the trial of six men accused of wielding weapons to force federal agents to abandon a round-up of Nevada rancher Cliven Bundy’s cattle in April 2014.” A U.S. Bureau of Land Management agent, Rand Stover, “returned to the witness stand Tuesday for questioning about escalating tension between government officials and Bundy family members in the weeks before the armed standoff.” Prosecutor Steven Myhre “asked Stover on Monday about confrontations that led roundup supervisors to ramp up security around federal agents and contract cowboys enforcing court orders to collect Bundy cattle in March 2014.”

Additional coverage was provided by the [Las Vegas \(NV\) Review-Journal](#) (2/14, Wilson) and [WBUR-FM Boston \(MA\)](#) Boston (2/14).

Securing America’s Energy Future

Onshore Energy Development

WPost Analysis: Trump’s Pro-Coal Rhetoric Insufficient To Protect Plants.

According to the [Washington Post](#) (2/14, Dennis, Mufson), President Trump’s campaign promises to bring back and protect jobs in the coal industry are meeting financial obstacles, with Arizona’s Navajo Generating Station 2019 closure announcement this week serving as one example. The decision to shutter the West’s largest coal-fired power plant stems from shale revolution-induced record-low natural gas prices that make it more expensive to produce electricity at the coal-fired plant than elsewhere. Though the Post says environmentalists champion the shift from coal production, the Phoenix-area community likely will be hard hit with the loss of up to 800 jobs. The [AP](#) (2/14, Silber) reports Navajo and Hopi Nation communities are preparing for what they believe will be a “devastating economic fallout” after the plant is closed. Hopi Tribal Chairman Herman Honanie “said the tribes are concerned with the severe impact the shutdown will have on communities already struggling with rampant poverty and high unemployment rates.” The [Arizona Republic](#) (2/14) said in an editorial that the plant was “doomed” by “market forces,” not the “hand of federal environmental regulation.”

Additional coverage was provided by [The Hill](#) (2/14, Henry), the “Morning Energy” blog of [Politico](#) (2/14), the [Cortez \(CO\) Journal](#) (2/14, Thompson), [Grist](#) (2/14, Thompson), and [Law360](#).

Tribes Submit “Last-Ditch” Filing To Stop Dakota Access

Pipeline.

In “another last-ditch effort to stop completion of the Dakota Access pipeline,” the Standing Rock and Cheyenne River Sioux tribes on Tuesday submitted a new filing in federal court in DC. The [Washington Post](#) (2/14, Mufson) reports that according to the filing, the Army Corps of Engineers’ actions “in issuing a final easement for the oil pipeline” were “arbitrary, capricious, and contrary to law.” The filing “asks the court to grant a partial summary judgment and vacate that easement.”

Environmental Groups Wondering How To Preserve Stream Protection Rule.

[Bloomberg BNA](#) (2/14, Lee) reports that “environmental groups and their allies in Congress are pondering what they can do save the stream protection rule, soon to be nixed by President Donald Trump.” However, “none of the options appear promising, leaving environmental advocates at a loss.” Trump is expected to sign Thursday “a Congressional Review Act resolution nixing the stream rule (RIN: 1029-AC63), issued in the last days of the Obama administration, which limits the placement of mining waste in streams.”

Additional coverage was provided by [NPR](#) (2/14, Frazier).

Utes In Talks With Interior Over Fracking Rule.

[E&E Publishing](#) (2/14) reports the Ute Indian Tribe is meeting with officials from the Interior Department to discuss a possible settlement to longtime legal complaints about the Obama Administration’s fracking rule. The Ute Tribe maintains the hydraulic fracturing regulation violates tribal sovereignty and ignores regulatory and enforcement activity for which the tribe is responsible. Tribal attorney Jeremy Patterson and business committee member Tony Small are hoping an agreement can be reached that will exempt the Utes from the rule and allow them to take the lead on energy oversight on their reservation.

Technology, New Pipeline Infrastructure Spurring “Modern-Day Gold Rush” For Oil, Gas Drillers.

The [Washington Post](#) (2/14) provides a detailed analysis on the state of oil and gas drilling in the US, which the Post characterizes as thriving in part due to “technological advances and new pipeline infrastructure” that “have brought the ability to extract these resources to new parts of the country, injecting billions of dollars into local economies and spurring a modern-day gold rush.” The article cites analysis from data-provider Drillinginfo that shows there are currently “more than 900,000 active oil and gas wells in the United States, and more than 130,000 have been drilled since 2010.”

Additional Coverage: Bill Would Roll Back Rule On Mineral-royalty Valuations.

Additional coverage that a resolution has been introduced “that would use the Congressional Review Act to repeal the measure released last June by Interior’s Office of Natural Resources Revenue” was provided by the [Grand Junction \(CO\) Daily Sentinel](#) (2/15, Webb).

BLM Urged To Protect Zion National Park.

In an op-ed for the [Deseret \(UT\) News](#) (2/15, Richard), Ellis Richard, the founder of Park Rangers for Our Lands, urges the Bureau of Land Management to not issue “three oil and gas leases on the doorstep of Zion National Park.” Richard emphasizes that national parks are “economic powerhouses” and “that could be threatened now by this proposal, which would replace the stunning views and natural quiet that attract millions of Americans to Zion each year with the industrial noise and pollution of oil and gas drilling.”

BLM’s Methane Policies Defended.

In a piece for [Forbes](#) (2/14, Dan Grossman), Dan Grossman, National Director of the Environmental Defense Fund’s Oil & Gas state programs, warns that “lawmakers could be using the Congressional Review Act to dismantle common-sense energy policies that can save Americans hundreds of millions of dollars and prevent massive amounts of energy resources from being needlessly wasted.” The targeted policies from the Bureau of Land Management apply to oil and gas companies that have since 2013, “wasted more than \$1.5 billion worth of natural gas that belongs to the American public, with millions in lost royalties as a result.” According to Grossman, “rolling back BLM’s standards will now cost taxpayers [PDF] an additional \$800 million in lost royalties over the next decade – money that would be welcome in many states across the West that today face budget shortfalls.”

Renewable Energy

Bipartisan Governors Group Calls On Trump Administration To Support Renewables.

The “Morning Energy” blog of [Politico](#) (2/14) reported the Governor’s Wind & Solar Energy Coalition has asked the Trump Administration “to provide funding for grid modernization, support clean energy research and speed up the permitting process for wind and solar projects.” The letter signed by Republican Kansas Gov. Sam Brownback and Democratic Rhode Island Gov. Gina Raimondo said, “The boons of renewable energy can be virtually endless with your Administration’s and Congress’ support of the key initiatives detailed here. ... Your support of these initiatives will allow our nation to capitalize on renewable resources, meet the needs of Americans and bolster the economy.”

Empowering Native American Communities

Nooksack Tribe Sues Over Withholding Of \$14 Million.

The [AP](#) (2/14, Johnson) reports that the Nooksack Tribe is “suing the federal government, saying it has wrongfully been denied nearly \$14 million in a flap over its efforts to kick out almost 300 members.” In a lawsuit filed in U.S. District Court in Seattle on Monday, the “tribe — or at least the remnants of its council — argued that the government’s decision interferes with its right to govern itself.” Due to the BIA’s “decision, the tribe has been denied \$13.7 million in state and federal grants for medical services, housing and salmon habitat restoration, among other things, the complaint alleged.”

Coverage by the AP was also picked up by the [Greeneville \(TN\) Sun](#) (2/14, Johnson), the [Detroit \(MI\) News](#) (2/14, Johnson), [Philly \(PA\)](#) (2/14, Johnson), the [Washington \(DC\) Post](#) (2/14, Johnson), the [Washington \(DC\) Times](#) (2/14, Johnson), the [Bellingham \(WA\) Herald](#) (2/14, Johnson), the [Seattle \(WA\) Post-Intelligencer](#) (2/14, Johnson), [U.S. News & World Report](#) (2/14, Johnson) , and [KOMO-TV Seattle \(WA\)](#) Seattle (2/14, Johnson).

Tribal Members Notified Of Data Breach After Hard Drive Theft.

The [AP](#) (2/14) reports that “an external hard drive that was stolen from a government law enforcement vehicle contained personal information on members of Montana’s Crow and Northern Cheyenne Tribes.” According to the article, “tribal members were notified of the potential data breach in a letter last week from Bureau of Indian Affairs Director Weldon Bruce Loudermilk that was obtained by The Associated Press.” The letter “says the unencrypted hard drive containing names, addresses, birthdates and tribal enrollment information was stolen Dec. 4.”

Coverage by the AP was also picked up by [U.S. News & World Report](#) (2/14), the [Billings \(MT\) Gazette](#) (2/14), the [Helena \(MT\) Independent Record](#) (2/14), the [Great Falls \(MT\) Tribune](#) (2/14), the [Montana Standard](#) (2/14), the [Kansas City \(MO\) Star](#) (2/14), the [Charlotte \(NC\) Observer](#) (2/14), the [Washington \(DC\) Times](#) (2/14), and the [Biloxi \(MS\) Sun Herald](#) (2/14).

Connecticut Argues Tribe Can’t Sue State For Land Grab.

The [AP](#) Hartford, CT (2/14) reports that state officials in Connecticut are “claiming government immunity in response to a lawsuit by a Native American tribe seeking more than \$600 million for land it says the state seized from 1801 to 1918.” The state attorney general’s office “asked a state judge in Hartford on Tuesday to dismiss the lawsuit filed in October by the Schaghticoke Tribal Nation.” The tribe claims “the state took 2,000 of the 2,400 acres in the tribe’s reservation in western Connecticut and sold the land, but never compensated the tribe.”

Wilton Rancheria Says It Has Approval For Elk Grove Casino.

[KCRA-TV](#) Sacramento, CA (2/14, Luery) reports that the Wilton Rancheria tribe announced Tuesday that it has "received the green light from the Department of the Interior's Bureau of Indian Affairs to develop a luxury resort and casino on 36 acres at the so-called 'ghost mall' in Elk Grove." The article notes that "because the 36 acres have now been placed into a federal trust, the city of Elk Grove has no jurisdiction over the casino site."

Additional coverage was provided by the [Sacramento \(CA\) Business Journal](#) (2/14, Anderson), the [Elk Grove \(CA\) Citizen](#) (2/14, Armstrong), and the [Casino City Times](#) (2/14).

Tackling America's Water Challenges

Oroville Incident Highlighting Neglect Of Dam Infrastructure.

The [New York Times](#) (2/14, Nagourney, Fountain) reports that engineers and environmentalists say problems similar to that faced by the damaged Oroville Dam this week could recur at many of the roughly 1,585 dams in California, 17 of which are listed in poor condition. The Times reports that "California's most troubled large dam is at Lake Isabella" and will need to be rebuilt. Officials say the dam, built on a fault line, is safe despite record rains brought by changing weather patterns. The [Christian Science Monitor](#) (2/14) reports that beyond infrastructure neglect, "the Oroville incident is raising what may be an overdue debate over how water managers can better adapt to new climate realities." Sally Thompson at the University of California-Berkeley said that as more of California's winter precipitation comes as rain rather than snow, "these kinds of concerns about reservoir capacity will become increasingly urgent."

The [Los Angeles Times](#) (2/14) reports "scrutiny continued to grow over the emergency spillway at Oroville Dam after it eroded Sunday." During 2005 relicensing proceedings for the dam, environmental groups asked FERC to order the state to "to armor or otherwise reconstruct the ungated spillway."

Additional coverage was provided by [The Hill](#) (2/14, Hanson, Contributor), [U.S. News & World Report](#) (2/13, KNICKMEYER, SPAGAT), the [San Jose \(CA\) Mercury News](#) (2/14, Murphy), the [Sacramento \(CA\) Bee](#) (2/14, Sabalow), the [Sacramento \(CA\) Bee](#) (2/13, Griswold), the [Idaho Statesman](#) (2/14, Barker), [East County \(CA\) Today](#) (2/13), and [Yahoo! News](#) (2/14, KNICKMEYER, SPAGAT).

Scholar Says Dam Crisis Highlights Impact Changing Climate On Water Management. Noah S. Diffenbaugh at Stanford University writes for the [New York Times](#) (2/14) that the Oroville Dam incident is "the latest reminder that the United States needs a climate-smart upgrade of our water management systems," which were built when "extremely warm years were less common and snowpack was more reliable." The wet winter will end California's drought after the state lost one to three full years of precipitation from 2012 to 2016.

Diffenbaugh argues that investments in “climate smart” infrastructure are needed for the “new normal” of today’s weather.

Additional Coverage: BOR Ordered To Increase Klamath Flows For Coho.

Additional coverage that the Bureau of Reclamation will” have to increase flows in the Klamath River in an attempt to reduce the incidence of disease in coho salmon, according to a recent ruling issued in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California,” was provided by the [Siskiyou \(CA\) Daily News](#) (2/14, Smith).

California Urged To Look Beyond Twin Tunnels.

In an op-ed for the [Stockton \(CA\) Record](#) (2/14, Winn, Nottoli), Chuck Winn, chair of the San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors, and Don Nottoli, chair of the Delta Counties Coalition and chair of the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors, write that if California “continues to focus its political will on the WaterFix and its twin tunnels, it will continue to miss opportunities to be more effective and efficient managers of water.” According to the authors, “there are better, more cost-effective solutions that don’t pit northern and southern California against one another in the quest for reliable and high-quality water supplies.” They suggest: “Instead of the WaterFix, what if the state had focused its efforts on completing storage projects, levee improvements and better use of taxpayer-funded bond money to more swiftly construct essential statewide water projects?”

Top National News

Media Analyses Question Why Trump Did Not Act On Flynn Knowledge Sooner.

Coverage of Michael Flynn’s resignation as national security adviser has shifted to a focus on how much President Trump knew about Flynn’s contact with Russian officials, why the President did not alert Vice President Pence or dismiss Flynn upon learning of the conversations, and on contacts the Trump campaign appears to have had with Russian officials. Reporting and commentary is overwhelmingly critical, casting the Administration as disorganized and deceptive.

The story led all three broadcast network newscasts and dominated cable coverage and discussion throughout the day. [Facebook discussion](#) was very unfavorable toward the White House, and the term “Russians” was [trending on Twitter](#) Tuesday night. The critical hashtag [#Flynnghazi](#) appeared early Wednesday, as did [a hashtag](#) related to presidential impeachment that had more than 42,000 tweets as of 6 a.m. ET.

[ABC World News Tonight](#) 📺 (2/14, lead story, 5:30, Muir) opened with a brief recap of Monday evening’s events, and

Jonathan Karl then reported, "A surprising revelation from the White House today: The President has known for nearly three weeks" that Flynn "deceived the Vice President and the public about his conversations with the Russian ambassador to the US. Yet it wasn't until last night that the President fired him. ... In fact, two days after learning of his deception, the President had Flynn by his side for a phone call with Russian President Vladimir Putin. It wasn't until Friday after the Washington Post broke the story Flynn had discussed sanctions that Flynn changed his story, and apologized to the Vice President for misleading him." Karl added, "For months, the President has raised eyebrows with his effusive praise of Vladimir Putin...but today, the press secretary said this." Sean Spicer: "The irony of this entire situation is that the President has been incredibly tough on Russia."

Scott Pelley opened the [CBS Evening News](#) (2/14, lead story, 4:10) by saying, "The shadow of Moscow just seems to haunt President Trump like a curse from a Russian novel." In addition to Flynn, "Trump's campaign manager Paul Manafort was fired, in part, for his links to pro-Russian forces in Ukraine. Now the FBI is investigating whether Flynn lied to its agents and whether he violated a law that bans private citizens from negotiating with foreign countries." CBS' Major Garrett reported, "Last Friday, Flynn admitted he could not recall if sanctions had come up with the Russian ambassador. The President was asked about that on Air Force One." President Trump: "I don't know about it. I haven't seen it. What report is that?" Garrett: "Was he being truthful?" Spicer: "No, what he asked specifically is was he aware of a Washington Post story. He hadn't seen that at the time. Of course he was involved."

[NBC Nightly News](#) (2/14, lead story, 4:00, Holt) reported, "The White House said today President Trump asked for Flynn's resignation, calling it a matter of trust over Flynn's misleading accounts of his dealings. It didn't fully explain why now, weeks after the President was warned that Flynn, who was privy to the nation's top secrets, might be vulnerable to blackmail by the Russians." NBC's Kristen Welker: "The key questions tonight: What did the President know, when did he know it, and why did the President keep Flynn on board for nearly three weeks after the President found out he had been misled, allowing Flynn in top secret security meetings?"

The [AP](#) (2/14, Pace, Salama) reports that "just six days into his presidency," the President was informed that Flynn had misled Pence "about contacts with Russia. Trump kept his No. 2 in the dark and waited nearly three weeks" before firing Flynn. [Reuters](#) (2/14, Holland, Cowan) also says "Trump knew for weeks" about Flynn's deception "but did not immediately force him out." [USA Today](#) (2/14, Jackson, Johnson) reports that Spicer said Trump "did not oust Flynn sooner...because there was no proof Flynn had broken the law by calling Russian ambassador Sergey Kislyak."

The [Washington Post](#) (2/14, Phillip) reports that Spicer said

Trump "was briefed by White House Counsel Don McGahn that Flynn had discussed US sanctions with the Russian ambassador 'immediately' after McGahn was informed that Flynn had misled Pence," which contradicts "the impression given by Trump on Friday aboard Air Force One that he was not familiar with a Washington Post report that revealed that Flynn had not told the truth about the calls." The [New York Times](#) (2/14, Baker) reports that Spicer "said the president's team had been 'reviewing and evaluating this issue on a daily basis trying to ascertain the truth.'"

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/14, Lee, Barrett) also reports that Spicer said the President had become increasingly concerned about Flynn's misleading of top officials in recent days. The [Los Angeles Times](#) (2/14, Memoli, Wilber) says Spicer's comments Tuesday were "an account of Flynn's downfall that differed strikingly from what it said a day earlier." [The Hill](#) (2/14, Fabian) says the White House "sought to contain the damage," but "rather than putting the matter to rest...Spicer raised more questions by confirming that Trump knew for 'weeks'" about the deception. Sara Murray said on [CNN's Anderson Cooper 360](#) (2/14) that the White House "is doing damage control."

[Politico](#) (2/14, Stokols, Palmeri, Karni) says that "for the second time in less than a day," Spicer "contradicted statements coming from others in the White House. He told reporters at Tuesday's daily press briefing" that Trump "demanded Flynn's resignation, whereas senior administration officials said Monday night that Flynn decided to step down on his own."

Kellyanne Conway was asked on [NBC's Today Show](#) (2/14) about her claim that Flynn had the full confidence of the President just hours before Flynn resigned. Asked if she was "out of the loop on this," Conway said, "No, not at all. Both were true. The President is very loyal. He is a loyal person. And by night's end, Mike Flynn decided it was best to resign. He knew he had become a lightning rod and he made that decision." Referring to "Today" show host Matt Lauer's claim during the interview that her answers did not make sense, Conway said on [Fox News' Hannity](#) (2/14) that "just saying that I made no sense or it made no sense is inaccurate and unfair in this instance because as our press secretary Sean Spicer said later in the daily briefing...our White House counsel reviewed that information and concluded that this was not a legal matter. ... And so that is all I was trying to convey."

Asked on [ABC's Good Morning America](#) (2/14) if the White House counsel told the President that the Justice Department said Flynn was vulnerable to blackmail, Conway said, "I don't know the answer to that and President Trump has asked me to join you today to say that he accepted the resignation of Gen. Flynn, and really the key here in that resignation is very simple. It's that the Vice President, Mike Pence, was misled by Gen. Flynn, or Gen. Flynn could not completely recall what his conversations had been."

[McClatchy](#) (2/14, Kumara) says that during the three-week period, "Flynn briefed Trump on global issues, sat in on phone

conversations Trump held with a variety of world leaders, helped craft foreign policy as a trio of allies – the prime ministers of Britain, Japan and Canada – visited Washington, and helped formulate the response Saturday to a North Korea ballistic missile launch.”

[Politico](#) (2/14, Nussbaum) reports, “Pence aides privately expressed frustration that the vice president had been placed in such a spot.” The [Washington Post](#) (2/14, A1, Costa, Parker) writes on its front page that “Pence’s decision to try to stay out of the cliques that have plagued the White House has allowed him, so far, to maintain his standing as a neutral player committed to forwarding Trump’s agenda on Capitol Hill. But it also appears to have left him at times outside of Trump’s brain trust.” The [New York Post](#) (2/14, Schultz, Halper) and the [Washington Times](#) (2/14, Miller) are among the other sources reporting on Tuesday’s White House statements.

On [CNN’s The Lead](#) 🗣️ (2/14), Jake Tapper asked, “Did President Trump lose confidence in his national security adviser because Gen. Flynn made that call and then lied about it to the public and to members of the Administration? Or did President Trump lose confidence in Flynn because we found out about the calls and the lies?”

Tom Friedman said on [MSNBC’s Morning Joe](#) 🗣️ (2/14), “There’s only one question I have in my mind: President Trump, did you know what Flynn said to the Russian ambassador? Did he do it with your approval? Did he do it with your instruction? When did you find out about it? What did you tell Pence? ... This is, I think, one of the most serious national security affairs that our country has been involved in certainly in my lifetime.”

Chuck Todd said on [MSNBC’s MTP Daily](#) 🗣️ (2/14) that this is “arguably the biggest presidential scandal involving a foreign government since Iran-contra. Take a breath: Hyperbole aside, folks, hunker down, because this is a Class Five political hurricane that’s hitting Washington.” David Ignatius said on [MSNBC’s Hardball](#) 🗣️ (2/14), “Increasingly as I look at this, I have the feeling that President Trump intended to try to ride this out, until it became public, thanks to the reporting of the Washington Post.” David Gergen said on [CNN’s Anderson Cooper 360](#) 🗣️ (2/14), “I think this White House has unfortunately fed us so many misleading statements and lies over time it’s difficult to know what to believe about their account of what happened.”

David Frum [tweeted](#), “This isn’t about the Logan Act. It’s about the appearance of payback to the Russians to reward them for tipping the election to Trump.” Pro-Democratic PAC American Bridge [tweeted](#), “Trump was okay with the Russians potentially blackmailing Gen. Flynn – maybe because Trump is vulnerable to blackmail too?” Paul Krugman [tweeted](#), “If Trump were a Democrat, hearings on his possible impeachment would start tomorrow.”

The [New York Times](#) (2/14) says in an editorial that while Trump “may have thought” that Flynn’s resignation “would end the

controversy over his administration's involvement with Russia," the "damning revelations keep coming. The whole fiasco underscores the dysfunction and dishonesty of his White House and how ill prepared it is to protect the nation." The Times says it is "unlikely that Mr. Flynn would have been pushed out" if the story had not been exposed. The Times adds, "There are many unanswered questions. Did anyone in the White House authorize Mr. Flynn's contacts? Why has Mr. Trump not condemned him for discussing sanctions with the Russians when he was not yet in office?"

The [Washington Post](#) (2/14) says more optimistically that Flynn's exit "offers President Trump an opportunity to right what has been a dysfunctional policymaking apparatus." Flynn "clearly misled The Post, Vice President Pence and other senior officials when he said he did not discuss US sanctions against Russia" with Ambassador Sergey Kislyak, and "did so in the context of as-yet-unresolved questions about Russia's interference in the presidential election and other possible contacts between the regime of Vladimir Putin and the Trump campaign. The affair underlines the urgency of an impartial investigation into those matters." The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/14) also calls Flynn's resignation a chance for Trump to reset his chaotic White House operation and for Congress to look into Russia's interference in the 2016 election.

[USA Today](#) (2/14) editorializes, "Flynn was a loose cannon long before he became President Trump's deeply flawed choice to be national security adviser." Congress "was already under pressure to thoroughly investigate Team Trump's connections with Russia and the president's peculiar refusal to criticize Putin. The Flynn affair gives investigators even more reason to act, and to do so swiftly."

Friedman writes in his [New York Times](#) (2/14) column that hopefully Flynn's resignation "will finally get the United States government, Congress and the news media to demand a proper answer to what is still the biggest national security question staring us in the face today: What is going on between Donald Trump and the Russians?"

Jill Lawrence writes in her [USA Today](#) (2/14) column, "If you start firing people for lying, for purveying fake news, for making US foreign policy before you take office, for possibly having financial ties to Russia and possibly being vulnerable to blackmail by Russia, for being investigated by US intelligence agencies – well. Where will it stop? That's the obvious and extremely uncomfortable question" surrounding Flynn's exit, "because you might say President Trump is his role model."

In his [Washington Post](#) (2/14) column, Ignatius writes, "Flynn's fall is a painful story, with many unanswered questions. Perhaps the biggest is why a retired general, schooled in the chain of command, would have talked" with a Russian ambassador "without consulting his boss, Trump. That's the White House line, but this investigation of Russiagate is just beginning."

In a [Washington Post](#) (2/14) piece headlined "Lying Took

Down Flynn, But It Seems To Be Just Fine On The Sunday Talk Shows," media columnist Margaret Sullivan writes, "If lies were always taken that seriously in the Trump administration, we might be living on the right side of the looking glass. But they aren't. And we aren't." She cites comments by Conway and Stephen Miller, and says "there is no reason to be surprised about the public statements of the Prevarication Administration."

NYTimes A1: Trump Campaign "Had Repeated Contacts With Russian Intelligence." On its front page, the [New York Times](#) (2/14, A1, Schmidt, Mazzetti, Apuzzo) reports under the headline "Trump Campaign Aides Had Repeated Contacts With Russian Intelligence" that "phone records and intercepted calls show" that members of President Trump's 2016 campaign "and other Trump associates had repeated contacts with senior Russian intelligence officials in the year before the election, according to four current and former American officials."

According to [Reuters](#) (2/15), the Kremlin on Wednesday rejected the report by the Times, saying it "was not based on any facts." Noting that the newspaper's sources were unnamed, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters, "Let's not believe anonymous information. It's a newspaper report which is not based on any facts."

Trump Tweets That "Illegal Leaks" Are "The Real Story." Of President Trump's four tweets Tuesday, just one dealt with the story. The [New York Post](#) (2/14, Moore) reports that the President said "'illegal leaks coming out of Washington' are the 'real story' in the wake of" the Flynn resignation. Trump [tweeted](#), "The real story here is why are there so many illegal leaks coming out of Washington? Will these leaks be happening as I deal on N.Korea etc?" Responses to the President's tweet were solidly critical, with many citing the security issues regarding the President's discussion of the North Korean missile test in a public space at Mar-A-Lago this weekend and calling Trump hypocritical for his focus on Hillary Clinton's security issues during the campaign.

The [Milwaukee Journal Sentinel](#) (2/14, Nelson) reports that Sen. Ron Johnson said on Fox News on Tuesday that the leaks show "the challenges that the president faces in dealing with a bureaucracy that does not support his agenda."

The [New York Times](#) (2/14, Ember) reports that while a narrative "embraced by many in the traditional legacy media centered on what Mr. Flynn had done that led to his resignation," another, "which developed among the more right-leaning news media, focused on the leaks from Washington that had put pressure on Mr. Flynn to step aside, and whether these leaks were intended to damage President Trump."

The Wednesday morning headline on the Drudge Report, "SPIES TAKE DOWN FLYNN", links to a piece by Damon Linder of [The Week](#) (2/14) in which he writes that while the US "is much better off" with Flynn gone, "no one should be cheering the way he was brought down. The whole episode is evidence of the precipitous

and ongoing collapse of America's democratic institutions – not a sign of their resiliency." Linder calls Flynn's "ouster" a "soft coup (or political assassination) engineered by anonymous intelligence community bureaucrats." He adds, "Far too many Trump critics appear not to care that these intelligence agents leaked highly sensitive information to the press – mostly because Trump critics are pleased with the result."

Still, the [New York Times](#) (2/14, Shear) says that Flynn's resignation "caps a remarkably tumultuous first month for President Trump's White House that has burdened the early days of his presidency with scandal, legal challenges, personnel drama and questions about his temperament during interactions with world leaders." Dan Balz of the [Washington Post](#) (2/14, A1) writes in a front-page story that "the complexities of governing have quickly caught up with" Trump, and Flynn's resignation "is certainly the biggest embarrassment to date, setting some sort of record for an early exit by a top official in a new administration."

Members Of Both Parties Call For Further Investigations. [ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/14, story 3, 2:25, Muir) reported, "You can imagine the reaction pouring in from Democrats and Republicans – outrage from both sides." ABC's Mary Bruce: "Top Republicans like Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell say it's 'highly likely' the Senate will investigate Michael Flynn's conversations with Russian officials." On the [CBS Evening News](#) (2/14, story 3, 2:25, Pelley), Nancy Cordes reported, "Flynn's resignation led Democrats to renew their call for a bipartisan Watergate-style commission." House Minority Leader Pelosi: "This is deadly, deadly serious." Cordes: "House Speaker Paul Ryan did not agree. He said the Flynn matter could be folded into ongoing probes of Russian hacking." Ryan: "The Intelligence Committee has been looking into this thing all along." [NBC Nightly News](#) (2/14, story 3, 2:50, Holt) also reported that "members of Congress from both parties are calling for an investigation."

The [Los Angeles Times](#) (2/14, Memoli, Wilber) says "Republican senators called for a full and open investigation into Flynn's contacts" with the Russians. [USA Today](#) (2/14, Jackson, Johnson) reports that Senate Armed Services Chairman John McCain said Flynn's "forced resignation 'is a troubling indication of the dysfunction of the current national security apparatus' and 'also raises further questions about the Trump administration's intentions toward Vladimir Putin's Russia.'" Sen. Lindsey Graham "told CNN: 'Did General Flynn act alone? I want to know what Russia is up to.'" [Bloomberg Politics](#) (2/14, Dennis) reports that Senate Foreign Relations Chairman Bob Corker said it is "time for Congress to launch a more comprehensive probe into Russian contacts with Trump allies," while Sen. Roy Blunt, an Intelligence Committee member, "said it's 'likely' that Flynn will be called to testify before the panel."

[USA Today](#) (2/14, Collins, Kelly) says GOP leaders "refused to commit Tuesday to opening an investigation," though the [New York](#)

[Times](#) (2/14, Steinhauer) says Flynn's "stunning resignation...emboldened congressional Democrats to demand a broader investigation into President Trump's ties to Russia and the Kremlin's role in the 2016 election." Sen. Elizabeth Warren [tweeted](#), "This isn't a game. Reports say the Russians conducted a series of successful cyber-attacks on our elections to help elect @realDonaldTrump."

House Minority Whip Hoyer said on [CNN's Anderson Cooper 360](#) (2/14), "There is no way [Flynn's] resignation takes care of this event." Sen. Amy Klobuchar asked on [CNN's The Lead](#) (2/14), "Why were they so concerned about placating the Russians, about trying to get them on their side?" Rep. Seth Moulton (D-MA) said on [CNN's Wolf](#) (2/14), "If members of the administration are essentially conspiring with Russia either through the campaign earlier or now in the Administration itself...that's the definition of treason. This is a very, very serious affair."

The [Washington Post](#) (2/14, Sullivan, Demirjian, Kane) reports that while "Democrats went further than Republicans," members of both parties expressed concern. Corker said on [CNN's The Lead](#) (2/14), "There's been a lot of nefarious activity from Russia. I think the American people should understand fully what that is. ... And I think this additional component is something that in addition should be looked at." However, [McClatchy](#) (2/14, Schofield) reports that "the GOP won't seek a special panel" such as the Benghazi panel. This drew criticism from conservative commentator S.E. Cupp, who on [CNN's The Lead](#) (2/14) called it "troubling" that "you're hearing shockingly few Republicans call for more. ... If the shoe were on the other foot and this were an Obama Administration, of course Republicans would be up in arms and rightly so."

FBI Has Already Interviewed Flynn On Phone Conversations.

The [CBS Evening News](#) (2/14, story 2, 1:40, Pelley) reported that FBI agents interviewed Flynn shortly after Trump took office. They apparently asked him about whether he discussed the sanctions. CBS' Jeff Pegues said Flynn could face charges if he lied to the bureau. The [New York Times](#) (2/14, Goldman, Apuzzo, Schmidt) reports that "while it is not clear what he said in his F.B.I. interview, Mr. Flynn maintained publicly for more than a week that his conversations with the ambassador were innocuous and did not involve Russian sanctions, something now known to be false."

Latest Revelations Prompt Concerns About Administration's

"Russia Connection." On [CNN's Situation Room](#) (2/14), Barbara Starr said that Flynn had already "had become a lightning rod for criticism over his ties with Russia. It was a relationship dating back to 2015 when Flynn sat right next to Vladimir Putin at a dinner in Moscow." Andrea Mitchell reported on [NBC Nightly News](#) (2/14, story 2, 2:25, Holt) that Flynn's resignation is "raising questions about the damage to national security and the Russian connection." European diplomats, added Mitchell, "say all this is already

frightening US allies, no longer certain that America has their back.”

Russian Military Makes Series Of Provocations Against US. The [CBS Evening News](#) (2/14, story 4, 1:40, Pelley) reported Flynn’s resignation comes as Moscow is testing President Trump. US officials say Russia secretly launched a missile that is banned by a treaty signed by President Ronald Reagan and Russia during the final years of the Cold War. While the launch happened while Barack Obama was President, “it is now up to President Trump to respond to a deployment which US officials say is such a blatant violation that it calls into question the value of future arms control treaties with Russia.”

[ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/14, story 4, 0:45, Muir) reported on the “curious military moves” Russia is making. Apart from the missile launch, a “Russian spy ship” was spotted in international waters off the coast of Delaware. In addition, Russian jets reportedly flew within 100 yards of a US naval warship in the Black Sea. Noting the three incidents, [Fox News’ Special Report](#) (2/14) said Russia is “upping the ante with a series of provocations,” and “analysts will say...that Russian behavior, despite President Trump’s positive rhetoric, has really not changed.”

Russian Officials Frustrated By Flynn’s Resignation. [Fox News’ Special Report](#) (2/14) reported Flynn’s resignation was the top news story in Moscow, and it is prompting Russian officials to express “frustration.” Members of Russian parliament “were quick to fire off tweets and Facebook postings saying this had nothing to do with national security and protocol.” The Kremlin, meanwhile, declined to comment on the matter, saying, “These are internal matters of the Americans.”

The [Washington Post](#) (2/14, Roth) says that “leading Russian lawmakers rushed to defend” Flynn on Tuesday. [McClatchy](#) (2/14, Ordoñez, Kumar) says Flynn’s exit could have a major impact on US-Russian relations.

Sessions Under “Growing Pressure” To Remove Himself From Russia Inquiries. The [New York Times](#) (2/14, Lichtblau) reports that Attorney General Sessions “faced growing pressure on Tuesday to remove himself from any role in investigating President Trump’s aides and their relationship with Russia, but advisers to Mr. Sessions said he saw no need to do so.” Democrats acknowledged that they “had no way to force Mr. Sessions to remove himself from the case.”

White House Counsel McGahn “At The Center” Of Administration Controversies. The [Washington Post](#) (2/14, Zapotosky, Horwitz) profiles White House Counsel Donald McGahn, writing that President Trump “has faced no shortage of controversies” in his first month in office, and “the fiery lawyer...has been at the center of virtually every one.” The [Washington Times](#) (2/14, Boyer) says that McGahn was involved in both the Flynn case and the rollout of

the visa ban, along with other matters. [Politico](#) (2/14, Samuelsohn, Gerstein, Cook) says that while McGahn's job "is to stop scandals before they start," he "may have an all but impossible task."

Harward, Petraeus Mentioned As Potential Flynn Replacements.

The [New York Times](#) (2/14, Davis) reports that retired Vice Adm. Robert Harward is the President's top choice to succeed Flynn. The Times calls Harward "a hard-charging member of the Navy SEALs who rose through the ranks to top military positions" who is close with Defense Secretary Mattis. The [New York Post](#) (2/14, Fears) notes that Trump's short list "includes a controversial choice – former CIA Director David Petraeus."

Clinton Slams Flynn, Accuses Him Of Sharing Fake News During Campaign.

[Politico](#) (2/14, Quigley) reports that Hillary Clinton "blasted" Flynn "for sharing fake news about her during the campaign. Clinton linked on Tuesday to a tweet from longtime Clinton staffer Philippe Reines that criticized Flynn and Flynn's son, Michael Flynn Jr. Both Flynn's shared fake news stories perpetuating the fringe conspiracy theory 'Pizzagate,' which falsely alleges that Comet Ping Pong, a pizza place in Washington, D.C., hosts a child sex slave ring connected to Clinton."

The [Washington Post](#) (2/14, Miller, Entous, Nakashima), meanwhile, says Flynn's removal was "the culmination of swirling forces and resentment unleashed by the 2016 election. He embodied the bitterly partisan nature of the contest, leading 'Lock her up' chants directed at" Clinton.

OGE Urges White House To Investigate Conway's Endorsement Of Ivanka Trump's Clothing Line.

Erin Burnett said on [CNN's Out Front](#) 🗣️ (2/14), that the Office of Government Ethics believes "the White House should look into comments [presidential counselor Kellyanne]Conway made promoting Ivanka Trump's clothing line and there's strong reason to believe she violated ethics rules." [USA Today](#) (2/14, Schouten) reports that in a letter released Tuesday by Democrats on the House Oversight Committee, OGE head Walter Shaub "called on the White House to launch an investigation of Conway's conduct and 'consider taking disciplinary action against her.'" Shaub wrote that the facts appear "to establish a clear violation of the prohibition against misuse of position." Later on [CNN's Out Front](#) 🗣️, Jessica Schneider added that OGE "is requesting the White House report back to them by February 28th laying out the results of their investigation into Conway and any resulting disciplinary action." The [New York Times](#) (2/14, Pérez-Peña) says the OGE letter "adds to the troubles piling up on Ms. Conway." Similarly, the [AP](#) (2/14, Day) calls the OGE recommendation "the latest in a series of complications for Conway." Both [NBC Nightly News](#) 🗣️ (2/14, story 4, 0:20, Holt) and the [CBS Evening News](#) 🗣️ (2/14, story 5, 0:40, Pelley) briefly reported on the OGE's letter.

The [Washington Post](#) (2/14, Gold) says House Oversight and Government Reform Chairman Jason Chaffetz "called on President

Trump to follow the agency's advice," saying in a statement, "I appreciate the quick response from OGE and hope the White House heeds their recommendation." Chaffetz's view "was echoed" by Rep. Elijah E. Cummings, the ranking Democrat on the panel.

Asked about the OGE letter on [Fox News' Hannity](#) (2/14), Conway said, "I do not have a comment on the particular letter that has been sent or on any type of investigation. I've been very straightforward about that particular incident and I'll leave it at that."

NYTimes Analysis: Liberal Activists Uniting In Opposition To Trump.

The [New York Times](#) (2/14, Alcindor) reports, "Protesters who had focused on issues like police shootings of black people, a \$15 minimum wage and climate change are collaborating against a common foe, President Trump." Across the country, says the Times, "activists are exchanging civil disobedience tactics, pooling financial resources and showing up to demonstrations about issues that they may not have previously focused on. Call it Protest Nation: Activists across the country have been strengthening old partnerships and making new ones."

Anti-Trump Activists Explain What "Resist" Means To Them.

Under the headline "'Resist' Is A Battle Cry, But What Does It Mean?," the [New York Times](#) (2/14) runs a piece in which various opponents of President Trump explain what the word "resist," which "has become a one-word battle cry for the anti-Trump forces," means to them. For example, New York-based fashion designer Bob Bland, who was a co-chair of the Women's March on Washington, told the Times, "It's a daily mental practice to galvanize yourself and to remind yourself to not become acclimated to this barrage of executive orders and then people being stripped of their rights because that is not what this country was founded on, and we should be moving forward not backwards. And that is why we all have to get out onto the streets and act."

Milbank: Trump Has Become "Increasingly Toxic." In his [Washington Post](#) (2/14) column, Dana Milbank writes that Republicans are being confronted at their constituent meetings, citing the incidents as "an early backlash against the Trump presidency." Milbank says Trump's "face plant since the inauguration – most recently the resignation of national security adviser Michael Flynn over dealings with Russia – is only making matters worse." Milbank adds that Trump "has become increasingly toxic, with Flynn's resignation and other Russia revelations, the travel ban struck down in court, chaos involving Obamacare, attacks on the federal judiciary and a series of bizarre pronouncements on everything from Ivanka Trump's fashion line to Frederick Douglass."

Breitbart: Late-Night Hosts Going "Scorched-Earth" Against Trump Administration. [Breitbart](#) (2/14, Hudson) reported that "ratings-seeking late-night talk show hosts have apparently gone

scorched-earth against President Donald Trump's administration." As examples, Breitbart cited a parody video from Stephen Colbert "that featured various television characters violently attacking" White House advisor Stephen Miller and a pun from Conan O'Brien which made Steve Bannon "out to be a Nazi sympathizer."

Stuever: Anti-Trump Movement Sees Effectiveness Of Television Mockery. In his column for the [Washington Post](#) (2/14), TV critic Hank Stuever highlights President Trump's penchant for watching television, and says "a fomenting Trump resistance movement has seen that televised mockery might be effective in creating the sort of tiny cracks that eventually cause meaningful collapse." Rather than "the kind of whip-smart, fact-based, ironic criticism inherited from Jon Stewart's 'Daily Show,'" it is "the plain, old-fashioned, over-the-top mockery that shows a White House hopelessly out of control, compromised, flaccid from the get-go and comically inept."

Editorial Wrap-Up

New York Times.

"The Missing Pieces In The Flynn Story." The [New York Times](#) (2/14) says in an editorial that while President Trump "may have thought" that former National Security Adviser Flynn's resignation "would end the controversy over his administration's involvement with Russia," the "damning revelations keep coming. The whole fiasco underscores the dysfunction and dishonesty of his White House and how ill prepared it is to protect the nation." The Times says it is "unlikely that Mr. Flynn would have been pushed out" if the story had not been exposed. The Times adds, "There are many unanswered questions. Did anyone in the White House authorize Mr. Flynn's contacts? Why has Mr. Trump not condemned him for discussing sanctions with the Russians when he was not yet in office?"

"Who'd Want To Limit Retirement Plans? House Republicans."

In an editorial, the [New York Times](#) (2/14) writes House Republicans are expected to approve as early as Wednesday a proposed measure that "would effectively repeal" the Labor Department's retirement savings rule "that gave states with strict investor protections the green light to start and to promote the plans without running afoul of federal pension law." If the House moves "ahead on its destructive course" and delays the rule, writes the Times, it would "thwart efforts by California, Illinois and other states to establish basic retirement savings plans for employees at companies that do not offer such coverage." The Times says the expected retirement savings rule delay further demonstrates that "both Congress and the Trump administration have shown an appetite for helping Wall Street at the expense of average citizens."

"A Housing Solution: Lawyers For Tenants." A [New York Times](#) (2/15) editorial welcomes an announcement by the New York City Council and Mayor Bill de Blasio announced on Sunday "a big

increase in funding for legal services for tenants facing eviction in housing court.” The Times says “at a time when America’s most powerful landlord, President Trump, has threatened to put legal services for the poor on the chopping block, New York City is pointing in another direction, toward justice for those who can’t always afford to pay for it themselves.”

Washington Post.

“Michael Flynn Is Gone. Here’s Where The National Security Council Should Go Next.” The [Washington Post](#) (2/14) says in an editorial that former National Security Adviser Michael Flynn’s exit “offers President Trump an opportunity to right what has been a dysfunctional policymaking apparatus.” Flynn “clearly misled The Post, Vice President Pence and other senior officials when he said he did not discuss U.S. sanctions against Russia” with Ambassador Sergey Kislyak, and “did so in the context of as-yet-unresolved questions about Russia’s interference in the presidential election and other possible contacts between the regime of Vladimir Putin and the Trump campaign. The affair underlines the urgency of an impartial investigation into those matters.”

“How The New Treasury Secretary Can Prove He’s Serious About The Job.” The [Washington Post](#) (2/14) editorializes Treasury Secretary Mnuchin’s “relatively tardy” confirmation reflected Democratic senators’ “genuine concerns” about Mnuchin’s “of public-sector experience and his belated disclosure to senators of some \$100 million in personal wealth.” The Post says Mnuchin’s opponents “were not wrong” to question his suitability in the Treasury Department, but Mnuchin proved himself “to be not only an expert on finance, but also well-versed in the federal policy issues, especially those involving housing, over which he will share responsibility.” To prove his value in the department, the Post says, Mnuchin should, as his top priority, “work with Congress on a permanent fix to the housing finance system, still dominated by the unsustainably semi-nationalized giants Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac.”

“A Chance For Charter Schools To Finally Break Through In Virginia.” A [Washington Post](#) (2/14) editorial praises Virginia state Sen. J. Chapman “Chap” Petersen for “choosing children over politics” and voting in favor of “modest changes” to the state’s “archaic” 1998 public charter school law. The Post explains Virginia is “an outlier” in a nation that has otherwise experienced “dramatic” public charter school growth. The proposed measure “would loosen the chokehold that local school boards have in authorizing charter schools and ease restrictions on operations,” and its language “is carefully framed to deal with some of the objections that have undermined past efforts to reform the charter law.” The Post urges Gov. Terry McAuliffe to follow Petersen’s example and sign the bill if it reaches his desk.

Wall Street Journal.

“The Michael Flynn Fallout.” In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/14) calls former National Security Adviser Michael Flynn’s resignation a chance for Trump to reset his chaotic White House operation and for Congress to look into Russia’s interference in the 2016 election.

“The ObamaCare Merger Deathblow.” The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/14) editorializes that following Federal judges’ recent decisions to block the Aetna-Humana and Cigna-Anthem mergers, most of the insurers decided to dissolve the agreements. The insurers initially pursued the mergers in response to the Affordable Care Act’s detrimental side effects, and the dissolution decisions potentially indicate that deregulation, competition, and an improved insurance market will emerge under the Administration.

“The Death Of Kim Jong Nam.” In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/14) writes that Kim Jong-Nam’s murder illustrates the lack of stability and vulnerability of the North Korean regime. The Journal warns against focusing on the sensational details of the event and instead recognize the killing shows the growing danger of Kim Jong Un’s fanatical, fragile, and nuclear-armed regime. The Journal concludes by calling for Washington to be ready for both a nuclear assault and a palace coup.

Big Picture

Headlines From Today’s Front Pages.

Wall Street Journal:

[Flynn Probed By FBI Over Calls With Russian Official](#)
[Antitrust Rulings Put Chill On Health-insurance Mergers](#)
[It’s Boom Time Again For America’s Largest Banks](#)
[Triamcort Builds \\$3 Billion Stake In P&G](#)

New York Times:

[Trump Campaign Aides Had Repeated Contacts With Russian Intelligence](#)
[“Unbelievable Turmoil”: Trump’s First Month Leaves Washington Reeling](#)
[Flynn’s Downfall Sprang From “Eroding Level Of Trust”](#)
[Pedro Hernandez Found Guilty Of Kidnapping And Killing Etan Patz In 1979](#)
[Trump’s Shift To ‘Outside-In’ Strategy For Mideast Peace Is A Long Shot](#)

Washington Post:

[After Sex Abuse Accusation, Olympic Officials Stayed Sidelined A Phone Call, Then A Swift Fall](#)
[A Humility Lesson For The President](#)
[THE Vice President](#)

Financial Times:

[Toshiba Tries To Staunch Bleeding After \\$6.3bn Nuclear Writedown](#)

[Kim Jong Un's Brother Killed In Malaysia](#)

[Brexit Tests French Love Affair With London Tech](#)

[Peugeot In Talks To Buy GM's European Business](#)

Washington Times:

[White House Labors To Move On After Leaks Sink Flynn](#)

[Law Allows Trump To Refuse Visas To "Uncooperative" Countries](#)

[That Won't Take Back Deportees](#)

[Humana Latest Insurer To Exit Obamacare Exchanges](#)

[Venezuelan Vice President Rejects US Sanctions, Denies "Drug](#)

[Kingpin" Designation](#)

[Iran Growing Network To Train Foreign Terrorists, Dissident Group](#)

[Says](#)

[Abortion Bill In Oklahoma Would Require Fathers To Approve](#)

[Procedure](#)

Story Lineup From Last Night's Network News:

ABC: Flynn Resignation; Flynn-FBI Investigation; Flynn-Congress Reaction; Russian Military; Severe Weather; Venezuela In Crisis; Harrison Ford Flight Error; Oroville Dam Emergency; Child Kidnapping Murder; Art Thief Caught; University Women's Basketball; Child Charity.

CBS: Flynn Resignation; Flynn-FBI Investigation; Flynn-Congress Reaction; Russian Military; Kellyanne Conway-Ethics; Oroville Dam Emergency; Immigration Order-Canadian Muslims; Health-Chemo Therapy Hair; North Korean Half-Brother Assassinated; University Women's Basketball.

NBC: Flynn Resignation; Flynn-Russia Connection; Flynn-Congress Reaction; Kellyanne Conway-Ethics; Oroville Dam Emergency; Severe Weather-Houston; Child Kidnapping Murder; Harrison Ford Flight Error; North Korean Half-Brother Assassinated; University Women's Basketball; Cancer Patient Couple.

Network TV At A Glance:

Flynn Resignation – 13 minutes, 40 seconds

Flynn-Congress Reaction – 7 minutes, 40 seconds

Flynn-FBI Investigation – 4 minutes, 25 seconds

North Korean Half-Brother Assassinated – 3 minutes, 5 seconds

Russian Military – 2 minutes, 25 seconds

Oroville Dam Emergency – 1 minute, 50 seconds

Kellyanne Conway-Ethics – 1 minute

Story Lineup From This Morning's Radio News Broadcasts:

ABC: Flynn Controversy; Oroville Dam Emergency; Harrison Ford Flight Error.

CBS: Oroville Dam Emergency; Severe Weather; Flynn Controversy; President-Retailers Meeting; Dodd-Frank Reform; Alaskan Fish Boat Investigation; Wall Street News.

FOX: Flynn Controversy; Oroville Dam Emergency; Dog Show.

NPR: Flynn Controversy; Dodd-Frank Reform; Disney-PewDiePie; Wall Street News.

Washington Schedule

Today's Events In Washington.

White House:

PRESIDENT TRUMP — Participates in a listening session with the Retail Industry Leaders Association and member company CEOs; meets Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel and Mrs. Netanyahu; speaks with President Mauricio Macri of Argentina by telephone; participates in a legislative affairs strategy session; hosts Senator Marco Rubio and Mrs. Rubio for dinner.

VICE PRESIDENT PENCE — Joins the President to participate in a listening session with the Retail Industry Leaders Association and member company CEOs; joins the President in meeting with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

MELANIA TRUMP — Meets Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel and Mrs. Netanyahu; hosts Senator Marco Rubio and Mrs. Rubio for dinner.

US Senate: 7:00 AM Republican Sen. Joni Ernst hosts weekly 'constituent coffee', for Iowans visiting Washington, DC Location: Rm 111, Russell Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC
www.ernst.senate.gov <https://twitter.com/senjoniernst>

15 8:30 AM Special Olympics annual Capitol Hill Day – Special Olympics 14th annual Capitol Hill Day, with delegations of Special Olympics athletes and Program leaders, coaches, and family members from 40 states meeting Congressional leaders to 'urge their continued commitment to ensuring that people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and Special Olympics are top of mind when critical decisions are made for the country' Location: Washington, DC <http://www.specialolympics.org/>
<https://twitter.com/SpecialOlympics>

10:00 AM Ashton Kutcher testifies to Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing on 'Ending Modern Slavery' – Hearing on 'Ending Modern Slavery: Building on Success', with testimony from Thorn: Digital Defenders of Children co-founder Ashton Kutcher; and Human Rights First President and CEO Elisa Massimino Location: Rm 419, Dirksen Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC
<http://foreign.senate.gov/>

10:00 AM Senate Environment Committee hearing on modernization of the Endangered Species Act – Hearing on 'Oversight: Modernization of the Endangered Species Act', with testimony from Wyoming Governor David Freudenthal; Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies President Gordon Myers; Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation President James Holte; Defenders of Wildlife President and CEO Jamie Rappaport Clark; and Association of Zoos and Aquariums President and CEO Daniel Ashe Location: Rm 406, Dirksen Senate Office Bldg,

Washington, DC <http://epw.senate.gov/public/>

10:30 AM Senate Appropriations subcommittee hearing on mental health care – Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Subcommittee hearing on 'Mental Health Care: Examining Treatments and Services', with testimony from National Council for Behavioral Health Medical Director / Missouri Institute for Mental Health Distinguished Professor of Science Dr Joseph Parks; Navos Mental Health Solutions CEO Dr David Johnson; Cherokee Health Systems CEO Dr Dennis Freeman; and International Association of Chiefs of Police President Donald De Lucca Location: Rm 138, Dirksen Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://appropriations.senate.gov/>
<https://twitter.com/SenateApprops>

12:30 PM Senate Dems discuss plans to stop outsourcing and bring jobs home – Democratic Sens. Debbie Stabenow, Claire McCaskill, Joe Donnelly, and Gary Peters discuss their plans to stop outsourcing and bring jobs home (the Bring Jobs Home Act, Offshoring Notification Act, End Outsourcing Act, and Outsourcing Accountability Act respectively), and urge President Donald Trump to support their proposals, via press conference Location: S-325 (Senate Radio and TV Gallery), U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC <http://stabenow.senate.gov/> <https://twitter.com/StabenowPress>

12:30 PM Dem Sens. Stabenow, McCaskill, Donnelly and Peters discuss bills to 'bring jobs home' – Democratic Sens. Debbie Stabenow, Claire McCaskill, Joe Donnelly and Gary Peters discuss their plans to stop outsourcing and 'bring jobs home', via Capitol Hill press conference. The bills the quartet have introduced include the 'Bring Jobs Home Act' (Sen. Stabenow), the 'End Outsourcing Act' (Sen. Donnelly), the 'Outsourcing Accountability Act' (Sen. Peters), and the 'Offshoring Notification Act' (Sen. McCaskill Location: S-325 Senate Radio/TV Gallery, U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC <http://stabenow.senate.gov/>
<https://twitter.com/StabenowPress>

2:00 PM New Congress Forum on Child Welfare and Adoption – New Congress Forum on Child Welfare and Adoption, hosted by the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute (CCAI) plus honorary co-hosts including the Congressional Coalition on Adoption and its Co-Chairs Sens. Roy Blunt and Amy Klobuchar and Reps. Trent Franks and Brenda Lawrence, the Senate Caucus on Foster Youth, the Congressional Caucus on Foster Youth, and the National Foster Youth Initiative. All Members of Congress invited to discuss their child welfare and adoption interests and priorities – both domestic and international – with confirmed attendees including Republican Sen. Chuck Grassley Location: SVC 212-210, U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC www.ccaainstitute.org
<https://twitter.com/CCAIInstitute>

2:30 PM Senate Aging Committee hearing on stopping financial fraud – Hearing on 'Stopping Senior Scams: Developments in Financial Fraud Affecting Seniors', with testimony from IRS impersonation scam victim Phillip Hatch (via video); Department of

the Treasury Deputy Inspector General for Investigations Tim Camus; Federal Trade Commission Bureau of Consumer Protection Division of Marketing Practices Associate Director Lois Greisman; and Center for the Advocacy for the Rights & Interests of the Elderly Executive Director Diane Menio * At the hearing, the Committee also releases updated 2016 statistics for its 'Fighting Fraud: U.S. Senate Aging Committee Identifies Top 10 Scams Targeting Our Nation's Seniors' resource * Postponed from 1 Feb Location: Rm 562, Dirksen Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://aging.senate.gov/>

2:30 PM Senate Transportation subcommittee hearing on the multimodal transportation system – Surface Transportation and Merchant Marine Infrastructure, Safety, and Security Subcommittee hearing on 'Moving America: Stakeholder Perspectives on our Multimodal Transportation System', with testimony from BNSF Railway Executive Chairman Matthew Rose; Schneider National CEO Dr Christopher Lofgren; Dow Chemical Company Vice President of Integrated Supply Chain Tom Gurd; and Amtrak President and CEO Wick Moorman Location: Rm 253, Russell Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://commerce.senate.gov>

2:45 PM Senate Governmental Affairs hearing on GAO's high-risk list – Hearing on 'High Risk: Government Operations Susceptible to Waste, Fraud, and Mismanagement', with testimony from U.S. Comptroller General Gene Dodaro; U.S. Census Bureau Director John Thompson; Department of Veterans Affairs Inspector General Michael Missal; and Department of Homeland Security Inspector General John Roth * Government Accountability Office's High Risk List is an inventory of govt operations vulnerable to fraud, waste, abuse, and mismanagement Location: Rm 342, Dirksen Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC

<http://hsgac.senate.gov/> <https://twitter.com/SenateHSGAC>

US House: 8:30 AM Special Olympics annual Capitol Hill Day – Special Olympics 14th annual Capitol Hill Day, with delegations of Special Olympics athletes and Program leaders, coaches, and family members from 40 states meeting Congressional leaders to 'urge their continued commitment to ensuring that people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and Special Olympics are top of mind when critical decisions are made for the country' Location: Washington, DC <http://www.specialolympics.org/> <https://twitter.com/SpecialOlympics>

8:30 AM Florida Congressional delegation meeting on water issues facing coastal communities – Florida Congressional Delegation Co-Chairs Democratic Rep. Alcee Hastings and Republican Rep. Vern Buchanan host delegation meeting to address water issues facing coastal communities and the Lake Okeechobee Watershed, with panelists including U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Deputy District Commander for South Florida Lt. Col. Jennifer Reynolds, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science's Dr Richard Stumpf, and Sarasota, FL, Mayor Willie Charles

Shaw Location: Rm 2020, Rayburn House Office Bldg, Washington, DC www.alceehastings.house.gov
<https://twitter.com/RepHastingsFL>

9:00 AM House Veterans' Affairs Committee Business Meeting – Business Meeting, to consider on 'Resolution to assign Congressman Kilili Sablan, Congresswoman Esty, and Congressman Scott Peters to HVAC Subcommittees' Location: Rm 334, Cannon House Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://veterans.house.gov/>
<https://twitter.com/HouseVetAffairs>

10:00 AM Fed Chair Yellen presents Monetary Policy Report to House Financial Services Committee – House Committee on Financial Services hearing on 'Monetary Policy and the State of the Economy', with testimony from Federal Reserve Board Chair Janet Yellen (presenting the semi-annual Monetary Policy Report) Location: Rm 2128, Rayburn House Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://www.federalreserve.gov> <https://twitter.com/federalreserve>

10:00 AM House Education subcommittee hearing on juvenile justice reform – Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education Subcommittee hearing on 'Providing Vulnerable Youth the Hope of a Brighter Future Through Juvenile Justice Reform', with testimony from Lucas County Juvenile Division Judge Denise Navarre Cubbon (Lucas County, OH), Lafayette Police Department Chief of Police Patrick Flannelly (Lafayette, IN), YMCA of Greater Louisville Safe Place Services Executive Director Matt Reed, and Colorado Department of Public Safety Division of Criminal Justice Office of Adult and Juvenile Justice Assistance Manager Meg Williams Location: Rm 2175, Rayburn House Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://edworkforce.house.gov/>
<https://twitter.com/EdWorkforce>

10:00 AM House Technology subcommittees joint hearing on DOE Loan Guarantee Program – Energy Subcommittee and Oversight Subcommittee joint hearing on 'Risky Business: The DOE Loan Guarantee Program', with testimony from Heritage Foundation Thomas A. Roe Institute for Economic Policy Studies Senior Research Fellow in Regulatory Policy Diane Katz; Cato Institute Director of Tax Policy Studies Chris Edwards; Stanford University Steyer-Taylor Center for Energy Policy and Finance Executive Director Dan Reicher; and Utah State University Department of Economics and Finance Assistant Research Professor Dr Ryan Yonk Location: Rm 2318, Rayburn House Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://science.house.gov> <https://twitter.com/HouseScience>

10:00 AM House Energy subcommittee hearing on modernizing infrastructure, including the Dakota Access Pipeline – Energy Subcommittee hearing on 'Modernizing Energy and Electricity Delivery Systems: Challenges and Opportunities to Promote Infrastructure Improvement and Expansion', with testimony from Dakota Access Pipeline Project Director Joey Mahmoud; Standing Rock Sioux Tribe Councilman at Large Chad Harrison; International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers International President Lonnie Stephenson; GE Power Chief Digital

Officer Ganesh Bell; Electric Power Research Institute President and CEO Dr Michael Howard; GridWise Alliance CEO Steve Hauser; Laborers International Union of North America General President Terry O'Sullivan; Valley Electrical Consolidated owner and CEO Rex Ferry; and citizen Kim Kann * Dakota Access Pipeline has been subject to a number of legal challenges and major protests over its potential impacts to the environment and to Native Americans in North Dakota. Last year, then-President Barack Obama discussed the possibility of rerouting it, but President Donald Trump expedited it last month Location: Rm 2123, Rayburn House Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://energycommerce.house.gov/>
<https://twitter.com/HouseCommerce>

10:00 AM Hearing on 'Rural Economic Outlook: Setting the Stage for the Next Farm Bill' Location: Rm 1300, Longworth House Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://agriculture.house.gov/>

10:00 AM House Appropriations subcommittee oversight hearing on USDA IG – Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Subcommittee oversight hearing on 'Office of the Inspector General', with testimony from U.S. Department of Agriculture Inspector General Phyllis Fong, Assistant Inspector General for Audits Gil Harden, and Assistant Inspector General for Investigations Ann Coffey Location: Rm 2362-A, Rayburn House Office Bldg, Washington, DC
<http://appropriations.house.gov/>
<https://twitter.com/HouseAppropsGOP>

10:00 AM Human Resources Subcommittee hearing on 'The Geography of Poverty' Location: Rm 1100, Longworth House Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://waysandmeans.house.gov/>
<https://twitter.com/WaysandMeansGOP>

10:00 AM House Transportation subcommittee hearing on the state of the nation's aviation manufacturing – Aviation Subcommittee hearing on 'Building a 21st Century Infrastructure for America: State of American Aviation Manufacturing', with testimony from Federal Aviation Administration Associate Administrator for Aviation Safety Peggy Gilligan, and Aircraft Certification Service Director Dorenda Baker; Pratt and Whitney Vice President for Technology and Environment Dr Alan Epstein; Boeing Commercial Airplanes Vice President for Engineering John Hamilton; and Textron Aviation Senior Vice President for Certification Michael Thacker Location: Rm 2167, Rayburn House Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://transportation.house.gov/>
<https://twitter.com/Transport>

10:00 AM House Oversight Committee hearing on GAO's High Risk Report – Hearing on 'GAO's 2017 High Risk Report: 34 Programs in Peril', with testimony from U.S. Comptroller General Gene Dodaro * Government Accountability Office High Risk List is an inventory of govt operations vulnerable to fraud, waste, abuse, and mismanagement Location: Rm 2154, Rayburn House Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://oversight.house.gov/>
<https://twitter.com/GOPoversight>

10:00 AM Dem Rep. Mark Takano at press conference on LGBTQ concerns over Labor Secretary-nominee Andrew Puzder – Pride at Work’s Jerame Davis, Equality Federation’s Andy Garcia, and Democratic Rep. Mark Takano discuss ‘the LGBTQ ramifications of Andrew Puzder being confirmed as secretary of labor’ via press conference Location: Rm 421, Cannon House Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://www.prideatwork.org/>
<https://twitter.com/PrideatWork>

10:00 AM House Judiciary Committee marks up its authorization and oversight plan – Markup hearing on ‘Authorization and Oversight Plan for the 115th Congress’, ‘H.R. 985, Fairness in Class Action Litigation Act’, and ‘H.R. 906, Furthering Asbestos Claim Transparency (FACT) Act’ Location: Rm 2141, Rayburn House Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://judiciary.house.gov/>
<https://twitter.com/HouseJudiciary>

10:30 AM House Administration Committee hearing on committee funding begins – Hearing begins on ‘Committee Funding for the 115th Congress’, with testimony from bipartisan Reps. Mike Conaway, Collin Peterson, Mac Thornberry, Adam Smith, Diane Black, John Yarmuth, Virginia Foxx, Bobby Scott, Greg Walden, Frank Pallone, Susan Brooks, Linda Sanchez, Jeb Hensarling, Maxine Waters, Ed Royce, Eliot Engel, Michael McCaul, Bennie Thompson, Devin Nunes, Adam Schiff, Bob Goodlatte, John Conyers, Rob Bishop, Raul Grijalva, Jason Chaffetz, Elijah Cummings, Pete Sessions, Louise Slaughter, Lamar Smith, Eddie Bernice Johnson, Steven Chabot, Nydia Velazquez, Bill Shuster, Peter DeFazio, Phil Roe, Tim Walz, Kevin Brady, and Richard Neal * Concludes tomorrow Location: Rm 1310, Longworth House Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://cha.house.gov/>
<https://twitter.com/HouseAdmnGOP>

11:00 AM House Small Business Committee hearing on the tax code and entrepreneurship – Hearing on ‘Start-ups Stalling? The Tax Code as a Barrier to Entrepreneurship’, with testimony from Tax Foundation Director of Federal Projects Kyle Pomerleau; Heritage Foundation Institute for Economic Freedom and Opportunity Senior Fellow for Economic Policy David Burton; Tribute President Tim Reynolds (on behalf of National Small Business Association); and former American Institute of CPAs Tax Executive Committee Chair Troy Lewis Location: Rm 2360, Rayburn House Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://smallbusiness.house.gov/>
<https://twitter.com/SmallBizGOP>

12:00 PM House meets for legislative business – House of Representatives meets for legislative business, with agenda expected to include completion of consideration of ‘H.J.Res. 42 – Disapproving the rule submitted by the Department of Labor relating to drug testing of unemployment compensation applicants’, ‘H.J.Res. 66 – Disapproving the rule submitted by the Department of Labor relating to savings arrangements established by States for non-governmental employees’, and ‘H.J.Res. 67 – Disapproving the rule submitted by the Department of Labor relating to savings

arrangements established by qualified State political subdivisions for non-governmental employees' Location: Washington, DC
<http://www.house.gov/>

1:00 PM Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission co-hosts briefing on child soldiers – 'Combatting Child Soldiering: A Pernicious Form of Child Trafficking' briefing, co-hosted by the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission and the Congressional Human Trafficking Caucus in commemoration of the International Day against the use of Child Soldiers (12 Feb). Panel of experts – including Dalhousie University Romeo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative founder Romeo Dallaire and Human Rights Watch Children's Rights Division Advocacy Director / International Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers founding chairperson Jo Becker – examine the U.S. record and explore ways to improve and deepen U.S. efforts to end the recruitment and use of children as soldiers * TLHRC Co-Chairs Reps. James McGovern and Randy Hultgren deliver opening remarks Location: Rm 2200, Rayburn House Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://tlhrc.house.gov/>
<https://twitter.com/TLHRCommission>

2:00 PM New Congress Forum on Child Welfare and Adoption – New Congress Forum on Child Welfare and Adoption, hosted by the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute (CCAI) plus honorary co-hosts including the Congressional Coalition on Adoption and its Co-Chairs Sens. Roy Blunt and Amy Klobuchar and Reps. Trent Franks and Brenda Lawrence, the Senate Caucus on Foster Youth, the Congressional Caucus on Foster Youth, and the National Foster Youth Initiative. All Members of Congress invited to discuss their child welfare and adoption interests and priorities – both domestic and international – with confirmed attendees including Republican Sen. Chuck Grassley Location: SVC 212-210, U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC www.ccaainstitute.org
<https://twitter.com/CCAIInstitute>

2:00 PM House Oversight subcommittee hearing on federal programs that serve tribes and their members – Interior, Energy, and Environment Subcommittee hearing on 'Examining Federal Programs that Serve Tribes and Their Members' Location: Rm 2154, Rayburn House Office Bldg, Washington, DC
<http://oversight.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/GOPoversight>

2:00 PM House Appropriations subcommittee 'Members' Day' hearing – Legislative Branch Subcommittee 'Members' Day' hearing, with testimony from Members of Congress on the agencies and programs under the jurisdiction of the subcommittee Location: HT-2, U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC
<http://appropriations.house.gov/>
<https://twitter.com/HouseAppropsGOP>

4:30 PM Event on Capitol Hill on 'some of the tangible impacts of federally funded basic research' – National Science Foundation and Coalition for National Science Funding (CNSF) host 'The Arc of Science: Research to Results' – an event on Capitol Hill to highlight 'some of the tangible impacts of federally funded basic research' for

new Members of Congress and their staff. NSF Director France Cordova and bipartisan Reps. Lamar Smith and Eddie Bernice Johnson deliver remarks, while demonstrators include representatives from the Los Angeles Police Department, the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Federal Trade Commission, and private industry Location: Rms 2043-2044, Rayburn House Office Bldg, Washington, DC <http://www.nsf.gov/> <https://twitter.com/NSF>

4:45 PM House Armed Services Committee Chairman Rep. Mac Thornberry press gaggle Location: Rm 2216, Rayburn House Office Bldg, Washington, DC armedservices.house.gov <https://twitter.com/HASCRpublicans>

Other: 8:00 AM NAHU Capitol Conference concludes – National Association of Health Underwriters Capitol Conference concludes, with speakers today including Republicans Sen. Lamar Alexander and Rep. Chris Collins, Democratic Rep. Kyrsten Sinema, former Sen. Tom Daschle, and NAHU Past-President John Nelson Location: Hyatt Regency on Capitol Hill, Washington, DC <http://www.nahu.org> <https://twitter.com/nahudotorg>

8:30 AM National Congress of American Indians Executive Council Winter Session continues – National Congress of American Indians 2017 Executive Council Winter Session (aka Tribal Nations Legislative Summit) continues. Day three speakers include Reps. Markwayne Mullin and Jared Huffman, Census Bureau Director John Thompson, and Alaska Lt. Governor Bryon Mallott Location: Capital Hilton, 1001 16th St NW, Washington, DC <http://www.ncai.org/> <https://twitter.com/NCAI1944>

9:00 AM GOP Sen. Mike Lee discusses populism at Heritage Foundation – ‘Conservatism for the Forgotten Man’ Heritage Foundation event: Republican Sen. Mike Lee ‘explains the delicate balance between the opportunities and difficulties populism presents and how conservatives can navigate through these challenges’, before a panel of Ethics and Public Policy Center Fellow Dr Yuval Levin and Heritage Foundation Institute for Economic Freedom and Opportunity Center for Data Analysis Research Fellow in Macroeconomics Dr Salim Furth discuss how to apply these principles from a theoretical and macro level Location: Heritage Foundation, 214 Massachusetts Ave NE, Washington, DC www.heritage.org <https://twitter.com/Heritage>

9:00 AM Bipartisan Reps. Chaffetz and Cummings at Cato Institute policy forum on police cell-site simulations – ‘Stingrays: A New Frontier in Police Surveillance’ Cato Institute Policy Forum, with House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform Chairman Jason Chaffetz presenting the findings from a recent House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform report on cell-site simulators (aka ‘Stingrays’) – which said that there is no consensus on the rules that should regulate their deployment, or even what legal authorities govern tracking using them – before a panel of policy experts and technologists (including House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform Ranking Member Elijah Cummings and Cato Institute Policy Analyst Adam Bates)

explore 'how law enforcement can exploit this powerful tool to fight crime, while also checking its enormous power to encroach on privacy' Location: Cato Institute, 1000 Massachusetts Ave NW, Washington, DC <http://www.cato.org/>
<https://twitter.com/CatoEvents> #CatoEvents

2:00 PM Education Secretary DeVos addresses Magnet Schools of America – Magnet Schools of America 2017 National Policy Training Conference. Speakers include Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos, Republican Rep. Luke Messer, and PDK International CEO Dr Joshua Starr Location: Marriott Marquis, 901 Massachusetts Ave NW, Washington DC <http://www.magnet.edu/>
<https://twitter.com/MagnetSchlsMSA>

6:00 PM Woman's National Democratic Club hosts the final DNC Candidate Forum – Woman's National Democratic Club hosts the final DNC Candidate Forum for candidates to make their final pitch before the election of the new Democratic National Committee chair at the 23-26 DNC meeting. Candidates are Democratic Rep. Keith Ellison, former Secretary of Labor Tom Perez, DNC Vice Chair Ray Buckley, South Bend, IN, Mayor Pete Buttigieg, former Rock the Vote President Jehmu Greene, South Carolina Party Chairman Jaime Harrison and Idaho Democratic Party Executive Director Sally Boynton Brown Location: Woman's National Democratic Club, 1526 New Hampshire Ave NW, Washington, DC
www.democraticwoman.org https://twitter.com/wndc_1922

7:00 PM GOP Sen. Joni Ernst speaks on CVA 'Future of the Courts' tele-town hall – Concerned Veterans for America 'Future of the Courts' tele-town hall series begins with Republican Sen. Joni Ernst and CVA Executive Director Mark Lucas speaking on veterans' relationship with the U.S. Constitution, the role of the Supreme Court in American government, and the importance of having judges like Neil Gorsuch, who President Donald Trump has nominated for the vacant seat on the U.S. Supreme Court Location: TBD <http://concernedveteransforamerica.org/>
<https://twitter.com/concernedvets>

Last Laughs

Late Night Political Humor.

Jimmy Kimmel: "This was a bittersweet Valentine's Day at the White House as National Security Adviser Michael Flynn became the first contestant eliminated on 'The Celebrity President.' He had his job for only 23 days. Meatloaf lasted longer than Michael Flynn."

Jimmy Kimmel: "The White House said [Flynn] didn't do anything illegal. They say the President just lost confidence in him, which is strange because yesterday, Kellyanne Conway, the President's spokesperson, said Trump had full confidence in him. It's like your girlfriend telling you she loves you while she's signing up for 'Ok Cupid.'"

Jimmy Kimmel: "Flynn tried to resign last week, but Vladimir Putin wouldn't let him, refused to accept his letter of resignation, so Trump stepped in."

Jimmy Kimmel: "A lot of news outlets were speculating because Trump called Governor Christie all the way to Washington, he must be offering him a job in his Administration. Turns out, not the case. Real story is this has been a stressful few weeks, and the President just likes to watch Chris Christie eat lunch. It cheers him up."

Jimmy Kimmel: "Speaking of magazines, 'Playboy' magazine has decided to start publishing naked photographs again. It really is incredible how much Donald Trump has been able to accomplish."

Stephen Colbert: "[Michael Flynn] resigned last night, not because of a scandal. He just wanted to spend more time with his Russian contacts."

Stephen Colbert: "Of course, this is a major betrayal of trust, and Trump immediately condemned both Flynn and the Russians. I am just kidding."

James Corden: "Obviously, the big news everyone is talking about today came from the White House where National Security Adviser Michael Flynn has resigned from his position after only 24 days! Did his health insurance even kick in?"

James Corden: "Apparently, Flynn was asked to leave because he lied to the Vice President about conversations with Russia. But on the bright side, he did such a good job lying he's now next in line to be the White House Press Secretary."

James Corden: "Flynn said that he's resigning to spend more time with his loved ones: You know, his wife, his kids, the Kremlin, the KGB."

Trevor Noah: [Referring to Michael Flynn's resignation] "Donald Trump finally draining the swamp of the people he brought to the swamp! President Trump is a genius, people! He hires a cabinet full of terrible people, fires them one by one. Looks like he's a man of action."

Trevor Noah: [Referring to Rep. Jason Chaffetz's response to Flynn's controversy] "Oh, the situation has taken care of itself? What kind of an investigator are you? Chaffetz is like an exterminator who comes in the kitchen, turns the lights on, roaches run, and he's, like, 'Well, problem solved! Easier than I thought. Nothing to do here.'"

Jimmy Fallon: “Apparently, Michael Flynn just set a record of the shortest-serving White House National Security Adviser ever at 24 days. Then Education Secretary Betsy DeVos said, ‘Wow. Only a week?’”

Seth Meyers: “White House staffers have reportedly begun using an encrypted chat app called ‘Confide’ that erases messages as soon as they’re read. Not only that, they’ve also started erasing national security advisers.”

Seth Meyers: “No one in the 64-year history of the role had a shorter tenure than [Flynn]. The average tenure is 2.6 years. Flynn was on the job just 24 days. Twenty-four days. I use disposable razors longer than that.”

Seth Meyers: “Well, I guess that’s it, then. Kellyanne Conway says Flynn enjoys the full confidence of the President. And if there’s anyone in the White House you can trust, it’s Kellyanne Con...Just a reminder that if Kellyanne Conway is ever on TV saying, ‘There isn’t a tornado coming,’ get in the basement!”

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From: Quinn, Brendan
To: [Ferriter, Olivia](#)
Subject: Re: Links to OIG reports
Date: Wednesday, February 15, 2017 11:35:15 AM

Fantastic! Thank you very much

On Wed, Feb 15, 2017 at 11:33 AM, Ferriter, Olivia <olivia_ferriter@ios.doi.gov> wrote:

OIG Reports on IA Energy Resources and Tribal School Facilities

<https://www.doioig.gov/sites/doioig.gov/files/CR-EV-BIA-0001-2011Public.pdf>
<<https://www.doioig.gov/sites/doioig.gov/files/CR-EV-BIA-0001-2011Public.pdf>> - Oil and Gas Leasing in Indian Country: An Opportunity for Economic Development

<https://www.doioig.gov/reports/bia-needs-sweeping-changes-manage-osage-nations-energy-resources>
<<https://www.doioig.gov/reports/bia-needs-sweeping-changes-manage-osage-nations-energy-resources>> - BIA Needs Sweeping Changes to Manage the Osage Nation's Energy Resources

<https://www.doioig.gov/reports/bureau-indian-affairs-federal-indian-minerals-office>
<<https://www.doioig.gov/reports/bureau-indian-affairs-federal-indian-minerals-office>> - BIA's Federal Indian Minerals Office

<https://www.doioig.gov/reports/bureau-indian-affairs-southern-ute-agencys-management-southern-ute-indian-tribes-energy> <<https://www.doioig.gov/reports/bureau-indian-affairs-southern-ute-agencys-management-southern-ute-indian-tribes-energy>> - BIA's Southern Ute Agency's Management of the Southern Ute Indian Tribe's Energy Resources

<https://www.doioig.gov/reports/records-management-selected-bureau-indian-affairs-agency-offices>
<<https://www.doioig.gov/reports/records-management-selected-bureau-indian-affairs-agency-offices>> - Records Management at Selected BIA Agency Offices

<https://www.doioig.gov/reports/condition-indian-school-facilities> <<https://www.doioig.gov/reports/condition-indian-school-facilities>> - Condition of Indian School Facilities

<https://www.doioig.gov/reports/condition-bureau-indian-affairs-facilities-pine-hill-boarding-school>
<<https://www.doioig.gov/reports/condition-bureau-indian-affairs-facilities-pine-hill-boarding-school>> - Condition of BIAs Facilities at Pine Hill Boarding School

<https://www.doioig.gov/sites/doioig.gov/files/2010-I-0010.pdf>
<<https://www.doioig.gov/sites/doioig.gov/files/2010-I-0010.pdf>> - School Violence Prevention

<https://www.doioig.gov/sites/doioig.gov/files/2008-G-00291.pdf>
<<https://www.doioig.gov/sites/doioig.gov/files/2008-G-00291.pdf>> - Evaluation of Controls to Prevent Violence at BIE-Operated Education Facilities

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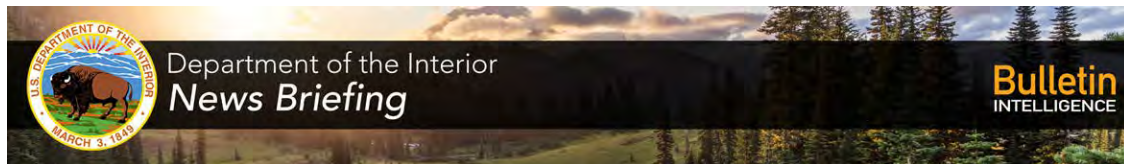
From: Simpson, Melissa
To: [Benedetto, Kathleen](mailto:Benedetto.Kathleen)
Subject: Fwd: U.S. Department of the Interior News Briefing for Friday, February 17, 2017
Date: Friday, February 17, 2017 7:31:26 AM

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DATE: FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2017 7:00 AM EST

Holiday Message

In observance of the Washington's Birthday holiday, we will not publish on Monday, February 20, 2017. Service will resume on Tuesday, February 21, 2017. We wish our readers a safe and happy holiday.

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DOI In The News

- Bloomberg News: Trump Signs Measure Ending Stream Protection Rule.
- Politico Morning Energy: Zinke Expected To Undertake "Major Reorganization" At Interior.
- Missoula (MT) Independent: Zinke Not Participating In Recent House Votes.
- Siskiyou (CA) Daily News: Zinke's Help Sought With Suction Dredge Mining In California.
- Bristol (VA) Herald Courier: Outdoor Retailer Show Leaving Utah Over Public Lands Stance.
- Salt Lake (UT) Tribune: Utah Business Owners Oppose Grand Staircase-Escalante Resolution.
- Salem (OR) Statesman Journal: Bill Would Study Moving Oregon Public Land To State Control.
- Reuters: Fight Over Public Lands Unite Sportsmen And Environmentalists.

- Troy (NY) Daily News: Eldean Bridge To Get Historical Marker.
- Salem (OR) Capital Press: Additional Coverage: Oregon Counties Sue Over Cascade-Siskiyou Expansion.
- KAJO-AM Grants Pass (OR): Additional Coverage: Hiring Freeze Raises Firefighting Concerns.
- Cortez (CO) Journal: Op-Ed: Recreation Economy Depends Upon Protection Of Public Lands.

America's Great Outdoors

National Park Service

- Washington Post: National Parks Offering Free Admission On Presidents' Day.
- U.S. News & World Report: Sitka National Historical Park Wants To Restore Views Of 1804 Battlefield.
- Brookhaven (GA) Post: NPS Approves Back Half Of Brookhaven Park To Be Transferred To City.
- Times of Northwest Indiana: New Fire Management Officer Named At Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore.
- Bradenton (FL) Herald: Man With Plan To Visit All National Parks To Stop At De Soto National Memorial Saturday.
- Washington Times: Skier Falls To Death In Grand Teton National Park.
- Colorado Springs (CO) Gazette: Authorities Searching For Missing Man In Great Sand Dunes National Park.
- Georgetowner: Additional Coverage: NPS Approves New Boathouses On Georgetown Waterfront.
- Fox News: Additional Coverage: "Firefall" Optical Illusion Returns To Yosemite National Park.

Fish And Wildlife Service

- Washington Post: House Republicans Move To Overturn Obama Limits on Alaska Hunting, Trapping.
- Outdoor News: Obama-era Lead Ban Put On Hold.
- Washington Times: Havasu National Wildlife Refuge To Close For Two Weeks For Aerial Hunt Of Wild Swine.
- Payson (AZ) Roundup: FWS Says Relic Leopard Frogs Don't Warrant Federal Protection.
- Santa Fe New Mexican: FWS Seeks Input On 2017 Mexican Gray Wolf Plan.
- Law360: FWS Released From Lawsuit Over Permit For Lynx Capture.
- Missoulian (MT): Judge Hears Arguments In Lawsuit Filed Over Cabinet-Yaak Bears.
- Houston Chronicle: World's Oldest Seabird Hatches New Chick At Midway Atoll National Wildlife Refuge.

Bureau Of Land Management

- Horse: BLM Calls Wild Horse Slaughter Story "Fake News".

US Geological Survey

- KRGV-TV Harlingen (TX): USGS Says Southeast Texas Ground Has Dropped.

Securing America's Energy Future

Offshore Energy Development

- Law360: Interior Urges High Court To Refuse Noble's Well-Plug Row.
- Offshore Engineer: BSEE Inspects Hess' Stampede Tension Leg Platform.
- Associated Press: Hilcorp Natural Gas Pipeline Leaking Into Cook Inlet.

Onshore Energy Development

- E&E Daily: Dakota Access Stakeholders Debate At House Panel Hearing.
- Wall Street Journal: Navajo Nation Seeks Trumps Help To Keep Arizona Coal Plant Open.
- Bloomberg News: Most BLM Auctions Are Now Held Online Over Activist Concerns.
- Reuters: TransCanada Files Keystone XL Pipeline Application For Nebraska Route.
- Riverton (WY) Ranger: BLM Posts Oil, Gas Parcels For June Lease.
- Riverton (WY) Ranger: February Lease Sale Generated \$129.3 Million.
- Wall Street Journal: Additional Coverage Of Possible Shutdown Of Navajo Generating Station.

Renewable Energy

- Law360: Court Reject Anglers' Request To Halt New York Wind Farm Lease.

Empowering Native American Communities

- Courthouse News: House Subcommittee Told Oversight Of BIA, BIE Needed.
- Sputnik News: NCAI President Says Native American Schools Need \$388 Million To Be Modernized.
- Char-Koosta News: Additional Coverage: Little Shell Moves Closer To Federal Recognition.

Office Of Insular Affairs

- Guam Daily Post: Editorial: Trump's Tough immigration Stance Could Impact Guam.

Tackling America's Water Challenges

- Sacramento (CA) Bee: BOR Monitoring Arrival Of North California Storms.
- San Francisco Chronicle: BOR Expects Lake Berryessa's Glory Hole To Spill Over.
- Redding (CA) Record-Searchlight: BOR Says Sacramento River Flood Maps A Secret.

Top National News

- NBC: Media Analyses: Trump's Performance At News Conference Unseemly, Unprecedented.
- USA Today: Trump Says He Has Directed Sessions To Investigate Leaks.
- Washington Post: Senate Judiciary Committee To Begin Gorsuch Hearings March 20.

Editorial Wrap-Up

- New York Times.
 - "For A Troubled President, The Media Is A Satisfying Target."
 - "Bring On The Special Prosecutor."
 - "Plastic Bag Fees Make Sense, Just Not To Albany."

- Washington Post.
 - "Trump Can Help Americans Trust Him By Releasing His Taxes."
 - "What The Country Need To Know About The New Labor Secretary Nominee."
 - "A Power That Lets Police Take Property For Themselves – Even When There’s No Crime."
- Wall Street Journal.
 - "The Bully Trumpet."
 - "Trump’s Labor Mulligan."
 - "Supreme Court Disclosure Test."

Big Picture

- Headlines From Today’s Front Pages.

Washington Schedule

- Today’s Events In Washington.

Last Laughs

- Late Night Political Humor.

DOI In The News

Trump Signs Measure Ending Stream Protection Rule.

[Bloomberg News](#) (2/16, Natter) reports President Trump signed legislation repealing the Stream Protection Rule under the Congressional Review Act. "In eliminating this rule I am continuing to keep my promise to the American people to get rid of wasteful regulations," Trump said at a White House signing ceremony. [The Hill](#) (2/16, Henry) reports the rule "is among the most controversial environment regulations" of the Obama administration and the coal industry "said it would be costly to implement and lead to job losses across the sector."

The [Washington Times](#) (2/16, Wolfgang) reports that "the legislation has at least some bipartisan support." West Virginia Democrat Sen. Joe Manchin was "present at Thursday’s event and has urged Mr. Trump to roll back Obama-era regulations on the coal industry."

Meanwhile, a brief report on the [CBS Evening News](#) (2/16, story 9, 0:20, Pelley) said that a Congressional Research Service report "said the regulation would have created as many jobs as it eliminated." [CNBC](#) (2/16) reports that the CRS "found the rule would reduce coal-related employment by an average of 260 jobs a year." CRS also "projected the rule would generate an average of 250 jobs a year," and "some of the new jobs would be in high-skilled areas like engineering and biology."

Additional coverage was provided by [CBS News](#) (2/16), [Fox News](#) (2/16), the [Wheeling \(WV\) Intelligencer](#) (2/17), the [Clarksburg \(WV\) Exponent-Telegram](#) (2/16, Ali), the [Bluefield \(WV\) Daily Telegraph](#) (2/16, Jordan), the [Cleveland \(OH\) Plain Dealer](#) (2/16, Koff), the [Pittsburgh \(PA\) Post-Gazette](#) (2/17, Eilperin), the [Johnstown \(PA\) Tribune-Democrat](#) (2/16, Griffith), the [Gephardt Daily](#) (2/17), [West Virginia MetroNews](#) (2/16, Wiles), [West Virginia Public Broadcasting](#) (2/16, Board), the [Daily Caller](#) (2/16, Bastasch), the [Daily Caller](#) (2/16, Picket), [UPI](#) (2/16, Feller), [National Geographic](#) (2/16, Profeta),

[Mining](#) (2/16, McCrae), [Western Journalism](#) (2/16, Powe), [Libertarian Republic](#) (2/16, Bastasch), [Law360](#) (2/16, Goldberg), [RT](#) (2/16), [WTOV-TV Steubenville \(OH\)](#) Steubenville, OH (2/16, Warner), [KGWN-TV Cheyenne \(WY\)](#) Cheyenne, WY (2/16), [WCBC-AM Cumberland \(MD\)](#) Cumberland, MD (2/16), [WDTV-TV Bridgeport \(WV\)](#) Bridgeport, WV (2/16), [WAJR-AM Morgantown \(WV\)](#) Morgantown, WV (2/16, Wiles), and [WAJR-AM Morgantown \(WV\)](#) Morgantown, WV (2/16, Wiles).

Zinke Expected To Undertake “Major Reorganization” At Interior.

[Politico Morning Energy](#) (2/16) reports that House Natural Resources Chairman Rob Bishop “told reporters Wednesday he won’t roll out his legislative agenda until Trump’s administration is in place.” He said, “You need the entire cast in there. I’m not going to wait forever for the administration to get up and running before we start moving, but I want to give them a chance to be in place.” Bishop added that “he’d like to give Interior nominee Ryan Zinke time to complete some ‘major reorganization’ at the department that he said Zinke understands needs to happen.”

Zinke Not Participating In Recent House Votes.

The [Missoula \(MT\) Independent](#) (2/16) reports that as Interior nominee Ryan Zinke awaits for his confirmation vote, “Montana’s sole voice in the House of Representatives appears to have gone AWOL.” The article notes that “according to congressional records, Zinke hasn’t cast a single vote since Jan. 5.” Moreover, “his private and official Twitter accounts have gone virtually dormant, though his Facebook page has been sporadically updated with links to news stories and a photo of his wife, Lola, at President Trump’s Jan. 20 inauguration.” The article also points out that the House has “been taking up issues of interest to Montanans.”

[KECI-TV](#) Missoula, MT (2/16, Giottonini). reports that one reason could be that “Zinke wants to enter his new role as Secretary of Interior with less of a political footprint.” Political observers don’t expect to “see change until the fate of Zinke’s cabinet post is decided.”

Zinke’s Help Sought With Suction Dredge Mining In California.

The [Siskiyou \(CA\) Daily News](#) (2/16, Jester) reports that the Mining Act of 1872 was “brought up at the Siskiyou County Board of Supervisors meeting on Tuesday during discussion of a 2009 ban on suction dredge mining, a matter which miners in Siskiyou County see as negatively impacting their livelihood.” The board of supervisors has decided to send a letter to Interior nominee Ryan Zinke “which discusses the issues surrounding the ban on suction dredging.” According to the article, “the letter seeks to familiarize Zinke with suction dredge mining and how it affects the ‘rural, blue collar citizens of Siskiyou County,’ should he ultimately be confirmed for the interior position and thus be able to explore the matter.”

Outdoor Retailer Show Leaving Utah Over Public Lands Stance.

The [AP](#) (2/16, McCombs) reports that “a lucrative outdoor trade show that’s been staged in Salt Lake City for two decades announced Thursday it will be leaving Utah over the latest disagreement with state leaders about their stance on public lands.” The Outdoor Retailer show “made the announcement just

hours after a conference call intended to smooth discord between industry leaders and Gov. Gary Herbert ended with both sides disappointed." The article notes that "industry leaders had previously threatened to leave Utah if Herbert didn't stand down from his call for President Donald Trump to rescind the new Bears Ears National Monument." Herbert "refused to grant them their request in the conference call, triggering the decision."

Coverage by the AP was also picked up by the [Minneapolis \(MN\) Star Tribune](#) (2/16, McCombs), [Philly \(PA\)](#) (2/16, McCombs), the [Washington \(DC\) Post](#) (2/16, McCombs), and the [Daily Mail](#) (2/16).

Additional coverage was provided by the [Denver \(CO\) Post](#) (2/16, Blevins), the [Pacific Standard](#) (2/16, Tobias), the [Men's Journal](#) (2/16, Trimble), and [KSL-TV Salt Lake City \(UT\)](#) Salt Lake City (2/16, Williams).

Utah Business Owners Oppose Grand Staircase-Escalante Resolution.

The [Salt Lake \(UT\) Tribune](#) (2/15, Maffly) reports that Garfield County commissioners have "hit the pause button on a proposed resolution targeting the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument after dozens of Boulder and Escalante business owners implored them to consider the monument's economic benefits before voting to drastically shrink it." Business operators claim that the monument "drives a thriving and diverse economy, contrary to claims by elected leaders that it has sunk the county into a 'state of emergency.'" Commissioners "agreed to hold a hearing March 13 before voting on whether to ask Congress to contract the Grand Staircase boundaries."

Bill Would Study Moving Oregon Public Land To State Control.

The [Salem \(OR\) Statesman Journal](#) (2/16, Urness) reports that "four Republican lawmakers want to study the idea of transferring Oregon's federal public lands to state control." House Bill 2365 would "create a task force to analyze the benefit and cost of an idea that has become a political lightning rod both nationally and locally." The bill's chief sponsor, Rep. Carl Wilson, "emphasized that his bill was only asking for a study," and "he also emphasized that neither he nor his bill intend to sell Oregon's public land into private ownership."

The [Bend \(OR\) Bulletin](#) (2/16, Hamway) reports that Rep. Gene Whisnant "withdrew his sponsorship" the bill. Whisnant "defended his support for the bill" on Thursday, "but announced that he will no longer be sponsoring it, citing a flurry of emails and calls from concerned citizens and conservation organizations."

Fight Over Public Lands Unite Sportsmen And Environmentalists.

[Reuters](#) (2/17, Volcovici, Knox) reports that sportsmen and environmentalists are uniting against efforts to transfer federal lands to state control. Both groups "fear" that doing so "could open them up to drilling and coal mining rather than recreation and preservation." The article notes that "recent funding data from the Foundation Center database, which aggregates information from tax filings, shows groups such as the Backcountry Hunters and Anglers and the Outdoor Alliance have accepted grants from big environmental and liberal foundations, including the Turner Foundation and the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation."

Eldean Bridge To Get Historical Marker.

The [Troy \(NY\) Daily News](#) (2/16, Fox) reports that the Miami County Commissioners have decided to accept a historical marker from the Interior Department for the Eldean covered bridge, which has been recognized as a National Historic Landmark. The Interior Department will “pay for the plaque, but it will be up to the county to have the plaque installed, County Engineer Paul Huelskamp said.”

Additional Coverage: Oregon Counties Sue Over Cascade-Siskiyou Expansion.

Additional coverage that 17 Oregon counties have filed a lawsuit the expansion of the Cascade-Siskiyou national monument was provided by the [Salem \(OR\) Capital Press](#) (2/16, Perkowski), the [Klamath Falls \(OR\) Herald And News](#) (2/16, Owens), and [Courthouse News](#) (2/16, Brown).

Additional Coverage: Hiring Freeze Raises Firefighting Concerns.

Additional coverage that Sen. Ron Wyden has raised “concerns about the impact a 90-day federal employee hiring freeze might have on the seasonal firefighting force” with the Interior Department was provided by [KAJO-AM](#) Grants Pass, OR (2/16, Marsh).

Op-Ed: Recreation Economy Depends Upon Protection Of Public Lands.

In an op-ed for the [Cortez \(CO\) Journal](#) (2/16, Wren), Diane Wren, the owner of Osprey Packs, writes that as Rep. Ryan Zinke is “being considered as our new interior Secretary in Washington, and as the Trump administration begins to review its own public lands policy, there are two things that are important for a new administration to take to heart: The vital role America’s public lands play in the \$646 billion national outdoor recreation economy, and the broad public support for the president’s historic ability to use the Antiquities Act to protect sensitive scientific and culturally significant lands in the future.” If confirmed, Wren hopes that Zinke will “listen to an American public that overwhelmingly supports protecting our public lands for the future.” Wren urges “the new administration to stand for what makes America, and Colorado, great — our shared public lands and the ability of the president and the Interior Department to protect them for future generations via the Antiquities Act.”

America’s Great Outdoors

National Park Service

National Parks Offering Free Admission On Presidents’ Day.

The [Washington Post](#) (2/16, Taylor) reports that the National Park Service is offering Free Entrance Day to celebrate Presidents’ Day.

Additional coverage was provided by the [Los Angeles Times](#) (2/16, Forgione), the [Arizona Republic](#) (2/16, Jespersen) and [KXRM-TV](#) Colorado Springs, CO (2/16, Case).

Sitka National Historical Park Wants To Restore Views Of 1804 Battlefield.

The [AP](#) (2/17) reports that Sitka National Historical Park is “looking to get the public’s support to move forward with a project to restore an area of the park that was the site of a battlefield more than 200 years ago.” The 1804 Tlingit-Russian battlefield “on a peninsula near the mouth of Indian River has since been overgrown with trees and shrubs.” The park is “now looking to clear out the brush to give visitors a better view of the water from the historic site.”

NPS Approves Back Half Of Brookhaven Park To Be Transferred To City.

The [Brookhaven \(GA\) Post](#) (2/15, Benton) reports that the National Park Service has “approved the back half of Brookhaven Park to be transferred to the City.” DeKalb County Commissioners “must now approve the changes to the deed.” According to the article, “if the County approves the transfer, Brookhaven expects to pay the same \$100 per acre for the back half of the 30-acre park that they paid for the rest of the parks in the City.”

New Fire Management Officer Named At Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore.

The [Times of Northwest Indiana](#) (2/16) reports that the National Park Service has chosen MaryEllen “Mel” Whitenack as the Fire Management Officer at Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore. Chief of Resource Management Daniel Plath said, “Mel has shown great leadership and done an outstanding job across the Midwest Region of the National Park Service to help parks develop fire programs. Mel brings with her years of fire management experience and proven team building skills, including the 2015 National Wildland Fire Leadership Challenge, where Indiana Dunes fire team received the runner-up award for all fire programs across the country.”

Man With Plan To Visit All National Parks To Stop At De Soto National Memorial Saturday.

The [Bradenton \(FL\) Herald](#) (2/16, Nealeigh) reports that Manatee Mikah Meyer is “on a mission: to see all the National Park Service sites in the country in honor of his father, and to encourage the LGBT community.” Meyer said will visit De Soto National Memorial on Saturday “as the next leg of his trip, stop No. 115.” According to the article, “his plan is to arrive at noon to watch a film about the history of DeSoto’s encounter with the indigenous people, then attend a ‘living history’ ranger demonstration.”

Skier Falls To Death In Grand Teton National Park.

The [AP](#) (2/16) reports that “a 26-year-old man has died after falling about 1,400 feet while skiing in Grand Teton National Park.” The National Park Service says John “Jack” Fields Jr. “fell Wednesday morning down a narrow, steep gully on the South Teton Mountain.”

Coverage by the AP was also picked up by [U.S. News & World Report](#) (2/16) and the [Spokane \(WA\) Spokesman-Review](#) (2/16).

Authorities Searching For Missing Man In Great Sand Dunes National Park.

The [Colorado Springs \(CO\) Gazette](#) (2/16, Mulder) reports that “authorities are searching for a 40-year-old man who went missing in the Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve in southern Colorado.” Park staff began searching

for Bryan Skilinski on Wednesday afternoon, “but on Thursday morning, the primary search began,” Acting Superintendent Scott Stonum said. According to the article, “about 30 people will continue the search until Thursday evening, when they will debrief and plan for Friday, when additional resources are expected to join.”

Additional Coverage: NPS Approves New Boathouses On Georgetown Waterfront.

Additional coverage that the National Park Service has approved “a plan for the Georgetown Nonmotorized Boathouse Zone Development Plan and Environmental Assessment” was provided by the [Georgetowner](#) (2/16, Devaney).

Additional Coverage: “Firefall” Optical Illusion Returns To Yosemite National Park.

Additional coverage of the “firefall” attraction at Yosemite National Park was provided by [Fox News](#) (2/16), the [Los Angeles \(CA\) Times](#) (2/16, Rocha), [Time Out](#) (2/16, Martin), and [KPRC-TV Houston \(TX\)](#) Houston (2/16, Hidalgo).

Fish and Wildlife Service

House Republicans Move To Overturn Obama Limits on Alaska Hunting, Trapping.

The [Washington Post](#) (2/16, Eilperin) reports that House Republicans on Thursday passed a bill that would nullify regulations affecting hunting activities on national wildlife refuges in Alaska. The [AP](#) (2/16) reports that the Fish and Wildlife Service “said last year the rule will help maintain sustainable populations of bears, wolves and coyotes on national wildlife refuges across Alaska.” But Rep. Don Young “says the rule undermines Alaska’s ability to manage fish and wildlife on refuge lands – one-fifth of its land mass.” He says the rule “destroys a cooperative relationship between Alaska and the federal government.”

Coverage by the AP was picked up by the [Fairbanks \(AK\) News-Miner](#) (2/16), [Philly \(PA\)](#) (2/16), [U.S. News & World Report](#) (2/16), the [Washington \(DC\) Post](#) (2/16), the [Washington \(DC\) Times](#) (2/16), and the [Daily Mail](#) (2/16).

Additional coverage was provided by the [Alaska Dispatch News](#) (2/16, Martinson), the [Daily Caller](#) (2/16, Follett), the [Huffington Post](#) (2/15, Pacelle), [BuzzFeed](#) (2/16, Grandoni), and [AmmoLand](#) (2/16, Evans).

Obama-era Lead Ban Put On Hold.

[Outdoor News](#) (2/16, Weisberg) reports that “a recently issued federal order banning the use of lead bullets and fishing tackle on federal lands is currently on hold, according to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which cites the change of administration in Washington for the delay in implementation.” Former President Obama “issued the directive in his final days in the White House, but it now is under review, according to Fish and Wildlife Service spokesman Laury Parramore, who indicated that all national orders have the same status.” She said, “(The lead ban) has not been singled out. The new administration is

evaluating the order in all its implications.”

Havasu National Wildlife Refuge To Close For Two Weeks For Aerial Hunt Of Wild Swine.

The [AP](#) (2/16) reports that the Havasu National Wildlife Refuge. will be “closed for two weeks starting Feb. 21 for an aerial hunt to eradicate hundreds of feral swine regarding as troublesome and dangerous.” The U.S. Fish and Wildlife” estimates there are 100 to 1,000 of the non-native pigs at the refuge.” Sen. John McCain “said the government should allow private hunters to shoot the hogs, but Mohave County Supervisor Buster Johnson said that’d delay the project.”

Coverage by the AP was also picked up by the [Albuquerque \(NM\) Journal](#) (2/16) and [U.S. News & World Report](#) (2/16).

Additional coverage was provided by the [Las Vegas \(NV\) Review-Journal](#) (2/16, Hawkins).

FWS Says Relic Leopard Frogs Don’t Warrant Federal Protection.

The [Payson \(AZ\) Roundup](#) (2/16) reports that “a frog species in Arizona and southern Nevada does not need federal protection under the Endangered Species Act, thanks to the multi-partner conservation efforts of the Arizona Game and Fish Department, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and other federal and state agencies that make up the Relict Leopard Frog Conservation Team.” The FWS has “determined that relict leopard frog populations are stable or increasing.” Jim DeVos, assistant director for Game and Fish’s Wildlife Management Division, said, “This shows that collaborative, on-the-ground efforts lead to conservation successes. By taking proactive measures that preclude the need for listing a species under the Endangered Species Act, we have much more flexibility in actively managing the species so it can ultimately thrive.”

FWS Seeks Input On 2017 Mexican Gray Wolf Plan.

The [Santa Fe New Mexican](#) (2/16, Moss) reports that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, “in the most aggressive recovery plan in recent years for the Mexican gray wolf, is proposing to release two packs of adult and young wolves in New Mexico this year, as well as place captive-born pups with wild litters.” John Bradley, an agency spokesman, “said the agency intends to apply for a permit with the state in order to move forward with the releases.”

Additional coverage was provided by the [AP](#) (2/17, Bryan).

FWS Released From Lawsuit Over Permit For Lynx Capture.

[Law360](#) (2/16, Lidgett) reports that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service was “released from a lawsuit Wednesday brought by environmental and animal welfare groups suing it for issuing the state of Maine a permit that allowed the accidental capture of a threatened lynx species, with a federal judge finding that the service had a rational basis to issue the permit.”

Judge Hears Arguments In Lawsuit Filed Over Cabinet-Yaak Bears.

The [Missoulian \(MT\)](#) (2/16, Chaney) reports that “whether grizzly bear numbers in northwest Montana are stable, shrinking or growing, both sides of a lawsuit over their federal status agree there aren’t enough of them.”

However, “lawyers for the Alliance for the Wild Rockies and the U.S. Government could not agree why the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service switched its recommendation from ‘warranted but precluded’ for more protection under the federal Endangered Species Act to a designation indicating the bear population was close to recovery.” U.S. District Judge Dana Christensen heard their arguments in Missoula on Thursday. The two sides argued before U.S. District Judge Dana Christensen in Missoula on Thursday.

World’s Oldest Seabird Hatches New Chick At Midway Atoll National Wildlife Refuge.

The [AP](#) (2/16) reports that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service said Thursday Wisdom, the “world’s oldest known seabird,” hatched a new chick at Midway Atoll National Wildlife Refuge last week. FWS project leader Bob Peyton “says Wisdom has returned to Midway for over six decades.”

Coverage by the AP was also picked up by the [Bristol \(VA\) Herald Courier](#) (2/16), the [Minneapolis \(MN\) Star Tribune](#) (2/16), [Philly \(PA\)](#) (2/16), the [Tacoma \(WA\) News Tribune](#) (2/16), [U.S. News & World Report](#) (2/16), the [Washington \(DC\) Post](#) (2/16), the [Washington \(DC\) Times](#) (2/16), the [Daily Mail](#) (2/16), the [Japan Times](#) (2/17), the [Times of India](#) (2/17), and [WBOC-TV Salisbury \(MD\)](#) Salisbury, MD (2/16).

Bureau of Land Management

BLM Calls Wild Horse Slaughter Story “Fake News”.

The [Horse](#) (2/16, Raia) reports that the Bureau of Land Management has “labeled an article claiming the agency plans to slaughter more than 40,000 wild horses as fake news.” According to the article, “a Jan. 30 article published by the website Native Indigenous American alleges that the Department of the Interior voted Jan. 27 to slaughter 67% of the wild horses remaining in the United States.” In response, Tom Gorey, BLM senior public affairs specialist, said the article was “fake news.” He said, “The agency’s policy is to not sell or send wild horses or burros to slaughter and there has been no congressional direction to the contrary.”

US Geological Survey

USGS Says Southeast Texas Ground Has Dropped.

The [AP](#) Harlingen, TX (2/16) reports that the U.S. Geological Survey “says the extensive use of water pumped from underground in recent decades has caused the ground in Southeast Texas to drop in at least one location by nearly 4 feet.” The USGS “says in a report released Thursday that water use by cities and other customers has caused aquifers to drop dramatically in some places.”

Securing America’s Energy Future

Offshore Energy Development

Interior Urges High Court To Refuse Noble’s Well-Plug Row.

[Law360](#) (2/16, Powell) reports that the Interior Department has “pressed the U.S. Supreme Court to reject Noble Energy Inc.’s request to review a D.C. Circuit decision upholding the department’s order to plug and abandon an oil well off the coast of California.”

BSEE Inspects Hess’ Stampede Tension Leg Platform.

[Offshore Engineer](#) (2/15) reports that “Hess Corp.’s Stampede tension leg platform moved one step closer to production Wednesday following completion of an initial pre-production inspection of its topsides by the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE) at the Kiewit shipyard in Ingleside, Texas.” Amy Wilson, acting district manager of BSEE’s Houma District, said, “BSEE conducts these inspections because our role is to ensure that energy produced on the Outer Continental Shelf is done safely, responsibly and with the fewest impacts to the environment. Our engineers and inspectors spend three to four days verifying that all safety equipment, design specifications and submitted drawings comply with federal regulations.”

Hilcorp Natural Gas Pipeline Leaking Into Cook Inlet.

The [AP](#) (2/16, Joling) reports natural gas has been leaking for at least 10 days from an underwater natural gas pipeline owned by Hilcorp Alaska LLC into the Cook Inlet. Gas is bubbling from an 8-inch pipeline in 80 feet of water about four miles offshore, but floating ice has prevented divers from reaching the site. The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation and the federal PHMSA are investigating the leak. DEC spokeswoman Candice Bressler said, “We believe the risk to public health and safety is small. ... Environmental risk is less easy to quantify since a monitoring and assessment program is not yet in place.” While there are few people in the area this time of year, there is the possibility for the leak to negatively affect beluga whales. The [Kenai \(AK\) Peninsula Clarion](#) (2/16) reports the damaged underwater pipeline is leaking between 210,000 and 310,000 cubic feet of natural gas per day into the water. Since spotting the leak, Hilcorp has reduced the pressure in the pipeline and shut down non-essential equipment on nearby platforms. The US Coast Guard said that “due to the current level of ice in lower Cook Inlet, natural gas may be accumulating under the ice and unable to be dissipate (sic) safely into the atmosphere.”

Onshore Energy Development

Dakota Access Stakeholders Debate At House Panel Hearing.

[E&E Daily](#) (2/16, Bogardus) reports on “sharp exchanges” between Dakota Access pipeline developer Energy Transfer Partners and the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe during hearing of the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy this week. Issues raised at the hearing, including “what constitutes ‘meaningful consultation,’ pipeline safety, effects on drinking water, climate change and eminent domain,” reaching beyond North Dakota and E&E reports “tribes have begun mobilizing to fight the Keystone XL pipeline in South Dakota, and landowners and environmental groups are pitted against gas pipelines up and down the East Coast.” Both sides spoke of the need to “strike a balance” among supporting labor unions, creating jobs, building

infrastructure, and protecting the environment, respecting landowners and tribes. Despite the pushback, "Trump's push to fast-track other critical infrastructure projects has cemented an alliance between unions and the GOP."

Officials Deny Deadline Extension For Evacuation Order. [Reuters](#) (2/16, Sylvester) reports federal officials and North Dakota Governor Doug Burgum refused to extend the February 22 deadline for activists living in camps to protest the Dakota Access pipeline. Activists met with officials from the US Army Corps of Engineers, the governor, and the state Department of Transportation to ask for more time to remove their belongings and waste from the camps. Pipeline opponents fear new conflicts if the Army crews are accompanied by police. Chase Iron Eyes said, "It's completely impossible to remove everything down there in that short of a time frame. ... The people aren't opposed to the help of the Army Corps, but it's got to be without the presence of militarized law enforcement."

[Fuel Fix \(TX\)](#) (2/16) reports Energy Transfer Partners completed \$2 billion in stake sales in the Dakota Access pipeline. ETP sold a 27.6 percent stake to Enbridge and a 9.2 percent stake to Marathon Petroleum. Phillips 66 maintains its 25 percent stake, while Energy Transfer has a controlling ownership of 38.25 percent. The partial sale had been delayed for months after regulatory setbacks.

House Hearing Gets Heated Over Dakota Access Pipeline. [E&E Publishing](#) (2/16) reports that the House hearing on energy infrastructure became heated as the Standing Rock Sioux tribe and Energy Transfer Partners testified on the Dakota Access pipeline. Republican Rep. Markwayne Mullin of Oklahoma pointed to his Cherokee heritage in questions targeted at the Chad Harrison of the tribal council. Mullin said he has an easement in his own backyard that he was happy to grant because it was good for the country. He said, "What's good for your backyard is what's good for the country; it's going to create jobs in your backyard, too." California Democratic Rep. Raul Ruiz cut short Mullin's questioning by launching an attack on the idea the tribe had waived its right to oppose the project. He said, "I'm so tired of the federal government not respecting the meaningful consultation. ... Notification is not meaningful consultation."

Op-ed: Indian Wars Have Not Ended. Chase Iron Eyes writes in the Pundits Blog for [The Hill](#) (2/16, Eyes) saying the current conflict over the Dakota Access pipeline is reminiscent of previous fights between the federal government and Native American tribes. The pipeline has escalated into a new battle representing the intersection of protection human, civil and indigenous rights, respecting the Constitution and safeguarding the earth. Iron Eyes goes on to compare the current announcement that the Army will remove everything starting on February 23 to when the US military promised to subdue all Lakota who did not comply with orders to return to their reservation in 1875. He says, "The Indian Wars seem never to have ended."

Navajo Nation Seeks Trumps Help To Keep Arizona Coal Plant Open.

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/16, Harder, Gold, Puko) reports that the decision earlier this week to close the Navajo Generating Station in Arizona could pose a challenge to President Trump's promise to help the coal industry. Russell Begaye, the president of the Navajo Nation, says his tribe opposes the plant's closure and the loss of 800 jobs and he is calling on Trump for concessions

akin to what Carrier Corp. got for keeping jobs at a factory in Indiana. Begaye said he has been in continual contact with White House officials since the inauguration, including three or four times in the last week. "We are going to seek a solution based on what we feel needs to be done," Mr. Begaye said. "Tax breaks, subsidies, a real strong verbiage from the White House, from President Trump himself."

Additional coverage that the Navajo Generating Station may shut down after 2019 was provided by the [Arizona Republic](#) (2/16, Randazzo), the [Cortez \(CO\) Journal](#) (2/14, Thompson), and the [Arizona Capitol Times](#) (2/16, Hummel).

Most BLM Auctions Are Now Held Online Over Activist Concerns.

[Bloomberg News](#) (2/16, Frazier) reports that because the Bureau of Land Management had to with climate activists during its in-person auctions for leasing rights for drilling on federal land, it started moving its auctions online. This year, only two of the BLM's 26 auctions will be held in person. The rest have been contracted to EnergyNet, a private company out of Texas that runs the country's largest auction site for oil and gas properties. The BLM gave EnergyNet a five-year exclusive to manage online auctions, and the company has since made deals with state agencies for the same purpose. Overall sales on the platform rose to \$745 million, and while the site filters out most protesters, CEO William Britain is worried about activists. Registered lessees must be able to prove that they are professionals engaged in oil, gas or mineral extraction. However, critics of the online auctions say it is an effort to take sales out of the public spotlight.

TransCanada Files Keystone XL Pipeline Application For Nebraska Route.

[Reuters](#) (2/16, Williams, Gopinath) reports TransCanada Corp filed an application Thursday with the Nebraska Public Service Commission to route its Keystone XL pipeline through the Midwestern state. The company says it expects the process to conclude this year, allowing the \$8 billion project to move forward.

BLM Posts Oil, Gas Parcels For June Lease.

The [Riverton \(WY\) Ranger](#) (2/16) reports that "the Bureau of Land Management's Wyoming office has posted its proposed list of parcels for the quarterly competitive oil and gas lease sale scheduled for June 22." According to the article, "the posted list, which identifies 26 parcels totaling 31,924.77 acres, initiates a 30-day public protest period. The protest period ends at 4:00 p.m. on March 3."

February Lease Sale Generated \$129.3 Million.

The [Riverton \(WY\) Ranger](#) (2/16) reports that the Bureau of Land Management "generated \$129.3 million for leasing rights on parcels offered at the BLM's quarterly federal oil and gas lease auction on Feb. 7 in Cheyenne." The BLM "sold 99 percent of the 184,792 acres that were offered."

Additional Coverage Of Possible Shutdown Of Navajo Generating Station.

Additional coverage that the Navajo Generating Station may shut down after 2019 was provided by the [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/16, Harder, Gold, Puko), the

[Arizona Republic](#) (2/16, Randazzo), the [Cortez \(CO\) Journal](#) (2/14, Thompson), and the [Arizona Capitol Times](#) (2/16, Hummel).

Renewable Energy

Court Reject Anglers' Request To Halt New York Wind Farm Lease.

[Law360](#) (2/16, Phillis) reports that "a D.C. federal court on Wednesday refused to block a \$43 million wind energy lease for an area off the coast of New York, deciding the deal would not cause sufficient harm to a coalition of fishing groups and municipalities that argues the project poses a grave economic threat." U.S. District Judge Tanya S. Chutkan "declined a request from the Fisheries Survival Fund and other groups to enjoin the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management from executing the lease sale to Statoil Wind US LLC."

Additional coverage was provided by the [Workboat](#) (2/16, Moore).

Empowering Native American Communities

House Subcommittee Told Oversight Of BIA, BIE Needed.

[Courthouse News](#) (2/16, Buchman) reports that members of the House Subcommittee on the Interior, Energy and Environment on Wednesday heard testimony "on the woeful state of schools on tribal lands and the disconnect with the federal government many said has exacerbated the problems." According to the article, "at the heart of the problems, the subcommittee was told, is a woeful lack of communication between tribes and the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Bureau of Indian Education." Mary Kendall, deputy inspector general at the Interior department, "said many of the bureaus' problems stem from an inability to distribute funds to tribes and use resources effectively." Kendall said, "The Office of the Inspector General has no programmatic authority to make that happen. Additional oversight of BIA and BIE by [Congress] would go a long way. Serious action by new leadership at the Office of Indian Affairs would help."

NCAI President Says Native American Schools Need \$388 Million To Be Modernized.

[Sputnik News](#) (2/17) reports that "schools for Native Americans in the United States require at least \$388 million to be effectively modernized," National Congress of American Indians President Brian Cladoosby said. He said, "President Donald Trump had indicated that he wants a big infrastructure spending bill. If you based it on need, the one's that need it the most in the United States, the Native Americans by far would be able to show that they have the highest need for infrastructure in their communities."

Additional Coverage: Little Shell Moves Closer To Federal Recognition.

Additional coverage that the Senate Indian Affairs Committee "recently voted unanimously in favor on a recognition bill that also could give the Little Shell 200 acres of land in central Montana if passed by the full U.S. Congress" was provided by the [Char-Koosta News](#) (2/16).

Office Of Insular Affairs

Editorial: Trump's Tough immigration Stance Could Impact Guam.

In an editorial, the [Guam Daily Post](#) (2/16) says that President Trump's tough immigration stance "could help the government of Guam cope with the cost of public services to regional immigrants who aren't economically able to stand on their own feet." It notes that "has had a dramatic increase in the number of regional immigrants." Gov. Eddie Calvo has, "in the past, complained to the U.S. Department of the Interior – including during an inter-agency conference in Washington, D.C. – that many of these immigrants from the FSM come to Guam without the skills to hold jobs, the ability to support themselves economically while they don't have jobs, and that they end up taxing the island's already strained public health-care system." It concludes that "if Trump prevails, Guam could become a very different community a year, or a few years from now, if he sends all the immigrants back who can't financially sustain themselves."

Tackling America's Water Challenges

BOR Monitoring Arrival Of North California Storms.

The [Sacramento \(CA\) Bee](#) (2/15, GARRISON, LINDELOF) reports that "three storm systems are headed for the Sacramento region, starting Thursday and continuing into next week, according to the National Weather Service." However, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation officials "do not believe these storms will force a similar rush of water into Folsom Lake." BOR spokesman Todd Plain said, "We are monitoring current conditions as always, but we are expecting a colder storm system with lower snow levels, and inflows into Folsom are not expected to dramatically increase."

BOR Expects Lake Berryessa's Glory Hole To Spill Over.

The [San Francisco Chronicle](#) (2/16, Graff) reports that "the last time" Lake Berryessa's Glory Hole "spilled over was 10 years ago in 2006, and the Bureau of Reclamation thinks it could happen again soon." Sarah McBride, a public affairs specialist with the BOR, said, "A rough estimate is we expect it might start spilling tomorrow, Friday, or this weekend."

Additional coverage was provided by the [Napa Valley \(CA\) Register](#) (2/16) and the [Sacramento \(CA\) Bee](#) (2/16, Opsahl).

BOR Says Sacramento River Flood Maps A Secret.

The [Redding \(CA\) Record-Searchlight](#) (2/16, Arthur) reports that a homeowner who worried that "his home could be flooded" if the Sacramento River continued to rise asked U.S. Bureau of Reclamation "officials if he could get copies of maps showing the river elevations corresponding with dam releases." However, bureau officials told Greg Boehle "they don't make them available to the public." Don Bader, the bureau's area manager, "said they aren't even available through a Freedom of Information Act request."

Top National News

Media Analyses: Trump's Performance At News Conference Unseemly, Unprecedented.

Media coverage characterizes President Trump's Thursday [press conference](#) as an "angry," "defensive," "rambling" "spectacle" that was unprecedented in modern-day politics. The overwhelmingly negative reporting takes issue with Trump's criticism of the media, and provides little coverage of Trump's recap of the early days of his Administration and stated successes. However, analysts also predicted Trump's return to his campaign-style interaction with the press was likely to play well with his supporters. [NBC Nightly News](#) (2/16, lead story, 5:30, Holt), for example, reported in its lead story that the left has written about the press conference as a "meltdown," while the right has "heralded" it as "the trashing of the media in an epic news conference." At any rate, NBC added, people from all political viewpoints likely agree that it "was pretty much unlike anything we've heard from behind a presidential podium." Indicative of the overall tenor of much of the coverage, [USA Today](#) (2/16, Wolf) refers to "one of the wildest presidential press conferences on record" – one that included "a rambling, defensive and at times angry performance by the leader of the free world." During the "spectacle for the ages," USA Today adds, Trump "lashed out at the media, Hillary Clinton, the intelligence community, judges and Democrats – among many others."

[Politico](#) (2/16, Dawsey) says that "after stewing in anger during four rocky weeks" as President, the press conference "appeared to be a cathartic moment" for Trump, who aides say "has found running the government harder than expected." However, Politico says Trump "seemed to be in his element" on Thursday. Trump, according to the [AP](#) (2/16, Lemire), "bullied reporters, dismissed facts and then cracked a few caustic jokes." The AP says that "combination" made Trump "irresistible cable TV fodder" during the campaign. [Bloomberg Politics](#) (2/16, Sink) says Trump "appeared to satisfy his itch to duke it out with a press corps he feels has treated him unfairly since his inauguration." Bloomberg adds that Trump's supporters "no doubt ate it up" and possibly saw that the President "seemed to enjoy his banter with reporters, so much so that he could barely pry himself away from the cameras." Bloomberg quotes Trump as saying that he is "actually having a very good time." Trump added, "Don't forget, that's the way I won. Remember, I used to give you a news conference every time I made a speech? Which was like every day." [Reuters](#) (2/16, Holland) similarly reports the President's "message" during the press conference "appeared aimed at the same voters who elected him" and "feel Washington has left them behind and who like his image as an outsider trying to shake up the establishment."

The [Washington Times](#) (2/16, Miller, Boyer) reports Trump said the "level of dishonest" in the media "is out of control" as news organizations are siding with special interests rather than average Americans. The media, Trump said, is "trying to attack our administration because they know we are following through on pledges that we made, and they're not happy about it." The [New York Post](#) (2/16, Halper), with a front page that the [Drudge Report](#) shows as having a picture of Trump dressed as a circus ringmaster with the headline "Wildest Show On Earth" – says Trump indicated he was using the press conference to take his message "straight to the people." The [Huffington Post](#)

(2/16, Wilkie) reports that Trump said this was necessary because “many of our nation’s reporters and folks will not tell you the truth and will not treat the wonderful people of our country with the respect they deserve.” Trump added that “much of the media” based in the District of Columbia, New York, and Los Angeles “in particular” do not speak for average Americans, “but for the special interests and for those profiting off a very, very obviously broken system.” However, the [New York Times](#) (2/16, Baker) reports that despite his criticism of the media, Trump at “one point plaintively pleaded for understanding.” Trump said “the tone” of cable news commentary about him “is such hatred,” adding, “I’m really not a bad person.”

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/16) editorializes that Trump provided a clear and coherent message that was far from a bad performance. The [New York Times](#) (2/16) editorializes that Trump “needed the press to play the punching bag that so delighted his political base,” while Chris Cillizza says in a [Washington Post](#) (2/16) analysis that Trump “understands” that the media “represent everything” his supporters “dislike about American society.” Cillizza indicates that Trump’s supporters view the media as made up of “Ivy-League-educated coastal elites who look down their noses at the average person, dismissing them and their views as stupid and ill-informed.” In a [Washington Times](#) (2/16) column, Charles Hunt says Trump “is an agent of total disruption, bordering on chaos – everything American voters would like to see set upon Washington.” Hunt adds that Trump – who is not “a politician,” is not “polished by public relations experts,” and “doesn’t always speak with complete precision” – “always gets his point across.” Trump, Hunt continues, “wants to shake things up” and Americans “stand behind him.” On [Fox News’ Hannity](#) (2/16), Sean Hannity called Trump’s press conference “a historic beatdown of the alt-left propaganda media and they had it coming. ... It is very refreshing to see a commander in chief who will fight back against the all the dishonesty, all the smears, and set the record straight with you, the American people.” The hashtag [#TrumpPressConference](#) was trending on Twitter throughout the day Thursday and Thursday night. Tweets were largely – but not universally – negative toward Trump.

Meanwhile, a [New York Times](#) (2/16, Shear, Haberman, Thrusch) analysis says it is “unlikely” that Trump’s press conference “will divert much long-term attention from questions” that his Administration has faced. Chuck Todd said on [NBC Nightly News](#) (2/16, story 2, 1:10, Holt) that while the press conference likely played well with Trump’s base, it “did nothing to somehow cause” concerned lawmakers “to be less uneasy.” Howard Kurtz said on [Fox News Special Report](#) (2/16) that “the other news he made today was drowned out by his assault on the media which doesn’t help him pass his legislative agenda, the thing that would actually ensure he gets more positive press.” However, Chris Wallace said on [Fox News’ O’Reilly Factor](#) (2/16) that “this was a determined effort by this President, who is by far the best spokesman in his administration, for his administration, to seize the narrative.” Wallace added, “This is a President saying, ‘I am in charge, I know what I’m doing. I am not going to bend to Washington. Washington is going to have to get used to me.’”

The [Washington Post](#) (2/16, Parker, Wagner) reports that Trump “alternated between claims that he had ‘inherited a mess’ and the assertion that his fledgling administration ‘is running like a fine-tuned machine.’” The

Post adds that Trump “seemed to acknowledge the widespread reports of turbulence and upheaval emanating out of his West Wing.” Trump said, according to [The Hill](#) (2/16, Fabian), “I turn on the TV, open the newspapers and I see stories of chaos. Chaos. Yet it is the exact opposite.” The [CBS Evening News](#) 📺 (2/16, lead story, 4:15, Pelley) showed Trump adding, “This administration is running like a fine-tuned machine.” The [Los Angeles Times](#) (2/16, Bierman, Memoli, Lauter) reports that Trump “countered that all of his early setbacks were the fault of others, the product of ‘fake news’ reporting or both.” Trump said, “I inherited a mess,” adding, “It’s a mess at home and abroad.”

[McClatchy](#) (2/16, Kumar, Ordoñez) reports that Trump “boasted of his successes despite a series of setbacks” – including an appellate court ruling of his immigration executive order, the resignation of former National Security Adviser Flynn, the withdrawal of former Labor Secretary nominee Andrew Puzder, and leaks from the White House and federal agencies. [Roll Call](#) (2/16, Bennett) says Trump “hammered Democrats at several points, saying ‘the only thing they can do is delay because they screwed things up royally.’” According to Roll Call, Trump “used the criticism as a way to pivot to a list of first-month actions he said he took to reverse Democratic policies” and uphold “a promise I made to the American people.” The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/16, Lee, Paletta) quotes Trump as saying, “There has never been a presidency that’s done so much in such a short period of time” and “we have not even started the big work yet.” Jonathan Karl reported on [ABC World News Tonight](#) 📺 (2/16, lead story, 4:45, Muir) that Trump “pointed to the soaring stock market, his executive orders cutting regulations and the smooth roll-out of his Supreme Court nominee.”

Media Considers Truthfulness Of Trump’s Statements. A [New York Times](#) (2/16, Fandos) analysis says that while Trump accused the media of dishonesty, he “uttered several falsehoods of his own.” The Times highlights “some of the most important,” which include: winning the most electoral college votes since former President Ronald Reagan; the US Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit is “in chaos”; and that he inherited an economy that was a “mess.”

The [CBS Evening News](#) 📺 (2/16, story 6, 1:35, Pelley) reported that while Trump received 304 electoral votes, former President Obama won 365 and former President George H.W. Bush had 426. The [AP](#) (2/16, Boak, Woodward) reports that “economic stats and territorial losses of Islamic State insurgents don’t support [Trump’s] assertions about the problems handed to him on those fronts.” The AP says that “by almost every economic measure,” Obama “inherited a far worse situation” in 2009 than Trump took over. The AP adds that ISIS “began to lose ground before Trump took office.”

The [Washington Post](#) (2/16) reports that “there’s a fair amount of truth” to Trump’s statement that “drugs are becoming cheaper than candy bars.” Drugs, the Post says, “are often incredibly inexpensive, particularly per dose.” The Post cites a 2015 Baltimore Sun report that said “peewee” capsules of heroin sold for about six dollars per dose in West Baltimore and opiate painkillers “can sometimes be even cheaper” at “the per-pill level.” Moreover, another [Washington Post](#) (2/16) piece says that while “it is true that some drug in some quantity might be less expensive than some candy bar at some size,” the “cheapest drug is going to be more expensive than a relatively pricey

candy bar." The Post provides examples of drug prices that it identified by searching on Quora.

Cummings: Trump Made Up "Story About Me." The [Washington Post](#) (2/16, Portnoy) reports that Rep. Elijah Cummings (D-MD) denied Trump's claim that the lawmaker would not meet with the President despite repeated requests from the White House. Trump, during the press conference, "speculated that Cummings may have been dissuaded from coming to the White House for political reasons." Cummings said in a statement, "I have no idea why President Trump would make up a story about me like he did today. Of course, Senator Schumer never told me to skip a meeting with the President."

WPost Analysis: Trump's Comment To Black Reporter "Crystallized The Unusual Nature" Of Presidency. The [Washington Post](#) (2/16, Bump) reports "few moments crystallized the unusual nature" of Trump's Administration as "effectively as an exchange" with April Ryan of American Urban Radio Networks. When Ryan stood up to ask Trump if he would include the Congressional Black Caucus in discussions about urban policy, the Post says, Trump responded by asking the reporter if she "want[s] to set up the meeting." Trump added, "Are they friends of yours? Set up a meeting."

[ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/16, story 4, 1:50, Muir) reported Trump's response left "members of the Congressional Black Caucus in shock." Rep. Emanuel Cleaver (D-MO) said that Trump made an "assumption" that "because there was a black woman in the room," she "had a unique connection with the Congressional Black Caucus." Cummings said on [CNN's Situation Room](#) (2/16) that Trump likely "saw an African-American woman connected with the Congressional Black Caucus and said maybe they're friends." Cummings said that "every time [Trump] talks...about the inner city, he has negative things to say." Cummings added, "I wish he could walk into some of the areas that I live in and where people are doing extremely well, taking very good care of their families, and he needs to have a bigger picture of the African-American communities and our cities."

Durbin Says Press Conference Was "Hard To Follow." Senate Minority Whip Durbin said on [CNN's The Lead](#) (2/16) that Trump's press conference was "hard to follow. There were so many different things he said. It clearly was a spur-of-the-moment decision. And what I think frankly we should reflect on is we're dealing with some extremely serious questions." Durbin added, "The President would have been well-advised to sit down for five minutes with his legal counsel before that press conference and get a few things straight before he made these statements."

Media Analyses: Trump-CNN Conflict Reaches New Stage. The [New York Post](#) (2/16, Atkinson) reports that both Trump and CNN "took a blowtorch to the blowup" between the two sides during the press conference. The Post says Trump "made it personal" when he told White House correspondent Jim Acosta to "ask [CNN Worldwide President] Jeff Zucker how he got his job, OK?" The Post says "it was not immediately known what Trump meant." [Politico](#) (2/16, Weprin) says Zucker on Thursday said that Trump's comments about CNN being fake news are a "badge of honor" and the network's coverage of the Administration has increased employee morale.

Kushner Complained To Time Warner Executive About CNN Coverage. The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/16, Hagey, Paletta) reports senior adviser Jared Kushner

met with Time Warner executive Gary Ginsberg in recent weeks and expressed the Administration's concerns about CNN's coverage, according to a White House official. Kushner, the Journal says, complained about unfair and slanted coverage against the President.

Fox News' Smith Blasts Trump's Performance. [USA Today](#) (2/16, Cummings) reports Fox News anchor Shepard Smith "is under fire for criticizing" Trump's interaction with Acosta and refusing to answer questions about ties to Russia. Smith on Thursday said that Trump "keeps repeating ridiculous, throwaway lines that are not true at all and sort of avoiding this issue of Russia as if we're some kind of fools for asking the question." Smith added, "We have a right to know. You call us fake news and put us down like children for asking questions on behalf of the American people."

O'Reilly: Trump Did Not Understand "How Extensive The Problem Really Is." In his "Talking Points Memo" segment on [Fox News' O'Reilly Factor](#) (2/16), Bill O'Reilly said, "When President Trump first mentioned draining the swamp in Washington, I don't believe he understood how extensive the problem really is. For eight years of President Obama, there are many people working in the federal government who like the former President and who despise Mr. Trump. Eliminating all of them and stopping the leaks, pretty much be impossible. Also don't trying to get fairness out of the anti-Trump press is impossible as well. So, the Trump Administration has its hands full."

Powers: Trump "Probably A Little Frustrated" With Spicer. Kirsten Powers said on [CNN's Anderson Cooper 360](#) (2/16) that from Trump's perspective, the press conference "shows he's probably a little frustrated with Sean Spicer," and "this is how he would like press conferences to be handled."

Podesta: Trump Is Trying To "Disorient Public Perceptions" Of News. In a [Washington Post](#) (2/16) op-ed, former Hillary Clinton campaign chairman John Podesta says Trump's "fake-news pivot isn't subtle" as he "benefited from fake news stories during the campaign" and has President "has constantly used the epithet against mainstream media outlets that dare criticize him." Trump, according to Podesta, "is deploying a strategy, used by autocrats, designed to completely disorient public perception." Podesta says that Trump "seeks nothing less than to undermine the public's belief that any news can be trusted" and that "any news is true."

NYTimes Criticizes Trump's Answer To Anti-Semitism Question. A [New York Times](#) (2/16) editorial criticizes the President's answer to a question about the rise of anti-Semitic incidents in the US, saying that "as is so often the case, he began with a focus on himself and skirted the issue." He then "once again...exploited the Jewish members of his family to bolster his credibility," before deriding the question as "very insulting."

Trump Says He Has Directed Sessions To Investigate Leaks.

[USA Today](#) (2/16, Johnson) reports that President Trump said "in the midst of a meandering and combative White House news conference" that he has directed Attorney General Sessions "to investigate alleged leaks of classified information," which "immediately revived concerns previously voiced by Democratic lawmakers that Sessions could not assert his independence as the nation's chief law enforcement officer." Senate Minority Leader Schumer has called on Sessions to recuse himself, and Senate Judiciary Committee ranking Democrat Dianne Feinstein "asked that Sessions limit contacts between the

White House and the Justice Department." The [New York Times](#) (2/16, Savage, Lichtblau) writes that while "no law forbids a president from making a criminal referral to the Justice Department," it is "unusual for a president to direct the agency to open a criminal investigation into his perceived opponents or to talk publicly about having done so."

[ABC World News Tonight](#) 📺 (2/16, story 2, 2:25, Muir) reported that during his news conference, Trump "defend[ed] the national security adviser he just fired." ABC's Pierre Thomas: "Justice Department attorneys are intensely reviewing why former National Security Advisor Michael Flynn made misleading statements to the White House about his conversation with Russia's ambassador to the US and whether he broke any laws in the process. ... Today, President Trump continued to praise the man he fired." Trump: "Mike Flynn is a fine person, and I asked for his resignation. He respectfully gave it." On the [CBS Evening News](#) 📺 (2/16, story 5, 2:25, Pelley), John Dickerson said, "The Michael Flynn episode is about what penalty there is for not telling the truth in the Trump Administration. And today we got about the fourth explanation from the President on what his relationship was with Michael Flynn."

On the [CBS Evening News](#) 📺 (2/16, story 2, 2:35, Pelley), Jeff Pegues reported that Trump "was asked by three reporters if any of his campaign staffers were in regular contact with Russian operatives during the election. He denied any connections to the Kremlin and dismissed the investigation." Trump: "Russia is a ruse. I have nothing to do with Russia. Haven't made a phone call to Russia in years."

Shepard Smith said on [Fox News' Shepard Smith Reporting](#) 📺 (2/16), "It's crazy what we're watching every day. It's absolutely crazy. [Trump] keeps repeating ridiculous throw-away lines that are not true at all and sort of avoiding this issue of Russia as if we're some kind of fools for asking the question. Really? Your opposition was hacked, and the Russians were responsible for it, and your people were on the phone with Russia the same day it's happening, and we're fools asking questions? No, sir, we're not fools for asking the question, and we demand to know the answer to this question. You owe this to the American people."

Congressmen Say Trump "Fumed" About Leaks In Meeting. [Politico](#) (2/16, Cheney, Bade) reports that the President "fumed about intelligence community leaks during a meeting at the White House with his earliest supporters in Congress," according to Reps. Lou Barletta (R-PA) and Mike Kelly (R-PA), who were among the 11 lawmakers at the meeting. Kelly said Trump "vented" that Flynn's departure "is 'not the issue' compared to the leaks that made those revelations public," and Barletta said Trump "'talked a lot' about the leaks."

Officials Say Flynn Denied Discussing Sanctions With Russian Ambassador In FBI Interview. The [Washington Post](#) (2/16, A1, Horwitz, Entous) reports that Flynn denied to FBI agents in a January 24 interview "that he had discussed U.S. sanctions against Russia" with Ambassador Sergey Kislyak before President Trump took office, "contradicting the contents of intercepted communications collected by intelligence agencies," according to current and former officials. The Post says Flynn may be "in legal jeopardy" since "lying to the FBI is a felony offense."

Durbin "Skeptical" Whether Senate Intelligence Committee Can Conduct Adequate Investigation. Senate Minority Whip Durbin was asked on [CNN's The](#)

[Lead](#) 🗣️ (2/16) if he believes the Senate Intelligence Committee can do an adequate investigation of Trump campaign aides' contacts with Russia. Durbin said, "I'm skeptical. I trust Mark Warner completely, but he has to work with the Republican senator who may not be as enthusiastic about this. ... When there is a report coming out of the Senate Intelligence Committee, trust me, it will be heavily censored and redacted and the only way to get that information declassified is with the permission of the White House."

Nunes: Leakers "Probably" People From Obama Administration. The [Washington Times](#) (2/16, Sherfinski) reports that House Intelligence Chairman Devin Nunes said Wednesday evening that "most of the recent intel leaks are likely originating from people who worked in the Obama administration." He said on Fox News' Hannity, "It's totally unacceptable for anyone within government to be doing this. I think most of this is probably from people who were in the old Administration, but there still could be some people that have burrowed in and are providing classified information to the media."

Trump May Have Financier Lead Intelligence Agencies. The [Washington Post](#) (2/16, Wagner, Merle) reports Trump is considering having Stephen Feinberg, a financier and "longtime friend," lead "a broad review of US intelligence agencies," but said that "might not be necessary once his team is fully in place." Trump said, "It's something we may take advantage of, but I don't think we'll need that at all." The President said the pending confirmation of ex-Sen. Dan Coats as director of national intelligence might eliminate the need for such a review.

Harward Turns Down Offer To Become NSA. [Reuters](#) (2/16, Beech) reports that retired Vice Adm. Robert Harward has turned down Trump's offer to be named national security adviser. [USA Today](#) (2/16, Cummings) reports that Harward told the AP that he turned down the job for personal reasons, but CBS reported that Trump "insisted that Deputy National Security Adviser K.T. McFarland be allowed to stay on, and Harward refused to retain the former Fox News analyst and Flynn hire."

Jim Sciutto said on [CNN's Anderson Cooper 360](#) 🗣️ (2/16) that people close to Harward say "this was a difficult decision between duty to his country, to people he served under before," but "he sees a White House that is in chaos and that's not something that he wanted to be associated with." The [New York Times](#) (2/16, Davis, Schmitt) says White House officials "had scrambled to head off the refusal, asserting as late as Thursday evening" that Harward "was still in the running."

Max Boot of the Council on Foreign Relations [tweeted](#), "It's not just Harward. I hear other professionals are either fleeing NSC staff or refusing to join. Lots of vacancies. WH a total mess."

NYTimes Analysis: US Does Not Yet Have A "Deep State," But Is Heading That Way. The [New York Times](#) (2/16, Taub, Fisher) says in an analysis that the leaks are leading some to compare the US to countries "like Egypt, Turkey and Pakistan, where shadowy networks within government bureaucracies, often referred to as 'deep states,' undermine and coerce elected governments." Experts say the US is not yet "seeing the rise of its own deep state...but the echoes are real – and disturbing."

Time Analysis: White House Returns To "Reality-Show Ways" Amid "Chaos." Philip Elliott of [TIME](#) (2/16) looks "Inside Donald Trump's White House Chaos," writing that while Trump "mastered the art of disruption" as a presidential

candidate, “disruption in government – the rulemaker breaking the rules – turns out to be more costly.” Facing crises and protests, “the White House has fallen back on its reality-show ways, distracted by the internecine drama of senior aides who spend their days mixing government business with jockeying for position and favor with the boss.”

In her [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/16) column, Peggy Noonan pleads with Trump to bring in more conventional staff members to balance out his own unconventional style and that of much of his inner circle. However, in the [Washington Post](#) (2/16), contributing columnist Hugh Hewitt warns against hyperbole, writing that every Administration stumbles in its first days, and that “judgments about Trump’s presidency based on his first month in the Oval Office are by definition premature.”

Senate Judiciary Committee To Begin Gorsuch Hearings March 20.

The [Washington Post](#) (2/16, Sullivan) reports that the Senate Judiciary Committee announced Thursday that it will begin hearings on the nomination of Judge Neil Gorsuch to the Supreme Court on March 20. A [tweet](#) from the committee read, “Chairman @ChuckGrassley: @SenJudiciary Committee to begin hearing on the nomination of Judge Neil Gorsuch for #SCOTUS on March 20th.” The hearings “are expected to span several days and draw intense public scrutiny.” The [New York Times](#) (2/16, Pérez-Peña) says Democrats are “angry that Republicans refused to allow President Barack Obama to fill the seat over the last 11 months of his presidency,” and “have vowed tough questioning” of Gorsuch. While Gorsuch has “strong legal credentials, some Democrats are likely to oppose him, with many people on the left demanding that they push back against Mr. Trump in any way they can.”

In an op-ed for [USA Today](#) (2/16), Senate Judiciary Chairman Charles Grassley criticizes Senate Democrats for “signal[ing] plans to block any nomination made by the newly-elected president even before he announced his nomination” after “criticizing Republicans for taking a principled position about a lame duck president that was advocated by Democrats for decades.” Arguing that there should not be “one set of rules for Republicans and another set of rules for Democrats,” Grassley writes, “We won’t abide by such a double standard.”

Editorial Wrap-Up

New York Times.

“For A Troubled President, The Media Is A Satisfying Target.” The [New York Times](#) (2/16) editorializes that in his press conference, President Trump “needed the press to play the punching bag that so delighted his political base.”

“Bring On The Special Prosecutor.” The [New York Times](#) (2/17) editorializes that the Administration’s “ties” to Moscow “clearly” should be investigated and only a special prosecutor could conduct an inquiry “fairly and completely.” The Times says that while “it’s never easy to conduct robust, independent investigations of the most powerful people in the world,” the ability to do so “is one of the foundations of a functioning democracy.”

“Plastic Bag Fees Make Sense, Just Not To Albany.” A [New York Times](#)

(2/17) editorial.

Washington Post.

“Trump Can Help Americans Trust Him By Releasing His Taxes.” The [Washington Post](#) (2/16) editorializes that President Trump’s “rambling news conference” on Thursday was consistent with his previous modus operandi. The public cannot trust the President’s statement that “the whole Russian thing” is a “ruse” because of a lack of transparency, writes the Post. Trump’s failure to release his tax returns despite promising he would do so is a significant impediment to gaining America’s trust because the global nature of the business empire he handed down to his sons increases “the potential scale and scope of his international conflicts of interest.” Without more complete disclosure and evidence to back up claims, the public cannot fully trust its leader.

“What The Country Need To Know About The New Labor Secretary Nominee.”

The [Washington Post](#) (2/16) says in an editorial that the Trump White House did “a spectacularly bad vetting job” with former Labor Secretary nominee Andrew Puzder, which “raises the question of whether the choice of [new nominee Alexander] Acosta holds more promise. On paper, his credentials are strong,” but his “confirmation hearing needs principally to be the forum at which we get a better sense of Trump policy toward the healing but still troubled labor market.”

“A Power That Lets Police Take Property For Themselves – Even When There’s No Crime.” The [Washington Post](#) (2/16) editorializes that President Trump last week “met with a group of sheriffs, who, as they groused about their critics, seem to have extracted a new policy position from a credulous and apparently ill-informed president.” The sheriffs “spoke about ‘civil asset forfeiture’ – a bizarre police power prone to abuse yet beloved by law enforcement,” and Trump “concluded that only ‘bad people’ would pressure them to change the practice.” The Post points out that “an ideologically diverse, bipartisan movement that includes many Trump supporters opposes civil asset forfeiture, because it allows police to seize property from Americans on shockingly flimsy legal grounds.” The Post notes that “a variety of states have passed or are considering reforms to their civil forfeiture system,” and some “have abolished it, stipulating that assets can be seized only from convicted criminals.”

Wall Street Journal.

“The Bully Trumpet.” The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/16) editorializes that in his press conference, President Trump provided a clear and coherent message that was far from a bad performance.

“Trump’s Labor Mulligan.” The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/16) says in an editorial that Labor Secretary-designate Alexander Acosta has a solid record that should win the support of even Senate liberals.

“Supreme Court Disclosure Test.” The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/16) writes in an editorial that when the Supreme Court considers the Independence Institute’s appeal Friday it should find the McCain-Feingold Act unconstitutional. The Colorado free-market think tank’s pre-enforcement challenge maintains that the 2002 law’s provision requiring donor disclosure for issue-based advertisements goes against the First Amendment by imposing

undue burdens on Americans who advocate for causes. If the court fails to act accordingly, federal campaign finance disclosure rules will affect more political speech.

Big Picture

Headlines From Today's Front Pages.

Wall Street Journal:

[Trump Lets Loose Against Critics](#)

[Trump Administration Backs Off Talk Of Closer Russia Ties](#)

[With \\$15 Left In The Bank, A Baby Boomer Makes Peace With Less](#)

[Fund's \\$600 Million Lost Week Captivates Traders](#)

New York Times:

['I Inherited A Mess,' Trump Says, Defending His Performance](#)

[In 77 Chaotic Minutes, Trump Defends 'Fine-Tuned Machine'](#)

[GOP's Grand Visions For Congress Now Look Like A Mirage](#)

[EPA Workers Try To Block Pruitt In Show Of Defiance](#)

[Fake News, Fake Ukrainians: How A Group Of Russians Tilted A Dutch Vote](#)

[Is 2-State Solution Dead? In Israel, A Debate Over What's Next](#)

Washington Post:

[Trump Travels Come At High Cost](#)

[Flynn TOLD FBI He Did Not Discuss Sanctions](#)

[Trump Defends Month In Office](#)

[Mistakes By DC Lab Force Retesting For Zika](#)

[The Trump Effect In Germany: A Resurgent Left](#)

Financial Times:

[US Officials Set Conditions On Russia Thaw](#)

[French Bond Trading Soars On Fear Of Populist Wave](#)

[Kim Jong Nam Assassination Hits Beijing Authority](#)

[Norway Plans Shake-up Of \\$900bn Oil Fund](#)

Washington Times:

[Trump Blasts 'Out Of Control' Media For Ignoring Early Successes](#)

[Feds Say Border Fence Has Been Cut 9,200 Times Since 2010](#)

[President Trump Orders Justice Probe Of Intel Leaks, Says Flynn Was 'Just Doing His Job'](#)

[Islamic Extremism Deadliest Ideology In U.S. For First Time In 30 Years](#)

[Post-9/11 Veterans Seek New Purpose By Joining Left-Wing Protest Movements](#)

[DNC Leaders Unhappy With Aggressive Tactics To Elect Ellison As Chairman](#)

Story Lineup From Last Night's Network News:

ABC: Trump News Conference; Flynn Investigation; Russian Military Aggression; Trump-Black Caucus; Trump-New Immigration Order; Immigrant Protest; Middle East Bombings; Foiled Synagogue Attack; Teenager Hikers Murdered; Severe Weather; Washington State Explosion; Stroller Recall;

Phone Plans Competition; National Zoo Panda Farewell.

CBS: Trump News Conference; Trump-Russia Investigation; Trump-New Immigration Order; Presidential Orders; Flynn Controversy-Expert Opinion; Trump-Electoral Victory Comment; Immigrant Protest; Immigrant Taking Sanctuary; Trump-Coal Mine Stream Order; Detroit Philanthropist Billionaire Dies.

NBC: Trump News Conference; News Conference-Congress Reaction; US Syria Deployment; Immigrant Protest; Wall Street Surge; Food Expiration Label Change; Kim Jung-Nam Assassination; Stroller Recall; Documentary Planet Earth Sequel.

Network TV At A Glance:

Trump News Conference – 14 minutes, 30 seconds

Trump-Russia Investigation – 5 minutes

Immigrant Protest – 4 minutes, 45 seconds

Trump-New Immigration Order – 30 seconds

Story Lineup From This Morning's Radio News Broadcasts:

ABC: National Security Advisor Pick Withdraws; Labor Secretary Nominee; Trump News Conference; Foiled Synagogue Attack; Bill Cosby Lawsuit; Airport Incident.

CBS: Trump News Conference; Cabinet Confirmation; Severe Weather-West Coast; Oroville Dam Situation; Severe Weather-East Coast; Flu Season; Airport Smugglers.

FOX: Trump News Conference; Tillerson-Russia Meeting; Police Violence Protest; Immigrant Protest.

NPR: Immigration Order-Legal Challenge; National Security Advisor Pick Withdraws; Defense Secretary-NATO Speech; Wall Street News.

Washington Schedule

Today's Events In Washington.

White House:

PRESIDENT TRUMP — Meets with Dennis Muilenburg, CEO of the Boeing Company; arrives in West Palm Beach, Florida.

VICE PRESIDENT PENCE — Arrive in Munich on Air Force Two for the weekend's Munich Security Conference.

US Senate: Congress breaks for Presidents Day recess – Congress breaks for Presidents Day District Work Period (aka State Work Period) * No votes in the House of Representatives today

US House: 10:00 AM Ahmadiyya Muslim Community USA annual 'Day on the Hill' – Ahmadiyya Muslim Community USA annual 'Day on the Hill', focusing on efforts to combat violent extremism, protect vulnerable religious minorities, empower American Muslims, and promote the 'True Islam' grassroots campaign to combat 'the perverse ideology of extremists and better protect national security'. Speakers include Democratic Reps. Jim McGovern and Pete Aguilar Location: Rm 121, Cannon House Office Bldg., Washington, DC
www.ahmadiyya.us https://twitter.com/Islam_Press #MuslimAllly

Congress breaks for Presidents Day recess – Congress breaks for

Presidents Day District Work Period (aka State Work Period) * No votes in the House of Representatives today

Other: No scheduled events

Last Laughs

Late Night Political Humor.

Jimmy Kimmel: "The President decided to hold an impromptu press conference, and it was a sight to see. It reminded me of something you'd see before a pay-per-view boxing event."

Jimmy Kimmel: "The tone of the press conference was like if your dad found a pack of cigarettes under your mattress. He was mad."

Jimmy Kimmel: "You know it's a bad press conference when assuming all black people know each other wasn't even the worst part of it."

Stephen Colbert: [Referring to President Trump's comment 'I inherited a mess.'] "No, you inherited a fortune. We elected a mess."

Stephen Colbert: "Oh, you're black, can you talk to the Congressional Black Caucus at your next meeting of the black club? You know what, forget it. I'll have Ben Carson do it. Sit down."

James Corden: "The big news out of Washington right now is the press conference Donald Trump held this morning. Did everyone see it? No? Lucky you, sir."

James Corden: "But Puzder withdrew his nomination after it became clear he would not get confirmed. When asked what he was going to do next, Puzder said, 'Please, drive around to the second window and we can talk there.'"

James Corden: "'The least anti-Semitic person.' The least. But here's the thing. Here's the guy [Trump] said it to. This guy. He's an orthodox Jewish reporter. I'm pretty sure he has met people who are less anti-Semitic than Donald Trump. You know, like at home or at his temple."

Trevor Noah: "I can't play the entire press conference. We only have 30 minutes and [Trump] spoke for, like, six days."

Trevor Noah: "That's the information you were given? If you can't trust your President to get the right information on a googlable fact, then can you really trust him with the harder stuff which, by the way, is everything else the President of the United States has to deal with."

Trevor Noah: "In his farewell address, President Obama urged us to get engaged in politics and not just to seat back and check out of everything. Then he went kite surfing."

Jimmy Fallon: [Fallon Impersonating President Trump] "And yet we've made so much progress. In fact, if you ask any American, they'll say that I've managed to make the last four weeks feel like four years."

Jimmy Fallon: [Fallon Impersonating President Trump] "Look, I knew that [Flynn] knew that I knew, but he didn't know that I knew that he knew that I knew that he knew that I knew that he knew. So now you know."

Jimmy Fallon: "President Trump's press conference lasted for an hour and 15 minutes. Though an hour of that was just scanning the room for a reporter who wouldn't ask a tough question."

Seth Meyers: "President Trump today tweeted that the 'failing 'New York Times' must apologize for publishing leaks' from his administration, but at this point if they didn't publish White House leaks, the whole paper would just be the crosswords."

Seth Meyers: "Being a world leader sitting with Trump right now is like being a woman on a date with a guy and then his wife shows up screaming, 'Your kids want to know where you are.'"

Seth Meyers: [Referring to Trump's response on Russian aggression during his press conference] "That's your answer? We're talking about Russian military aggression, not a turkey sandwich at the deli. Not good. Very dry."

Seth Meyers: [Referring to Trump's response to an African-American reporter about the Congressional Black Caucus] "It's racist to assume all black people know each other. You don't know all orange people. Hey, Donald, can you set up a meeting with Snookie and the Lorax."

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From: Kathleen Benedetto
To: [Simpson, Melissa](mailto:Simpson.Melissa)
Subject: Re: U.S. Department of the Interior News Briefing for Friday, February 17, 2017
Date: Friday, February 17, 2017 8:12:07 AM

I'll have to check

Sent from my iPhone

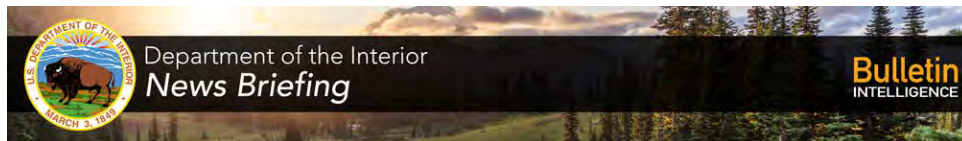
On Feb 17, 2017, at 7:31 AM, Simpson, Melissa <melissa_simpson@ios.doi.gov> wrote:

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From: **Bulletin Intelligence** <Interior@bulletinintelligence.com>
Date: Fri, Feb 17, 2017 at 7:01 AM
Subject: U.S. Department of the Interior News Briefing for Friday, February 17, 2017
To: Interior@bulletinintelligence.com

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DATE: FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2017 7:00 AM EST

Holiday Message

In observance of the Washington's Birthday holiday, we will not publish on Monday, February 20, 2017. Service will resume on Tuesday, February 21, 2017. We wish our readers a safe and happy holiday.

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- Bloomberg News: Most BLM Auctions Are Now Held Online Over Activist Concerns.
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- Law360: Court Reject Anglers' Request To Halt New York Wind Farm Lease.

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- Sputnik News: NCAI President Says Native American Schools Need \$388 Million To Be Modernized.
- Char-Koosta News: Additional Coverage: Little Shell Moves Closer To Federal Recognition.

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- Guam Daily Post: Editorial: Trump's Tough immigration Stance Could Impact Guam.

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- San Francisco Chronicle: BOR Expects Lake Berryessa's Glory Hole To Spill Over.
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DOI In The News

Trump Signs Measure Ending Stream Protection Rule.

[Bloomberg News](#) (2/16, Natter) reports President Trump signed

legislation repealing the Stream Protection Rule under the Congressional Review Act. "In eliminating this rule I am continuing to keep my promise to the American people to get rid of wasteful regulations," Trump said at a White House signing ceremony. [The Hill](#) (2/16, Henry) reports the rule "is among the most controversial environment regulations" of the Obama administration and the coal industry "said it would be costly to implement and lead to job losses across the sector."

The [Washington Times](#) (2/16, Wolfgang) reports that "the legislation has at least some bipartisan support." West Virginia Democrat Sen. Joe Manchin was "present at Thursday's event and has urged Mr. Trump to roll back Obama-era regulations on the coal industry."

Meanwhile, a brief report on the [CBS Evening News](#) (2/16, story 9, 0:20, Pelley) said that a Congressional Research Service report "said the regulation would have created as many jobs as it eliminated." [CNBC](#) (2/16) reports that the CRS "found the rule would reduce coal-related employment by an average of 260 jobs a year." CRS also "projected the rule would generate an average of 250 jobs a year," and "some of the new jobs would be in high-skilled areas like engineering and biology."

Additional coverage was provided by [CBS News](#) (2/16), [Fox News](#) (2/16), the [Wheeling \(WV\) Intelligencer](#) (2/17), the [Clarksburg \(WV\) Exponent-Telegram](#) (2/16, Ali), the [Bluefield \(WV\) Daily Telegraph](#) (2/16, Jordan), the [Cleveland \(OH\) Plain Dealer](#) (2/16, Koff), the [Pittsburgh \(PA\) Post-Gazette](#) (2/17, Eilperin), the [Johnstown \(PA\) Tribune-Democrat](#) (2/16, Griffith), the [Gephardt Daily](#) (2/17), [West Virginia MetroNews](#) (2/16, Wiles), [West Virginia Public Broadcasting](#) (2/16, Board), the [Daily Caller](#) (2/16, Bastasch), the [Daily Caller](#) (2/16, Picket), [UPI](#) (2/16, Feller), [National Geographic](#) (2/16, Profeta), [Mining](#) (2/16, McCrae), [Western Journalism](#) (2/16, Powe), [Libertarian Republic](#) (2/16, Bastasch), [Law360](#) (2/16, Goldberg), [RT](#) (2/16), [WTOV-TV Steubenville \(OH\)](#) Steubenville, OH (2/16, Warner), [KGWN-TV Cheyenne \(WY\)](#) Cheyenne, WY (2/16), [WCBC-AM Cumberland \(MD\)](#) Cumberland, MD (2/16), [WDTV-TV Bridgeport \(WV\)](#) Bridgeport, WV (2/16), [WAJR-AM Morgantown \(WV\)](#) Morgantown, WV (2/16, Wiles), and [WAJR-AM Morgantown \(WV\)](#) Morgantown, WV (2/16, Wiles).

Zinke Expected To Undertake "Major Reorganization" At Interior.

[Politico Morning Energy](#) (2/16) reports that House Natural Resources Chairman Rob Bishop "told reporters Wednesday he won't roll out his legislative agenda until Trump's administration is in place." He said, "You need the entire cast in there. I'm not going to wait forever for the administration to get up and running before we start moving, but I want to give them a chance to be in place." Bishop added that "he'd like to give Interior nominee Ryan Zinke time to complete some 'major reorganization' at the department

that he said Zinke understands needs to happen.”

Zinke Not Participating In Recent House Votes.

The [Missoula \(MT\) Independent](#) (2/16) reports that as Interior nominee Ryan Zinke awaits for his confirmation vote, “Montana’s sole voice in the House of Representatives appears to have gone AWOL.” The article notes that “according to congressional records, Zinke hasn’t cast a single vote since Jan. 5.” Moreover, “his private and official Twitter accounts have gone virtually dormant, though his Facebook page has been sporadically updated with links to news stories and a photo of his wife, Lola, at President Trump’s Jan. 20 inauguration.” The article also points out that the House has “been taking up issues of interest to Montanans.”

[KECI-TV](#) Missoula, MT (2/16, Giottonini). reports that one reason could be that “Zinke wants to enter his new role as Secretary of Interior with less of a political footprint.” Political observers don’t expect to “see change until the fate of Zinke’s cabinet post is decided.”

Zinke’s Help Sought With Suction Dredge Mining In California.

The [Siskiyou \(CA\) Daily News](#) (2/16, Jester) reports that the Mining Act of 1872 was “brought up at the Siskiyou County Board of Supervisors meeting on Tuesday during discussion of a 2009 ban on suction dredge mining, a matter which miners in Siskiyou County see as negatively impacting their livelihood.” The board of supervisors has decided to send a letter to Interior nominee Ryan Zinke “which discusses the issues surrounding the ban on suction dredging.” According to the article, “the letter seeks to familiarize Zinke with suction dredge mining and how it affects the ‘rural, blue collar citizens of Siskiyou County,’ should he ultimately be confirmed for the interior position and thus be able to explore the matter.”

Outdoor Retailer Show Leaving Utah Over Public Lands Stance.

The [AP](#) (2/16, McCombs) reports that “a lucrative outdoor trade show that’s been staged in Salt Lake City for two decades announced Thursday it will be leaving Utah over the latest disagreement with state leaders about their stance on public lands.” The Outdoor Retailer show “made the announcement just hours after a conference call intended to smooth discord between industry leaders and Gov. Gary Herbert ended with both sides disappointed.” The article notes that “industry leaders had previously threatened to leave Utah if Herbert didn’t stand down from his call for President Donald Trump to rescind the new Bears Ears National Monument.” Herbert “refused to grant them their request in the conference call, triggering the decision.”

Coverage by the AP was also picked up by the [Minneapolis \(MN\) Star Tribune](#) (2/16, McCombs), [Philly \(PA\)](#) (2/16, McCombs), the [Washington \(DC\) Post](#) (2/16, McCombs), and the [Daily Mail](#)

(2/16).

Additional coverage was provided by the [Denver \(CO\) Post](#) (2/16, Blevins), the [Pacific Standard](#) (2/16, Tobias), the [Men's Journal](#) (2/16, Trimble), and [KSL-TV Salt Lake City \(UT\)](#) Salt Lake City (2/16, Williams).

Utah Business Owners Oppose Grand Staircase-Escalante Resolution.

The [Salt Lake \(UT\) Tribune](#) (2/15, Maffly) reports that Garfield County commissioners have "hit the pause button on a proposed resolution targeting the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument after dozens of Boulder and Escalante business owners implored them to consider the monument's economic benefits before voting to drastically shrink it." Business operators claim that the monument "drives a thriving and diverse economy, contrary to claims by elected leaders that it has sunk the county into a 'state of emergency.'" Commissioners "agreed to hold a hearing March 13 before voting on whether to ask Congress to contract the Grand Staircase boundaries."

Bill Would Study Moving Oregon Public Land To State Control.

The [Salem \(OR\) Statesman Journal](#) (2/16, Urness) reports that "four Republican lawmakers want to study the idea of transferring Oregon's federal public lands to state control." House Bill 2365 would "create a task force to analyze the benefit and cost of an idea that has become a political lightning rod both nationally and locally." The bill's chief sponsor, Rep. Carl Wilson, "emphasized that his bill was only asking for a study," and "he also emphasized that neither he nor his bill intend to sell Oregon's public land into private ownership."

The [Bend \(OR\) Bulletin](#) (2/16, Hamway) reports that Rep. Gene Whisnant "withdrew his sponsorship" the bill. Whisnant "defended his support for the bill" on Thursday, "but announced that he will no longer be sponsoring it, citing a flurry of emails and calls from concerned citizens and conservation organizations."

Fight Over Public Lands Unite Sportsmen And Environmentalists.

[Reuters](#) (2/17, Volcovici, Knox) reports that sportsmen and environmentalists are uniting against efforts to transfer federal lands to state control. Both groups "fear" that doing so "could open them up to drilling and coal mining rather than recreation and preservation." The article notes that "recent funding data from the Foundation Center database, which aggregates information from tax filings, shows groups such as the Backcountry Hunters and Anglers and the Outdoor Alliance have accepted grants from big environmental and liberal foundations, including the Turner Foundation and the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation."

Eldean Bridge To Get Historical Marker.

The [Troy \(NY\) Daily News](#) (2/16, Fox) reports that the Miami County Commissioners have decided to accept a historical marker from the Interior Department for the Eldean covered bridge, which has been recognized as a National Historic Landmark. The Interior Department will “pay for the plaque, but it will be up to the county to have the plaque installed, County Engineer Paul Huelskamp said.”

Additional Coverage: Oregon Counties Sue Over Cascade-Siskiyou Expansion.

Additional coverage that 17 Oregon counties have filed a lawsuit the expansion of the Cascade-Siskiyou national monument was provided by the [Salem \(OR\) Capital Press](#) (2/16, Perkowski), the [Klamath Falls \(OR\) Herald And News](#) (2/16, Owens), and [Courthouse News](#) (2/16, Brown).

Additional Coverage: Hiring Freeze Raises Firefighting Concerns.

Additional coverage that Sen. Ron Wyden has raised “concerns about the impact a 90-day federal employee hiring freeze might have on the seasonal firefighting force” with the Interior Department was provided by [KAJO-AM](#) Grants Pass, OR (2/16, Marsh).

Op-Ed: Recreation Economy Depends Upon Protection Of Public Lands.

In an op-ed for the [Cortez \(CO\) Journal](#) (2/16, Wren), Diane Wren, the owner of Osprey Packs, writes that as Rep. Ryan Zinke is “being considered as our new interior Secretary in Washington, and as the Trump administration begins to review its own public lands policy, there are two things that are important for a new administration to take to heart: The vital role America’s public lands play in the \$646 billion national outdoor recreation economy, and the broad public support for the president’s historic ability to use the Antiquities Act to protect sensitive scientific and culturally significant lands in the future.” If confirmed, Wren hopes that Zinke will “listen to an American public that overwhelmingly supports protecting our public lands for the future.” Wren urges “the new administration to stand for what makes America, and Colorado, great — our shared public lands and the ability of the president and the Interior Department to protect them for future generations via the Antiquities Act.”

America’s Great Outdoors

National Park Service

National Parks Offering Free Admission On Presidents’ Day.

The [Washington Post](#) (2/16, Taylor) reports that the National Park Service is offering Free Entrance Day to celebrate Presidents’ Day.

Additional coverage was provided by the [Los Angeles Times](#) (2/16, Forgione), the [Arizona Republic](#) (2/16, Jespersen) and [KXRM-TV](#) Colorado Springs, CO (2/16, Case).

Sitka National Historical Park Wants To Restore Views Of 1804 Battlefield.

The [AP](#) (2/17) reports that Sitka National Historical Park is “looking to get the public’s support to move forward with a project to restore an area of the park that was the site of a battlefield more than 200 years ago.” The 1804 Tlingit-Russian battlefield “on a peninsula near the mouth of Indian River has since been overgrown with trees and shrubs.” The park is “now looking to clear out the brush to give visitors a better view of the water from the historic site.”

NPS Approves Back Half Of Brookhaven Park To Be Transferred To City.

The [Brookhaven \(GA\) Post](#) (2/15, Benton) reports that the National Park Service has “approved the back half of Brookhaven Park to be transferred to the City.” DeKalb County Commissioners “must now approve the changes to the deed.” According to the article, “if the County approves the transfer, Brookhaven expects to pay the same \$100 per acre for the back half of the 30-acre park that they paid for the rest of the parks in the City.”

New Fire Management Officer Named At Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore.

The [Times of Northwest Indiana](#) (2/16) reports that the National Park Service has chosen MaryEllen “Mel” Whitenack as the Fire Management Officer at Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore. Chief of Resource Management Daniel Plath said, “Mel has shown great leadership and done an outstanding job across the Midwest Region of the National Park Service to help parks develop fire programs. Mel brings with her years of fire management experience and proven team building skills, including the 2015 National Wildland Fire Leadership Challenge, where Indiana Dunes fire team received the runner-up award for all fire programs across the country.”

Man With Plan To Visit All National Parks To Stop At De Soto National Memorial Saturday.

The [Bradenton \(FL\) Herald](#) (2/16, Nealeigh) reports that Manatee Mikah Meyer is “on a mission: to see all the National Park Service sites in the country in honor of his father, and to encourage the LGBT community.” Meyer said will visit De Soto National Memorial on Saturday “as the next leg of his trip, stop No. 115.” According to the article, “his plan is to arrive at noon to watch a film about the history of DeSoto’s encounter with the indigenous people, then attend a ‘living history’ ranger demonstration.”

Skier Falls To Death In Grand Teton National Park.

The [AP](#) (2/16) reports that “a 26-year-old man has died after falling about 1,400 feet while skiing in Grand Teton National Park.” The National Park Service says John “Jack” Fields Jr. “fell Wednesday morning down a narrow, steep gully on the South Teton Mountain.”

Coverage by the AP was also picked up by [U.S. News & World Report](#) (2/16) and the [Spokane \(WA\) Spokesman-Review](#) (2/16).

Authorities Searching For Missing Man In Great Sand Dunes National Park.

The [Colorado Springs \(CO\) Gazette](#) (2/16, Mulder) reports that “authorities are searching for a 40-year-old man who went missing in the Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve in southern Colorado.” Park staff began searching for Bryan Skilinski on Wednesday afternoon, “but on Thursday morning, the primary search began,” Acting Superintendent Scott Stonum said. According to the article, “about 30 people will continue the search until Thursday evening, when they will debrief and plan for Friday, when additional resources are expected to join.”

Additional Coverage: NPS Approves New Boathouses On Georgetown Waterfront.

Additional coverage that the National Park Service has approved “a plan for the Georgetown Nonmotorized Boathouse Zone Development Plan and Environmental Assessment” was provided by the [Georgetowner](#) (2/16, Devaney).

Additional Coverage: “Firefall” Optical Illusion Returns To Yosemite National Park.

Additional coverage of the “firefall” attraction at Yosemite National Park was provided by [Fox News](#) (2/16), the [Los Angeles \(CA\) Times](#) (2/16, Rocha), [Time Out](#) (2/16, Martin), and [KPRC-TV Houston \(TX\) Houston](#) (2/16, Hidalgo).

Fish and Wildlife Service

House Republicans Move To Overturn Obama Limits on Alaska Hunting, Trapping.

The [Washington Post](#) (2/16, Eilperin) reports that House Republicans on Thursday passed a bill that would nullify regulations affecting hunting activities on national wildlife refuges in Alaska. The [AP](#) (2/16) reports that the Fish and Wildlife Service “said last year the rule will help maintain sustainable populations of bears, wolves and coyotes on national wildlife refuges across Alaska.” But Rep. Don Young “says the rule undermines Alaska’s ability to manage fish and wildlife on refuge lands – one-fifth of its land mass.” He says the rule “destroys a cooperative relationship between Alaska and the federal government.”

Coverage by the AP was picked up by the [Fairbanks \(AK\) News-Miner](#) (2/16), [Philly \(PA\)](#) (2/16), [U.S. News & World Report](#)

(2/16), the [Washington \(DC\) Post](#) (2/16), the [Washington \(DC\) Times](#) (2/16), and the [Daily Mail](#) (2/16).

Additional coverage was provided by the [Alaska Dispatch News](#) (2/16, Martinson), the [Daily Caller](#) (2/16, Follett), the [Huffington Post](#) (2/15, Pacelle), [BuzzFeed](#) (2/16, Grandoni), and [AmmoLand](#) (2/16, Evans).

Obama-era Lead Ban Put On Hold.

[Outdoor News](#) (2/16, Weisberg) reports that “a recently issued federal order banning the use of lead bullets and fishing tackle on federal lands is currently on hold, according to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which cites the change of administration in Washington for the delay in implementation.” Former President Obama “issued the directive in his final days in the White House, but it now is under review, according to Fish and Wildlife Service spokesman Laury Parramore, who indicated that all national orders have the same status.” She said, “(The lead ban) has not been singled out. The new administration is evaluating the order in all its implications.”

Havasu National Wildlife Refuge To Close For Two Weeks For Aerial Hunt Of Wild Swine.

The [AP](#) (2/16) reports that the Havasu National Wildlife Refuge. will be “closed for two weeks starting Feb. 21 for an aerial hunt to eradicate hundreds of feral swine regarding as troublesome and dangerous.” The U.S. Fish and Wildlife” estimates there are 100 to 1,000 of the non-native pigs at the refuge.” Sen. John McCain “said the government should allow private hunters to shoot the hogs, but Mohave County Supervisor Buster Johnson said that’d delay the project.”

Coverage by the AP was also picked up by the [Albuquerque \(NM\) Journal](#) (2/16) and [U.S. News & World Report](#) (2/16).

Additional coverage was provided by the [Las Vegas \(NV\) Review-Journal](#) (2/16, Hawkins).

FWS Says Relic Leopard Frogs Don’t Warrant Federal Protection.

The [Payson \(AZ\) Roundup](#) (2/16) reports that “a frog species in Arizona and southern Nevada does not need federal protection under the Endangered Species Act, thanks to the multi-partner conservation efforts of the Arizona Game and Fish Department, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and other federal and state agencies that make up the Relict Leopard Frog Conservation Team.” The FWS has “determined that relict leopard frog populations are stable or increasing.” Jim DeVos, assistant director for Game and Fish’s Wildlife Management Division, said, “This shows that collaborative, on-the-ground efforts lead to conservation successes. By taking proactive measures that preclude the need for listing a species under the Endangered Species Act, we have much more flexibility in actively managing the species so it can ultimately thrive.”

FWS Seeks Input On 2017 Mexican Gray Wolf Plan.

The [Santa Fe New Mexican](#) (2/16, Moss) reports that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, "in the most aggressive recovery plan in recent years for the Mexican gray wolf, is proposing to release two packs of adult and young wolves in New Mexico this year, as well as place captive-born pups with wild litters." John Bradley, an agency spokesman, "said the agency intends to apply for a permit with the state in order to move forward with the releases."

Additional coverage was provided by the [AP](#) (2/17, Bryan).

FWS Released From Lawsuit Over Permit For Lynx Capture.

[Law360](#) (2/16, Lidgett) reports that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service was "released from a lawsuit Wednesday brought by environmental and animal welfare groups suing it for issuing the state of Maine a permit that allowed the accidental capture of a threatened lynx species, with a federal judge finding that the service had a rational basis to issue the permit."

Judge Hears Arguments In Lawsuit Filed Over Cabinet-Yaak Bears.

The [Missoulian \(MT\)](#) (2/16, Chaney) reports that "whether grizzly bear numbers in northwest Montana are stable, shrinking or growing, both sides of a lawsuit over their federal status agree there aren't enough of them." However, "lawyers for the Alliance for the Wild Rockies and the U.S. Government could not agree why the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service switched its recommendation from 'warranted but precluded' for more protection under the federal Endangered Species Act to a designation indicating the bear population was close to recovery." U.S. District Judge Dana Christensen heard their arguments in Missoula on Thursday. The two sides argued before U.S. District Judge Dana Christensen in Missoula on Thursday.

World's Oldest Seabird Hatches New Chick At Midway Atoll National Wildlife Refuge.

The [AP](#) (2/16) reports that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service said Thursday Wisdom, the "world's oldest known seabird," hatched a new chick at Midway Atoll National Wildlife Refuge last week. FWS project leader Bob Peyton "says Wisdom has returned to Midway for over six decades."

Coverage by the AP was also picked up by the [Bristol \(VA\) Herald Courier](#) (2/16), the [Minneapolis \(MN\) Star Tribune](#) (2/16), [Philly \(PA\)](#) (2/16), the [Tacoma \(WA\) News Tribune](#) (2/16), [U.S. News & World Report](#) (2/16), the [Washington \(DC\) Post](#) (2/16), the [Washington \(DC\) Times](#) (2/16), the [Daily Mail](#) (2/16), the [Japan Times](#) (2/17), the [Times of India](#) (2/17), and [WBOC-TV Salisbury \(MD\)](#) Salisbury, MD (2/16).

Bureau of Land Management

BLM Calls Wild Horse Slaughter Story “Fake News”.

The [Horse](#) (2/16, Raia) reports that the Bureau of Land Management has “labeled an article claiming the agency plans to slaughter more than 40,000 wild horses as fake news.” According to the article, “a Jan. 30 article published by the website Native Indigenous American alleges that the Department of the Interior voted Jan. 27 to slaughter 67% of the wild horses remaining in the United States.” In response, Tom Gorey, BLM senior public affairs specialist, said the article was “fake news.” He said, “The agency’s policy is to not sell or send wild horses or burros to slaughter and there has been no congressional direction to the contrary.”

US Geological Survey

USGS Says Southeast Texas Ground Has Dropped.

The [AP](#) Harlingen, TX (2/16) reports that the U.S. Geological Survey “says the extensive use of water pumped from underground in recent decades has caused the ground in Southeast Texas to drop in at least one location by nearly 4 feet.” The USGS “says in a report released Thursday that water use by cities and other customers has caused aquifers to drop dramatically in some places.”

Securing America’s Energy Future

Offshore Energy Development

Interior Urges High Court To Refuse Noble’s Well-Plug Row.

[Law360](#) (2/16, Powell) reports that the Interior Department has “pressed the U.S. Supreme Court to reject Noble Energy Inc.’s request to review a D.C. Circuit decision upholding the department’s order to plug and abandon an oil well off the coast of California.”

BSEE Inspects Hess’ Stampede Tension Leg Platform.

[Offshore Engineer](#) (2/15) reports that “Hess Corp.’s Stampede tension leg platform moved one step closer to production Wednesday following completion of an initial pre-production inspection of its topsides by the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE) at the Kiewit shipyard in Ingleside, Texas.” Amy Wilson, acting district manager of BSEE’s Houma District, said, “BSEE conducts these inspections because our role is to ensure that energy produced on the Outer Continental Shelf is done safely, responsibly and with the fewest impacts to the environment. Our engineers and inspectors spend three to four days verifying that all safety equipment, design specifications and submitted drawings comply with federal regulations.”

Hilcorp Natural Gas Pipeline Leaking Into Cook Inlet.

The [AP](#) (2/16, Joling) reports natural gas has been leaking for at least 10 days from an underwater natural gas pipeline owned by Hilcorp Alaska LLC into the Cook Inlet. Gas is bubbling from an 8-inch pipeline in 80 feet of water about four miles offshore, but floating ice has prevented divers from reaching the site. The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation and the federal PHMSA are investigating the leak. DEC spokeswoman Candice Bressler said, "We believe the risk to public health and safety is small. ... Environmental risk is less easy to quantify since a monitoring and assessment program is not yet in place." While there are few people in the area this time of year, there is the possibility for the leak to negatively affect beluga whales. The [Kenai \(AK\) Peninsula Clarion](#) (2/16) reports the damaged underwater pipeline is leaking between 210,000 and 310,000 cubic feet of natural gas per day into the water. Since spotting the leak, Hilcorp has reduced the pressure in the pipeline and shut down non-essential equipment on nearby platforms. The US Coast Guard said that "due to the current level of ice in lower Cook Inlet, natural gas may be accumulating under the ice and unable to be dissipate (sic) safely into the atmosphere."

Onshore Energy Development

Dakota Access Stakeholders Debate At House Panel Hearing.

[E&E Daily](#) (2/16, Bogardus) reports on "sharp exchanges" between Dakota Access pipeline developer Energy Transfer Partners and the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe during hearing of the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy this week. Issues raised at the hearing, including "what constitutes 'meaningful consultation,' pipeline safety, effects on drinking water, climate change and eminent domain," reaching beyond North Dakota and E&E reports "tribes have begun mobilizing to fight the Keystone XL pipeline in South Dakota, and landowners and environmental groups are pitted against gas pipelines up and down the East Coast." Both sides spoke of the need to "strike a balance" among supporting labor unions, creating jobs, building infrastructure, and protecting the environment, respecting landowners and tribes. Despite the pushback, "Trump's push to fast-track other critical infrastructure projects has cemented an alliance between unions and the GOP."

Officials Deny Deadline Extension For Evacuation Order.

[Reuters](#) (2/16, Sylvester) reports federal officials and North Dakota Governor Doug Burgum refused to extend the February 22 deadline for activists living in camps to protest the Dakota Access pipeline. Activists met with officials from the US Army Corps of Engineers, the governor, and the state Department of Transportation to ask for more time to remove their belongings and waste from the camps. Pipeline opponents fear new conflicts if the Army crews are accompanied by police. Chase Iron Eyes said, "It's completely

impossible to remove everything down there in that short of a time frame. ... The people aren't opposed to the help of the Army Corps, but it's got to be without the presence of militarized law enforcement."

[Fuel Fix \(TX\)](#) (2/16) reports Energy Transfer Partners completed \$2 billion in stake sales in the Dakota Access pipeline. ETP sold a 27.6 percent stake to Enbridge and a 9.2 percent stake to Marathon Petroleum. Phillips 66 maintains its 25 percent stake, while Energy Transfer has a controlling ownership of 38.25 percent. The partial sale had been delayed for months after regulatory setbacks.

House Hearing Gets Heated Over Dakota Access Pipeline. [E&E Publishing](#) (2/16) reports that the House hearing on energy infrastructure became heated as the Standing Rock Sioux tribe and Energy Transfer Partners testified on the Dakota Access pipeline. Republican Rep. Markwayne Mullin of Oklahoma pointed to his Cherokee heritage in questions targeted at the Chad Harrison of the tribal council. Mullin said he has an easement in his own backyard that he was happy to grant because it was good for the country. He said, "What's good for your backyard is what's good for the country; it's going to create jobs in your backyard, too." California Democratic Rep. Raul Ruiz cut short Mullin's questioning by launching an attack on the idea the tribe had waived its right to oppose the project. He said, "I'm so tired of the federal government not respecting the meaningful consultation. ... Notification is not meaningful consultation."

Op-ed: Indian Wars Have Not Ended. Chase Iron Eyes writes in the Pundits Blog for [The Hill](#) (2/16, Eyes) saying the current conflict over the Dakota Access pipeline is reminiscent of previous fights between the federal government and Native American tribes. The pipeline has escalated into a new battle representing the intersection of protection human, civil and indigenous rights, respecting the Constitution and safeguarding the earth. Iron Eyes goes on to compare the current announcement that the Army will remove everything starting on February 23 to when the US military promised to subdue all Lakota who did not comply with orders to return to their reservation in 1875. He says, "The Indian Wars seem never to have ended."

Navajo Nation Seeks Trumps Help To Keep Arizona Coal Plant Open.

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/16, Harder, Gold, Puko) reports that the decision earlier this week to close the Navajo Generating Station in Arizona could pose a challenge to President Trump's promise to help the coal industry. Russell Begaye, the president of the Navajo Nation, says his tribe opposes the plant's closure and the loss of 800 jobs and he is calling on Trump for concessions akin to what Carrier Corp. got for keeping jobs at a factory in Indiana. Begaye said he has been in continual contact with White House officials since the inauguration, including three or four times in the last

week. "We are going to seek a solution based on what we feel needs to be done," Mr. Begaye said. "Tax breaks, subsidies, a real strong verbiage from the White House, from President Trump himself."

Additional coverage that the Navajo Generating Station may shut down after 2019 was provided by the [Arizona Republic](#) (2/16, Randazzo), the [Cortez \(CO\) Journal](#) (2/14, Thompson), and the [Arizona Capitol Times](#) (2/16, Hummel).

Most BLM Auctions Are Now Held Online Over Activist Concerns.

[Bloomberg News](#) (2/16, Frazier) reports that because the Bureau of Land Management had to with climate activists during its in-person auctions for leasing rights for drilling on federal land, it started moving its auctions online. This year, only two of the BLM's 26 auctions will be held in person. The rest have been contracted to EnergyNet, a private company out of Texas that runs the country's largest auction site for oil and gas properties. The BLM gave EnergyNet a five-year exclusive to manage online auctions, and the company has since made deals with state agencies for the same purpose. Overall sales on the platform rose to \$745 million, and while the site filters out most protesters, CEO William Britain is worried about activists. Registered lessees must be able to prove that they are professionals engaged in oil, gas or mineral extraction. However, critics of the online auctions say it is an effort to take sales out of the public spotlight.

TransCanada Files Keystone XL Pipeline Application For Nebraska Route.

[Reuters](#) (2/16, Williams, Gopinath) reports TransCanada Corp filed an application Thursday with the Nebraska Public Service Commission to route its Keystone XL pipeline through the Midwestern state. The company says it expects the process to conclude this year, allowing the \$8 billion project to move forward.

BLM Posts Oil, Gas Parcels For June Lease.

The [Riverton \(WY\) Ranger](#) (2/16) reports that "the Bureau of Land Management's Wyoming office has posted its proposed list of parcels for the quarterly competitive oil and gas lease sale scheduled for June 22." According to the article, "the posted list, which identifies 26 parcels totaling 31,924.77 acres, initiates a 30-day public protest period. The protest period ends at 4:00 p.m. on March 3."

February Lease Sale Generated \$129.3 Million.

The [Riverton \(WY\) Ranger](#) (2/16) reports that the Bureau of Land Management "generated \$129.3 million for leasing rights on parcels offered at the BLM's quarterly federal oil and gas lease auction on Feb. 7 in Cheyenne." The BLM "sold 99 percent of the 184,792 acres that were offered."

Additional Coverage Of Possible Shutdown Of Navajo Generating Station.

Additional coverage that the Navajo Generating Station may shut down after 2019 was provided by the [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/16, Harder, Gold, Puko), the [Arizona Republic](#) (2/16, Randazzo), the [Cortez \(CO\) Journal](#) (2/14, Thompson), and the [Arizona Capitol Times](#) (2/16, Hummel).

Renewable Energy

Court Reject Anglers' Request To Halt New York Wind Farm Lease.

[Law360](#) (2/16, Phillis) reports that "a D.C. federal court on Wednesday refused to block a \$43 million wind energy lease for an area off the coast of New York, deciding the deal would not cause sufficient harm to a coalition of fishing groups and municipalities that argues the project poses a grave economic threat." U.S. District Judge Tanya S. Chutkan "declined a request from the Fisheries Survival Fund and other groups to enjoin the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management from executing the lease sale to Statoil Wind US LLC."

Additional coverage was provided by the [Workboat](#) (2/16, Moore).

Empowering Native American Communities

House Subcommittee Told Oversight Of BIA, BIE Needed.

[Courthouse News](#) (2/16, Buchman) reports that members of the House Subcommittee on the Interior, Energy and Environment on Wednesday heard testimony "on the woeful state of schools on tribal lands and the disconnect with the federal government many said has exacerbated the problems." According to the article, "at the heart of the problems, the subcommittee was told, is a woeful lack of communication between tribes and the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Bureau of Indian Education." Mary Kendall, deputy inspector general at the Interior department, "said many of the bureaus' problems stem from an inability to distribute funds to tribes and use resources effectively." Kendall said, "The Office of the Inspector General has no programmatic authority to make that happen. Additional oversight of BIA and BIE by [Congress] would go a long way. Serious action by new leadership at the Office of Indian Affairs would help."

NCAI President Says Native American Schools Need \$388 Million To Be Modernized.

[Sputnik News](#) (2/17) reports that "schools for Native Americans in the United States require at least \$388 million to be effectively

modernized,” National Congress of American Indians President Brian Cladoosby said. He said, “President Donald Trump had indicated that he wants a big infrastructure spending bill. If you based it on need, the one’s that need it the most in the United States, the Native Americans by far would be able to show that they have the highest need for infrastructure in their communities.”

Additional Coverage: Little Shell Moves Closer To Federal Recognition.

Additional coverage that the Senate Indian Affairs Committee “recently voted unanimously in favor on a recognition bill that also could give the Little Shell 200 acres of land in central Montana if passed by the full U.S. Congress” was provided by the [Char-Koosta News](#) (2/16).

Office Of Insular Affairs

Editorial: Trump’s Tough immigration Stance Could Impact Guam.

In an editorial, the [Guam Daily Post](#) (2/16) says that President Trump’s tough immigration stance “could help the government of Guam cope with the cost of public services to regional immigrants who aren’t economically able to stand on their own feet.” It notes that “has had a dramatic increase in the number of regional immigrants.” Gov. Eddie Calvo has, “in the past, complained to the U.S. Department of the Interior – including during an inter-agency conference in Washington, D.C. – that many of these immigrants from the FSM come to Guam without the skills to hold jobs, the ability to support themselves economically while they don’t have jobs, and that they end up taxing the island’s already strained public health-care system.” It concludes that “if Trump prevails, Guam could become a very different community a year, or a few years from now, if he sends all the immigrants back who can’t financially sustain themselves.”

Tackling America’s Water Challenges

BOR Monitoring Arrival Of North California Storms.

The [Sacramento \(CA\) Bee](#) (2/15, GARRISON, LINDELOF) reports that “three storm systems are headed for the Sacramento region, starting Thursday and continuing into next week, according to the National Weather Service.” However, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation officials “do not believe these storms will force a similar rush of water into Folsom Lake.” BOR spokesman Todd Plain said, “We are monitoring current conditions as always, but we are expecting a colder storm system with lower snow levels, and inflows into Folsom are not expected to dramatically increase.”

BOR Expects Lake Berryessa's Glory Hole To Spill Over.

The [San Francisco Chronicle](#) (2/16, Graff) reports that "the last time" Lake Berryessa's Glory Hole "spilled over was 10 years ago in 2006, and the Bureau of Reclamation thinks it could happen again soon." Sarah McBride, a public affairs specialist with the BOR, said, "A rough estimate is we expect it might start spilling tomorrow, Friday, or this weekend."

Additional coverage was provided by the [Napa Valley \(CA\) Register](#) (2/16) and the [Sacramento \(CA\) Bee](#) (2/16, Opsahl).

BOR Says Sacramento River Flood Maps A Secret.

The [Redding \(CA\) Record-Searchlight](#) (2/16, Arthur) reports that a homeowner who worried that "his home could be flooded" if the Sacramento River continued to rise asked U.S. Bureau of Reclamation "officials if he could get copies of maps showing the river elevations corresponding with dam releases." However, bureau officials told Greg Boehle "they don't make them available to the public." Don Bader, the bureau's area manager, "said they aren't even available through a Freedom of Information Act request."

Top National News

Media Analyses: Trump's Performance At News Conference Unseemly, Unprecedented.

Media coverage characterizes President Trump's Thursday [press conference](#) as an "angry," "defensive," "rambling" "spectacle" that was unprecedented in modern-day politics. The overwhelmingly negative reporting takes issue with Trump's criticism of the media, and provides little coverage of Trump's recap of the early days of his Administration and stated successes. However, analysts also predicted Trump's return to his campaign-style interaction with the press was likely to play well with his supporters. [NBC Nightly News](#) 📺 (2/16, lead story, 5:30, Holt), for example, reported in its lead story that the left has written about the press conference as a "meltdown," while the right has "heralded" it as "the trashing of the media in an epic news conference." At any rate, NBC added, people from all political viewpoints likely agree that it "was pretty much unlike anything we've heard from behind a presidential podium." Indicative of the overall tenor of much of the coverage, [USA Today](#) (2/16, Wolf) refers to "one of the wildest presidential press conferences on record" – one that included "a rambling, defensive and at times angry performance by the leader of the free world." During the "spectacle for the ages," USA Today adds, Trump "lashed out at the media, Hillary Clinton, the intelligence community, judges and Democrats – among many others."

[Politico](#) (2/16, Dawsey) says that "after stewing in anger during four rocky weeks" as President, the press conference "appeared to be a cathartic moment" for Trump, who aides say

"has found running the government harder than expected." However, Politico says Trump "seemed to be in his element" on Thursday. Trump, according to the [AP](#) (2/16, Lemire), "bullied reporters, dismissed facts and then cracked a few caustic jokes." The AP says that "combination" made Trump "irresistible cable TV fodder" during the campaign. [Bloomberg Politics](#) (2/16, Sink) says Trump "appeared to satisfy his itch to duke it out with a press corps he feels has treated him unfairly since his inauguration." Bloomberg adds that Trump's supporters "no doubt ate it up" and possibly saw that the President "seemed to enjoy his banter with reporters, so much so that he could barely pry himself away from the cameras." Bloomberg quotes Trump as saying that he is "actually having a very good time." Trump added, "Don't forget, that's the way I won. Remember, I used to give you a news conference every time I made a speech? Which was like every day." [Reuters](#) (2/16, Holland) similarly reports the President's "message" during the press conference "appeared aimed at the same voters who elected him" and "feel Washington has left them behind and who like his image as an outsider trying to shake up the establishment."

The [Washington Times](#) (2/16, Miller, Boyer) reports Trump said the "level of dishonest" in the media "is out of control" as news organizations are siding with special interests rather than average Americans. The media, Trump said, is "trying to attack our administration because they know we are following through on pledges that we made, and they're not happy about it." The [New York Post](#) (2/16, Halper), with a front page that the [Drudge Report](#) shows as having a picture of Trump dressed as a circus ringmaster with the headline "Wildest Show On Earth" – says Trump indicated he was using the press conference to take his message "straight to the people." The [Huffington Post](#) (2/16, Wilkie) reports that Trump said this was necessary because "many of our nation's reporters and folks will not tell you the truth and will not treat the wonderful people of our country with the respect they deserve." Trump added that "much of the media" based in the District of Columbia, New York, and Los Angeles "in particular" do not speak for average Americans, "but for the special interests and for those profiting off a very, very obviously broken system." However, the [New York Times](#) (2/16, Baker) reports that despite his criticism of the media, Trump at "one point plaintively pleaded for understanding." Trump said "the tone" of cable news commentary about him "is such hatred," adding, "I'm really not a bad person."

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/16) editorializes that Trump provided a clear and coherent message that was far from a bad performance. The [New York Times](#) (2/16) editorializes that Trump "needed the press to play the punching bag that so delighted his political base," while Chris Cillizza says in a [Washington Post](#) (2/16) analysis that Trump "understands" that the media "represent everything" his supporters "dislike about American society." Cillizza indicates that Trump's supporters view the media as made up of "Ivy-League-educated coastal elites who look down their noses at

the average person, dismissing them and their views as stupid and ill-informed." In a [Washington Times](#) (2/16) column, Charles Hunt says Trump "is an agent of total disruption, bordering on chaos – everything American voters would like to see set upon Washington." Hunt adds that Trump – who is not "a politician," is not "polished by public relations experts," and "doesn't always speak with complete precision" – "always gets his point across." Trump, Hunt continues, "wants to shake things up" and Americans "stand behind him." On [Fox News' Hannity](#) (2/16), Sean Hannity called Trump's press conference "a historic beatdown of the alt-left propagandist media and they had it coming. ... It is very refreshing to see a commander in chief who will fight back against all the dishonesty, all the smears, and set the record straight with you, the American people." The hashtag [#TrumpPressConference](#) was trending on Twitter throughout the day Thursday and Thursday night. Tweets were largely – but not universally – negative toward Trump.

Meanwhile, a [New York Times](#) (2/16, Shear, Haberman, Thrusch) analysis says it is "unlikely" that Trump's press conference "will divert much long-term attention from questions" that his Administration has faced. Chuck Todd said on [NBC Nightly News](#) (2/16, story 2, 1:10, Holt) that while the press conference likely played well with Trump's base, it "did nothing to somehow cause" concerned lawmakers "to be less uneasy." Howard Kurtz said on [Fox News Special Report](#) (2/16) that "the other news he made today was drowned out by his assault on the media which doesn't help him pass his legislative agenda, the thing that would actually ensure he gets more positive press." However, Chris Wallace said on [Fox News' O'Reilly Factor](#) (2/16) that "this was a determined effort by this President, who is by far the best spokesman in his administration, for his administration, to seize the narrative." Wallace added, "This is a President saying, 'I am in charge, I know what I'm doing. I am not going to bend to Washington. Washington is going to have to get used to me.'"

The [Washington Post](#) (2/16, Parker, Wagner) reports that Trump "alternated between claims that he had 'inherited a mess' and the assertion that his fledgling administration 'is running like a fine-tuned machine.'" The Post adds that Trump "seemed to acknowledge the widespread reports of turbulence and upheaval emanating out of his West Wing." Trump said, according to [The Hill](#) (2/16, Fabian), "I turn on the TV, open the newspapers and I see stories of chaos. Chaos. Yet it is the exact opposite." The [CBS Evening News](#) (2/16, lead story, 4:15, Pelley) showed Trump adding, "This administration is running like a fine-tuned machine." The [Los Angeles Times](#) (2/16, Bierman, Memoli, Lauter) reports that Trump "countered that all of his early setbacks were the fault of others, the product of 'fake news' reporting or both." Trump said, "I inherited a mess," adding, "It's a mess at home and abroad."

[McClatchy](#) (2/16, Kumar, Ordoñez) reports that Trump "boasted of his successes despite a series of setbacks" – including

an appellate court ruling of his immigration executive order, the resignation of former National Security Adviser Flynn, the withdrawal of former Labor Secretary nominee Andrew Puzder, and leaks from the White House and federal agencies. [Roll Call](#) (2/16, Bennett) says Trump “hammered Democrats at several points, saying ‘the only thing they can do is delay because they screwed things up royally.’” According to Roll Call, Trump “used the criticism as a way to pivot to a list of first-month actions he said he took to reverse Democratic policies” and uphold “a promise I made to the American people.” The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/16, Lee, Paletta) quotes Trump as saying, “There has never been a presidency that’s done so much in such a short period of time” and “we have not even started the big work yet.” Jonathan Karl reported on [ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/16, lead story, 4:45, Muir) that Trump “pointed to the soaring stock market, his executive orders cutting regulations and the smooth roll-out of his Supreme Court nominee.”

Media Considers Truthfulness Of Trump’s Statements. A [New York Times](#) (2/16, Fandos) analysis says that while Trump accused the media of dishonesty, he “uttered several falsehoods of his own.” The Times highlights “some of the most important,” which include: winning the most electoral college votes since former President Ronald Reagan; the US Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit is “in chaos”; and that he inherited an economy that was a “mess.”

The [CBS Evening News](#) (2/16, story 6, 1:35, Pelley) reported that while Trump received 304 electoral votes, former President Obama won 365 and former President George H.W. Bush had 426. The [AP](#) (2/16, Boak, Woodward) reports that “economic stats and territorial losses of Islamic State insurgents don’t support [Trump’s] assertions about the problems handed to him on those fronts.” The AP says that “by almost every economic measure,” Obama “inherited a far worse situation” in 2009 than Trump took over. The AP adds that ISIS “began to lose ground before Trump took office.”

The [Washington Post](#) (2/16) reports that “there’s a fair amount of truth” to Trump’s statement that “drugs are becoming cheaper than candy bars.” Drugs, the Post says, “are often incredibly inexpensive, particularly per dose.” The Post cites a 2015 Baltimore Sun report that said “peewee” capsules of heroin sold for about six dollars per dose in West Baltimore and opiate painkillers “can sometimes be even cheaper” at “the per-pill level.” Moreover, another [Washington Post](#) (2/16) piece says that while “it is true that some drug in some quantity might be less expensive than some candy bar at some size,” the “cheapest drug is going to be more expensive than a relatively pricey candy bar.” The Post provides examples of drug prices that it identified by searching on Quora.

Cummings: Trump Made Up “Story About Me.” The [Washington Post](#) (2/16, Portnoy) reports that Rep. Elijah Cummings (D-MD)

denied Trump's claim that the lawmaker would not meet with the President despite repeated requests from the White House. Trump, during the press conference, "speculated that Cummings may have been dissuaded from coming to the White House for political reasons." Cummings said in a statement, "I have no idea why President Trump would make up a story about me like he did today. Of course, Senator Schumer never told me to skip a meeting with the President."

WPost Analysis: Trump's Comment To Black Reporter "Crystallized The Unusual Nature" Of Presidency. The [Washington Post](#) (2/16, Bump) reports "few moments crystallized the unusual nature" of Trump's Administration as "effectively as an exchange" with April Ryan of American Urban Radio Networks. When Ryan stood up to ask Trump if he would include the Congressional Black Caucus in discussions about urban policy, the Post says, Trump responded by asking the reporter if she "want[s] to set up the meeting." Trump added, "Are they friends of yours? Set up a meeting."

[ABC World News Tonight](#) 📺 (2/16, story 4, 1:50, Muir) reported Trump's response left "members of the Congressional Black Caucus in shock." Rep. Emanuel Cleaver (D-MO) said that Trump made an "assumption" that "because there was a black woman in the room," she "had a unique connection with the Congressional Black Caucus." Cummings said on [CNN's Situation Room](#) 📺 (2/16) that Trump likely "saw an African-American woman connected with the Congressional Black Caucus and said maybe they're friends." Cummings said that "every time [Trump] talks...about the inner city, he has negative things to say." Cummings added, "I wish he could walk into some of the areas that I live in and where people are doing extremely well, taking very good care of their families, and he needs to have a bigger picture of the African-American communities and our cities."

Durbin Says Press Conference Was "Hard To Follow." Senate Minority Whip Durbin said on [CNN's The Lead](#) 📺 (2/16) that Trump's press conference was "hard to follow. There were so many different things he said. It clearly was a spur-of-the-moment decision. And what I think frankly we should reflect on is we're dealing with some extremely serious questions." Durbin added, "The President would have been well-advised to sit down for five minutes with his legal counsel before that press conference and get a few things straight before he made these statements."

Media Analyses: Trump-CNN Conflict Reaches New Stage. The [New York Post](#) (2/16, Atkinson) reports that both Trump and CNN "took a blowtorch to the blowup" between the two sides during the press conference. The Post says Trump "made it personal" when he told White House correspondent Jim Acosta to "ask [CNN Worldwide President] Jeff Zucker how he got his job, OK?" The Post says "it was not immediately known what Trump meant." [Politico](#) (2/16, Weprin) says Zucker on Thursday said that Trump's comments about CNN being fake news are a "badge of honor" and the

network's coverage of the Administration has increased employee morale.

Kushner Complained To Time Warner Executive About CNN Coverage. The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/16, Hagey, Paletta) reports senior adviser Jared Kushner met with Time Warner executive Gary Ginsberg in recent weeks and expressed the Administration's concerns about CNN's coverage, according to a White House official. Kushner, the Journal says, complained about unfair and slanted coverage against the President.

Fox News' Smith Blasts Trump's Performance. [USA Today](#) (2/16, Cummings) reports Fox News anchor Shepard Smith "is under fire for criticizing" Trump's interaction with Acosta and refusing to answer questions about ties to Russia. Smith on Thursday said that Trump "keeps repeating ridiculous, throwaway lines that are not true at all and sort of avoiding this issue of Russia as if we're some kind of fools for asking the question." Smith added, "We have a right to know. You call us fake news and put us down like children for asking questions on behalf of the American people."

O'Reilly: Trump Did Not Understand "How Extensive The Problem Really Is." In his "Talking Points Memo" segment on [Fox News' O'Reilly Factor](#) (2/16), Bill O'Reilly said, "When President Trump first mentioned draining the swamp in Washington, I don't believe he understood how extensive the problem really is. For eight years of President Obama, there are many people working in the federal government who like the former President and who despise Mr. Trump. Eliminating all of them and stopping the leaks, pretty much be impossible. Also don't trying to get fairness out of the anti-Trump press is impossible as well. So, the Trump Administration has its hands full."

Powers: Trump "Probably A Little Frustrated" With Spicer. Kirsten Powers said on [CNN's Anderson Cooper 360](#) (2/16) that from Trump's perspective, the press conference "shows he's probably a little frustrated with Sean Spicer," and "this is how he would like press conferences to be handled."

Podesta: Trump Is Trying To "Disorient Public Perceptions" Of News. In a [Washington Post](#) (2/16) op-ed, former Hillary Clinton campaign chairman John Podesta says Trump's "fake-news pivot isn't subtle" as he "benefited from fake news stories during the campaign" and has President "has constantly used the epithet against mainstream media outlets that dare criticize him." Trump, according to Podesta, "is deploying a strategy, used by autocrats, designed to completely disorient public perception." Podesta says that Trump "seeks nothing less than to undermine the public's belief that any news can be trusted" and that "any news is true."

NYTimes Criticizes Trump's Answer To Anti-Semitism Question. A [New York Times](#) (2/16) editorial criticizes the President's answer to a question about the rise of anti-Semitic incidents in the US, saying that "as is so often the case, he began with a focus on himself and skirted the issue." He then "once again...exploited the

Jewish members of his family to bolster his credibility," before deriding the question as "very insulting."

Trump Says He Has Directed Sessions To Investigate Leaks.

[USA Today](#) (2/16, Johnson) reports that President Trump said "in the midst of a meandering and combative White House news conference" that he has directed Attorney General Sessions "to investigate alleged leaks of classified information," which "immediately revived concerns previously voiced by Democratic lawmakers that Sessions could not assert his independence as the nation's chief law enforcement officer." Senate Minority Leader Schumer has called on Sessions to recuse himself, and Senate Judiciary Committee ranking Democrat Dianne Feinstein "asked that Sessions limit contacts between the White House and the Justice Department." The [New York Times](#) (2/16, Savage, Lichtblau) writes that while "no law forbids a president from making a criminal referral to the Justice Department," it is "unusual for a president to direct the agency to open a criminal investigation into his perceived opponents or to talk publicly about having done so."

[ABC World News Tonight](#) 📺 (2/16, story 2, 2:25, Muir) reported that during his news conference, Trump "defend[ed] the national security adviser he just fired." ABC's Pierre Thomas: "Justice Department attorneys are intensely reviewing why former National Security Advisor Michael Flynn made misleading statements to the White House about his conversation with Russia's ambassador to the US and whether he broke any laws in the process. ... Today, President Trump continued to praise the man he fired." Trump: "Mike Flynn is a fine person, and I asked for his resignation. He respectfully gave it." On the [CBS Evening News](#) 📺 (2/16, story 5, 2:25, Pelley), John Dickerson said, "The Michael Flynn episode is about what penalty there is for not telling the truth in the Trump Administration. And today we got about the fourth explanation from the President on what his relationship was with Michael Flynn."

On the [CBS Evening News](#) 📺 (2/16, story 2, 2:35, Pelley), Jeff Pegues reported that Trump "was asked by three reporters if any of his campaign staffers were in regular contact with Russian operatives during the election. He denied any connections to the Kremlin and dismissed the investigation." Trump: "Russia is a ruse. I have nothing to do with Russia. Haven't made a phone call to Russia in years."

Shepard Smith said on [Fox News' Shepard Smith Reporting](#) 📺 (2/16), "It's crazy what we're watching every day. It's absolutely crazy. [Trump] keeps repeating ridiculous throw-away lines that are not true at all and sort of avoiding this issue of Russia as if we're some kind of fools for asking the question. Really? Your opposition was hacked, and the Russians were responsible for it, and your people were on the phone with Russia the same day it's happening, and we're fools asking questions? No, sir, we're not fools for asking the question, and we demand to know the answer to this question."

You owe this to the American people.”

Congressmen Say Trump “Fumed” About Leaks In Meeting.

[Politico](#) (2/16, Cheney, Bade) reports that the President “fumed about intelligence community leaks during a meeting at the White House with his earliest supporters in Congress,” according to Reps. Lou Barletta (R-PA) and Mike Kelly (R-PA), who were among the 11 lawmakers at the meeting. Kelly said Trump “vented” that Flynn’s departure “is ‘not the issue’ compared to the leaks that made those revelations public,” and Barletta said Trump “‘talked a lot’ about the leaks.”

Officials Say Flynn Denied Discussing Sanctions With Russian Ambassador In FBI Interview. The [Washington Post](#) (2/16, A1, Horwitz, Entous) reports that Flynn denied to FBI agents in a January 24 interview “that he had discussed U.S. sanctions against Russia” with Ambassador Sergey Kislyak before President Trump took office, “contradicting the contents of intercepted communications collected by intelligence agencies,” according to current and former officials. The Post says Flynn may be “in legal jeopardy” since “lying to the FBI is a felony offense.”

Durbin “Skeptical” Whether Senate Intelligence Committee Can Conduct Adequate Investigation. Senate Minority Whip Durbin was asked on [CNN’s The Lead](#) (2/16) if he believes the Senate Intelligence Committee can do an adequate investigation of Trump campaign aides’ contacts with Russia. Durbin said, “I’m skeptical. I trust Mark Warner completely, but he has to work with the Republican senator who may not be as enthusiastic about this. ... When there is a report coming out of the Senate Intelligence Committee, trust me, it will be heavily censored and redacted and the only way to get that information declassified is with the permission of the White House.”

Nunes: Leakers “Probably” People From Obama Administration. The [Washington Times](#) (2/16, Sherfinski) reports that House Intelligence Chairman Devin Nunes said Wednesday evening that “most of the recent intel leaks are likely originating from people who worked in the Obama administration.” He said on Fox News’ Hannity, “It’s totally unacceptable for anyone within government to be doing this. I think most of this is probably from people who were in the old Administration, but there still could be some people that have burrowed in and are providing classified information to the media.”

Trump May Have Financier Lead Intelligence Agencies. The [Washington Post](#) (2/16, Wagner, Merle) reports Trump is considering having Stephen Feinberg, a financier and “longtime friend,” lead “a broad review of US intelligence agencies,” but said that “might not be necessary once his team is fully in place.” Trump said, “It’s something we may take advantage of, but I don’t think we’ll need that at all.” The President said the pending confirmation of ex-Sen. Dan Coats as director of national intelligence might eliminate the need for such a review.

Harward Turns Down Offer To Become NSA. [Reuters](#) (2/16,

Beech) reports that retired Vice Adm. Robert Harward has turned down Trump's offer to be named national security adviser. [USA Today](#) (2/16, Cummings) reports that Harward told the AP that he turned down the job for personal reasons, but CBS reported that Trump "insisted that Deputy National Security Adviser K.T. McFarland be allowed to stay on, and Harward refused to retain the former Fox News analyst and Flynn hire."

Jim Sciutto said on [CNN's Anderson Cooper 360](#) (2/16) that people close to Harward say "this was a difficult decision between duty to his country, to people he served under before," but "he sees a White House that is in chaos and that's not something that he wanted to be associated with." The [New York Times](#) (2/16, Davis, Schmitt) says White House officials "had scrambled to head off the refusal, asserting as late as Thursday evening" that Harward "was still in the running."

Max Boot of the Council on Foreign Relations [tweeted](#), "It's not just Harward. I hear other professionals are either fleeing NSC staff or refusing to join. Lots of vacancies. WH a total mess."

NYTimes Analysis: US Does Not Yet Have A "Deep State," But Is Heading That Way. The [New York Times](#) (2/16, Taub, Fisher) says in an analysis that the leaks are leading some to compare the US to countries "like Egypt, Turkey and Pakistan, where shadowy networks within government bureaucracies, often referred to as 'deep states,' undermine and coerce elected governments." Experts say the US is not yet "seeing the rise of its own deep state...but the echoes are real – and disturbing."

Time Analysis: White House Returns To "Reality-Show Ways" Amid "Chaos." Philip Elliott of [TIME](#) (2/16) looks "Inside Donald Trump's White House Chaos," writing that while Trump "mastered the art of disruption" as a presidential candidate, "disruption in government – the rulebreaker breaking the rules – turns out to be more costly." Facing crises and protests, "the White House has fallen back on its reality-show ways, distracted by the internecine drama of senior aides who spend their days mixing government business with jockeying for position and favor with the boss."

In her [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/16) column, Peggy Noonan pleads with Trump to bring in more conventional staff members to balance out his own unconventional style and that of much of his inner circle. However, in the [Washington Post](#) (2/16), contributing columnist Hugh Hewitt warns against hyperbole, writing that every Administration stumbles in its first days, and that "judgments about Trump's presidency based on his first month in the Oval Office are by definition premature."

Senate Judiciary Committee To Begin Gorsuch Hearings March 20.

The [Washington Post](#) (2/16, Sullivan) reports that the Senate Judiciary Committee announced Thursday that it will begin hearings on the nomination of Judge Neil Gorsuch to the Supreme Court on March 20. A [tweet](#) from the committee read, "Chairman

@ChuckGrassley: @SenJudiciary Committee to begin hearing on the nomination of Judge Neil Gorsuch for #SCOTUS on March 20th." The hearings "are expected to span several days and draw intense public scrutiny." The [New York Times](#) (2/16, Pérez-Peña) says Democrats are "angry that Republicans refused to allow President Barack Obama to fill the seat over the last 11 months of his presidency," and "have vowed tough questioning" of Gorsuch. While Gorsuch has "strong legal credentials, some Democrats are likely to oppose him, with many people on the left demanding that they push back against Mr. Trump in any way they can."

In an op-ed for [USA Today](#) (2/16), Senate Judiciary Chairman Charles Grassley criticizes Senate Democrats for "signal[ing] plans to block any nomination made by the newly-elected president even before he announced his nomination" after "criticizing Republicans for taking a principled position about a lame duck president that was advocated by Democrats for decades." Arguing that there should not be "one set of rules for Republicans and another set of rules for Democrats," Grassley writes, "We won't abide by such a double standard."

Editorial Wrap-Up

New York Times.

"For A Troubled President, The Media Is A Satisfying Target." The [New York Times](#) (2/16) editorializes that in his press conference, President Trump "needed the press to play the punching bag that so delighted his political base."

"Bring On The Special Prosecutor." The [New York Times](#) (2/17) editorializes that the Administration's "ties" to Moscow "clearly" should be investigated and only a special prosecutor could conduct an inquiry "fairly and completely." The Times says that while "it's never easy to conduct robust, independent investigations of the most powerful people in the world," the ability to do so "is one of the foundations of a functioning democracy."

"Plastic Bag Fees Make Sense, Just Not To Albany." A [New York Times](#) (2/17) editorial.

Washington Post.

"Trump Can Help Americans Trust Him By Releasing His Taxes." The [Washington Post](#) (2/16) editorializes that President Trump's "rambling news conference" on Thursday was consistent with his previous modus operandi. The public cannot trust the President's statement that "the whole Russian thing" is a "ruse" because of a lack of transparency, writes the Post. Trump's failure to release his tax returns despite promising he would do so is a significant impediment to gaining America's trust because the global nature of the business empire he handed down to his sons increases "the potential scale and scope of his international conflicts of interest." Without more complete disclosure and evidence to

back up claims, the public cannot fully trust its leader.

“What The Country Need To Know About The New Labor Secretary Nominee.” The [Washington Post](#) (2/16) says in an editorial that the Trump White House did “a spectacularly bad vetting job” with former Labor Secretary nominee Andrew Puzder, which “raises the question of whether the choice of [new nominee Alexander] Acosta holds more promise. On paper, his credentials are strong,” but his “confirmation hearing needs principally to be the forum at which we get a better sense of Trump policy toward the healing but still troubled labor market.”

“A Power That Lets Police Take Property For Themselves – Even When There’s No Crime.” The [Washington Post](#) (2/16) editorializes that President Trump last week “met with a group of sheriffs, who, as they groused about their critics, seem to have extracted a new policy position from a credulous and apparently ill-informed president.” The sheriffs “spoke about ‘civil asset forfeiture’ – a bizarre police power prone to abuse yet beloved by law enforcement,” and Trump “concluded that only ‘bad people’ would pressure them to change the practice.” The Post points out that “an ideologically diverse, bipartisan movement that includes many Trump supporters opposes civil asset forfeiture, because it allows police to seize property from Americans on shockingly flimsy legal grounds.” The Post notes that “a variety of states have passed or are considering reforms to their civil forfeiture system,” and some “have abolished it, stipulating that assets can be seized only from convicted criminals.”

Wall Street Journal.

“The Bully Trumpet.” The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/16) editorializes that in his press conference, President Trump provided a clear and coherent message that was far from a bad performance.

“Trump’s Labor Mulligan.” The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/16) says in an editorial that Labor Secretary-designate Alexander Acosta has a solid record that should win the support of even Senate liberals.

“Supreme Court Disclosure Test.” The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/16) writes in an editorial that when the Supreme Court considers the Independence Institute’s appeal Friday it should find the McCain-Feingold Act unconstitutional. The Colorado free-market think tank’s pre-enforcement challenge maintains that the 2002 law’s provision requiring donor disclosure for issue-based advertisements goes against the First Amendment by imposing undue burdens on Americans who advocate for causes. If the court fails to act accordingly, federal campaign finance disclosure rules will affect more political speech.

Big Picture

Headlines From Today’s Front Pages.

Wall Street Journal:

[Trump Lets Loose Against Critics](#)

[Trump Administration Backs Off Talk Of Closer Russia Ties](#)

[With \\$15 Left In The Bank, A Baby Boomer Makes Peace With Less Fund's \\$600 Million Lost Week Captivates Traders](#)

New York Times:

['I Inherited A Mess,' Trump Says, Defending His Performance](#)

[In 77 Chaotic Minutes, Trump Defends 'Fine-Tuned Machine'](#)

[GOP's Grand Visions For Congress Now Look Like A Mirage](#)

[EPA Workers Try To Block Pruitt In Show Of Defiance](#)

[Fake News, Fake Ukrainians: How A Group Of Russians Tilted A Dutch Vote](#)

[Is 2-State Solution Dead? In Israel, A Debate Over What's Next](#)

Washington Post:

[Trump Travels Come At High Cost](#)

[Flynn TOLD FBI He Did Not Discuss Sanctions](#)

[Trump Defends Month In Office](#)

[Mistakes By DC Lab Force Retesting For Zika](#)

[The Trump Effect In Germany: A Resurgent Left](#)

Financial Times:

[US Officials Set Conditions On Russia Thaw](#)

[French Bond Trading Soars On Fear Of Populist Wave](#)

[Kim Jong Nam Assassination Hits Beijing Authority](#)

[Norway Plans Shake-up Of \\$900bn Oil Fund](#)

Washington Times:

[Trump Blasts 'Out Of Control' Media For Ignoring Early Successes](#)

[Feds Say Border Fence Has Been Cut 9,200 Times Since 2010](#)

[President Trump Orders Justice Probe Of Intel Leaks, Says Flynn Was 'Just Doing His Job'](#)

[Islamic Extremism Deadliest Ideology In U.S. For First Time In 30 Years](#)

[Post-9/11 Veterans Seek New Purpose By Joining Left-Wing Protest Movements](#)

[DNC Leaders Unhappy With Aggressive Tactics To Elect Ellison As Chairman](#)

Story Lineup From Last Night's Network News:

ABC: Trump News Conference; Flynn Investigation; Russian Military Aggression; Trump-Black Caucus; Trump-New Immigration Order; Immigrant Protest; Middle East Bombings; Foiled Synagogue Attack; Teenager Hikers Murdered; Severe Weather; Washington State Explosion; Stroller Recall; Phone Plans Competition; National Zoo Panda Farewell.

CBS: Trump News Conference; Trump-Russia Investigation; Trump-New Immigration Order; Presidential Orders; Flynn Controversy-Expert Opinion; Trump-Electoral Victory Comment; Immigrant Protest; Immigrant Taking Sanctuary; Trump-Coal Mine

Stream Order; Detroit Philanthropist Billionaire Dies.
NBC: Trump News Conference; News Conference-Congress Reaction; US Syria Deployment; Immigrant Protest; Wall Street Surge; Food Expiration Label Change; Kim Jung-Nam Assassination; Stroller Recall; Documentary Planet Earth Sequel.

Network TV At A Glance:

Trump News Conference – 14 minutes, 30 seconds
Trump-Russia Investigation – 5 minutes
Immigrant Protest – 4 minutes, 45 seconds
Trump-New Immigration Order – 30 seconds

Story Lineup From This Morning's Radio News Broadcasts:

ABC: National Security Advisor Pick Withdraws; Labor Secretary Nominee; Trump News Conference; Foiled Synagogue Attack; Bill Cosby Lawsuit; Airport Incident.

CBS: Trump News Conference; Cabinet Confirmation; Severe Weather-West Coast; Oroville Dam Situation; Severe Weather-East Coast; Flu Season; Airport Smugglers.

FOX: Trump News Conference; Tillerson-Russia Meeting; Police Violence Protest; Immigrant Protest.

NPR: Immigration Order-Legal Challenge; National Security Advisor Pick Withdraws; Defense Secretary-NATO Speech; Wall Street News.

Washington Schedule

Today's Events In Washington.

White House:

PRESIDENT TRUMP — Meets with Dennis Muilenburg, CEO of the Boeing Company; arrives in West Palm Beach, Florida.

VICE PRESIDENT PENCE — Arrive in Munich on Air Force Two for the weekend's Munich Security Conference.

US Senate: Congress breaks for Presidents Day recess – Congress breaks for Presidents Day District Work Period (aka State Work Period) * No votes in the House of Representatives today

US House: 10:00 AM Ahmadiyya Muslim Community USA annual 'Day on the Hill' – Ahmadiyya Muslim Community USA annual 'Day on the Hill', focusing on efforts to combat violent extremism, protect vulnerable religious minorities, empower American Muslims, and promote the 'True Islam' grassroots campaign to combat 'the perverse ideology of extremists and better protect national security'. Speakers include Democratic Reps. Jim McGovern and Pete Aguilar Location: Rm 121, Cannon House Office Bldg., Washington, DC www.ahmadiyya.us https://twitter.com/Islam_Press #MuslimAlly

Congress breaks for Presidents Day recess – Congress breaks for Presidents Day District Work Period (aka State Work Period) * No votes in the House of Representatives today

Other: No scheduled events

Last Laughs

Late Night Political Humor.

Jimmy Kimmel: "The President decided to hold an impromptu press conference, and it was a sight to see. It reminded me of something you'd see before a pay-per-view boxing event."

Jimmy Kimmel: "The tone of the press conference was like if your dad found a pack of cigarettes under your mattress. He was mad."

Jimmy Kimmel: "You know it's a bad press conference when assuming all black people know each other wasn't even the worst part of it."

Stephen Colbert: [Referring to President Trump's comment 'I inherited a mess.'] "No, you inherited a fortune. We elected a mess."

Stephen Colbert: "Oh, you're black, can you talk to the Congressional Black Caucus at your next meeting of the black club? You know what, forget it. I'll have Ben Carson do it. Sit down."

James Corden: "The big news out of Washington right now is the press conference Donald Trump held this morning. Did everyone see it? No? Lucky you, sir."

James Corden: "But Puzder withdrew his nomination after it became clear he would not get confirmed. When asked what he was going to do next, Puzder said, 'Please, drive around to the second window and we can talk there.'"

James Corden: "'The least anti-Semitic person.' The least. But here's the thing. Here's the guy [Trump] said it to. This guy. He's an orthodox Jewish reporter. I'm pretty sure he has met people who are less anti-Semitic than Donald Trump. You know, like at home or at his temple."

Trevor Noah: "I can't play the entire press conference. We only have 30 minutes and [Trump] spoke for, like, six days."

Trevor Noah: "That's the information you were given? If you can't trust your President to get the right information on a googlable fact, then can you really trust him with the harder stuff which, by the way, is everything else the President of the United States has to deal with."

Trevor Noah: "In his farewell address, President Obama urged us

to get engaged in politics and not just to seat back and check out of everything. Then he went kite surfing."

Jimmy Fallon: [Fallon Impersonating President Trump] "And yet we've made so much progress. In fact, if you ask any American, they'll say that I've managed to make the last four weeks feel like four years."

Jimmy Fallon: [Fallon Impersonating President Trump] "Look, I knew that [Flynn] knew that I knew, but he didn't know that I knew that he knew that I knew that he knew that I knew that he knew. So now you know."

Jimmy Fallon: "President Trump's press conference lasted for an hour and 15 minutes. Though an hour of that was just scanning the room for a reporter who wouldn't ask a tough question."

Seth Meyers: "President Trump today tweeted that the 'failing 'New York Times' must apologize for publishing leaks' from his administration, but at this point if they didn't publish White House leaks, the whole paper would just be the crosswords."

Seth Meyers: "Being a world leader sitting with Trump right now is like being a woman on a date with a guy and then his wife shows up screaming, 'Your kids want to know where you are.'"

Seth Meyers: [Referring to Trump's response on Russian aggression during his press conference] "That's your answer? We're talking about Russian military aggression, not a turkey sandwich at the deli. Not good. Very dry."

Seth Meyers: [Referring to Trump's response to an African-American reporter about the Congressional Black Caucus] "It's racist to assume all black people know each other. You don't know all orange people. Hey, Donald, can you set up a meeting with Snookie and the Lorax."

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From: Kathleen Benedetto
To: [Simpson, Melissa](mailto:Melissa.Simpson@ios.doi.gov)
Subject: Re: U.S. Department of the Interior News Briefing for Friday, February 17, 2017
Date: Friday, February 17, 2017 8:30:06 AM

Yes

Sent from my iPhone

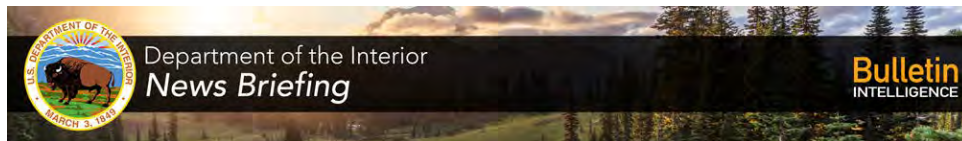
On Feb 17, 2017, at 7:31 AM, Simpson, Melissa <melissa_simpson@ios.doi.gov> wrote:

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From: **Bulletin Intelligence** <Interior@bulletinintelligence.com>
Date: Fri, Feb 17, 2017 at 7:01 AM
Subject: U.S. Department of the Interior News Briefing for Friday, February 17, 2017
To: Interior@bulletinintelligence.com

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DATE: FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2017 7:00 AM EST

Holiday Message

In observance of the Washington's Birthday holiday, we will not publish on Monday, February 20, 2017. Service will resume on Tuesday, February 21, 2017. We wish our readers a safe and happy holiday.

Today's Table Of Contents

DOI In The News

- Bloomberg News: Trump Signs Measure Ending Stream Protection Rule.
- Politico Morning Energy: Zinke Expected To Undertake "Major Reorganization" At Interior.
- Missoula (MT) Independent: Zinke Not Participating In Recent House Votes.

- Siskiyou (CA) Daily News: Zinke's Help Sought With Suction Dredge Mining In California.
- Bristol (VA) Herald Courier: Outdoor Retailer Show Leaving Utah Over Public Lands Stance.
- Salt Lake (UT) Tribune: Utah Business Owners Oppose Grand Staircase-Escalante Resolution.
- Salem (OR) Statesman Journal: Bill Would Study Moving Oregon Public Land To State Control.
- Reuters: Fight Over Public Lands Unite Sportsmen And Environmentalists.
- Troy (NY) Daily News: Eldean Bridge To Get Historical Marker.
- Salem (OR) Capital Press: Additional Coverage: Oregon Counties Sue Over Cascade-Siskiyou Expansion.
- KAJO-AM Grants Pass (OR): Additional Coverage: Hiring Freeze Raises Firefighting Concerns.
- Cortez (CO) Journal: Op-Ed: Recreation Economy Depends Upon Protection Of Public Lands.

America's Great Outdoors

National Park Service

- Washington Post: National Parks Offering Free Admission On Presidents' Day.
- U.S. News & World Report: Sitka National Historical Park Wants To Restore Views Of 1804 Battlefield.
- Brookhaven (GA) Post: NPS Approves Back Half Of Brookhaven Park To Be Transferred To City.
- Times of Northwest Indiana: New Fire Management Officer Named At Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore.
- Bradenton (FL) Herald: Man With Plan To Visit All National Parks To Stop At De Soto National Memorial Saturday.
- Washington Times: Skier Falls To Death In Grand Teton National Park.
- Colorado Springs (CO) Gazette: Authorities Searching For Missing Man In Great Sand Dunes National Park.
- Georgetown: Additional Coverage: NPS Approves New Boathouses On Georgetown Waterfront.
- Fox News: Additional Coverage: "Firefall" Optical Illusion Returns To Yosemite National Park.

Fish And Wildlife Service

- Washington Post: House Republicans Move To Overturn Obama Limits on Alaska Hunting, Trapping.
- Outdoor News: Obama-era Lead Ban Put On Hold.
- Washington Times: Havasu National Wildlife Refuge To Close For Two Weeks For Aerial Hunt Of Wild Swine.
- Payson (AZ) Roundup: FWS Says Relic Leopard Frogs Don't Warrant Federal Protection.

- Santa Fe New Mexican: FWS Seeks Input On 2017 Mexican Gray Wolf Plan.
- Law360: FWS Released From Lawsuit Over Permit For Lynx Capture.
- Missoulian (MT): Judge Hears Arguments In Lawsuit Filed Over Cabinet-Yaak Bears.
- Houston Chronicle: World's Oldest Seabird Hatches New Chick At Midway Atoll National Wildlife Refuge.

Bureau Of Land Management

- Horse: BLM Calls Wild Horse Slaughter Story "Fake News".

US Geological Survey

- KRGV-TV Harlingen (TX): USGS Says Southeast Texas Ground Has Dropped.

Securing America's Energy Future

Offshore Energy Development

- Law360: Interior Urges High Court To Refuse Noble's Well-Plug Row.
- Offshore Engineer: BSEE Inspects Hess' Stampede Tension Leg Platform.
- Associated Press: Hilcorp Natural Gas Pipeline Leaking Into Cook Inlet.

Onshore Energy Development

- E&E Daily: Dakota Access Stakeholders Debate At House Panel Hearing.
- Wall Street Journal: Navajo Nation Seeks Trumps Help To Keep Arizona Coal Plant Open.
- Bloomberg News: Most BLM Auctions Are Now Held Online Over Activist Concerns.
- Reuters: TransCanada Files Keystone XL Pipeline Application For Nebraska Route.
- Riverton (WY) Ranger: BLM Posts Oil, Gas Parcels For June Lease.
- Riverton (WY) Ranger: February Lease Sale Generated \$129.3 Million.
- Wall Street Journal: Additional Coverage Of Possible Shutdown Of Navajo Generating Station.

Renewable Energy

- Law360: Court Reject Anglers' Request To Halt New York Wind Farm Lease.

Empowering Native American Communities

- Courthouse News: House Subcommittee Told Oversight Of BIA, BIE Needed.
- Sputnik News: NCAI President Says Native American Schools Need \$388 Million To Be Modernized.
- Char-Koosta News: Additional Coverage: Little Shell Moves Closer To Federal Recognition.

Office Of Insular Affairs

- Guam Daily Post: Editorial: Trump's Tough immigration Stance Could Impact Guam.

Tackling America's Water Challenges

- Sacramento (CA) Bee: BOR Monitoring Arrival Of North California Storms.
- San Francisco Chronicle: BOR Expects Lake Berryessa's Glory Hole To Spill Over.
- Redding (CA) Record-Searchlight: BOR Says Sacramento River Flood Maps A Secret.

Top National News

- NBC: Media Analyses: Trump's Performance At News Conference Unseemly, Unprecedented.
- USA Today: Trump Says He Has Directed Sessions To Investigate Leaks.
- Washington Post: Senate Judiciary Committee To Begin Gorsuch Hearings March 20.

Editorial Wrap-Up

- New York Times.
 - "For A Troubled President, The Media Is A Satisfying Target."
 - "Bring On The Special Prosecutor."
 - "Plastic Bag Fees Make Sense, Just Not To Albany."
- Washington Post.
 - "Trump Can Help Americans Trust Him By Releasing His Taxes."
 - "What The Country Need To Know About The New Labor Secretary Nominee."
 - "A Power That Lets Police Take Property For Themselves – Even When There's No Crime."
- Wall Street Journal.
 - "The Bully Trumpet."
 - "Trump's Labor Mulligan."
 - "Supreme Court Disclosure Test."

Big Picture

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Washington Schedule

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Last Laughs

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DOI In The News

Trump Signs Measure Ending Stream Protection Rule.

[Bloomberg News](#) (2/16, Natter) reports President Trump signed

legislation repealing the Stream Protection Rule under the Congressional Review Act. "In eliminating this rule I am continuing to keep my promise to the American people to get rid of wasteful regulations," Trump said at a White House signing ceremony. [The Hill](#) (2/16, Henry) reports the rule "is among the most controversial environment regulations" of the Obama administration and the coal industry "said it would be costly to implement and lead to job losses across the sector."

The [Washington Times](#) (2/16, Wolfgang) reports that "the legislation has at least some bipartisan support." West Virginia Democrat Sen. Joe Manchin was "present at Thursday's event and has urged Mr. Trump to roll back Obama-era regulations on the coal industry."

Meanwhile, a brief report on the [CBS Evening News](#) (2/16, story 9, 0:20, Pelley) said that a Congressional Research Service report "said the regulation would have created as many jobs as it eliminated." [CNBC](#) (2/16) reports that the CRS "found the rule would reduce coal-related employment by an average of 260 jobs a year." CRS also "projected the rule would generate an average of 250 jobs a year," and "some of the new jobs would be in high-skilled areas like engineering and biology."

Additional coverage was provided by [CBS News](#) (2/16), [Fox News](#) (2/16), the [Wheeling \(WV\) Intelligencer](#) (2/17), the [Clarksburg \(WV\) Exponent-Telegram](#) (2/16, Ali), the [Bluefield \(WV\) Daily Telegraph](#) (2/16, Jordan), the [Cleveland \(OH\) Plain Dealer](#) (2/16, Koff), the [Pittsburgh \(PA\) Post-Gazette](#) (2/17, Eilperin), the [Johnstown \(PA\) Tribune-Democrat](#) (2/16, Griffith), the [Gephardt Daily](#) (2/17), [West Virginia MetroNews](#) (2/16, Wiles), [West Virginia Public Broadcasting](#) (2/16, Board), the [Daily Caller](#) (2/16, Bastasch), the [Daily Caller](#) (2/16, Picket), [UPI](#) (2/16, Feller), [National Geographic](#) (2/16, Profeta), [Mining](#) (2/16, McCrae), [Western Journalism](#) (2/16, Powe), [Libertarian Republic](#) (2/16, Bastasch), [Law360](#) (2/16, Goldberg), [RT](#) (2/16), [WTOV-TV Steubenville \(OH\)](#) Steubenville, OH (2/16, Warner), [KGWN-TV Cheyenne \(WY\)](#) Cheyenne, WY (2/16), [WCBC-AM Cumberland \(MD\)](#) Cumberland, MD (2/16), [WDTV-TV Bridgeport \(WV\)](#) Bridgeport, WV (2/16), [WAJR-AM Morgantown \(WV\)](#) Morgantown, WV (2/16, Wiles), and [WAJR-AM Morgantown \(WV\)](#) Morgantown, WV (2/16, Wiles).

Zinke Expected To Undertake "Major Reorganization" At Interior.

[Politico Morning Energy](#) (2/16) reports that House Natural Resources Chairman Rob Bishop "told reporters Wednesday he won't roll out his legislative agenda until Trump's administration is in place." He said, "You need the entire cast in there. I'm not going to wait forever for the administration to get up and running before we start moving, but I want to give them a chance to be in place." Bishop added that "he'd like to give Interior nominee Ryan Zinke time to complete some 'major reorganization' at the department

that he said Zinke understands needs to happen.”

Zinke Not Participating In Recent House Votes.

The [Missoula \(MT\) Independent](#) (2/16) reports that as Interior nominee Ryan Zinke awaits for his confirmation vote, “Montana’s sole voice in the House of Representatives appears to have gone AWOL.” The article notes that “according to congressional records, Zinke hasn’t cast a single vote since Jan. 5.” Moreover, “his private and official Twitter accounts have gone virtually dormant, though his Facebook page has been sporadically updated with links to news stories and a photo of his wife, Lola, at President Trump’s Jan. 20 inauguration.” The article also points out that the House has “been taking up issues of interest to Montanans.”

[KECI-TV](#) Missoula, MT (2/16, Giottonini). reports that one reason could be that “Zinke wants to enter his new role as Secretary of Interior with less of a political footprint.” Political observers don’t expect to “see change until the fate of Zinke’s cabinet post is decided.”

Zinke’s Help Sought With Suction Dredge Mining In California.

The [Siskiyou \(CA\) Daily News](#) (2/16, Jester) reports that the Mining Act of 1872 was “brought up at the Siskiyou County Board of Supervisors meeting on Tuesday during discussion of a 2009 ban on suction dredge mining, a matter which miners in Siskiyou County see as negatively impacting their livelihood.” The board of supervisors has decided to send a letter to Interior nominee Ryan Zinke “which discusses the issues surrounding the ban on suction dredging.” According to the article, “the letter seeks to familiarize Zinke with suction dredge mining and how it affects the ‘rural, blue collar citizens of Siskiyou County,’ should he ultimately be confirmed for the interior position and thus be able to explore the matter.”

Outdoor Retailer Show Leaving Utah Over Public Lands Stance.

The [AP](#) (2/16, McCombs) reports that “a lucrative outdoor trade show that’s been staged in Salt Lake City for two decades announced Thursday it will be leaving Utah over the latest disagreement with state leaders about their stance on public lands.” The Outdoor Retailer show “made the announcement just hours after a conference call intended to smooth discord between industry leaders and Gov. Gary Herbert ended with both sides disappointed.” The article notes that “industry leaders had previously threatened to leave Utah if Herbert didn’t stand down from his call for President Donald Trump to rescind the new Bears Ears National Monument.” Herbert “refused to grant them their request in the conference call, triggering the decision.”

Coverage by the AP was also picked up by the [Minneapolis \(MN\) Star Tribune](#) (2/16, McCombs), [Philly \(PA\)](#) (2/16, McCombs), the [Washington \(DC\) Post](#) (2/16, McCombs), and the [Daily Mail](#)

(2/16).

Additional coverage was provided by the [Denver \(CO\) Post](#) (2/16, Blevins), the [Pacific Standard](#) (2/16, Tobias), the [Men's Journal](#) (2/16, Trimble), and [KSL-TV Salt Lake City \(UT\)](#) Salt Lake City (2/16, Williams).

Utah Business Owners Oppose Grand Staircase-Escalante Resolution.

The [Salt Lake \(UT\) Tribune](#) (2/15, Maffly) reports that Garfield County commissioners have "hit the pause button on a proposed resolution targeting the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument after dozens of Boulder and Escalante business owners implored them to consider the monument's economic benefits before voting to drastically shrink it." Business operators claim that the monument "drives a thriving and diverse economy, contrary to claims by elected leaders that it has sunk the county into a 'state of emergency.'" Commissioners "agreed to hold a hearing March 13 before voting on whether to ask Congress to contract the Grand Staircase boundaries."

Bill Would Study Moving Oregon Public Land To State Control.

The [Salem \(OR\) Statesman Journal](#) (2/16, Urness) reports that "four Republican lawmakers want to study the idea of transferring Oregon's federal public lands to state control." House Bill 2365 would "create a task force to analyze the benefit and cost of an idea that has become a political lightning rod both nationally and locally." The bill's chief sponsor, Rep. Carl Wilson, "emphasized that his bill was only asking for a study," and "he also emphasized that neither he nor his bill intend to sell Oregon's public land into private ownership."

The [Bend \(OR\) Bulletin](#) (2/16, Hamway) reports that Rep. Gene Whisnant "withdrew his sponsorship" the bill. Whisnant "defended his support for the bill" on Thursday, "but announced that he will no longer be sponsoring it, citing a flurry of emails and calls from concerned citizens and conservation organizations."

Fight Over Public Lands Unite Sportsmen And Environmentalists.

[Reuters](#) (2/17, Volcovici, Knox) reports that sportsmen and environmentalists are uniting against efforts to transfer federal lands to state control. Both groups "fear" that doing so "could open them up to drilling and coal mining rather than recreation and preservation." The article notes that "recent funding data from the Foundation Center database, which aggregates information from tax filings, shows groups such as the Backcountry Hunters and Anglers and the Outdoor Alliance have accepted grants from big environmental and liberal foundations, including the Turner Foundation and the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation."

Eldean Bridge To Get Historical Marker.

The [Troy \(NY\) Daily News](#) (2/16, Fox) reports that the Miami County Commissioners have decided to accept a historical marker from the Interior Department for the Eldean covered bridge, which has been recognized as a National Historic Landmark. The Interior Department will “pay for the plaque, but it will be up to the county to have the plaque installed, County Engineer Paul Huelskamp said.”

Additional Coverage: Oregon Counties Sue Over Cascade-Siskiyou Expansion.

Additional coverage that 17 Oregon counties have filed a lawsuit the expansion of the Cascade-Siskiyou national monument was provided by the [Salem \(OR\) Capital Press](#) (2/16, Perkowski), the [Klamath Falls \(OR\) Herald And News](#) (2/16, Owens), and [Courthouse News](#) (2/16, Brown).

Additional Coverage: Hiring Freeze Raises Firefighting Concerns.

Additional coverage that Sen. Ron Wyden has raised “concerns about the impact a 90-day federal employee hiring freeze might have on the seasonal firefighting force” with the Interior Department was provided by [KAJO-AM](#) Grants Pass, OR (2/16, Marsh).

Op-Ed: Recreation Economy Depends Upon Protection Of Public Lands.

In an op-ed for the [Cortez \(CO\) Journal](#) (2/16, Wren), Diane Wren, the owner of Osprey Packs, writes that as Rep. Ryan Zinke is “being considered as our new interior Secretary in Washington, and as the Trump administration begins to review its own public lands policy, there are two things that are important for a new administration to take to heart: The vital role America’s public lands play in the \$646 billion national outdoor recreation economy, and the broad public support for the president’s historic ability to use the Antiquities Act to protect sensitive scientific and culturally significant lands in the future.” If confirmed, Wren hopes that Zinke will “listen to an American public that overwhelmingly supports protecting our public lands for the future.” Wren urges “the new administration to stand for what makes America, and Colorado, great — our shared public lands and the ability of the president and the Interior Department to protect them for future generations via the Antiquities Act.”

America’s Great Outdoors

National Park Service

National Parks Offering Free Admission On Presidents’ Day.

The [Washington Post](#) (2/16, Taylor) reports that the National Park Service is offering Free Entrance Day to celebrate Presidents’ Day.

Additional coverage was provided by the [Los Angeles Times](#) (2/16, Forgione), the [Arizona Republic](#) (2/16, Jespersen) and [KXRM-TV](#) Colorado Springs, CO (2/16, Case).

Sitka National Historical Park Wants To Restore Views Of 1804 Battlefield.

The [AP](#) (2/17) reports that Sitka National Historical Park is “looking to get the public’s support to move forward with a project to restore an area of the park that was the site of a battlefield more than 200 years ago.” The 1804 Tlingit-Russian battlefield “on a peninsula near the mouth of Indian River has since been overgrown with trees and shrubs.” The park is “now looking to clear out the brush to give visitors a better view of the water from the historic site.”

NPS Approves Back Half Of Brookhaven Park To Be Transferred To City.

The [Brookhaven \(GA\) Post](#) (2/15, Benton) reports that the National Park Service has “approved the back half of Brookhaven Park to be transferred to the City.” DeKalb County Commissioners “must now approve the changes to the deed.” According to the article, “if the County approves the transfer, Brookhaven expects to pay the same \$100 per acre for the back half of the 30-acre park that they paid for the rest of the parks in the City.”

New Fire Management Officer Named At Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore.

The [Times of Northwest Indiana](#) (2/16) reports that the National Park Service has chosen MaryEllen “Mel” Whitenack as the Fire Management Officer at Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore. Chief of Resource Management Daniel Plath said, “Mel has shown great leadership and done an outstanding job across the Midwest Region of the National Park Service to help parks develop fire programs. Mel brings with her years of fire management experience and proven team building skills, including the 2015 National Wildland Fire Leadership Challenge, where Indiana Dunes fire team received the runner-up award for all fire programs across the country.”

Man With Plan To Visit All National Parks To Stop At De Soto National Memorial Saturday.

The [Bradenton \(FL\) Herald](#) (2/16, Nealeigh) reports that Manatee Mikah Meyer is “on a mission: to see all the National Park Service sites in the country in honor of his father, and to encourage the LGBT community.” Meyer said will visit De Soto National Memorial on Saturday “as the next leg of his trip, stop No. 115.” According to the article, “his plan is to arrive at noon to watch a film about the history of DeSoto’s encounter with the indigenous people, then attend a ‘living history’ ranger demonstration.”

Skier Falls To Death In Grand Teton National Park.

The [AP](#) (2/16) reports that “a 26-year-old man has died after falling about 1,400 feet while skiing in Grand Teton National Park.” The National Park Service says John “Jack” Fields Jr. “fell Wednesday morning down a narrow, steep gully on the South Teton Mountain.”

Coverage by the AP was also picked up by [U.S. News & World Report](#) (2/16) and the [Spokane \(WA\) Spokesman-Review](#) (2/16).

Authorities Searching For Missing Man In Great Sand Dunes National Park.

The [Colorado Springs \(CO\) Gazette](#) (2/16, Mulder) reports that “authorities are searching for a 40-year-old man who went missing in the Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve in southern Colorado.” Park staff began searching for Bryan Skilinski on Wednesday afternoon, “but on Thursday morning, the primary search began,” Acting Superintendent Scott Stonum said. According to the article, “about 30 people will continue the search until Thursday evening, when they will debrief and plan for Friday, when additional resources are expected to join.”

Additional Coverage: NPS Approves New Boathouses On Georgetown Waterfront.

Additional coverage that the National Park Service has approved “a plan for the Georgetown Nonmotorized Boathouse Zone Development Plan and Environmental Assessment” was provided by the [Georgetowner](#) (2/16, Devaney).

Additional Coverage: “Firefall” Optical Illusion Returns To Yosemite National Park.

Additional coverage of the “firefall” attraction at Yosemite National Park was provided by [Fox News](#) (2/16), the [Los Angeles \(CA\) Times](#) (2/16, Rocha), [Time Out](#) (2/16, Martin), and [KPRC-TV Houston \(TX\) Houston](#) (2/16, Hidalgo).

Fish and Wildlife Service

House Republicans Move To Overturn Obama Limits on Alaska Hunting, Trapping.

The [Washington Post](#) (2/16, Eilperin) reports that House Republicans on Thursday passed a bill that would nullify regulations affecting hunting activities on national wildlife refuges in Alaska. The [AP](#) (2/16) reports that the Fish and Wildlife Service “said last year the rule will help maintain sustainable populations of bears, wolves and coyotes on national wildlife refuges across Alaska.” But Rep. Don Young “says the rule undermines Alaska’s ability to manage fish and wildlife on refuge lands – one-fifth of its land mass.” He says the rule “destroys a cooperative relationship between Alaska and the federal government.”

Coverage by the AP was picked up by the [Fairbanks \(AK\) News-Miner](#) (2/16), [Philly \(PA\)](#) (2/16), [U.S. News & World Report](#)

(2/16), the [Washington \(DC\) Post](#) (2/16), the [Washington \(DC\) Times](#) (2/16), and the [Daily Mail](#) (2/16).

Additional coverage was provided by the [Alaska Dispatch News](#) (2/16, Martinson), the [Daily Caller](#) (2/16, Follett), the [Huffington Post](#) (2/15, Pacelle), [BuzzFeed](#) (2/16, Grandoni), and [AmmoLand](#) (2/16, Evans).

Obama-era Lead Ban Put On Hold.

[Outdoor News](#) (2/16, Weisberg) reports that “a recently issued federal order banning the use of lead bullets and fishing tackle on federal lands is currently on hold, according to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which cites the change of administration in Washington for the delay in implementation.” Former President Obama “issued the directive in his final days in the White House, but it now is under review, according to Fish and Wildlife Service spokesman Laury Parramore, who indicated that all national orders have the same status.” She said, “(The lead ban) has not been singled out. The new administration is evaluating the order in all its implications.”

Havasu National Wildlife Refuge To Close For Two Weeks For Aerial Hunt Of Wild Swine.

The [AP](#) (2/16) reports that the Havasu National Wildlife Refuge. will be “closed for two weeks starting Feb. 21 for an aerial hunt to eradicate hundreds of feral swine regarding as troublesome and dangerous.” The U.S. Fish and Wildlife” estimates there are 100 to 1,000 of the non-native pigs at the refuge.” Sen. John McCain “said the government should allow private hunters to shoot the hogs, but Mohave County Supervisor Buster Johnson said that’d delay the project.”

Coverage by the AP was also picked up by the [Albuquerque \(NM\) Journal](#) (2/16) and [U.S. News & World Report](#) (2/16).

Additional coverage was provided by the [Las Vegas \(NV\) Review-Journal](#) (2/16, Hawkins).

FWS Says Relic Leopard Frogs Don’t Warrant Federal Protection.

The [Payson \(AZ\) Roundup](#) (2/16) reports that “a frog species in Arizona and southern Nevada does not need federal protection under the Endangered Species Act, thanks to the multi-partner conservation efforts of the Arizona Game and Fish Department, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and other federal and state agencies that make up the Relict Leopard Frog Conservation Team.” The FWS has “determined that relict leopard frog populations are stable or increasing.” Jim DeVos, assistant director for Game and Fish’s Wildlife Management Division, said, “This shows that collaborative, on-the-ground efforts lead to conservation successes. By taking proactive measures that preclude the need for listing a species under the Endangered Species Act, we have much more flexibility in actively managing the species so it can ultimately thrive.”

FWS Seeks Input On 2017 Mexican Gray Wolf Plan.

The [Santa Fe New Mexican](#) (2/16, Moss) reports that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, "in the most aggressive recovery plan in recent years for the Mexican gray wolf, is proposing to release two packs of adult and young wolves in New Mexico this year, as well as place captive-born pups with wild litters." John Bradley, an agency spokesman, "said the agency intends to apply for a permit with the state in order to move forward with the releases."

Additional coverage was provided by the [AP](#) (2/17, Bryan).

FWS Released From Lawsuit Over Permit For Lynx Capture.

[Law360](#) (2/16, Lidgett) reports that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service was "released from a lawsuit Wednesday brought by environmental and animal welfare groups suing it for issuing the state of Maine a permit that allowed the accidental capture of a threatened lynx species, with a federal judge finding that the service had a rational basis to issue the permit."

Judge Hears Arguments In Lawsuit Filed Over Cabinet-Yaak Bears.

The [Missoulian \(MT\)](#) (2/16, Chaney) reports that "whether grizzly bear numbers in northwest Montana are stable, shrinking or growing, both sides of a lawsuit over their federal status agree there aren't enough of them." However, "lawyers for the Alliance for the Wild Rockies and the U.S. Government could not agree why the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service switched its recommendation from 'warranted but precluded' for more protection under the federal Endangered Species Act to a designation indicating the bear population was close to recovery." U.S. District Judge Dana Christensen heard their arguments in Missoula on Thursday. The two sides argued before U.S. District Judge Dana Christensen in Missoula on Thursday.

World's Oldest Seabird Hatches New Chick At Midway Atoll National Wildlife Refuge.

The [AP](#) (2/16) reports that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service said Thursday Wisdom, the "world's oldest known seabird," hatched a new chick at Midway Atoll National Wildlife Refuge last week. FWS project leader Bob Peyton "says Wisdom has returned to Midway for over six decades."

Coverage by the AP was also picked up by the [Bristol \(VA\) Herald Courier](#) (2/16), the [Minneapolis \(MN\) Star Tribune](#) (2/16), [Philly \(PA\)](#) (2/16), the [Tacoma \(WA\) News Tribune](#) (2/16), [U.S. News & World Report](#) (2/16), the [Washington \(DC\) Post](#) (2/16), the [Washington \(DC\) Times](#) (2/16), the [Daily Mail](#) (2/16), the [Japan Times](#) (2/17), the [Times of India](#) (2/17), and [WBOC-TV Salisbury \(MD\)](#) Salisbury, MD (2/16).

Bureau of Land Management

BLM Calls Wild Horse Slaughter Story “Fake News”.

The [Horse](#) (2/16, Raia) reports that the Bureau of Land Management has “labeled an article claiming the agency plans to slaughter more than 40,000 wild horses as fake news.” According to the article, “a Jan. 30 article published by the website Native Indigenous American alleges that the Department of the Interior voted Jan. 27 to slaughter 67% of the wild horses remaining in the United States.” In response, Tom Gorey, BLM senior public affairs specialist, said the article was “fake news.” He said, “The agency’s policy is to not sell or send wild horses or burros to slaughter and there has been no congressional direction to the contrary.”

US Geological Survey

USGS Says Southeast Texas Ground Has Dropped.

The [AP](#) Harlingen, TX (2/16) reports that the U.S. Geological Survey “says the extensive use of water pumped from underground in recent decades has caused the ground in Southeast Texas to drop in at least one location by nearly 4 feet.” The USGS “says in a report released Thursday that water use by cities and other customers has caused aquifers to drop dramatically in some places.”

Securing America’s Energy Future

Offshore Energy Development

Interior Urges High Court To Refuse Noble’s Well-Plug Row.

[Law360](#) (2/16, Powell) reports that the Interior Department has “pressed the U.S. Supreme Court to reject Noble Energy Inc.’s request to review a D.C. Circuit decision upholding the department’s order to plug and abandon an oil well off the coast of California.”

BSEE Inspects Hess’ Stampede Tension Leg Platform.

[Offshore Engineer](#) (2/15) reports that “Hess Corp.’s Stampede tension leg platform moved one step closer to production Wednesday following completion of an initial pre-production inspection of its topsides by the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE) at the Kiewit shipyard in Ingleside, Texas.” Amy Wilson, acting district manager of BSEE’s Houma District, said, “BSEE conducts these inspections because our role is to ensure that energy produced on the Outer Continental Shelf is done safely, responsibly and with the fewest impacts to the environment. Our engineers and inspectors spend three to four days verifying that all safety equipment, design specifications and submitted drawings comply with federal regulations.”

Hilcorp Natural Gas Pipeline Leaking Into Cook Inlet.

The [AP](#) (2/16, Joling) reports natural gas has been leaking for at least 10 days from an underwater natural gas pipeline owned by Hilcorp Alaska LLC into the Cook Inlet. Gas is bubbling from an 8-inch pipeline in 80 feet of water about four miles offshore, but floating ice has prevented divers from reaching the site. The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation and the federal PHMSA are investigating the leak. DEC spokeswoman Candice Bressler said, "We believe the risk to public health and safety is small. ... Environmental risk is less easy to quantify since a monitoring and assessment program is not yet in place." While there are few people in the area this time of year, there is the possibility for the leak to negatively affect beluga whales. The [Kenai \(AK\) Peninsula Clarion](#) (2/16) reports the damaged underwater pipeline is leaking between 210,000 and 310,000 cubic feet of natural gas per day into the water. Since spotting the leak, Hilcorp has reduced the pressure in the pipeline and shut down non-essential equipment on nearby platforms. The US Coast Guard said that "due to the current level of ice in lower Cook Inlet, natural gas may be accumulating under the ice and unable to be dissipate (sic) safely into the atmosphere."

Onshore Energy Development

Dakota Access Stakeholders Debate At House Panel Hearing.

[E&E Daily](#) (2/16, Bogardus) reports on "sharp exchanges" between Dakota Access pipeline developer Energy Transfer Partners and the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe during hearing of the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy this week. Issues raised at the hearing, including "what constitutes 'meaningful consultation,' pipeline safety, effects on drinking water, climate change and eminent domain," reaching beyond North Dakota and E&E reports "tribes have begun mobilizing to fight the Keystone XL pipeline in South Dakota, and landowners and environmental groups are pitted against gas pipelines up and down the East Coast." Both sides spoke of the need to "strike a balance" among supporting labor unions, creating jobs, building infrastructure, and protecting the environment, respecting landowners and tribes. Despite the pushback, "Trump's push to fast-track other critical infrastructure projects has cemented an alliance between unions and the GOP."

Officials Deny Deadline Extension For Evacuation Order.

[Reuters](#) (2/16, Sylvester) reports federal officials and North Dakota Governor Doug Burgum refused to extend the February 22 deadline for activists living in camps to protest the Dakota Access pipeline. Activists met with officials from the US Army Corps of Engineers, the governor, and the state Department of Transportation to ask for more time to remove their belongings and waste from the camps. Pipeline opponents fear new conflicts if the Army crews are accompanied by police. Chase Iron Eyes said, "It's completely

impossible to remove everything down there in that short of a time frame. ... The people aren't opposed to the help of the Army Corps, but it's got to be without the presence of militarized law enforcement."

[Fuel Fix \(TX\)](#) (2/16) reports Energy Transfer Partners completed \$2 billion in stake sales in the Dakota Access pipeline. ETP sold a 27.6 percent stake to Enbridge and a 9.2 percent stake to Marathon Petroleum. Phillips 66 maintains its 25 percent stake, while Energy Transfer has a controlling ownership of 38.25 percent. The partial sale had been delayed for months after regulatory setbacks.

House Hearing Gets Heated Over Dakota Access Pipeline. [E&E Publishing](#) (2/16) reports that the House hearing on energy infrastructure became heated as the Standing Rock Sioux tribe and Energy Transfer Partners testified on the Dakota Access pipeline. Republican Rep. Markwayne Mullin of Oklahoma pointed to his Cherokee heritage in questions targeted at the Chad Harrison of the tribal council. Mullin said he has an easement in his own backyard that he was happy to grant because it was good for the country. He said, "What's good for your backyard is what's good for the country; it's going to create jobs in your backyard, too." California Democratic Rep. Raul Ruiz cut short Mullin's questioning by launching an attack on the idea the tribe had waived its right to oppose the project. He said, "I'm so tired of the federal government not respecting the meaningful consultation. ... Notification is not meaningful consultation."

Op-ed: Indian Wars Have Not Ended. Chase Iron Eyes writes in the Pundits Blog for [The Hill](#) (2/16, Eyes) saying the current conflict over the Dakota Access pipeline is reminiscent of previous fights between the federal government and Native American tribes. The pipeline has escalated into a new battle representing the intersection of protection human, civil and indigenous rights, respecting the Constitution and safeguarding the earth. Iron Eyes goes on to compare the current announcement that the Army will remove everything starting on February 23 to when the US military promised to subdue all Lakota who did not comply with orders to return to their reservation in 1875. He says, "The Indian Wars seem never to have ended."

Navajo Nation Seeks Trumps Help To Keep Arizona Coal Plant Open.

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/16, Harder, Gold, Puko) reports that the decision earlier this week to close the Navajo Generating Station in Arizona could pose a challenge to President Trump's promise to help the coal industry. Russell Begaye, the president of the Navajo Nation, says his tribe opposes the plant's closure and the loss of 800 jobs and he is calling on Trump for concessions akin to what Carrier Corp. got for keeping jobs at a factory in Indiana. Begaye said he has been in continual contact with White House officials since the inauguration, including three or four times in the last

week. "We are going to seek a solution based on what we feel needs to be done," Mr. Begaye said. "Tax breaks, subsidies, a real strong verbiage from the White House, from President Trump himself."

Additional coverage that the Navajo Generating Station may shut down after 2019 was provided by the [Arizona Republic](#) (2/16, Randazzo), the [Cortez \(CO\) Journal](#) (2/14, Thompson), and the [Arizona Capitol Times](#) (2/16, Hummel).

Most BLM Auctions Are Now Held Online Over Activist Concerns.

[Bloomberg News](#) (2/16, Frazier) reports that because the Bureau of Land Management had to with climate activists during its in-person auctions for leasing rights for drilling on federal land, it started moving its auctions online. This year, only two of the BLM's 26 auctions will be held in person. The rest have been contracted to EnergyNet, a private company out of Texas that runs the country's largest auction site for oil and gas properties. The BLM gave EnergyNet a five-year exclusive to manage online auctions, and the company has since made deals with state agencies for the same purpose. Overall sales on the platform rose to \$745 million, and while the site filters out most protesters, CEO William Britain is worried about activists. Registered lessees must be able to prove that they are professionals engaged in oil, gas or mineral extraction. However, critics of the online auctions say it is an effort to take sales out of the public spotlight.

TransCanada Files Keystone XL Pipeline Application For Nebraska Route.

[Reuters](#) (2/16, Williams, Gopinath) reports TransCanada Corp filed an application Thursday with the Nebraska Public Service Commission to route its Keystone XL pipeline through the Midwestern state. The company says it expects the process to conclude this year, allowing the \$8 billion project to move forward.

BLM Posts Oil, Gas Parcels For June Lease.

The [Riverton \(WY\) Ranger](#) (2/16) reports that "the Bureau of Land Management's Wyoming office has posted its proposed list of parcels for the quarterly competitive oil and gas lease sale scheduled for June 22." According to the article, "the posted list, which identifies 26 parcels totaling 31,924.77 acres, initiates a 30-day public protest period. The protest period ends at 4:00 p.m. on March 3."

February Lease Sale Generated \$129.3 Million.

The [Riverton \(WY\) Ranger](#) (2/16) reports that the Bureau of Land Management "generated \$129.3 million for leasing rights on parcels offered at the BLM's quarterly federal oil and gas lease auction on Feb. 7 in Cheyenne." The BLM "sold 99 percent of the 184,792 acres that were offered."

Additional Coverage Of Possible Shutdown Of Navajo Generating Station.

Additional coverage that the Navajo Generating Station may shut down after 2019 was provided by the [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/16, Harder, Gold, Puko), the [Arizona Republic](#) (2/16, Randazzo), the [Cortez \(CO\) Journal](#) (2/14, Thompson), and the [Arizona Capitol Times](#) (2/16, Hummel).

Renewable Energy

Court Reject Anglers' Request To Halt New York Wind Farm Lease.

[Law360](#) (2/16, Phillis) reports that "a D.C. federal court on Wednesday refused to block a \$43 million wind energy lease for an area off the coast of New York, deciding the deal would not cause sufficient harm to a coalition of fishing groups and municipalities that argues the project poses a grave economic threat." U.S. District Judge Tanya S. Chutkan "declined a request from the Fisheries Survival Fund and other groups to enjoin the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management from executing the lease sale to Statoil Wind US LLC."

Additional coverage was provided by the [Workboat](#) (2/16, Moore).

Empowering Native American Communities

House Subcommittee Told Oversight Of BIA, BIE Needed.

[Courthouse News](#) (2/16, Buchman) reports that members of the House Subcommittee on the Interior, Energy and Environment on Wednesday heard testimony "on the woeful state of schools on tribal lands and the disconnect with the federal government many said has exacerbated the problems." According to the article, "at the heart of the problems, the subcommittee was told, is a woeful lack of communication between tribes and the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Bureau of Indian Education." Mary Kendall, deputy inspector general at the Interior department, "said many of the bureaus' problems stem from an inability to distribute funds to tribes and use resources effectively." Kendall said, "The Office of the Inspector General has no programmatic authority to make that happen. Additional oversight of BIA and BIE by [Congress] would go a long way. Serious action by new leadership at the Office of Indian Affairs would help."

NCAI President Says Native American Schools Need \$388 Million To Be Modernized.

[Sputnik News](#) (2/17) reports that "schools for Native Americans in the United States require at least \$388 million to be effectively

modernized,” National Congress of American Indians President Brian Cladoosby said. He said, “President Donald Trump had indicated that he wants a big infrastructure spending bill. If you based it on need, the one’s that need it the most in the United States, the Native Americans by far would be able to show that they have the highest need for infrastructure in their communities.”

Additional Coverage: Little Shell Moves Closer To Federal Recognition.

Additional coverage that the Senate Indian Affairs Committee “recently voted unanimously in favor on a recognition bill that also could give the Little Shell 200 acres of land in central Montana if passed by the full U.S. Congress” was provided by the [Char-Koosta News](#) (2/16).

Office Of Insular Affairs

Editorial: Trump’s Tough immigration Stance Could Impact Guam.

In an editorial, the [Guam Daily Post](#) (2/16) says that President Trump’s tough immigration stance “could help the government of Guam cope with the cost of public services to regional immigrants who aren’t economically able to stand on their own feet.” It notes that “has had a dramatic increase in the number of regional immigrants.” Gov. Eddie Calvo has, “in the past, complained to the U.S. Department of the Interior – including during an inter-agency conference in Washington, D.C. – that many of these immigrants from the FSM come to Guam without the skills to hold jobs, the ability to support themselves economically while they don’t have jobs, and that they end up taxing the island’s already strained public health-care system.” It concludes that “if Trump prevails, Guam could become a very different community a year, or a few years from now, if he sends all the immigrants back who can’t financially sustain themselves.”

Tackling America’s Water Challenges

BOR Monitoring Arrival Of North California Storms.

The [Sacramento \(CA\) Bee](#) (2/15, GARRISON, LINDELOF) reports that “three storm systems are headed for the Sacramento region, starting Thursday and continuing into next week, according to the National Weather Service.” However, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation officials “do not believe these storms will force a similar rush of water into Folsom Lake.” BOR spokesman Todd Plain said, “We are monitoring current conditions as always, but we are expecting a colder storm system with lower snow levels, and inflows into Folsom are not expected to dramatically increase.”

BOR Expects Lake Berryessa's Glory Hole To Spill Over.

The [San Francisco Chronicle](#) (2/16, Graff) reports that "the last time" Lake Berryessa's Glory Hole "spilled over was 10 years ago in 2006, and the Bureau of Reclamation thinks it could happen again soon." Sarah McBride, a public affairs specialist with the BOR, said, "A rough estimate is we expect it might start spilling tomorrow, Friday, or this weekend."

Additional coverage was provided by the [Napa Valley \(CA\) Register](#) (2/16) and the [Sacramento \(CA\) Bee](#) (2/16, Opsahl).

BOR Says Sacramento River Flood Maps A Secret.

The [Redding \(CA\) Record-Searchlight](#) (2/16, Arthur) reports that a homeowner who worried that "his home could be flooded" if the Sacramento River continued to rise asked U.S. Bureau of Reclamation "officials if he could get copies of maps showing the river elevations corresponding with dam releases." However, bureau officials told Greg Boehle "they don't make them available to the public." Don Bader, the bureau's area manager, "said they aren't even available through a Freedom of Information Act request."

Top National News

Media Analyses: Trump's Performance At News Conference Unseemly, Unprecedented.

Media coverage characterizes President Trump's Thursday [press conference](#) as an "angry," "defensive," "rambling" "spectacle" that was unprecedented in modern-day politics. The overwhelmingly negative reporting takes issue with Trump's criticism of the media, and provides little coverage of Trump's recap of the early days of his Administration and stated successes. However, analysts also predicted Trump's return to his campaign-style interaction with the press was likely to play well with his supporters. [NBC Nightly News](#) (2/16, lead story, 5:30, Holt), for example, reported in its lead story that the left has written about the press conference as a "meltdown," while the right has "heralded" it as "the trashing of the media in an epic news conference." At any rate, NBC added, people from all political viewpoints likely agree that it "was pretty much unlike anything we've heard from behind a presidential podium." Indicative of the overall tenor of much of the coverage, [USA Today](#) (2/16, Wolf) refers to "one of the wildest presidential press conferences on record" – one that included "a rambling, defensive and at times angry performance by the leader of the free world." During the "spectacle for the ages," USA Today adds, Trump "lashed out at the media, Hillary Clinton, the intelligence community, judges and Democrats – among many others."

[Politico](#) (2/16, Dawsey) says that "after stewing in anger during four rocky weeks" as President, the press conference "appeared to be a cathartic moment" for Trump, who aides say

"has found running the government harder than expected." However, Politico says Trump "seemed to be in his element" on Thursday. Trump, according to the [AP](#) (2/16, Lemire), "bullied reporters, dismissed facts and then cracked a few caustic jokes." The AP says that "combination" made Trump "irresistible cable TV fodder" during the campaign. [Bloomberg Politics](#) (2/16, Sink) says Trump "appeared to satisfy his itch to duke it out with a press corps he feels has treated him unfairly since his inauguration." Bloomberg adds that Trump's supporters "no doubt ate it up" and possibly saw that the President "seemed to enjoy his banter with reporters, so much so that he could barely pry himself away from the cameras." Bloomberg quotes Trump as saying that he is "actually having a very good time." Trump added, "Don't forget, that's the way I won. Remember, I used to give you a news conference every time I made a speech? Which was like every day." [Reuters](#) (2/16, Holland) similarly reports the President's "message" during the press conference "appeared aimed at the same voters who elected him" and "feel Washington has left them behind and who like his image as an outsider trying to shake up the establishment."

The [Washington Times](#) (2/16, Miller, Boyer) reports Trump said the "level of dishonest" in the media "is out of control" as news organizations are siding with special interests rather than average Americans. The media, Trump said, is "trying to attack our administration because they know we are following through on pledges that we made, and they're not happy about it." The [New York Post](#) (2/16, Halper), with a front page that the [Drudge Report](#) shows as having a picture of Trump dressed as a circus ringmaster with the headline "Wildest Show On Earth" – says Trump indicated he was using the press conference to take his message "straight to the people." The [Huffington Post](#) (2/16, Wilkie) reports that Trump said this was necessary because "many of our nation's reporters and folks will not tell you the truth and will not treat the wonderful people of our country with the respect they deserve." Trump added that "much of the media" based in the District of Columbia, New York, and Los Angeles "in particular" do not speak for average Americans, "but for the special interests and for those profiting off a very, very obviously broken system." However, the [New York Times](#) (2/16, Baker) reports that despite his criticism of the media, Trump at "one point plaintively pleaded for understanding." Trump said "the tone" of cable news commentary about him "is such hatred," adding, "I'm really not a bad person."

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/16) editorializes that Trump provided a clear and coherent message that was far from a bad performance. The [New York Times](#) (2/16) editorializes that Trump "needed the press to play the punching bag that so delighted his political base," while Chris Cillizza says in a [Washington Post](#) (2/16) analysis that Trump "understands" that the media "represent everything" his supporters "dislike about American society." Cillizza indicates that Trump's supporters view the media as made up of "Ivy-League-educated coastal elites who look down their noses at

the average person, dismissing them and their views as stupid and ill-informed." In a [Washington Times](#) (2/16) column, Charles Hunt says Trump "is an agent of total disruption, bordering on chaos – everything American voters would like to see set upon Washington." Hunt adds that Trump – who is not "a politician," is not "polished by public relations experts," and "doesn't always speak with complete precision" – "always gets his point across." Trump, Hunt continues, "wants to shake things up" and Americans "stand behind him." On [Fox News' Hannity](#) (2/16), Sean Hannity called Trump's press conference "a historic beatdown of the alt-left propagandist media and they had it coming. ... It is very refreshing to see a commander in chief who will fight back against all the dishonesty, all the smears, and set the record straight with you, the American people." The hashtag [#TrumpPressConference](#) was trending on Twitter throughout the day Thursday and Thursday night. Tweets were largely – but not universally – negative toward Trump.

Meanwhile, a [New York Times](#) (2/16, Shear, Haberman, Thrusch) analysis says it is "unlikely" that Trump's press conference "will divert much long-term attention from questions" that his Administration has faced. Chuck Todd said on [NBC Nightly News](#) (2/16, story 2, 1:10, Holt) that while the press conference likely played well with Trump's base, it "did nothing to somehow cause" concerned lawmakers "to be less uneasy." Howard Kurtz said on [Fox News Special Report](#) (2/16) that "the other news he made today was drowned out by his assault on the media which doesn't help him pass his legislative agenda, the thing that would actually ensure he gets more positive press." However, Chris Wallace said on [Fox News' O'Reilly Factor](#) (2/16) that "this was a determined effort by this President, who is by far the best spokesman in his administration, for his administration, to seize the narrative." Wallace added, "This is a President saying, 'I am in charge, I know what I'm doing. I am not going to bend to Washington. Washington is going to have to get used to me.'"

The [Washington Post](#) (2/16, Parker, Wagner) reports that Trump "alternated between claims that he had 'inherited a mess' and the assertion that his fledgling administration 'is running like a fine-tuned machine.'" The Post adds that Trump "seemed to acknowledge the widespread reports of turbulence and upheaval emanating out of his West Wing." Trump said, according to [The Hill](#) (2/16, Fabian), "I turn on the TV, open the newspapers and I see stories of chaos. Chaos. Yet it is the exact opposite." The [CBS Evening News](#) (2/16, lead story, 4:15, Pelley) showed Trump adding, "This administration is running like a fine-tuned machine." The [Los Angeles Times](#) (2/16, Bierman, Memoli, Lauter) reports that Trump "countered that all of his early setbacks were the fault of others, the product of 'fake news' reporting or both." Trump said, "I inherited a mess," adding, "It's a mess at home and abroad."

[McClatchy](#) (2/16, Kumar, Ordoñez) reports that Trump "boasted of his successes despite a series of setbacks" – including

an appellate court ruling of his immigration executive order, the resignation of former National Security Adviser Flynn, the withdrawal of former Labor Secretary nominee Andrew Puzder, and leaks from the White House and federal agencies. [Roll Call](#) (2/16, Bennett) says Trump “hammered Democrats at several points, saying ‘the only thing they can do is delay because they screwed things up royally.’” According to Roll Call, Trump “used the criticism as a way to pivot to a list of first-month actions he said he took to reverse Democratic policies” and uphold “a promise I made to the American people.” The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/16, Lee, Paletta) quotes Trump as saying, “There has never been a presidency that’s done so much in such a short period of time” and “we have not even started the big work yet.” Jonathan Karl reported on [ABC World News Tonight](#) (2/16, lead story, 4:45, Muir) that Trump “pointed to the soaring stock market, his executive orders cutting regulations and the smooth roll-out of his Supreme Court nominee.”

Media Considers Truthfulness Of Trump’s Statements. A [New York Times](#) (2/16, Fandos) analysis says that while Trump accused the media of dishonesty, he “uttered several falsehoods of his own.” The Times highlights “some of the most important,” which include: winning the most electoral college votes since former President Ronald Reagan; the US Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit is “in chaos”; and that he inherited an economy that was a “mess.”

The [CBS Evening News](#) (2/16, story 6, 1:35, Pelley) reported that while Trump received 304 electoral votes, former President Obama won 365 and former President George H.W. Bush had 426. The [AP](#) (2/16, Boak, Woodward) reports that “economic stats and territorial losses of Islamic State insurgents don’t support [Trump’s] assertions about the problems handed to him on those fronts.” The AP says that “by almost every economic measure,” Obama “inherited a far worse situation” in 2009 than Trump took over. The AP adds that ISIS “began to lose ground before Trump took office.”

The [Washington Post](#) (2/16) reports that “there’s a fair amount of truth” to Trump’s statement that “drugs are becoming cheaper than candy bars.” Drugs, the Post says, “are often incredibly inexpensive, particularly per dose.” The Post cites a 2015 Baltimore Sun report that said “peewee” capsules of heroin sold for about six dollars per dose in West Baltimore and opiate painkillers “can sometimes be even cheaper” at “the per-pill level.” Moreover, another [Washington Post](#) (2/16) piece says that while “it is true that some drug in some quantity might be less expensive than some candy bar at some size,” the “cheapest drug is going to be more expensive than a relatively pricey candy bar.” The Post provides examples of drug prices that it identified by searching on Quora.

Cummings: Trump Made Up “Story About Me.” The [Washington Post](#) (2/16, Portnoy) reports that Rep. Elijah Cummings (D-MD)

denied Trump's claim that the lawmaker would not meet with the President despite repeated requests from the White House. Trump, during the press conference, "speculated that Cummings may have been dissuaded from coming to the White House for political reasons." Cummings said in a statement, "I have no idea why President Trump would make up a story about me like he did today. Of course, Senator Schumer never told me to skip a meeting with the President."

WPost Analysis: Trump's Comment To Black Reporter "Crystallized The Unusual Nature" Of Presidency. The [Washington Post](#) (2/16, Bump) reports "few moments crystallized the unusual nature" of Trump's Administration as "effectively as an exchange" with April Ryan of American Urban Radio Networks. When Ryan stood up to ask Trump if he would include the Congressional Black Caucus in discussions about urban policy, the Post says, Trump responded by asking the reporter if she "want[s] to set up the meeting." Trump added, "Are they friends of yours? Set up a meeting."

[ABC World News Tonight](#) 📺 (2/16, story 4, 1:50, Muir) reported Trump's response left "members of the Congressional Black Caucus in shock." Rep. Emanuel Cleaver (D-MO) said that Trump made an "assumption" that "because there was a black woman in the room," she "had a unique connection with the Congressional Black Caucus." Cummings said on [CNN's Situation Room](#) 📺 (2/16) that Trump likely "saw an African-American woman connected with the Congressional Black Caucus and said maybe they're friends." Cummings said that "every time [Trump] talks...about the inner city, he has negative things to say." Cummings added, "I wish he could walk into some of the areas that I live in and where people are doing extremely well, taking very good care of their families, and he needs to have a bigger picture of the African-American communities and our cities."

Durbin Says Press Conference Was "Hard To Follow." Senate Minority Whip Durbin said on [CNN's The Lead](#) 📺 (2/16) that Trump's press conference was "hard to follow. There were so many different things he said. It clearly was a spur-of-the-moment decision. And what I think frankly we should reflect on is we're dealing with some extremely serious questions." Durbin added, "The President would have been well-advised to sit down for five minutes with his legal counsel before that press conference and get a few things straight before he made these statements."

Media Analyses: Trump-CNN Conflict Reaches New Stage. The [New York Post](#) (2/16, Atkinson) reports that both Trump and CNN "took a blowtorch to the blowup" between the two sides during the press conference. The Post says Trump "made it personal" when he told White House correspondent Jim Acosta to "ask [CNN Worldwide President] Jeff Zucker how he got his job, OK?" The Post says "it was not immediately known what Trump meant." [Politico](#) (2/16, Weprin) says Zucker on Thursday said that Trump's comments about CNN being fake news are a "badge of honor" and the

network's coverage of the Administration has increased employee morale.

Kushner Complained To Time Warner Executive About CNN Coverage. The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/16, Hagey, Paletta) reports senior adviser Jared Kushner met with Time Warner executive Gary Ginsberg in recent weeks and expressed the Administration's concerns about CNN's coverage, according to a White House official. Kushner, the Journal says, complained about unfair and slanted coverage against the President.

Fox News' Smith Blasts Trump's Performance. [USA Today](#) (2/16, Cummings) reports Fox News anchor Shepard Smith "is under fire for criticizing" Trump's interaction with Acosta and refusing to answer questions about ties to Russia. Smith on Thursday said that Trump "keeps repeating ridiculous, throwaway lines that are not true at all and sort of avoiding this issue of Russia as if we're some kind of fools for asking the question." Smith added, "We have a right to know. You call us fake news and put us down like children for asking questions on behalf of the American people."

O'Reilly: Trump Did Not Understand "How Extensive The Problem Really Is." In his "Talking Points Memo" segment on [Fox News' O'Reilly Factor](#) (2/16), Bill O'Reilly said, "When President Trump first mentioned draining the swamp in Washington, I don't believe he understood how extensive the problem really is. For eight years of President Obama, there are many people working in the federal government who like the former President and who despise Mr. Trump. Eliminating all of them and stopping the leaks, pretty much be impossible. Also don't trying to get fairness out of the anti-Trump press is impossible as well. So, the Trump Administration has its hands full."

Powers: Trump "Probably A Little Frustrated" With Spicer. Kirsten Powers said on [CNN's Anderson Cooper 360](#) (2/16) that from Trump's perspective, the press conference "shows he's probably a little frustrated with Sean Spicer," and "this is how he would like press conferences to be handled."

Podesta: Trump Is Trying To "Disorient Public Perceptions" Of News. In a [Washington Post](#) (2/16) op-ed, former Hillary Clinton campaign chairman John Podesta says Trump's "fake-news pivot isn't subtle" as he "benefited from fake news stories during the campaign" and has President "has constantly used the epithet against mainstream media outlets that dare criticize him." Trump, according to Podesta, "is deploying a strategy, used by autocrats, designed to completely disorient public perception." Podesta says that Trump "seeks nothing less than to undermine the public's belief that any news can be trusted" and that "any news is true."

NYTimes Criticizes Trump's Answer To Anti-Semitism Question. A [New York Times](#) (2/16) editorial criticizes the President's answer to a question about the rise of anti-Semitic incidents in the US, saying that "as is so often the case, he began with a focus on himself and skirted the issue." He then "once again...exploited the

Jewish members of his family to bolster his credibility," before deriding the question as "very insulting."

Trump Says He Has Directed Sessions To Investigate Leaks.

[USA Today](#) (2/16, Johnson) reports that President Trump said "in the midst of a meandering and combative White House news conference" that he has directed Attorney General Sessions "to investigate alleged leaks of classified information," which "immediately revived concerns previously voiced by Democratic lawmakers that Sessions could not assert his independence as the nation's chief law enforcement officer." Senate Minority Leader Schumer has called on Sessions to recuse himself, and Senate Judiciary Committee ranking Democrat Dianne Feinstein "asked that Sessions limit contacts between the White House and the Justice Department." The [New York Times](#) (2/16, Savage, Lichtblau) writes that while "no law forbids a president from making a criminal referral to the Justice Department," it is "unusual for a president to direct the agency to open a criminal investigation into his perceived opponents or to talk publicly about having done so."

[ABC World News Tonight](#) 📺 (2/16, story 2, 2:25, Muir) reported that during his news conference, Trump "defend[ed] the national security adviser he just fired." ABC's Pierre Thomas: "Justice Department attorneys are intensely reviewing why former National Security Advisor Michael Flynn made misleading statements to the White House about his conversation with Russia's ambassador to the US and whether he broke any laws in the process. ... Today, President Trump continued to praise the man he fired." Trump: "Mike Flynn is a fine person, and I asked for his resignation. He respectfully gave it." On the [CBS Evening News](#) 📺 (2/16, story 5, 2:25, Pelley), John Dickerson said, "The Michael Flynn episode is about what penalty there is for not telling the truth in the Trump Administration. And today we got about the fourth explanation from the President on what his relationship was with Michael Flynn."

On the [CBS Evening News](#) 📺 (2/16, story 2, 2:35, Pelley), Jeff Pegues reported that Trump "was asked by three reporters if any of his campaign staffers were in regular contact with Russian operatives during the election. He denied any connections to the Kremlin and dismissed the investigation." Trump: "Russia is a ruse. I have nothing to do with Russia. Haven't made a phone call to Russia in years."

Shepard Smith said on [Fox News' Shepard Smith Reporting](#) 📺 (2/16), "It's crazy what we're watching every day. It's absolutely crazy. [Trump] keeps repeating ridiculous throw-away lines that are not true at all and sort of avoiding this issue of Russia as if we're some kind of fools for asking the question. Really? Your opposition was hacked, and the Russians were responsible for it, and your people were on the phone with Russia the same day it's happening, and we're fools asking questions? No, sir, we're not fools for asking the question, and we demand to know the answer to this question."

You owe this to the American people.”

Congressmen Say Trump “Fumed” About Leaks In Meeting.

[Politico](#) (2/16, Cheney, Bade) reports that the President “fumed about intelligence community leaks during a meeting at the White House with his earliest supporters in Congress,” according to Reps. Lou Barletta (R-PA) and Mike Kelly (R-PA), who were among the 11 lawmakers at the meeting. Kelly said Trump “vented” that Flynn’s departure “is ‘not the issue’ compared to the leaks that made those revelations public,” and Barletta said Trump “‘talked a lot’ about the leaks.”

Officials Say Flynn Denied Discussing Sanctions With Russian Ambassador In FBI Interview. The [Washington Post](#) (2/16, A1, Horwitz, Entous) reports that Flynn denied to FBI agents in a January 24 interview “that he had discussed U.S. sanctions against Russia” with Ambassador Sergey Kislyak before President Trump took office, “contradicting the contents of intercepted communications collected by intelligence agencies,” according to current and former officials. The Post says Flynn may be “in legal jeopardy” since “lying to the FBI is a felony offense.”

Durbin “Skeptical” Whether Senate Intelligence Committee Can Conduct Adequate Investigation. Senate Minority Whip Durbin was asked on [CNN’s The Lead](#) 🗣️ (2/16) if he believes the Senate Intelligence Committee can do an adequate investigation of Trump campaign aides’ contacts with Russia. Durbin said, “I’m skeptical. I trust Mark Warner completely, but he has to work with the Republican senator who may not be as enthusiastic about this. ... When there is a report coming out of the Senate Intelligence Committee, trust me, it will be heavily censored and redacted and the only way to get that information declassified is with the permission of the White House.”

Nunes: Leakers “Probably” People From Obama Administration. The [Washington Times](#) (2/16, Sherfinski) reports that House Intelligence Chairman Devin Nunes said Wednesday evening that “most of the recent intel leaks are likely originating from people who worked in the Obama administration.” He said on Fox News’ Hannity, “It’s totally unacceptable for anyone within government to be doing this. I think most of this is probably from people who were in the old Administration, but there still could be some people that have burrowed in and are providing classified information to the media.”

Trump May Have Financier Lead Intelligence Agencies. The [Washington Post](#) (2/16, Wagner, Merle) reports Trump is considering having Stephen Feinberg, a financier and “longtime friend,” lead “a broad review of US intelligence agencies,” but said that “might not be necessary once his team is fully in place.” Trump said, “It’s something we may take advantage of, but I don’t think we’ll need that at all.” The President said the pending confirmation of ex-Sen. Dan Coats as director of national intelligence might eliminate the need for such a review.

Harward Turns Down Offer To Become NSA. [Reuters](#) (2/16,

Beech) reports that retired Vice Adm. Robert Harward has turned down Trump's offer to be named national security adviser. [USA Today](#) (2/16, Cummings) reports that Harward told the AP that he turned down the job for personal reasons, but CBS reported that Trump "insisted that Deputy National Security Adviser K.T. McFarland be allowed to stay on, and Harward refused to retain the former Fox News analyst and Flynn hire."

Jim Sciutto said on [CNN's Anderson Cooper 360](#) (2/16) that people close to Harward say "this was a difficult decision between duty to his country, to people he served under before," but "he sees a White House that is in chaos and that's not something that he wanted to be associated with." The [New York Times](#) (2/16, Davis, Schmitt) says White House officials "had scrambled to head off the refusal, asserting as late as Thursday evening" that Harward "was still in the running."

Max Boot of the Council on Foreign Relations [tweeted](#), "It's not just Harward. I hear other professionals are either fleeing NSC staff or refusing to join. Lots of vacancies. WH a total mess."

NYTimes Analysis: US Does Not Yet Have A "Deep State," But Is Heading That Way. The [New York Times](#) (2/16, Taub, Fisher) says in an analysis that the leaks are leading some to compare the US to countries "like Egypt, Turkey and Pakistan, where shadowy networks within government bureaucracies, often referred to as 'deep states,' undermine and coerce elected governments." Experts say the US is not yet "seeing the rise of its own deep state...but the echoes are real – and disturbing."

Time Analysis: White House Returns To "Reality-Show Ways" Amid "Chaos." Philip Elliott of [TIME](#) (2/16) looks "Inside Donald Trump's White House Chaos," writing that while Trump "mastered the art of disruption" as a presidential candidate, "disruption in government – the rulebreaker breaking the rules – turns out to be more costly." Facing crises and protests, "the White House has fallen back on its reality-show ways, distracted by the internecine drama of senior aides who spend their days mixing government business with jockeying for position and favor with the boss."

In her [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/16) column, Peggy Noonan pleads with Trump to bring in more conventional staff members to balance out his own unconventional style and that of much of his inner circle. However, in the [Washington Post](#) (2/16), contributing columnist Hugh Hewitt warns against hyperbole, writing that every Administration stumbles in its first days, and that "judgments about Trump's presidency based on his first month in the Oval Office are by definition premature."

Senate Judiciary Committee To Begin Gorsuch Hearings March 20.

The [Washington Post](#) (2/16, Sullivan) reports that the Senate Judiciary Committee announced Thursday that it will begin hearings on the nomination of Judge Neil Gorsuch to the Supreme Court on March 20. A [tweet](#) from the committee read, "Chairman

@ChuckGrassley: @SenJudiciary Committee to begin hearing on the nomination of Judge Neil Gorsuch for #SCOTUS on March 20th." The hearings "are expected to span several days and draw intense public scrutiny." The [New York Times](#) (2/16, Pérez-Peña) says Democrats are "angry that Republicans refused to allow President Barack Obama to fill the seat over the last 11 months of his presidency," and "have vowed tough questioning" of Gorsuch. While Gorsuch has "strong legal credentials, some Democrats are likely to oppose him, with many people on the left demanding that they push back against Mr. Trump in any way they can."

In an op-ed for [USA Today](#) (2/16), Senate Judiciary Chairman Charles Grassley criticizes Senate Democrats for "signal[ing] plans to block any nomination made by the newly-elected president even before he announced his nomination" after "criticizing Republicans for taking a principled position about a lame duck president that was advocated by Democrats for decades." Arguing that there should not be "one set of rules for Republicans and another set of rules for Democrats," Grassley writes, "We won't abide by such a double standard."

Editorial Wrap-Up

New York Times.

"For A Troubled President, The Media Is A Satisfying Target." The [New York Times](#) (2/16) editorializes that in his press conference, President Trump "needed the press to play the punching bag that so delighted his political base."

"Bring On The Special Prosecutor." The [New York Times](#) (2/17) editorializes that the Administration's "ties" to Moscow "clearly" should be investigated and only a special prosecutor could conduct an inquiry "fairly and completely." The Times says that while "it's never easy to conduct robust, independent investigations of the most powerful people in the world," the ability to do so "is one of the foundations of a functioning democracy."

"Plastic Bag Fees Make Sense, Just Not To Albany." A [New York Times](#) (2/17) editorial.

Washington Post.

"Trump Can Help Americans Trust Him By Releasing His Taxes." The [Washington Post](#) (2/16) editorializes that President Trump's "rambling news conference" on Thursday was consistent with his previous modus operandi. The public cannot trust the President's statement that "the whole Russian thing" is a "ruse" because of a lack of transparency, writes the Post. Trump's failure to release his tax returns despite promising he would do so is a significant impediment to gaining America's trust because the global nature of the business empire he handed down to his sons increases "the potential scale and scope of his international conflicts of interest." Without more complete disclosure and evidence to

back up claims, the public cannot fully trust its leader.

“What The Country Need To Know About The New Labor Secretary Nominee.” The [Washington Post](#) (2/16) says in an editorial that the Trump White House did “a spectacularly bad vetting job” with former Labor Secretary nominee Andrew Puzder, which “raises the question of whether the choice of [new nominee Alexander] Acosta holds more promise. On paper, his credentials are strong,” but his “confirmation hearing needs principally to be the forum at which we get a better sense of Trump policy toward the healing but still troubled labor market.”

“A Power That Lets Police Take Property For Themselves – Even When There’s No Crime.” The [Washington Post](#) (2/16) editorializes that President Trump last week “met with a group of sheriffs, who, as they groused about their critics, seem to have extracted a new policy position from a credulous and apparently ill-informed president.” The sheriffs “spoke about ‘civil asset forfeiture’ – a bizarre police power prone to abuse yet beloved by law enforcement,” and Trump “concluded that only ‘bad people’ would pressure them to change the practice.” The Post points out that “an ideologically diverse, bipartisan movement that includes many Trump supporters opposes civil asset forfeiture, because it allows police to seize property from Americans on shockingly flimsy legal grounds.” The Post notes that “a variety of states have passed or are considering reforms to their civil forfeiture system,” and some “have abolished it, stipulating that assets can be seized only from convicted criminals.”

Wall Street Journal.

“The Bully Trumpet.” The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/16) editorializes that in his press conference, President Trump provided a clear and coherent message that was far from a bad performance.

“Trump’s Labor Mulligan.” The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/16) says in an editorial that Labor Secretary-designate Alexander Acosta has a solid record that should win the support of even Senate liberals.

“Supreme Court Disclosure Test.” The [Wall Street Journal](#) (2/16) writes in an editorial that when the Supreme Court considers the Independence Institute’s appeal Friday it should find the McCain-Feingold Act unconstitutional. The Colorado free-market think tank’s pre-enforcement challenge maintains that the 2002 law’s provision requiring donor disclosure for issue-based advertisements goes against the First Amendment by imposing undue burdens on Americans who advocate for causes. If the court fails to act accordingly, federal campaign finance disclosure rules will affect more political speech.

Big Picture

Headlines From Today’s Front Pages.

Wall Street Journal:

[Trump Lets Loose Against Critics](#)

[Trump Administration Backs Off Talk Of Closer Russia Ties](#)

[With \\$15 Left In The Bank, A Baby Boomer Makes Peace With Less Fund's \\$600 Million Lost Week Captivates Traders](#)

New York Times:

['I Inherited A Mess,' Trump Says, Defending His Performance](#)

[In 77 Chaotic Minutes, Trump Defends 'Fine-Tuned Machine'](#)

[GOP's Grand Visions For Congress Now Look Like A Mirage](#)

[EPA Workers Try To Block Pruitt In Show Of Defiance](#)

[Fake News, Fake Ukrainians: How A Group Of Russians Tilted A Dutch Vote](#)

[Is 2-State Solution Dead? In Israel, A Debate Over What's Next](#)

Washington Post:

[Trump Travels Come At High Cost](#)

[Flynn TOLD FBI He Did Not Discuss Sanctions](#)

[Trump Defends Month In Office](#)

[Mistakes By DC Lab Force Retesting For Zika](#)

[The Trump Effect In Germany: A Resurgent Left](#)

Financial Times:

[US Officials Set Conditions On Russia Thaw](#)

[French Bond Trading Soars On Fear Of Populist Wave](#)

[Kim Jong Nam Assassination Hits Beijing Authority](#)

[Norway Plans Shake-up Of \\$900bn Oil Fund](#)

Washington Times:

[Trump Blasts 'Out Of Control' Media For Ignoring Early Successes](#)

[Feds Say Border Fence Has Been Cut 9,200 Times Since 2010](#)

[President Trump Orders Justice Probe Of Intel Leaks, Says Flynn Was 'Just Doing His Job'](#)

[Islamic Extremism Deadliest Ideology In U.S. For First Time In 30 Years](#)

[Post-9/11 Veterans Seek New Purpose By Joining Left-Wing Protest Movements](#)

[DNC Leaders Unhappy With Aggressive Tactics To Elect Ellison As Chairman](#)

Story Lineup From Last Night's Network News:

ABC: Trump News Conference; Flynn Investigation; Russian Military Aggression; Trump-Black Caucus; Trump-New Immigration Order; Immigrant Protest; Middle East Bombings; Foiled Synagogue Attack; Teenager Hikers Murdered; Severe Weather; Washington State Explosion; Stroller Recall; Phone Plans Competition; National Zoo Panda Farewell.

CBS: Trump News Conference; Trump-Russia Investigation; Trump-New Immigration Order; Presidential Orders; Flynn Controversy-Expert Opinion; Trump-Electoral Victory Comment; Immigrant Protest; Immigrant Taking Sanctuary; Trump-Coal Mine

Stream Order; Detroit Philanthropist Billionaire Dies.
NBC: Trump News Conference; News Conference-Congress Reaction; US Syria Deployment; Immigrant Protest; Wall Street Surge; Food Expiration Label Change; Kim Jung-Nam Assassination; Stroller Recall; Documentary Planet Earth Sequel.

Network TV At A Glance:

Trump News Conference – 14 minutes, 30 seconds
Trump-Russia Investigation – 5 minutes
Immigrant Protest – 4 minutes, 45 seconds
Trump-New Immigration Order – 30 seconds

Story Lineup From This Morning's Radio News Broadcasts:

ABC: National Security Advisor Pick Withdraws; Labor Secretary Nominee; Trump News Conference; Foiled Synagogue Attack; Bill Cosby Lawsuit; Airport Incident.

CBS: Trump News Conference; Cabinet Confirmation; Severe Weather-West Coast; Oroville Dam Situation; Severe Weather-East Coast; Flu Season; Airport Smugglers.

FOX: Trump News Conference; Tillerson-Russia Meeting; Police Violence Protest; Immigrant Protest.

NPR: Immigration Order-Legal Challenge; National Security Advisor Pick Withdraws; Defense Secretary-NATO Speech; Wall Street News.

Washington Schedule

Today's Events In Washington.

White House:

PRESIDENT TRUMP — Meets with Dennis Muilenburg, CEO of the Boeing Company; arrives in West Palm Beach, Florida.

VICE PRESIDENT PENCE — Arrive in Munich on Air Force Two for the weekend's Munich Security Conference.

US Senate: Congress breaks for Presidents Day recess – Congress breaks for Presidents Day District Work Period (aka State Work Period) * No votes in the House of Representatives today

US House: 10:00 AM Ahmadiyya Muslim Community USA annual 'Day on the Hill' – Ahmadiyya Muslim Community USA annual 'Day on the Hill', focusing on efforts to combat violent extremism, protect vulnerable religious minorities, empower American Muslims, and promote the 'True Islam' grassroots campaign to combat 'the perverse ideology of extremists and better protect national security'. Speakers include Democratic Reps. Jim McGovern and Pete Aguilar Location: Rm 121, Cannon House Office Bldg., Washington, DC www.ahmadiyya.us https://twitter.com/Islam_Press #MuslimAlly

Congress breaks for Presidents Day recess – Congress breaks for Presidents Day District Work Period (aka State Work Period) * No votes in the House of Representatives today

Other: No scheduled events

Last Laughs

Late Night Political Humor.

Jimmy Kimmel: "The President decided to hold an impromptu press conference, and it was a sight to see. It reminded me of something you'd see before a pay-per-view boxing event."

Jimmy Kimmel: "The tone of the press conference was like if your dad found a pack of cigarettes under your mattress. He was mad."

Jimmy Kimmel: "You know it's a bad press conference when assuming all black people know each other wasn't even the worst part of it."

Stephen Colbert: [Referring to President Trump's comment 'I inherited a mess.'] "No, you inherited a fortune. We elected a mess."

Stephen Colbert: "Oh, you're black, can you talk to the Congressional Black Caucus at your next meeting of the black club? You know what, forget it. I'll have Ben Carson do it. Sit down."

James Corden: "The big news out of Washington right now is the press conference Donald Trump held this morning. Did everyone see it? No? Lucky you, sir."

James Corden: "But Puzder withdrew his nomination after it became clear he would not get confirmed. When asked what he was going to do next, Puzder said, 'Please, drive around to the second window and we can talk there.'"

James Corden: "'The least anti-Semitic person.' The least. But here's the thing. Here's the guy [Trump] said it to. This guy. He's an orthodox Jewish reporter. I'm pretty sure he has met people who are less anti-Semitic than Donald Trump. You know, like at home or at his temple."

Trevor Noah: "I can't play the entire press conference. We only have 30 minutes and [Trump] spoke for, like, six days."

Trevor Noah: "That's the information you were given? If you can't trust your President to get the right information on a googlable fact, then can you really trust him with the harder stuff which, by the way, is everything else the President of the United States has to deal with."

Trevor Noah: "In his farewell address, President Obama urged us

to get engaged in politics and not just to seat back and check out of everything. Then he went kite surfing."

Jimmy Fallon: [Fallon Impersonating President Trump] "And yet we've made so much progress. In fact, if you ask any American, they'll say that I've managed to make the last four weeks feel like four years."

Jimmy Fallon: [Fallon Impersonating President Trump] "Look, I knew that [Flynn] knew that I knew, but he didn't know that I knew that he knew that I knew that he knew that I knew that he knew. So now you know."

Jimmy Fallon: "President Trump's press conference lasted for an hour and 15 minutes. Though an hour of that was just scanning the room for a reporter who wouldn't ask a tough question."

Seth Meyers: "President Trump today tweeted that the 'failing 'New York Times' must apologize for publishing leaks' from his administration, but at this point if they didn't publish White House leaks, the whole paper would just be the crosswords."

Seth Meyers: "Being a world leader sitting with Trump right now is like being a woman on a date with a guy and then his wife shows up screaming, 'Your kids want to know where you are.'"

Seth Meyers: [Referring to Trump's response on Russian aggression during his press conference] "That's your answer? We're talking about Russian military aggression, not a turkey sandwich at the deli. Not good. Very dry."

Seth Meyers: [Referring to Trump's response to an African-American reporter about the Congressional Black Caucus] "It's racist to assume all black people know each other. You don't know all orange people. Hey, Donald, can you set up a meeting with Snookie and the Lorax."

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From: Chambers, Micah
To: [Virginia Johnson](#); [Benjamin Keel](#); [Katharine Macgregor](#); [Cameron, Scott](#); [Magallanes, Downey](#)
Cc: [James Cason](#); [Domenech, Douglas](#)
Subject: RZ Docs
Date: Tuesday, February 21, 2017 10:13:59 AM
Attachments: [RZ - Committee Hearing Promises .pdf](#)
[RZ QFR Responses 1-17-17 SENR.pdf](#)
[RZ Record_ConservationSportsmen.pdf](#)
[RZ Record_EnergyMineralResources.pdf](#)
[RZ Record_Tribes.pdf](#)

All. I've attached the list of promises from his confirmation hearing along with a couple position papers and his QFR responses. Be glad to clarify any issues or questions as they come up if you'd find that helpful.

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Micah Chambers
Special Assistant / Acting Director
Office of Congressional & Legislative Affairs
Office of the Secretary of the Interior

PROMISES, PROMISES

Congressman Zinke's Opening Statement Promises

Overall Commitment

“When asked about what my goals might be, I would say there are three immediate tasks.

The **first** is to restore trust by working with rather than against local communities and states. I fully recognize that there is distrust, anger, and even hatred against some federal management policies. Being a listening advocate rather than a deaf adversary is a good start.

Second, is to prioritize the estimated 12.5 billion dollars in backlog of maintenance and repair in our National Parks. The President-elect is committed to a jobs and infrastructure bill, and I am going to need your help in making sure that bill includes shoring up our Nations treasures.

And **third**, to ensure the professionals on the front line, our rangers and field managers, have the right tools, right resources, and flexibility to make the right decisions that give a voice to the people they serve.”

Senate Hearing Promises

Alabama, Jeff Sessions
None

Alaska, Lisa Murkowski

- Travel to Alaska
- Review King Cove access road issue
- Work with the people of Alaska to be sure promises are kept re the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act
- Conduct a formal review with the Park's service and wit NFW on the regs and then work with the state of Alaska re management decisions
- Conduct formal review of the Obama Administration's actions that took resource-bearing lands and waters in Alaska off the table - can the actions be reversed?

Arizona – visit second, Jeff Flake

- Travel to Arizona
- Review Tribal water rights issues
- Review Lower Colorado River drought contingency plan to be certain that Arizona has enough water
- Commitment to work with the Tribes and other parties in Arizona to move the Hualapai settlement forward, and to get the necessary clarifications to the White mountain Apache tribe settlement

Colorado, Cory Gardner

- Travel to Colorado
- Commit to work with Congress to make LWCF permanent
- Committed to look at DOI across the board, especially BLM, re moving agencies to the West
- Work to protect the private water rights and work with Congress on permits and water storage projects

Hawaii, Mazie Hirono

- Travel to Hawaii,
- Climate Change debate – more commitment in research
- Water research commitment – nothing specific
- Concerns on sexual harassment at NPS – need zero tolerance
- Travel to Guam, Puerto Rico, Palau, Marshall Islands, and Micronesia requested by Hirono

Idaho, Jim Risch

- Travel to Idaho, visit NIFC in Boise
- Sage grouse – FWS and BLM management review process
- Wild Fire plans/funding

Illinois, Tammy Duckworth

- Concerns on sexual harassment at NPS, what will you do other than listen to the front line?

Louisiana, Bill Cassidy

- Travel to Louisiana
- Leasing permit – complete review
- Coastal impact issues
- National Parks review
- Pipeline review process

Maine, Angus King

- Funding for maintenance of the National parks to address the backlog
- Attempt to fully fund the Land and Water Conservation Fund

Michigan, Debbie Stabenow

- Travel to Michigan
- Sexual harassment issue – create a work environment for victims free of fear of retaliation
- Great Lakes concerns – advocate funding for FWS to control invasive species (Carp)
- Support USGS science
- Support the right to clean water

Minnesota, Al Franken

- Travel to Minnesota

- Climate Change debate – more commitment in research
- Support for LWCF

Montana, Steve Daines

- Tribal water right agreements concerns
- Fossil fuel permit process – complete review
- Gas flaring – complete review
- Sage grouse – complete review
- Wild Fire funding – complete review

Nevada, Catherine Cortez Masto

- Concerns on federal land exchanges
- Commit to guarantee that tribal members on the 32 reservations will have a seat at the table when it comes to decisions, activities, and land management near their communities
- Address the wild horse and burro problem
- Commitment to working with the states on drought contingency plans

New Mexico, Martin Heinrich

- Travel to New Mexico
- Climate Change debate – commitment to more research
- Continue to work together on access issues
- Support for LWCF
- Pursue the pillage and profiting side of repatriating a sacred shield from an auction house in Paris working with the State and Justice Departments

North Dakota – visit third, John Hoeven

- Travel to North Dakota
- Dakota access pipeline protest – need BIA law enforcement to resolve situation-make sure the rule of law is followed
- Gas flaring – complete review
- Review Wild Fire management/funding
- Review buffer stream rule

Ohio, Rob Portman

- Travel to Ohio
- Help with funding the National Parks Centennial Act fully in the next appropriations cycle
- Review stream buffer rule in Eastern Ohio

Oregon, Ron Wyden

- Travel to Oregon
- Seek collaboration on bipartisan healthy forest issues
- Klamath River project – complete review
- Review wild fire funding
- Support for LWCF

Tennessee, Lamar Alexander

- Wild Fire review
- Look at allocation of funding between the Smokies and other parks
- Agreed to look ahead and think about ways to motivate and incentivize millennials by teaching the importance of the great outdoors.

Utah – visit first, Mike Lee

- Travel to Utah, talk to the people affected by the monument designation, and return to DC and make a recommendation to the President.
- Sage grouse – review policy
- Monument(s) – review
- Federal land exchange discussion – specific ask

Vermont, Bernie Sanders

- Climate Change analysis – RZ to further study
- Improve life (healthcare and education) for Native American people throughout the country

Washington, Maria Cantwell

- Travel to Washington
- Get rid of the maintenance backlogs in National parks
- Continue work on the Yakima River Basin project support
- Review/update of coal permits
- The war on coal – taxpayers' fairness
- Tribal concerns review sovereignty and tribal rights
- Pacific Gateway Terminal, follow NEPA process and complete EIS before making any decisions
- Technology review of LiDAR, and push for funding on the next budget request
- Look at ways to support the Spokane Tribe on their dam construction settlement

West Virginia, Joe Manchin

- Travel to West Virginia
- Discussion about appropriating AML funds

Wyoming, John Barrasso

- Travel to Wyoming
- End the moratorium on federal coal leasing
- Support efforts to reverse the venting and flaring rule under the Congressional Review Act
- Sage grouse – commit to returning conservation and management authority back to the states

**U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
January 17, 2017 Hearing: Nomination of the Hon. Ryan Zinke
to be the Secretary of the Interior**

Questions for the Record from Chairman Lisa Murkowski

Question 1: From 1944 to 1982, the Interior Department conducted oil exploration in the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska, leaving behind 136 well sites in need of environmental remediation and proper plugging and abandonment. While I secured \$50 million in 2013 to clean up many of these legacy wells, by 2019, when that funding is exhausted, the Department estimates there will still be 29 wells in need of remediation. If you are confirmed as Secretary, will you commit to working with me to develop a plan to expedite the cleanup of all remaining wells, rather than allowing piecemeal, bare minimum federal efforts to continue year after year?

Response: Madam Chairman, I believe that cleaning up those legacy wells should be a priority, and, if confirmed, I look forward to working with you to achieve that goal.

Question 2: Fisheries and tourism are vital to the livelihoods of thousands of Southeast Alaskans, but the Canadian government is permitting new hardrock mines that could threaten transboundary watersheds if they do not adhere to strong environmental standards. While the State Department is generally the lead on this issue, one of Interior's agencies, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, has provided grant funding to study water quality on the Stikine, Taku, and Unuk Rivers. This will help establish a baseline and protect our ability to seek damages in the event of an environmental mishap under terms of a treaty between the U.S. and Canada. Are you willing to engage on this issue, consider increasing transboundary water studies, and consult with other Departments to encourage Canada to take all necessary steps to protect the environment in this region?

Response: If confirmed, yes.

Question 3: Will you review recently completed and ongoing Resource Management Plans in Alaska to ensure that these plans are consistent and do not prevent access to resources needed for economic development?

Response: If confirmed, yes.

Question 4: Will you staff the Alaska Special Assistant to the Secretary positions, both in Anchorage and Washington, DC?

Response: As I have discussed with you and your staff, Alaska deserves special attention given the large Federal footprint and impact on the state. With this in mind, if I am confirmed, I will work with you to fill the Special Assistant position based in Anchorage, and learn more as to why the position in Washington was eliminated.

Question 5: Will you ensure that all Interior agency actions affecting Alaska are consistent with recent principles set forth in Supreme Court decision in the *Sturgeon* case, requiring that agency organic acts' interpretations and all agency actions be consistent

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with the Alaska Statehood Act, the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, and the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act?

Response: I have been informed that the Supreme Court in the *Sturgeon* case, recognized that when passing the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act, Congress appreciated that Alaska is different in many respects from the lower 48 states in law. To the extent that the Congress has recognized such differences in the law, I will work to ensure that those differences are properly recognized in agency decisions.

Question 6: Will you review BLM's recent decision to require new cadastral survey standards for lands being transferred to the State of Alaska and Native corporations, which are opposed by the State, and which could affect the dependability of land title?

Response: If confirmed, yes.

Question 7: One of the greatest challenges facing Alaska is that our economic backbone, the Trans-Alaska-Pipeline System, is running three-quarters empty. It now carries just about 500,000 barrels per day—not due to a lack of resources, but instead an almost blanket lack of permission to access our federal areas. If you are confirmed as Interior Secretary, will you make it a priority to work with me, as well as Senator Sullivan, Congressman Young, and Governor Walker, to develop a plan to refill the Trans-Alaska Pipeline?

Response: President-elect Trump has declared energy dominance to be a strategic economic and foreign policy goal of the United States and that he intends to unleash America's \$50 trillion in untapped shale, oil, and natural gas reserves. Accomplishing that goal will, in part, depend on increasing flow on the Trans-Alaska Pipeline, and, if confirmed, I will work to ensure that happens.

Question 8: A critical element of statehood is the primary authority to regulate resident fish and wildlife and establish the means, methods, seasons, and bag limits for the taking of such resident fish and wildlife. This state authority also extends to federal lands unless and until expressly and specifically countermanded by Congress using its Property Clause authority. Congress later provided that federal land designations and administration were not to diminish this State authority. Do you concur that states, possess primary authority to regulate hunting and fishing on federal lands?

Response: Madam Chairman, I agree that, in general, states have primary responsibility for wildlife management and that authority generally extends to federal lands. Moreover, I am committed to collaborating with state wildlife managers to ensure that we jointly conserve our wildlife resources.

Questions for the Record from Ranking Member Maria Cantwell

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to be the Secretary of the Interior

Question 1: If confirmed, do you intend to serve the entire four-year term as Secretary?

Response: Yes.

Question 2: Have you severed all ties with the Special Operations For America super PAC you formed in 2012?

Response: Yes.

There was a complaint filed against the Special Operations For America super PAC with the Federal Election Commission in 2014 that alleged improper contributions to your congressional campaign. What action did the FEC take on that complaint?

Response: Because I no longer have any role at Special Operations For America and am not a party to the complaint, I do not know all the actions the FEC has taken on that matter, but I do understand it remains under review.

Have you severed ties with SEAL PAC? If not, what involvement will you have with it if you are confirmed as Secretary? What steps will you take to avoid any conflicts of interest or the appearance of any conflicts of interest resulting from your association with SEAL PAC?

Response: SEAL PAC is my leadership PAC, and I will step down from my position with the PAC upon confirmation if confirmed.

If confirmed, I will abide by the recusal policy of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources which requires that I:

- (1) Abide by the recusal requirements imposed by federal conflict of interest laws and the Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch;
- (2) Seek the advice of my designated agency ethics officer before proceeding whenever faced with a situation that may give rise to an actual or apparent conflict of interest, and;
- (3) Adhere to the principles of ethical conduct and avoid any actions creating the appearance of violating the Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch

Question 3: Thinning at-risk ponderosa pine forests and re-introducing prescribed fires (when the conditions are acceptable) is an idea supported almost universally by the scientific community, the environmental groups, and the timber industry. Will you be helpful in getting the pine pilot we developed here last Congress—a program to expedite those thinnings—enacted?

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I know the House prevented any wildfire or forestry legislation from being enacted at the end of last Congress—I suppose thinking they'd have a better chance this Congress to enact some of the sweeping ideas and environmental waivers that have been floating around. But don't you think a program focused on collaborative projects in the most at-risk forests—which are supported by science—are a better approach to protecting our communities, strengthening our timber industry, and restoring our forests?

If confirmed, will you be supportive of fixing the fire-borrowing problem that plagues the Federal wildland-firefighting agencies? And working within the Administration and with your current House colleagues on putting in place a plan that takes this issue off the table once and for all?

Response: If confirmed, I will work with you, Members of the House of Representatives and my colleagues within the Administration to get a handle on the fire-borrowing problem.

Question 4: The Department of the Interior has put into place a robust scientific integrity policy. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the Department's Bureaus and Offices, including the Secretary, are using the highest quality science, subject to rigorous scientific and scholarly standards, to inform decision making. This policy is also in place to ensure that the production and use of science at the Department is insulated from political intervention.

What are your views on scientific integrity and how will you ensure that the highest standards of scientific integrity are maintained at the Department of the Interior?

Response: If confirmed, I will work to ensure that the U.S. Department of the Interior depends on the best available science for agency decision-making. I will review agency policies and guidance to ensure that scientific integrity underpins agency action.

Question 5: The U.S. Geological Survey is the Nation's primary earth science agency and is responsible for producing the science to ensure that our nation is prepared for hazards like floods and earthquakes, produces our nation's maps, assesses our nation's energy and mineral resources, conducts science necessary to understand and manage our nation's lands and waters, and produced critical satellite imagery which is all over the world and by our own military and civilian agencies. Each of the Department's bureaus also produce science needed to carry out their missions.

What do you believe is the role of science in informing decision-making and how will you ensure that the USGS and science at the Department is properly resourced to provide for the safety and prosperity of our country?

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Response: The U.S. Department of Interior will rely on objective science and rigorous scientific review to inform agency decisions. I look forward to reviewing agency resources at the U.S. Geological Survey and other divisions if confirmed.

Questions for the Record from Senator John Barrasso

Question 1: In December 2016, the National Park Service issued its Record of Decision (ROD) for the Moose-Wilson Road Final Comprehensive Management Plan. The Moose-Wilson Corridor is a 7.1-mile stretch of road at the southern end of the Grand Teton National Park. Public access to the corridor is highly valued by locals, state residents, and national and international visitors alike for the unique opportunity it provides to view wildlife and enjoy the natural setting and beauty of the Grand Teton National Park.

The 2016 ROD represents a dramatic shift in the management approach for the Corridor from the 2007 Final Transportation Plan by severely limiting the public's access to this national park, forcing a 30-plus mile rerouting; eliminating a multi-use pathway from the southern entrance despite 2 tragic deaths from vehicle-cyclist collisions in this park; and reversing course on the 2007 decision to reroute the northern segment of the Road out of important wildlife habitat and wetlands. The Park Service has decided to limit access to the Corridor to no more than 200 vehicles—a threshold that lacks any rational scientific or factual basis, and will require new construction of 3-lane queuing station on both ends of the Corridor essentially cutting off public access to the Park. The second Environmental Impact Statement spent millions of taxpayer dollars for 7.1 miles of road planning – intended to keep the public out. The park even says it may be 2-4 years of through-road closures to pave 1.7 miles of the road and a spur entrance – which raises serious questions of intent to habituate the public to keep out of their national park.

Given the contrived and arbitrary nature of this decision and the dramatic shift from the Final Transportation Plan, will you consider reopening the Record of Decision (ROD) for the Moose-Wilson Road Final Comprehensive Management Plan?

Response: Senator, I am not sufficiently informed of the details of the situation to make a judgment today. However, access to our public lands is one of my highest priorities, and, from your description, it appears this may be an example of a situation that needs attention. I commit that, if confirmed, I will review this situation and consult with you further.

Question 2: In Wyoming, and other states across the West, agencies have identified limited land parcels that would be more suitable for management or ownership by the state, county, or other entity. Administratively, these lands could be made available for sale, transfer, or other means of disposal, but change in the status of these lands is limited by agency use of employee time and funding priorities. Given your support for H.R. 1214, the National Forest Small Tracts Act Amendments Act of 2015, will you commit to

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prioritizing funds for disposal of lands that have been identified, agreed upon, and approved by the respective agencies?

Response: I remain committed to managing our federal land in a way that best serves those who use it. Wyoming and Montana are very similar. Both our states understand the challenges and opportunities associated with Federal Land. I supported H.R. 1214's unanimous passage because it is common sense. While I oppose the large-scale sale or transfer of public land, small parcel exchanges or conveyances that benefit the local community have received my full support as a Congressman and will continue should I be confirmed as Secretary of the Interior.

Questions for the Record from Senator Ron Wyden

Question 1: When working on difficult forestry issues, which I've been doing for over 20 years, you learn that no one gets everything they want but everyone must get something they need. My O&C bill brings people together, it gets the harvest up, and it protects bedrock environmental laws. I understand the urge to streamline process, but forestry policies that stack the deck in favor of one side won't work, particularly if you're interested in rebuilding faith in the federal government, which you noted in your remarks and in our meeting.

Litigation reform bars the path to the courthouse and sufficiency language essentially hands forests over to just one side of the debate. Coupled together, you create a scenario where the actions of one side are deemed automatically compliant and the other side has no way of challenging the action. That's the definition of stacking the deck and it will drive the two sides of an issue further apart, rather than bringing them together in a collaborative way.

How would you encourage collaboration in forestry while balancing the needs of all interests and avoiding reforms, like sufficiency language, that hand the entire deck over to one side?

Response: I appreciate your concerns about the need for collaboration in balancing the needs of all interests while avoiding policies that stack the deck for one side of any issue. As a member of the Natural Resources Committee in the House, I supported legislation that would have expanded the collaborative model to help resolve natural resource conflicts on our public lands. I would like to work with you and the other members of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee to provide appropriate authority to the Department of the Interior to expand and protect the work of the Resource Advisory Committees under the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act, the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program, and the Community Wildfire Protection Plans that have been collaboratively developed under the Healthy Forest Restoration Act.

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Question 2: Representative Zinke, in our meeting, I told you about my bill, the Recreation Not Red-Tape Act, to cut the bureaucratic red tape that stands in the way of getting more people outdoors and opening access to America's special places. Recreation is an economic driver, particularly in rural areas, with studies showing recreation is a \$646 billion economy.

As Secretary, will you commit to working with me on my bill and prioritizing outdoor recreation and its vast economic potential on public lands, without sacrificing critical environmental protections?

Response: Senator, I appreciate the time you took to meet with me prior to the hearing. As we discussed, I believe public lands should be available for the enjoyment of all, and, if confirmed, outdoor recreation will be a priority of mine, and I believe recreation can occur while respecting and caring for the environment.

Question 3: Throughout the process of developing the Klamath water management agreements in Southern Oregon, the Bureau of Reclamation, under the direction of the Secretary of Interior, was a critical player in helping with stakeholder negotiations. Those agreements have expired and the future of the Klamath Basin remains uncertain. Are you familiar at all with what is happening in the Klamath Basin?

Response: Senator, I am somewhat familiar with the issues in the Klamath, but, if confirmed will need to learn a great deal more. I hope I will have the opportunity to visit the area with you and learn from you what needs to be done.

Question 4: Can you commit to working with me and the other members of the Oregon delegation and to supporting the Bureau of Reclamation and their efforts to help solve this complex problem in the Klamath Basin?

Response: If confirmed, yes.

Question 5: I've introduced the Wildfire Disaster Funding Act for the last several congresses, and I know you cosponsored the House companion bill in the past. While the issue of wildfire funding has been primarily a Forest Service issue, wildfires don't pay any attention to jurisdictional borders and they don't care who manages the land they're burning, so as Secretary of Interior, this is an issue you'll have to address. Do you think the practice of fire borrowing should be ended?

Response: Thank you for your leadership on the Wildfire Disaster Funding Act. The entire Montana delegation has cosponsored this bill because Western states like ours intimately know the devastation of forest fires. I understand the importance of fixing the current wildfire borrowing system, but I believe it is only one component of the problem. As Montana's Congressman, I have been an active proponent of forest management reforms so wildfires are less severe. Active management reforms will get to the root of

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the problem and lessen the burden of fighting wildfires. I fully agree that our firefighting funding mechanisms must be reformed, but it must be part of a comprehensive solution. I look forward to crafting those measures with you if I am confirmed.

Question 6: Do you think controlling the 10-year average cost of fires by freezing it at a certain level, or using some other budget control tool so it doesn't continue to erode the agency budgets, help the agencies better budget for and fund fires in the future as well as fund other non-fire programs in forest management and recreation?

Response: As you know, we are both supporters of the Wildfire Disaster Funding Act. I do believe these budget reforms would provide relief to the agencies to better invest in other priorities. However, if we do not tackle comprehensive management reforms, forest health will continue to deteriorate and escalate the potential for severe forest fires. Should I be confirmed, I look forward to working with you and your colleagues on comprehensive solutions that fix our budget process and management shortfalls.

Question 7: I'm sure you're aware of the situation that unfolded at the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge in Harney County Oregon this time last year and the disruptions it caused in the local communities. I was grateful that federal officials coordinated closely with the County Sheriff and Commissioners to ensure that community members were safe and that the rule of law was preserved. Incidents like this, led by extremists, that compromise our public lands are very concerning and I'm just glad it ended without escalating further.

If you are confirmed as the Secretary of Interior, you will be in charge of managing National Wildlife Refuges, Wilderness Areas, and recreation lands, in an era where hostility toward federal lands and federal officials is rampant, particularly in rural areas.

What will you do to ensure the protection of not only our incredible public lands that have been set aside by Republican and Democratic Presidents and Congresses, but also the protection of your employees, like the employees at the Malheur Refuge, who are not just federal employees, but Oregonians?

Response: Senator, as someone who has led soldiers in combat, I am committed to the safety of the Department's employees. I am also committed to restoring trust by freeing up our employees to make decisions and to collaborate with local law enforcement if things get difficult.

Question 8: Oregon is no stranger to an ESA listing, so ranchers and conservationists took a front seat in the collaborative efforts to establish land management plans to prevent one. After all the collaborative success, the last thing that the people of my state want to see is an Endangered Species Act (ESA) listing of the greater sage grouse. Fortunately, that was avoided in September 2015, when the Fish and Wildlife Service decided that listing the bird was unwarranted. However, FWS's decision was

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predicated on the strength of federal sage grouse conservation plans, without which, the bird would likely have been listed.

As secretary, can you outline what steps you will take to support the robust implementation of both federal and state grouse conservation plans, so that we can prevent an ESA listing and continue to support and encourage collaboration?

Response: I believe that the goals of the Endangered Species Act, which are to halt and reverse the trend towards species extinction, are very important. I am aware that there are several grant programs within the Department of the Interior to provide federal funding towards species recovery efforts. If I am confirmed, I will review these programs and work with Congress to set appropriate funding levels for them.

Question 9: Are you committed to meeting the goals of the Endangered Species Act and would you agree that federal funding to help recover threatened and endangered species is crucial to preserving our nation's wildlife and biodiversity?

Response: I support the goals of the Endangered Species Act. I agree that focusing efforts on the recovery of listed species is important and I look forward to working with you on this important issue.

Question 10: Can you help me understand your stance on public land ownership and tell me whether you think that public lands should remain in federal ownership or be sold or transferred to states or other jurisdictions?

Response: I believe that Teddy Roosevelt had it right when he put under federal protection millions of acres of federal lands. I share President-elect Trump's view that federal lands should not be sold to states and I have voted 17 times against such action.

Question 11: Oregonians and all West Coast residents are becoming increasingly concerned about the next major earthquake, which has become a matter of "when" and not "if." Preparation is key, and even just a few seconds of warning is enough to take steps to prevent casualties and mitigate destruction. In a few seconds, supplies of oil, natural gas, and chemicals can be turned off, trains and cars can be slowed or stopped, sensitive data can be secured, and people can get to safe places. This is a bipartisan priority and we need to get this system finished -- failing to prepare for these events is not an option, and could have dire consequences for West Coast populations. Given the importance of this technology to provide the kind of warning that exists for hurricane, winter storms, and other extreme events, how would you, if confirmed, work with USGS to ensure ShakeAlert becomes fully operational for the west coast?

Response: As a geologist, I am fully aware of the hazards along the western coast of the United States, and appreciate that the risks are a matter of "when" and not "if". Earthquakes are an important applied science focus of USGS' Natural Hazards Mission

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Area. I fully support the collaborative research and scientific efforts related to earth hazards and, if confirmed, will continue these efforts.

Question 12: Can you assure us that the annual budgets you would propose would back up your stated commitment to those resources with the actual conservation and maintenance dollars they clearly need?

Response: If I am confirmed, I will review these programs and work with Congress to set appropriate funding levels for them.

Question 13: The California water provisions that passed as part of the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation (WIIN) Act gives the Secretaries of Interior and Commerce discretion in implementing the mandates to maximize water deliveries to Central Valley farmers. How do you plan to balance the mandates to maximize water deliveries to farmers with the mandates to protect fishery resources and comply with the Endangered Species Act when making critical decisions about how to interpret and implement the provisions in this legislation?

Response: Water from the Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers Delta provides drinking water to 25 million Californians from the Bay area to San Diego and provides water supplies to over two million acres of farmland. In addition, it serves as an important stop on the Pacific flyway and is home or a gateway to the home for numerous endangered fish species. In addition to other provisions, the WIIN Act calls for the Secretaries of the Interior and of Commerce to use science and the adaptive management provisions of the existing biological opinions to maximize water supply and water supply reliability, consistent with the Endangered Species Act. If confirmed, I will work with the Secretary of Commerce and the State of California to fulfill the directives in the WIIN Act, consistent with the Endangered Species Act.

Question 14: The Fisheries Restoration and Irrigation Mitigation Act (FRIMA) provides funding in the Pacific Northwest (Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Montana and now California) to carry out fish passage projects and screen irrigation channels to reduce fish mortality. This program was recently reauthorized, but authorized funding was drastically reduced. Would you support funding for the implementation of this critical program that benefits farmers and fish?

Response: If I am confirmed, I will review these programs and work with Congress to set appropriate funding levels for them.

Question 15: The Secretary currently oversees eight regional DOI Climate Science Centers, including an active center at Oregon State University. Would you support the continued climate change research and education at these eight centers?

Response: I value and support collaboration with public and private research institutions. As mentioned at the confirmation hearing, I believe that programs are most

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effective when they operate according to “clear and precise” goals. I look forward to a complete review of the eight DOI Climate Science Centers and their results over the past six years as we develop an agenda for moving forward.

Question 16: In general, what do you see as your role and the role of the Department of Interior in combating climate change?

Response: Senator, that is a challenging question simply because it is so broad. Many programs at the Department relate to or impact the climate. In general, my role, if confirmed, and the Department’s role will be to ensure that we manage programs and makes decisions based upon best available information and sound science.

Question 17: The American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) has made the following statement: “The scientific evidence is clear: global climate change caused by human activities is occurring now, and it is a growing threat to society.” Would you agree with this statement?

Response: Senator, as I said at my confirmation hearing, I believe the climate is changing, and man is an influence.

Question 18: The American Geophysical Union has made the following statement: “The scientific evidence is clear: global climate change caused by human activities is occurring now, and it is a growing threat to society.” Would you agree with this statement?

Response: Senator, as I said at my confirmation hearing, I believe the climate is changing, and man is an influence.

Question 19: Representative Zinke, I noticed that, in 2010, you signed a letter to the President and the Congress calling for “comprehensive clean energy jobs and climate change legislation.” I applaud your leadership, and I have submitted that letter for the record. Do you still agree, as you apparently did in 2010, with the vast majority of scientists that climate change is happening and that we as humans are contributing to it?

Response: Senator, as I said at my confirmation hearing, I believe the climate is changing, and man is an influence.

Question 20: Do you still believe, as you did in your letter to the President in 2010, that “the clean energy and climate challenge is America’s new space race”? And that our country should not back down from a challenge on this scale?

Response: Senator, I believe that the impacts of climate change are uncertain and that we have not yet determined the best way or ways to address it.

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Question 21: Representative Zinke, do you think the American taxpayer should get a fair, market-value, return on the coal, oil and natural gas extracted from publicly-owned lands?

Response: Yes.

Question 22: The GAO found, for example, that in order to get a fair return on oil and gas from public lands, the BLM should update its more than 30-year old rules on the venting and flaring of gas. I assume you would agree that it is time to dust off these rules and make sure they're delivering appropriately for the American people? Correct?

Response: I am committed to ensuring that the American taxpayers get a fair return on all natural resource development on federal lands. While I have not been briefed on the details of the regulations covering the venting and flaring of gas, I will review them if I am confirmed and make a determination on whether those rules need to be updated.

Question 23: Using GAO's estimates about the amount of federally owned natural gas that is wasted due to venting and flaring, over \$63.5 million in royalties was lost, over \$31.1 million to individual states in 2013 alone. This is millions of dollars that could go to state infrastructure needs, schools, and emergency services. Do you believe that states should be receiving this money instead of allowing companies to waste American energy resources and not give the American public their due? If so, how do you plan to make sure that states are getting the money they should from wasted natural gas, especially since you stated in your nomination hearing before the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee your support for the repeal of the current rule under a Congressional Review Act joint resolution of disapproval?

Response: I am committed to ensuring that the American taxpayers get a fair return on all natural resource development on federal lands. While I have concerns about the current rules regarding venting and flaring on federal lands, I will commit to a review of the oil and natural gas leasing program in order to evaluate whether any further regulation is appropriate.

Question 24: A federal court in Wyoming refused to enjoin the BLM's new wasted gas rule on January 16th. The court found that the rule was "unambiguously" within the BLM's authority to regulate oil and gas development for the prevention of waste, has economic and environmental benefits, will not impinge on states' sovereign interests, and will not cause significant economic burden to states or oil and gas companies. Do you believe the BLM has the authority to regulate oil and gas production on federal lands so as to prevent waste?

Response: While I have not been briefed on the legal issues surrounding the litigation over the BLM rules regarding venting and flaring on federal lands, I will commit to a

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review of the oil and natural gas leasing program in order to evaluate those legal issues and determine whether additional regulation of these activities is appropriate.

Question 25: I applaud your comments in your nomination hearing before the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee that “we’re wasting a lot, we’re venting a lot, and we’re wasting energy, and that is troubling me...The amount of venting in North Dakota alone almost exceeds what we get out of the fields. Let us build a system that recaptures what is being wasted.” Given that only 9% of venting or flaring requests cite a lack of infrastructure as the reason, according to the GAO, and the vast majority of wasted gas can be traced to leaks, what would you do to fix this problem?

Response: I am committed to ensuring that the American taxpayers get a fair return on all natural resource development on federal lands. While I have concerns about the current rules regarding venting and flaring on federal lands, I will commit to a review of the oil and natural gas leasing program in order to evaluate whether any further regulation is appropriate.

Question 26: If you support the repeal of the current rule under a Congressional Review Act joint resolution of disapproval, as you stated in your nomination hearing before the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, how do you plan to use existing DOI authority to address what you say is troubling to you regarding the amount of wasted gas coming from production on federal lands?

Response: I am committed to ensuring that the American taxpayers get a fair return on all natural resource development on federal lands. While I have concerns about the current rules regarding venting and flaring on federal lands, I will commit to a review of the oil and natural gas leasing program in order to evaluate whether any further regulation is appropriate.

Question 27: Based on hundreds of thousands of public comments, on January 11, 2017, the Department of Interior has clearly identified there is a need to modernize the federal coal program. We have a responsibility to ensure the public gets a fair market-value return from the sale of America's coal, and that we operate the program efficiently, while minimizing the impact of coal production on our communities and environment. The only responsible next step is to continue the review and implement the commonsense measures identified in the Department’s recent roadmap. I want your commitment to continue the work of modernizing the federal coal program, through the completion of an above-board transparent, scientific and public process.

What assurances can you give me that you will continue this important work?

Response: I have not personally reviewed the Federal Coal Programmatic EIS scoping report published by the Bureau of Land Management, which I believe is the document you are referencing. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that decisions are based on

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objective science and transparency. I will examine the scoping document and visit with the Bureau of Land Management and determine the appropriate next steps to be taken as part of the NEPA process.

Question 28: What will you do to limit liabilities to the American people associated with the cleanup of mining on public lands, including bonding and other protections?

Response: As someone from Montana, I appreciate the need for reclamation and want to ensure that we hold companies appropriately accountable for their responsibilities.

Question 29: You have said that you are supportive of an “all of the above energy policy, which includes renewables.” I suspect we agree renewable that energy projects can be important drivers of economic development in rural communities, often supplementing the income of farmers and ranchers and raising needed tax revenue for small towns. Yet we must balance the need for clean energy with the need to protect wilderness and fragile habitat. What will you do to ensure the Department of Interior continues to support the responsible construction of renewable energy projects on public lands?

Response: I will support responsible construction of projects. However, I have not been fully briefed on the regulatory regime in place for permitting renewable projects on federal lands, but I do believe that the NEPA process is a critical component of any federal permitting decision. If confirmed, I will review the process for evaluating these projects and ensure that all of the Department’s actions are appropriate.

Question 30: What are your plans for the siting and leasing processes for offshore renewable energy development, such as wind and marine hydrokinetic? How do you plan to involve other maritime industries, such as fishing and shipping, to ensure that the development of offshore renewable energy is collaborative?

Response: I have not been fully briefed on the permit applications for these projects, but I do believe that the NEPA process is a critical component of any federal permitting decision. A critical component of the NEPA process is consultation with all affected stakeholders. If confirmed, I will review the process for evaluating these projects and ensure that all of the Department’s actions are appropriate.

Question 31: You recently made some misinformed comments about the competitiveness of wind and solar energy in relation to coal-fired electricity. Wind energy is one of the most affordable options for new electric generation, and wind energy is reliably providing over 30% of the electricity in Iowa, and over 20% in Kansas, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Oklahoma; and generating more than 10% of the electricity in eight additional states. In fact, 79% of electricity power generation jobs in Oregon are in wind and solar, according to the Energy Information Administration. Given the importance of renewable energy in so many states, will you state for the record your support for good,

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American jobs in renewable energy production that are not only affordable but also provide an over 13% share of US energy production?

Response: I strongly support good, American jobs in renewable energy production.

Question 32: I know you have been supportive of the Keystone XL pipeline. Although Keystone is an international project, other pipeline projects--like the Dakota access pipeline--could fall onto your plate. Could you give us some insight into how you would deal with such a sensitive tribal issue, such as the Dakota Access Pipeline?

Response: Senator, the current situation with regard to the Dakota Access Pipeline is very challenging and unfortunate. This country needs to build and operate infrastructure, and the permitting process for infrastructure needs to comply with all laws and regulations and be relatively predictable so that companies and individuals undertaking infrastructure projects can reasonably estimate costs and schedules.

We must also be sensitive to tribal issues. Our great Indian nations deserve respect, and, if confirmed, I will work to rebuild the trust that comes from mutual respect. I believe that, if we build and then maintain mutual trust, we can build relative consensus around infrastructure siting issues.

Question 33: Reuters has reported that the incoming administration aims to privatize oil-rich and coal-rich Indian reservations. Can you comment on your understanding of such conversations, and what is your opinion on whether we should privatize tribal lands for the purpose of extracting energy resources?

Response: I have not personally reviewed the referenced Reuters' report. I am unaware of any effort by anyone to privatize tribal lands.

Question 34: As Secretary of Interior, you are in charge of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and the trust relationship with all U.S. Tribes. What are your thoughts on tribal sovereignty and the role of the federal government in the tribal trust relationship?

Response: As I stated during the hearing, I believe tribal sovereignty is very important. I believe it should be meaningful. As a member of Congress, I have been a strong advocate for the Tribes in Montana.

Question 35: When Secretary Sally Jewell spoke of DOI's scientific integrity policies, she stated that the Department must be a leader in the federal efforts for robust scientific integrity policies because "science is the very foundation of our mission." Would you agree that science is the foundation of the DOI's mission and what would be your plan to ensure that the Department's integrity policies remain robust and reliable?

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Response: I have not studied the referenced policy. However, I would agree that DOI's mission has always included a strong science component within its bureaus. I will want to be informed by objective science as I make policy decisions, and I look forward to hearing from the Department's scientists in that regard.

Question 36: How will you work with your counterparts at the Defense and State Departments to support approval and implementation of the 2010 Agreement between the U.S and Palau to update and extend the strategic "Compact" relationship between our two nations?

Response: This is an important issue. As I have said, the relationship between the United States and the territories and freely associated states is important to me. If I am confirmed, I will learn more about this issue and work with you to address it in a way that benefits the people of Palau, and the U.S. Government.

Question 37: Will you, if confirmed, work with the ENR Committee and with the Departments of Justice, Treasury and Labor to fully investigate any allegations that money laundering and abuse of guest workers is occurring in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands?

Response: Allegations of the criminal abuse of workers anywhere are significant and serious. If I am confirmed, I will look into this matter, work with the appropriate law enforcement agencies, and act accordingly.

Question 38: Prior to 2008, even though the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) was under US sovereignty, it had authority to control its borders and immigration. However, the CNMI proved unable to properly control the border or to prevent the abuse of guest workers who were admitted to the CNMI under local immigration control. Consequently, Congress extended federal border and immigration control to the CNMI. Can you assure the Committee that you will oppose any proposal to weaken federal border and immigration control in the CNMI?

Response: Control of US borders is important whether in CNMI or anywhere. If I am confirmed, I will learn more about this issue and work with you and other federal agencies to develop an appropriate response.

Question 39: There have been press articles regarding the activities of "Best Sunshine" corporation in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Would you please review these articles and let me know what action, if any, should be taken by the Interior Department and other Departments.

Response: If I am confirmed, I will make it a priority to review this material and respond accordingly.

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Question 40: One responsibility of the Interior Department is to create economic opportunities and improve the quality of life for Americans in the insular areas of our nation: American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Marianas, and the Virgin Islands. There have been improvements over time. But in terms of income, infrastructure, and many other measures these insular areas still lag far behind the rest of America. Often they are not given the same level of funding or access to federal programs as other parts of our country. Federal agencies often don't compile data on the territories the way they do for the rest of the U.S. What specific plans do you have to increase the pace of development in the insular areas to bring them up to the economic level of the rest of America?

Response: Economic development is the best way to increase opportunity and the standard of living for all peoples. The U.S. territories face significant challenges and deserve special attention. If I am confirmed, I look forward to learning more about the ways we can work to correct these issues.

Question 41: Currently, an Interior Assistant Secretary heads the Office of Insular Affairs. That is a serious acknowledgement of the importance of the work of this office; and I think the office should continue to be led by an Assistant Secretary. Do you plan to maintain this position of Assistant Secretary?

Response: U.S. territories deserve recognition and representation within the Department. If I am confirmed, I will look into the ASIA position, but I am not aware of any effort to change the status of the position.

Question 42: In a bipartisan appropriation for the current fiscal year, FY17, the Senate voted to increase funding for the Office of Insular Affairs by \$6.9 million dollars. Will you be supportive of providing increased bipartisan support and funding to America's insular areas to create economic opportunity and improve quality of life?

Response: Providing resources is one important way the U.S. can support the challenges of the territories. If I am confirmed, I will work with you and the Congress on the proper appropriations levels for this and other areas of the budget.

Question 43: As a follow-up to my question on the Office of Insular Affairs, is more funding needed? And if so, how exactly do you think additional funds should be targeted to be most effective?

Response: If I am confirmed, I look forward to learning more about the budget needs and allocations and will work with your office as appropriate.

Question 44: A role of the Office of Insular Affairs is to make sure that all federal agencies take the islands into account when formulating and implementing policy. What plans do you have to make sure that the Interior Department's input is welcome—and

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listened to—by other agencies, when they put together and administer policies that affect the territories?

Response: This is an important issue to me. Often the parts of the federal family neglect the territories completely or forget to take into account their unique circumstances. If I am confirmed, I will learn more about the ways we can solve this problem.

Questions for the Record from Senator Bernard Sanders

Tribal Issues

Question 1: The Department of the Interior is the most important federal government agency for dealing with the issues that affect Native American tribes. The Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs “assists and supports the Secretary of the Interior in fulfilling the United States’ trust responsibility to the Federally recognized American Indian and Alaska Native tribes and villages and individual Indian trust beneficiaries, as well as in maintaining the Federal-Tribal government-to-government relationship.”

If confirmed, will you commit to an open door policy for the Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs to ensure sufficient access to you and recognition of the importance of Indian Affairs within the department? Will you commit to an open door policy for tribal leaders to ensure that the federal government upholds its trust responsibility and maintains its government-to-government relationship with tribal leaders?

Response: Yes.

Question 2: While the Department of Interior plays a primary role in upholding our Government’s obligations to Indian tribes, there are many other federal agencies that also work to meet the responsibility. Department of Health and Human Services plays a major role in providing health and mental health care. Department of Justice works to ensure the public safety. Department of Commerce, Department of Agriculture, and other agencies administer programs designed to help improve Indian reservation economic development.

To succeed in its tribal relationships and trust, Interior must work with these agencies and ensure that they work collaboratively with Indian tribes. President Obama formed the White House Council on Native American Affairs to help inter-agency coordination.

How will you ensure that inter-agency coordination remains a top priority in this new administration?

Response: Senator, I agree with you that the federal agencies with obligations to and responsibilities for Indian tribes need to coordinate effectively. I am not familiar with the White House Council on Native American Affairs, but, if confirmed, inter-agency

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coordination will be a priority of mine, and, if the Council continues, I will utilize it to advance the interests of Indian tribes.

Question 3: The failed federal policies of Removal, Allotment and Termination resulted in the forced taking of hundreds of millions of acres of Native American homelands. The Interior Secretary is authorized to restore tribal homelands through the Indian Reorganization Act and the administrative Part 151 Indian land to trust process. The U.S. Supreme Court attacked that process in 2009.

What are you prepared to do to ensure that the administrative land to trust process continues to move forward under your administration?

Response: I understand that the land into trust process is very important to the Tribes. I will meet with the Bureau of Indian Affairs to gain a greater appreciation of the specific administrative challenges caused by the referenced 2009 decision and determine how they are best addressed.

Hydropower

Question 4: The U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources debated several bills regarding energy and natural resource policy that culminated in the Energy Policy Modernization Act. One of the energy sources addressed in this legislation was hydropower, which accounts for roughly 7 percent of all energy produced in the United States today. While the legislation this committee reported, and the Senate sent to the House, protected the ability of states to manage water and the ability of the federal resource managers to rely on science and expertise, the House passed legislation effectively stripping them of the tools available to them.

Hydropower is a critical source of carbon-free energy, but it is not without negative externalities. Several states, including Vermont, support hydropower, but opposed these efforts to hobble oversight.

Question 5: As Secretary of the Interior, would you counsel the President to reject legislation that would eliminate the ability of states and federal resource managers to protect drinking water, outdoor recreation, fisheries, and vulnerable wildlife populations?

Response: If confirmed, I will seek to inform the President of my views on specific legislative proposals related to water, outdoor recreation, fisheries and wildlife as they arise.

Question 6: Would you resist efforts by industry to federalize all aspects of the hydropower licensing process and consolidate in the industry-captured FERC responsibilities for evaluating environmental impact?

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Response: If confirmed, I will work to gain a greater appreciation of the specific role Interior's agencies play in the hydropower licensing process.

Land and Water Conservation Fund

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) has been an important source for state and local outdoor recreation facilities, state parks improvements, and public park land acquisition. Vermont has benefitted extensively from LWCF funding.

Question 7: You have been a long-term supporter of the LWCF. If confirmed, do you plan to continue your strong advocacy for this important source of funding for states and local governments to create parks and open spaces, protect wilderness and forests, and provide outdoor recreation opportunities?

Response: You and I both share a deep appreciation for the LWCF. This program has been incredibly successful in Montana. I have seen the benefits of the program first-hand with critical projects in my hometown. Should I be confirmed, I look forward to continuing to work with you and your colleagues to protect and bolster this important program.

Question 8: As the Secretary of the Interior, will you recommend to the President that the LWCF be fully funded?

Response: LWCF has my full support. I have cosponsored two bipartisan pieces of legislation to permanently reauthorize the program, have opposed my own Chairman's reform proposals and was the only member of the Montana delegation to vote in support of the program's reauthorization and funding. As a Montanan, I have personally witnessed the good work LWCF does for local communities, the sportsmen and recreation community, and conservation. As the budget process moves forward, I look forward to working the President-elect and Congress to support LWCF's critical work.

Question 9: Federal funding programs like the LWCF often involve a lot of "red tape" which can make them inaccessible to small rural communities with limited staff and resources. Would you be willing to re-examine any of the rules and regulations related to applying for and using federal funds such as the LWCF monies?

Response: Since coming to Congress, I have been one of the most vocal proponents of LWCF. It is a great program that serves Montana and our nation incredibly well. However, that does not mean it is perfect. We both represent rural states and I share your concern regarding "red tape" and limited resources. I have consistently voiced my opposition to the excessive bureaucracy that inhibits funds from making their way to those who need them most. The process should be streamlined and I look forward to working with you and your colleagues to achieve this goal.

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Conservation and Public Lands

Question 10: During your time in Congress, you earned a 3 percent rating (out of 100 percent) from the League of Conservation Voters (LCV). The votes used to rate Senators and members of Congress are scored on protection of the environment, public lands, waters and air.

Your LCV score reflects that, with just one exception, you voted against federal conservation policies. You have voted for cutting back Antiquity Act authorities, against public review of hard rock mining on public lands, against a review process for grazing permits on drought-damaged public lands, and against removing harmful riders undermining protections for imperiled species including removing Endangered Species Act-protections for the gray wolf. All of these issues will be under your authority as Secretary of Interior.

Can you explain your anti-conservation voting record while in Congress? How does this record suggest that you will protect our lands, waters and wildlife against corporate short-term interests, like Teddy Roosevelt?

Response: The League of Conservation Voters (LCV) voting score does not accurately represent my commitment to clean air and water, conservation and protecting public lands. I am a firm believer in the multiple use doctrine that President Roosevelt championed. However, under the current administration, the Executive Branch has often governed by rules and regulations that should have been debated and passed by Congress. I fundamentally believe in the separate but equal roles of government and the rule of law. Many of the votes calculated by the LCV had to do with rules that I believed were outside the purview of the Executive Branch. If I am confirmed as Secretary of the Interior, you have my commitment to follow and enforce the laws passed by you and your colleagues in Congress rather than governing by Executive Order.

Question 11: You signed the Montana Constitutional Governance Pledge promising to “legally and administratively oppose the multitude of bureaucracies that have sprung up to enforce the unlawful seizure of our native land and its resources including, but not limited to: the Bureau of Land Management, the United States Park Service, the various bureaus of Wildlife and Fisheries, etc., and restore the rightful powers over the land to the state and private ownership.”

Could you provide examples of the “unlawful seizure of our native land and its resources” by the agencies of the Department of Interior and what measures you would support as Secretary of interior to “restore the rightful powers over the land to the state and private ownership?”

Response: States across the West are uniquely familiar with the ‘checkerboard’ of private, state, and federal lands. The mix of lands under different management poses

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numerous issues, ranging from protecting recreational access to respecting the rights of private land owners. If confirmed, I want to ensure our public lands remain in public hands, and private and state-owned lands are respected as well. This means making sure small tract land transfers and sales adhere to the proper procedures.

Question 12: You are on record as supporting retention of federal lands in public ownership yet you voted for H. R. 3650, the “State National Forest Management Act of 2015” which would transfer over two million acres of Forest Service land to the states for sale to private interests. Could you explain the apparent inconsistency?

Response: I would like to respectfully correct the record. I was actually the only Republican on the House Committee on Natural Resources to vote against H.R.3650 when it came up for a markup on June 15, 2016. After the bill passed committee without my support, I reiterated my promise to my constituents that I would not support any legislation that transfers or sells large portions of our public lands. I remain committed to that promise should I be confirmed as Secretary of the Interior.

Question 13: What improvements can be made to the management of federal public lands?

Response: If confirmed, I will work to improve the management of our federal lands for multiple uses, including recreation, conservation and responsible energy development. I intend to restore trust by working with states and local communities to inform agency decisions. I intend to promote greater public access, responsible development and ensure that professionals within the Department of the Interior receive the resources, training, and tools needed to make informed decisions that give voice to the American public. I also recognize and will preserve those lands that deserve special recognition and are better managed with man as an observer.

Scientific integrity

Question 14: Are you familiar with the scientific integrity policy at the Department of the Interior? What is the importance of the policy in your opinion?

Response: Senator, I have not had the opportunity to review the Department’s scientific integrity policy. I value sound science, and I will review the policy if confirmed.

Question 15: Should Department of the Interior scientists be allowed to express their personal opinions about any issue as private citizens as long as they provide a disclaimer that they are speaking in a personal capacity and not for the agency?

Response: Senator, I have not had the opportunity to review the Department’s scientific integrity policy. I value sound science, and I will review the policy if confirmed.

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Question 16: Should Department of the Interior scientists have the right of last review to ensure the accuracy of materials that rely on their scientific work or expertise—including scientific reports, executive summaries, congressional testimony, press releases, and websites?

Response: I will review federal guidelines and Departmental policies on this issue and rely on the best available science for agency decision-making, if confirmed.

Question 17: Are there any parts of the Department of the Interior websites that you believe contain incorrect, incomplete, or erroneous information? Specifically, do you believe that any web pages currently contain incorrect, incomplete, or erroneous descriptions of climate change science?

Response: I have not reviewed the full extent of the Interior Department website, but if confirmed, I look forward to reviewing it further and paying special attention to the questions you raise.

Question 18: The most robust federal government scientific integrity policies empower scientists to speak openly with the public and the press about scientific matters. Would you improve your agency's policy to make this explicit?

Response: Senator, I respect scientists and the need for scientific integrity. I have not yet reviewed the Department's scientific integrity policies, but I will do so, and I am certainly willing to discuss this with you further if I am confirmed.

Management of Government Employees

The Department of the Interior employs 70,000 people at nine technical bureaus and a number of other offices. The following questions ask about how you would manage these personnel.

Question 19: Do you support and promise to uphold the merit system principles set forth in Chapter 23 Title 5 U.S. Code, which prohibit factors other than merit from consideration in civil service employment decisions?

Response: I support the merit system principles.

Question 20: As Secretary, do you believe that Congress using the Holman Rule, which allows any member of Congress to propose amending an appropriations bill to single out a government employee or cut a specific program, to be an appropriate measure when used against your Department? Will you support Congress in passing an amendment under the Holman Rule or would you oppose?

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Response: The U.S. House of Representatives sets its rules. If confirmed, as Secretary, it will be my responsibility to express my views to the President on any specific legislative proposal, and I will do so.

Question 21: As Secretary, do you believe that you will be better able to recruit and retain top talent if Congress is able to individually target employees based on their political whims?

Response: If confirmed, I will work to restore trust and give the employees on the front lines – our rangers, field managers and managers – the space and support to make the decisions they need to make. If I do that, I believe we will continue to retain and recruit top level talent.

Question 22: As Secretary, do you support Congress targeting and altering the salaries of individuals within your Department?

Response: I recognize that Congress has the power of the purse pursuant to the Constitution.

Question 23: As Secretary, how do you view the division of responsibility and authority between Congress and your Department on personnel issues?

Response: The Senate has the responsibility of advice and consent. Beyond that, I believe the authority of specific personnel decisions rests with the Department of the Interior and its bureaus.

Questions for the Record from Senator Debbie Stabenow

Question 1: I serve as Ranking Member of the Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry Committee -- which has a good deal of oversight of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service. When we met, we discussed your position on the Forest Service in broad terms. Please answer, preferably with a simple yes or no, whether you would advocate for Congress to approve legislation to transfer the Forest Service to the Interior Department?

Response: Senator, when we met, I said that I think we should consider moving the Forest Service to the Department of the Interior. As we discussed, the structure we use to manage federal lands has not been given a comprehensive review since its inception, and I believe there are numerous issues that need to be addressed. Among those issues, I believe the current situation in which one federal agency manages the surface and a second manages subsurface issues creates unnecessary duplication and conflict.

I clearly got the impression in our meeting and from these questions that you have concerns about moving the Forest Service to the Department of Interior. If confirmed, I

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look forward to further discussions with you. My goal is to ensure that our public lands are managed consistent with the inscription in the Roosevelt Arch at Yosemite, “for the enjoyment and benefit of the people.”

Question 2: If you would recommend transferring the Forest Service to the Interior Department, why with all of the challenges facing the Forest Service – including ballooning costs for wildfire suppression, nationwide invasive species outbreaks, and record numbers of recreationists and sportsmen looking for well-maintained trails and facilities on their public lands – would you want to undertake a complex, multi-year bureaucratic reorganization that will cost millions of dollars and precious staff time?

Response: Senator, I agree there are real challenges facing our public lands agencies, and I want to work to solve those problems rather than make them worse. If confirmed, I will work with you to that end.

Question 3: As you know, the responsibility for suppressing wildfires is shared between the Interior Department and the Agriculture Department’s Forest Service. In recent years, as suppression costs have ballooned, critical resources have been siphoned away from programs to safeguard and enhance our public lands and are instead being used to fight wildfires. The Forest Service is now spending over half their budget fighting wildfires, which is up from 16% in 1996. If Congress does not act, the Forest Service will be spending 2/3 of their overall budget on wildfire in 2025.

Bipartisan bills have been introduced in both chambers to address this problem and you were a cosponsor of the latest House bill, the Wildfire Disaster Funding Act. As Interior Secretary, will you continue to support the measure and work with Congress to see it enacted?

Response: If confirmed, fighting forest fires will be a major effort of mine. We need to better manage our forests to reduce the risk and consequences of fire, better coordinate firefighting and firefighting policies among federal agencies, and we should develop a better method of funding firefighting efforts. I realize these are complex issues and that you have spent considerable effort working to address them. If confirmed, I want to work with you on these issues.

Question 4: In addition to the maintenance backlogs that exist on federal lands, which I am also concerned with, I am distressed about insufficient funding for staff on Park Service lands. For example, Sleeping Bear Dunes in Michigan has experienced more than a 7% reduction in base level park staff and more than a 12% reduction in its base budget between 2010 and 2015. If confirmed, will you support additional cuts in funding for park rangers and other on-the-ground personnel that are struggling to meet their mission with increasing numbers of visitors; or, is this an area in the budget that you think should be increased?

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Response: Senator, I want front-line Interior employees to love their jobs and be committed to their mission. That will require attractive benefits, ensuring that staffing levels are commensurate with the need, and that those employees have the resources they need to do their jobs well. You can be assured that I will be an advocate for on-the-ground personnel.

Question 5: U.S. Department of Agriculture grant programs through the Natural Resources Conservation Service provide hundreds of millions of dollars around the country for on-farm conservation projects that improve water management. The Bureau of Reclamation, through its WaterSMART water efficiency grant program, provides around \$30 million annually for water conservation projects proposed by its beneficiaries and other water suppliers. In June, USDA and Reclamation agreed to coordinate these programs for on and off farm funding to maximize the benefits of both programs, specifically in the Colorado River Basin. If confirmed as Secretary of the Interior, would you commit to continue this cooperation and make it a funding priority in your budget?

Response: If I am confirmed, I will review the coordination between DOI and USDA on these programs, as well as the funding levels for those programs and work with Congress to set appropriate funding levels for them.

Question 6: Farmers and ranchers in the west receive substantial assistance from federal conservation initiatives to improve sagebrush ecosystem, consistent with state wildlife recommendations. A key driver of these resources are the sage grouse conservation plans, which were a factor for the Fish and Wildlife Service decision against an endangered species listing for the sage grouse last year. Can farmers and ranchers be certain that you will continue to support funding for these land management efforts?

Response: I have not been fully briefed on the conservation plans that have been put into place for the sagebrush ecosystem. If I am confirmed, I will review those plans and work with Congress to set appropriate funding levels for them.

Questions for the Record from Senator Jeff Flake

Question 1: The Indian Gaming Regulatory Act, or “IGRA,” was intended to provide an economic engine for tribes on their traditional tribal lands. In Arizona, tribal casinos in the Phoenix metropolitan area have created some controversy. Late last year, the State of Arizona and the tribes agreed to amendments to their gaming compacts. Previous Secretaries of the Interior have rejected these compacts negotiated in good faith between tribes and states. Shouldn’t the Secretary foster the tribes’ collective rights to self-determination by giving deference to the compacts they negotiate?

Response: I am an advocate for tribal sovereignty and self-determination. In general, if a tribe and a state have reached an agreement, it should be given meaning, but I will have

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to learn more about specific instances such as the one to which you refer and I look forward to doing so.

Question 2: The Department's Colorado River Basin study identified a growing gap between water supply and demand in the basin. One of the options identified by the Department and the State of Arizona is desalination of seawater. Israel has been a world leader in desalination and there are a number of partnerships developing with Israel on water. These include the participation of Arizona Governor Ducey in a recent trade mission and water conference in Israel. What role do you see the Department playing in desalination technology and cooperation with Israel in the water field?

Response: Israel is our ally, and cooperation with Israel will be an important part of President Trump's foreign policy. Your question highlights one of the many ways that our country's cooperation with Israel can provide a benefit here at home. Finding new water supplies and securing existing supplies is important to all western state economies and desalination is one of the possible options. If confirmed, I look forward to learning more about this and working with you moving forward.

Questions for the Record from Senator Al Franken

Question 1: If you are confirmed as Secretary of Interior, you will be responsible for overseeing the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). With the multitude of problems in Indian Country today, from disturbingly high rates of youth suicide to a lack of sufficient economic opportunity and many others, we need a bipartisan commitment to address the living conditions on tribal lands. One of the most frustrating issues with the BIA has been the chronic underfunding of important programs and general lack of support from the federal government.

- a. As Secretary of Interior, would you advocate for strong funding for federal programs that support American Indians?

Response: Yes, as appropriate.

- b. Do you have a timeline for filling BIA positions?

Response: If confirmed, the timeline for filling positions at the BIA is the same as it is for all other positions – as quickly as possible.

- c. Will expand on your ideas for improving living conditions in Indian Country?

Response: I believe we need to listen to the tribes and we need to work to empower them, recognizing that each Tribe's situation is different.

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Question 2: Economic development is vital for improving Indian Country, and one area of opportunity is the energy sector. For example, there is significant potential for clean energy development in Indian Country—like wind, solar, and biomass.

- a. Will you commit to working with me to boost renewable energy generation on tribal lands, which would bring important funds and jobs to these communities?

Response: Yes. If confirmed, I will work with you.

- b. I have been working to fund the Tribal Energy Loan Guarantee Program (TIELGP), which was included in the Energy Policy Act of 2005 but has never been funded. This program would allow the DOE to guarantee up to 90 percent of the principal and interest of a loan issued to an Indian tribe for energy development. By leveraging federal resources, this program would encourage borrowers to partner with the private sector to develop energy projects. While I know that this program falls outside of the purview of the DOI, would you commit to working with me to get this program funded?

Response: I will commit to learning more about the program. I would be happy to work with the Secretary of Energy and you as appropriate.

Question 3: Many of the communities in my home state of Minnesota cannot safely rely on the water currently supplied to their homes. These communities and my state have worked tirelessly, investing millions of dollars, in a tristate water system known as the Lewis & Clark Regional Water System. A successful state and federal partnership, Lewis & Clark is funded by local communities, states and expected annual funds from the federal government. Like two water projects in your home state of Montana, federal funding for Lewis & Clark is allocated through the Department of Interior's Bureau of Reclamation. Nearly completed, all communities and states involved have paid their share of the project and in numerous cases, prefunded the necessary dollars to complete this critical water project. However, the federal share of the project has fallen short year-after-year, putting the project far behind construction schedule causing an increase in cost to the project. Will you support prioritizing the Lewis & Clark Regional Water System through the water funds allocated by the Bureau of Reclamation?

Response: I am unaware of the specifics regarding the funding for the referenced project, but I will look into it as the budget for the Department is developed, if I am confirmed.

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Question 4: I appreciate your support for the Land and Water Conservation Fund. In April of 2015, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and the Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board received one of 8 new Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership grants administered through the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) state and local assistance program for Sheridan Veteran’s Memorial Park. This grant is helping to connect low income communities to trail networks, an environmentally restored riverfront, and other outdoor recreation opportunities near Minneapolis’ newest war memorial. If confirmed as Secretary, will you commit to ensuring LWCF dollars continue to foster partnerships that connect people, particularly those in underserved communities, to safe, accessible places to enjoy the great outdoors and establish meaningful relationships with their communities and public lands?

Response: Senator, growing up in Whitefish, Montana, Glacier Park was the sort of national park I learned about as a kid. But I recognize that lots of kids don’t have the opportunity to visit parks like Glacier, and for them an urban park may be their gateway to our great national parks. I want our parks to serve and inspire all Americans, and I will work with you to accomplish that goal.

Question 5: Under what circumstances would support or oppose the transfer of public land to state governments? For example, if Congress passed a bill transferring large sections of public lands to the states, would you recommend that the President veto it?

Response: I generally oppose the sale or transfer of federal lands, and President-elect Trump shares that view. There are some situations in which commitments have previously been made, inholdings need to be swapped or exchanged, or land banks are well situated to address the needs of growing urban areas, where limited transfer is appropriate. However, to your question, while I would wait to evaluate any legislation based on its specifics, I am inclined to oppose legislation that would transfer “large sections of public lands to the states.”

Question 6: Do you support allowing state and local governments to manage federal public lands? From a practical standpoint, how is this different from transferring federal lands to states?

Response: Yes.

Federal lands belong to all Americans, but they need to be managed with particular consideration of the people in local communities whose lives and livelihoods depend on the land. Implicit in the notion of allowing local and state governments to manage federal lands is the belief that local and state officials will be more aware and respectful of the interests of their local constituents and that land will be managed differently based on local considerations. I believe that

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federal ownership and local management can provide the proper balance among interests and be a viable model for management of certain federal lands.

Question 7: According to the Bureau of Land Management’s statistics for Fiscal Year 2015, there are 32.1 million acres of public lands (approximately the size of Alabama) currently under lease for oil and gas activities. However, merely one-third of these acres are actually producing fuel. In fact, the United States has a record high 7,500 approved drilling permits that industry has yet to put to use. In light of this overcapacity, do you believe it is necessary for United States to open up additional public land for oil and gas production? If so, why?

Response: If I am confirmed, I will fully review the oil and gas leasing program at BLM and evaluate whether the acreage levels are appropriate.

Question 8: The United States has been chronically underfunding our National Parks for years. As you know, the parks currently face a more than \$12 billion backlog in deferred maintenance, including \$47 million in Minnesota. I appreciate that you have committed to working with Congress to solve this unacceptable deferred maintenance backlog.

- a. What do you feel would be the best way to approach this issue?
- b. Will you advocate including deferred maintenance in any infrastructure package the new administration is planning?

Response: As I said yesterday, I want to work to make our park system great again. In doing so, I look forward to working with you to find ways to address the maintenance backlog and enhance our parks’ infrastructure.

Question 9: Recently, there has been a lot of discussion about increasing coal production in the United States. Much of this discussion has centered around a supposed “war on coal” being launched by the Obama administration. However, rather than regulation, the decrease in coal jobs has been largely due to the steady progression of automation technology in coal mining, and that fact natural gas is now cheaper than coal due to innovations in hydraulic fracturing and horizontal drilling. One industry expert was quoted in the Wall Street Journal in December saying, “the truth is, gas has already made coal uneconomic.”

- a. If you are confirmed, you will be tasked with oversight of energy production on federal lands—including about 40 percent of our nation’s coal production. Given the current economic reality of energy what do you see as the future of coal?

Response: The Energy Information Administration has projected that coal will remain an important part of the American fuel mix for decades.

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a.b. The Obama Administration put a moratorium on new coal leasing on public lands while it assessed whether taxpayers were receiving a fair return for publically-owned resources. If you are confirmed, will you continue this process?

Response: I have not personally reviewed the Federal Coal Programmatic EIS scoping report published by the Bureau of Land Management, which I believe is the document you are referencing. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that decisions are based on objective science and transparency. I will examine the scoping document and visit with the Bureau of Land Management and determine the appropriate next steps to be taken as part of the NEPA process.

b.c. For a century DOI has managed all aspects of oil and gas development on federal lands. Do you believe it should exercise the same authority involving wells that are hydraulically fractured? For example, do you support the current requirement that wells on federal lands capture methane—rather than waste a valuable public resource by releasing a potent greenhouse gas?

Response: I have not been fully briefed on all the regulatory regimes for coal or for oil and natural gas development on federal lands. If I am confirmed, I will review both of these programs in order to determine what changes may be appropriate in the oil and natural gas leasing program.

Question 10: If confirmed, you will oversee the National Parks which currently has a major problem with sexual harassment in its workforce. As I understand it, Park Service employees with sexual harassment claims are forced to deal with a complex and opaque complaint process and are often afraid to come forward for fear of retaliation. How will you address the culture at the National Park Service that deters abused workers from coming forward with their claims? What steps will you take to ensure our national parks are safe for visitors and workers alike?

Response: If confirmed, as I described in yesterday's hearing, I will work to ensure we have zero tolerance policy for the sexual harassment in the workforce. In addition, if confirmed, I will need to learn more about the specific problems that exist and then address them in the context of a zero tolerance policy.

Question 11: With a changing climate, we are seeing longer wildfire seasons and more extreme fires. At the same time, more and more people in the United States are living in and around forests, grasslands, shrublands, and other vegetated natural areas – places commonly referred to as the wildland-urban interface (WUI). Approximately 70,000 communities nationwide are considered to be at

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high risk from wildland fire, including some in Minnesota. Defense of private property – much of which is located in the WUI – accounts for a large percentage of fire suppression costs. How will you work with the United States Forest Service to mitigate the costs of these fires while ensuring the safety of vulnerable communities?

Response: The issues surrounding the prevention of forest fires and funding for fire suppression efforts are tremendously important. If I am confirmed, I will fully evaluate the Department's current role in fire prevention and suppression and work closely with USDA, the Forest Service, the States and Congress to ensure that these programs are appropriately funded and managed.

Question 12: Do you believe that climate change impacts should be included in environmental reviews under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)?

Response: I have been informed that the Council on Environmental Quality has published guidance for all federal agencies, which requires them to include climate change impacts in environmental reviews under the National Environmental Policy Act. I have not studied the issue.

Question 13: Do you believe that climate change has a cost to society and that this social cost of carbon should be used in regulatory analyses?

Response: I have been informed that the Council on Environmental Quality has published guidance for all federal agencies which requires them to include the social cost of carbon in environmental reviews under the National Environmental Policy Act and other major federal rulemaking analyses.

Question 14: If confirmed, what will do you do to promote renewable electricity generation—including wind and solar—on public lands?

Response: Senator, I am a supporter of an all-of-the-above energy policy, and that includes the development of renewable energy projects and transmission projects on federal lands. That development should be conducted in accordance with the principles of multiple use and fully consider and preserve hunting, fishing and recreating on federal lands.

Question 15: One of the many impacts of climate change has been the increasingly difficult problem of invasive species. Large areas of public lands and waters managed by the Department of the Interior have been damaged by invasions of non-native plants and wildlife. This problem both significantly threatens our most valued ecosystems and places a difficult financial burden on federal and state wildlife management programs, which detracts from their other important duties. Minnesotans are on the frontlines of this problem with the onset

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harmful invasive species in our state such as emerald ash borer, zebra mussels, Asian carp, and Eurasian watermilfoil.

- a. What actions would you take to enhance effectiveness of invasive species control programs on public lands?
- b. The Lacey Act is the most important federal statute in addressing the spread of invasive species. If confirmed, would you enforce the Lacey Act in its current form and list potential invaders as injurious? Additionally, would you call for any legislative changes to be made to the Lacey Act?

Response: I share your concern, especially since my home state of Montana also has significant and numerous invasive species problems; most recently with a very worrisome invasion by zebra mussels. I think it is critical that federal land managers be encouraged and empowered to be good neighbors in controlling invasive species in cooperation with adjacent private land owners. We all need to work together if we are to succeed in defending our ecosystems, economy, and public health from the threats posed by invasive species. I will most definitely enforce the Lacey Act if confirmed, and I am aware that there is broad bipartisan frustration with the lack of an efficient process for listing injurious species under the Act. I will ask the Fish and Wildlife Service to provide me recommendations on how the Act's implementation may be approved, and if it seems that legislative changes may be helpful, I would be pleased to have that conversation with the Congress.

Questions for the Record from Senator Steve Daines

Question 1: You have been a strong partner in the House on improving treatment of our National Forests. As you know, in many ways, Montana is ground zero for obstructionist litigation which hold up common sense, collaboratively developed forest health projects. In the House, you introduced counterpart legislation to my *Litigation Relief for Forest Management Projects Act*. Senator Tester joined us in this effort as well as a cosponsor. This bill would avoid the effects of a disastrous 9th Circuit Court decision in *Cottonwood Environmental Law Center v. United States Forest Service (Cottonwood)* by codifying the Obama Administration's position into law.

In 2015, the Ninth Circuit Court ruled in *Cottonwood* that the U.S. Forest Service (FS) needed to reinitiate consultation with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) at the programmatic (plan) level following the 2009 designation of critical habitat for the Canada lynx. As a result of this ruling, courts have stopped projects during the consultation process throughout the 18 national forests inhabited by lynx. The Department of Justice (DOJ), advocating a view shared by the FS and FWS, argued that the Endangered Species Act does not require re-initiation of consultation on completed forest plans and that only project-level analysis is needed. The Tenth Circuit in 2007 ruled in favor of the FS/FWS' position in a similar case, *Forest Guardians v. Forsgren*.

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In May 2016, DOJ filed a writ of certiorari petition to the U.S. Supreme Court to ask for review of the Cottonwood ruling and resolve the conflicting circuit opinions. On October 11, 2016, the Supreme Court denied this request, allowing the Ninth Circuit's *Cottonwood* decision to stand. As such, federal lands in the states of Montana, Idaho, Washington, Oregon, Nevada, California, and Arizona must operate according to the *Cottonwood* ruling, and the impacts could spread to other circuits as well. According to the Obama Administration, the *Cottonwood* ruling could “shutdown land management,” substantially increases unnecessary paperwork requirements without conservation benefits, delays much-needed management projects, and encourages more litigation against important management projects. At least two forest management projects in Montana have been held up in Court as a result of the *Cottonwood* ruling.

Congress must act to reverse this disastrous ruling. Congressional action will require leadership from your Department and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and other land management agencies.

Will you commit to work with me and other colleagues to enact a legislative solution and protect worthwhile land management projects?

Response: I share your concerns about this issue. You have my commitment that, if confirmed, we will work together to address this.

Question 2: If it was not for your personal attention to shepherding the *Blackfeet Water Rights Settlement Act* through the House of Representatives, we would not have succeeded in enacting that historic legislation last Congress. As you know, our work is not finished for the Blackfeet people. In order to effectively implement the Compact and uphold our commitments to the Tribe, our state, and other water users in the Golden Triangle of our state—we need to fully-fund this water settlement.

Will you work with me through the Budget and Appropriations process to ensure robust funding for the Blackfeet Water Rights Settlement?

Response: Whether in Congress or the Administration, I am and will remain dedicated to ensuring that our commitments to the Blackfeet are met.

Questions for the Record from Senator Joe Manchin III

Question 1: Addressing invasive species

Controlling and managing Invasive species is a wide-ranging and constantly evolving challenge. As you know, Congressman Zinke, invasive species decrease biodiversity, damage infrastructure and negatively impact ecosystems. Congress has not been able to address this issue in a meaningful way, as no comprehensive legislation to address the

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treatment, management, and repair of invasive species has been signed into law. However there is a patchwork of laws, regulations, policies and programs in place to mitigate the damage of invasive species. One of the reasons managing invasive species is challenging in a state like West Virginia is because we are a heavily forested state, with considerable amounts of public lands and many large private landowners, including Timber Investment Management Organizations, Real Estate Investments Trusts, coal companies, forest products companies, and family forest owners. This patchwork of Federal, state and private lands makes for a challenging landscape, however it is obvious to me that this is an issue that needs to be addressed by the Federal government. If you are confirmed as Secretary, you will co-chair the National Invasive Species Council (NISC) along with the Secretaries of the Agriculture and Commerce.

What measures do you intend to undertake to prevent, eradicate, and control invasive species?

What steps can Congress take to help you address the issue legislatively?

Response: I share your concern, especially since my home state of Montana also has significant and numerous invasive species problems; including a number of forest pests that threaten the health of our forests. I think it is critical that federal land managers be encouraged and empowered to be good neighbors in controlling invasive species in cooperation with adjacent private land owners. We all need to work together if we are to succeed in defending our ecosystems, economy, and public health from the threats posed by invasive species. If confirmed, I will explore ways to improve the operations of the National Invasive Species Council, and actively engage with the Secretaries of Commerce and Agriculture to get off to a strong start on this issue. One place to start will be to explore how we may work with the States to cooperatively implement the recent framework for early detection and rapid response to new invasive species introductions. Eliminating new invasive species introductions before they become firmly established is the most effective and efficient way to avoid serious and expensive long-term problems from invasive species. Once I have undertaken a review of this issue, I would be pleased to explore with the Congress any legislative changes that might be helpful to better protect our environment, economy, and public health.

Question 2: Developing energy infrastructure

I am a longtime supporter of our nation's sportsmen and sportswomen. West Virginia's natural resources provide us with incredible vistas and outdoor recreational opportunities. I believe in protecting these resources for future generations of West Virginians and for our guests from around the nation and the globe. But, I am also a pragmatist and I believe that we must balance the economy and the environment. West Virginia has a long tradition of being an energy exporting state. That's a tradition that we are determined to continue but – in order to do so - our nation's energy infrastructure must be modernized and expanded in an environmentally responsible way. I want to

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make sure that, when these projects cross public lands, federal agencies with permitting authority are doing their part. I'm sure you are aware that the National Park Service, the Bureau of Land Management and other agencies are engaged in permitting several pipeline projects in my state. And I'm sure you know that the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) is the lead federal agency on these matters. The Department of the Interior is a big agency and while you have stated that you are supportive of responsible energy production, I'd like to get a better understanding of how you plan to manage infrastructure permitting and clarify duplications in the permitting process for pipelines.

What specifically will you do to ensure that your agencies' regional offices are being responsive to and transparent with project developers?

Response: As someone who has led the development of an EIS, I know how frustrating it can be to have another federal agency fail to participate as a cooperating agency. I will work to ensure consistency within the bureaus.

Question 3: The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) is a critical tool to ensuring environmental reviews are comprehensive; our natural resources are preserved; and the mitigation of environmental impacts are minimal. There is certainly room for improvement but energy companies rely on the NEPA process to provide them certainty and a "roadmap" for their projects. And, yet there seems to be increasing uncertainty when it comes to these projects - particularly when a federal agency does not participate as a "cooperating agency".

How will you work to encourage agencies like the National Park Service to act as a cooperating agency on a NEPA review in order to prevent duplication? Because I believe that would ensure that the Park Service is using its financial and staffing resources prudently in a manner that is not redundant.

Response: I have not been fully briefed on the cooperation between all of the Department's agencies on NEPA reviews. If I am confirmed, I will review these procedures and ensure that coordination is appropriate.

Questions for the Record from Senator Cory Gardner

Question 1: Senator Shaheen and I passed the Outdoor Recreation Jobs and Economic Impact Act in December 2016, and President Obama signed it into law. The law requires the Secretary of the Interior to work with the Secretaries of Commerce and Agriculture to measure the outdoor recreation economy. This marks the first time that the federal government will measure the outdoor recreation industry's contribution to our economy.

Should you be confirmed to be Secretary of the Interior, will you commit to supporting an ongoing, annual report on the economic impact of the outdoor recreation economy?

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Response: It is my understanding that the Secretary of Commerce is required to submit the referenced report. I will work with the Secretary of Commerce to support his efforts as appropriate.

Question 2: Will you commit to providing at least \$3 million in funding in the President's budget request for FY18 to the Arkansas Valley Conduit in Southeast Colorado and look for all opportunities to direct additional discretionary funding in FY17 to the Conduit?

Response: Senator, as we discussed in your office, I understand the importance of the Arkansas Valley Conduit, but I cannot make a commitment on behalf of the President-elect about his future budget requests. The most I can do is pledge to work with you on this, and I am committed to do that.

Question 3: As Secretary of the Interior, will you make a renewed effort to work with Tribes no matter what kind of energy resources they have, or potential resources, so they can make their own decisions to develop their own resources for the benefit of their members and the country?

Response: If confirmed, this will be one of my highest priorities. As I said at yesterday's hearing on my designation, tribal sovereignty is meaningful and important. I believe tribes should be able to make their own resource decisions for the benefit of their members.

Questions for the Record from Senator Martin Heinrich

Question 1: Will you work with western senators to make sure that renewable energy development and associated transmission projects will remain a priority on public lands, while protecting the places where we all love to hunt, hike, and fish?

Response: Senator, I am a supporter of an all-of-the-above energy policy, and that includes the development of renewable energy projects and transmission projects on federal lands. That development should be conducted in accordance with the principles of multiple use and fully consider and preserve hunting, fishing and recreating on federal lands.

Question 2: As the new administration looks at hiring freezes or budget cuts, will you commit to protecting critical functions at Interior agencies, including fire management, law enforcement, realty, and permit processing?

Response: I agree with you that those are critical DOI responsibilities, and I will work to ensure funding for those programs are adequate.

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Question 3: Congress enacted the Indian Reorganization Act in 1934 to help restore homelands for tribal governments. Interior Secretaries of both parties worked to move tribal fee lands into trust for nearly 75 years before the Supreme Court struck down a portion of this law in 2009. Since 2009, the Interior Solicitor's office has worked to ensure that the Administrative land to trust process will continue to work for tribes. Can you please share your thoughts for continuing the Administrative Indian land to trust process?

Response: I understand that the land into trust process is very important to the tribes. I will meet with the Bureau of Indian Affairs to gain a greater appreciation of the specific administrative challenges caused by the referenced 2009 decision and the efforts taken by the Solicitor's office.

Question 4: As you know, many national forests, parks, and lands were carved out of the ancestral homelands of Indian tribes. Many tribes retain their connections to these sacred lands and places. What are your views about ensuring that these lands remain under federal control, and the need for the Interior Department and other federal land managers to protect tribal sacred places and access to these places for Native Americans?

Response: Senator, as I said at the hearing on my designation, I believe federal lands should remain under federal control, and I deeply respect the rights and heritage of Indian tribes. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that the Department of Interior's management practices respect sacred places and Native Americans.

Question 5: Tribal water rights settlements like the Taos and Aamodt Settlement Agreements promise to resolve long-standing conflicts and reduce uncertainty over water rights. Will you commit to transparently implementing water rights settlements in a way that protects water rights and the environment while ensuring adequate future water supplies?

Response: I appreciate how important these tribal water rights settlements are throughout the western states and to the tribes. I am not aware of the specific issues regarding a lack of transparency in the area of water rights, but as a general matter I believe Interior should act in a transparent manner.

Question 6: Across the West, our quality of life, tourism, and outdoor recreation are driving an economic resurgence and sustainable, healthy rivers and streams, lakes, and reservoirs are foundational to this economic growth. How do we protect and promote these resources while ensuring we have reliable water supplies for farms, industry and municipal use?

Response: I believe we need to recognize that everything needs to be on the table when it comes to our water resources from increased conservation to additional infrastructure. If

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confirmed, I believe the executive branch and congress need to work together to address the issue of water supply and reliability for the next century.

Question 7: Facing persistent drought in the West, Congress has boosted support for the WaterSmart program, the Bureau of Reclamation's primary tool in promoting water conservation and modern, efficient water infrastructure in agricultural and municipal uses. Will you work with us on increased funding and capacity for WaterSmart and federal leadership on efficient water infrastructure?

Response: In the West, water infrastructure is the backbone of local and regional economies, including the infrastructure on Indian Reservations. If confirmed I think it will be important for the Department of the Interior to explore many ways in which it can provide assistance to local and regional efforts to improve water certainty. I look forward to learning more about the WaterSmart Program and how it can be used to improve local economies in the West.

Question 8: You have talked about working with states on Antiquities Act monument proclamations and policies, but you have not mentioned collaboration with affected tribes. Will you commit to meeting with and working with tribes and tribal communities whose ancestral lands and sacred sites are protected by Antiquities Act proclamations before making any decisions about them?

Response: Yes, if confirmed.

Question 9: The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service just finalized revisions to the eagle conservation/take permit program in December. Will you commit to work with industry to ensure a practical and workable implementation, including incorporating the latest data and an appropriate consideration of low-risk projects?

Response: I am not familiar with the specifics of this program. As a general matter, any program needs to be workable and practical to be successful. If it is not, it needs to be improved.

Questions for the Record from Senator Mazie Hirono

Question 1: In Hawaii and the Pacific Region, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service works closely with the Department of Defense (DoD) in ensuring that they meet their environmental obligations including requirements under the Endangered Species Act, the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. This work is critical as our nation continues to strengthen our strategic interests in the Indo-Asia-Pacific region. Yet, this coordination takes up a large part of Fish and Wildlife Service's resources in the Pacific Island Office.

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As Secretary of Interior, you will be responsible for managing the Fish and Wildlife Service and as such, I want to make sure you are aware of this engagement between the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the DoD. I want to work with you to both ensure that this important work can continue as well as to address other important resource management issues under the responsibility of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Hawaii and the Pacific Region.

Response: Senator, I do not know much about the relationship between the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Department of Defense on these issues. Thank you for bringing this to my attention, and I look forward to learning more about this important issue as we work together.

Question 2: While in the House you voted in favor of an amendment that would have blocked funding for any listed species for which the Fish and Wildlife Service has failed to complete a 5-year review as required by the Endangered Species Act even though the Fish and Wildlife Service failure to do so is due to insufficient appropriations by Congress. This amendment would have devastated conservation and recovery efforts for as many as 850 species across the country, 137 of which are in Hawaii.

As Secretary, will you work with Congress to ensure that sufficient funding is provided to Fish and Wildlife Service so that they can fulfill their duties, including completing 5-year reviews, to protect and recover our nation's endangered species?

Response: If I am confirmed, I will work closely with Congress to ensure that conservation and recovery programs are appropriately funded.

Question 3: Despite Hawaii and the Pacific Islands being home to a large percentage of endangered species, we have suffered from a lack of funding. For example, in FY 16 the Fish and Wildlife Service's Recovery Fund was \$17.8 million for Region 1. The Pacific Islands received only 37% of the funding, despite being home to over 90% of Region 1's endangered species.

Can you commit to working with me to provide more federal resources to Hawaii and the Pacific Islands in recovery funding for our endangered species?

Response: Senator, I recognize that Hawaii is a special place with unique needs. If I am confirmed, I will work with you to ensure that funding for recovery and conservation programs in Hawaii are appropriate.

Question 4: Funding for Fish and Wildlife Service's State Wildlife Grants is based on a formula that takes into account human population and land area, with the added caveat that no state receives less than 1% of funding. As Hawaii does not have a large land area or large human population, we receive the minimum amount of funding, despite having a disproportionately large need to protect our threatened and endangered species.

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If confirmed, can I count on working with you to either adjust the formula to account for need (including number of endangered species) or raise the minimum amount of funding that states shall receive?

Response: If I am confirmed, I will commit to fully review the funding formulas for the Fish and Wildlife Service's State Wildlife Grant program to determine whether adjustments to the program are appropriate. I will also work with you and Congress to ensure that funding levels for the program are appropriate.

Question 5: As you know, the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) is a priority for Hawaii. It drives local economies and is the cornerstone federal program that provides access to public lands for all Americans, and helps protect our incredible diversity of plants and wildlife that make Hawaii so unique and special, as previously mentioned.

Getting into specifics, I understand you supported legislation that reflected the Senate energy bill compromise language that permanently reauthorized the LWCF. Will you carry over that support into your role as Secretary? Will you work to ensure that annual full funding for LWCF is provided in your budget proposal including robust funding for critical federal land acquisition priorities? Along those same lines, will you work with me and other members of Congress to find a reliable long-term funding solution for LWCF?

Response: LWCF has my full support. I have cosponsored two bipartisan pieces of legislation to permanently reauthorize the program, have opposed my own Chairman's reform proposals, and was the only member of the Montana delegation to vote in support of the program's reauthorization and funding. As a Montanan, I have personally witnessed the good work LWCF does for local communities, the sportsmen and recreation community, and conservation. As the budget process moves forward, I look forward to working the President-elect and Congress to support LWCF's critical work. That includes identifying stable, diverse and long-term funding mechanisms to keep the fund viable for generations to come.

Question 6: Water security is becoming increasingly important across the nation. As an island state, we in Hawaii are in a unique situation where we must be self-reliant for our freshwater needs. Just this past fall I hosted a Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee field hearing to examine opportunities for federal and non-federal partnerships in watershed protection and efforts to improve water security in Hawaii.

During the field hearing a couple of Federally-funded projects that target specific geographic locations, including the Forest Service's Watershed Improvement Program and the Bureau of Reclamation's Western Watershed Enhancement Partnership, were mentioned. Due to Hawaii's limited endangered species resources and invasive species threat, coupled with the importance of maintaining the health of our forested watersheds,

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can I count on working with you to identify opportunities for similar DOI initiatives to focus on the Pacific Islands?

Response: Water security is important. I will work with you on opportunities for initiatives that could benefit the Pacific Islands.

Question 7: DOI's stated mission is as follows: "The Department of Interior protects and manages the Nation's natural resources and cultural heritage; provides scientific and other information about those resources; and honors its trust responsibilities or special commitments to American Indians, Alaska Natives, and affiliated island communities."

As Secretary, how do you plan to carry out the Department's mission? What will the Department look like in, say 2 years, compared to now? What parts of the Department do you seek to change or enhance?

Response: If confirmed, I intend to restore trust and strong management to America's public lands and resources. In our meeting in your office and at the hearing this week, I shared the impact that attending the ceremony at Yellowstone National Park commemorating the 100 year anniversary of the National Park Service had on me. I believe we need to ensure that our approach to responsibly managing America's public lands will make our children's children proud in the next century. If confirmed, I will review agency policies, resources, and priorities and look forward to the opportunity to meet with you to discuss areas that would benefit from changes or enhancements.

Question 8: In an op-ed that you wrote last spring you noted that it's our responsibility to "ensure our children and grandchildren's children enjoy the same outdoor opportunities that we have." In Hawaii a lot of our native species are found only in Hawaii and are under constant threat from invasive species, climate change, development, etc.

As Secretary of Interior, what will you do to ensure that our grandchildren's children in Hawaii get to enjoy our native species?

Response: Senator, during the hearing on my designation, you know that I referred on several occasions to my two granddaughters sitting behind me. I am committed to looking at issues facing the Department with a 100-year perspective. I want to ensure that our grandchildren's children look back and think, "They did right by us." Frankly, I don't know all that can be done to address the threat of non-native species, but, if confirmed, I will consult with you and Hawaiian officials, and we will work together to find the best possible solutions.

Question 9: The Senate Environment and Public Works Committee held a successful bipartisan hearing last year on the issue of marine debris. The Fish and Wildlife Service testified on how marine debris is harming wildlife and fouling coastal National Wildlife Refuges.

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Coming from a non-coastal state, what steps will you take to familiarize yourself with this global problem? Will you support the Fish and Wildlife Service and Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement to continue their participation in the Interagency Marine Debris Coordinating Committee? What other steps could the DOI take to help find global solutions to this growing problem?

Response: I am familiar with marine debris, given my 23 years in the Navy and I recognize that it is a serious problem. However, I will need to learn more about the specific role the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement have with the interagency committee.

Question 10: Many of our National parks are suffering severe damage by invasive species. Examples include pythons and other invasive wildlife in Everglades, wild boars and tree-killing insects in Great Smoky Mountains, and saltcedar and invasive grasses in Joshua Tree National Park. The parks in Hawai'i are particularly invaded. The forests of Hawai'i Volcanoes are under threat from many invasive plants, feral pigs, and the plant disease rapid o' hia death. The Park's unique birds are being decimated by mongooses, rats, and avian malaria.

What steps will you take to protect our National parks from invasive species?

Response: I share your concern, especially since my home state of Montana also has significant and numerous invasive species problems in our national parks. I think it is critical that federal land managers be encouraged and empowered to be good neighbors in controlling invasive species in cooperation with adjacent private land owners. We all need to work together if we are to succeed in defending our ecosystems, economy, and public health from the threats posed by invasive species. I am especially concerned that Hawaii's unique flora and fauna are vulnerable to invasive species. I would not want to see invasive species push any of these unique plants and animals onto the Endangered Species list. Once confirmed, I will ask the National Park Service to present me with options for better protecting our national parks from invasive species.

Question 11: I'm sure you are familiar with visitor concerns about noise from park overflights. I understand Glacier National Park deals with issue. Since the passage of the National Parks Air Tour Management Act of 2000 every national park unit with significant air tour operations (50 or more air tours annually) has been required to prepare an air tour management plan or agreement. This is a joint responsibility of the National Park Service and Federal Aviation Administration. There are 27 national park units that qualify for plans including two in my state, Haleakala and Hawai'i Volcanoes national parks. Yet only two parks have had plans completed thus far (Biscayne and Big Cypress) and both of those just last year.

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What will you do to protect the environment and visitor experience at our national parks from air tour noise?

Response: I hope to work to enhance the visitor experience in our Nation's National Parks across the board. Frankly, I have not given a lot of thought to the issue of air tour noise, but, if confirmed, I will, and I would appreciate your recommendations on how best to address the issue.

Question 12: Last Congress I cosponsored a bill introduced by Senators Murkowski and Cantwell called the "National Volcano Early Warning and Monitoring Program Act." As you know, we have a number of volcanoes in Hawaii and this bill would provide important updates as well as unify the monitoring systems of volcano observatories, including the Hawaiian Volcano Observatory.

As Secretary will you support this bill? Will you make volcano monitoring a priority for the Department and commit to working with myself and other members of Congress to advance this legislation?

Response: If confirmed as Secretary, I will fully support the mission and intent of the "National Volcano Early Warning and Monitoring Program Act". Advancing our technological capabilities in this area is important. Volcanos are an important applied science focus of USGS' Natural Hazards Mission Area. As a geologist, I am aware and fully appreciative of the natural hazards that we face, and will continue to support USGS's efforts to address these risks.

Question 13: When we had our courtesy meeting you said that what is important to me is important to you. In Hawaii there are a number of priorities affecting the state that are important to me and that fall within the purview of the Department. These include:

- securing our freshwater resources,
- Compact of Free Association,
- permanent reauthorization of and full funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund,
- protecting and recovering endangered species, and
- preventing and eradicating invasive species.

As Secretary of Interior, will you commit to working with me on these issues?

Response: Senator, I appreciate you taking the time to meet with me prior to the hearing on my designation. What is important to you is important to me. If confirmed, I look forward to working together to address these issues.

Question 14: Hawaii is the state most impacted by the three compacts of free association that the United States has entered into with the Republic of Palau, Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Federated States of Micronesia. I have worked in the past on a

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number of items, including fulfilling our financial commitments to Palau, working to restore Medicaid reimbursements for citizens of the Freely Associated States (FAS), and establishing a one-stop resource center to facilitate the resettlement needs of FAS citizens residing in Hawaii.

If confirmed, can Hawaii, Guam, the Northern Marianas, and American Samoa continue counting on your department—and enlist your assistance in dealing with other departments as well—to assist us in working to support U.S. states and territories with large FAS citizen populations?

Response: This is an important issue to me. The relationship between the US, our territories, and the Freely Associated States is significant and deserves special focused attention. If I am confirmed, I look forward to learning more and working with you on finding appropriate solutions to the issues they face.

Question 15: Protecting our freshwater resources is becoming increasingly important across the nation as well as to our national security. As an island state, we in Hawaii are in a unique situation where we must be self-reliant for our freshwater needs. Just this past fall I hosted a Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee field hearing to examine opportunities for federal and non-federal partnerships in watershed protection and efforts to improve water security in Hawaii.

During this Congress I will be working to identify and provide federal resources to address water security both in Hawaii and across the nation. Will you make finding solutions to protect our water resources a priority at the department? How will you prioritize funding resources for USGS streamgages and other observational equipment that we rely on? Can I count on you as Secretary to work with me on this issue?

Response: As I mentioned in my opening testimony at my confirmation hearing, water resource security is of critical importance to our nation. I understand and appreciate your concerns related to the complex interaction between fresh groundwater “lens” and saltwater and the critical need to prioritize self-reliance and freshwater security for Hawaii and the country as a whole. I support your efforts to identify potential opportunities for federal and non-federal partnerships related to watershed protection and water security, and look forward to working with Congress in developing its funding priorities for developing and protecting our freshwater resources.

Question 16: As our military focuses on the strategic importance of the Indo-Asia-Pacific region, we expect an increase in traffic throughout the Pacific region. With that traffic comes an increased threat of invasive species in Hawaii, which is the gateway to the mainland U.S. from Asia.

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As Secretary, what resources will your department provide to assist the Pacific island communities in protecting against this threat? Do you agree with the proverb that “an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure?” If so, can I count on working with you to protect our environment from existing and anticipated threats?

Response: If confirmed, I will work to enhance coordination with the Department of Defense and the Pacific island communities to reduce the risks posed by invasive species. I definitely agree that “an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.” One place to start will be to explore how we may implement the recent framework for early detection and rapid response to new invasive species introductions. Eliminating new invasive species introductions before they become firmly established is the most effective and efficient way to avoid serious and expensive long-term problems from invasive species.

Question 17: As Secretary, you will be responsible for managing over 500 million acres of public lands.

What are your priorities for utilization of these lands for the public good?

Response: Senator, as I said at the hearing on my designation, I am inspired by the inscription on the Roosevelt Arch in the Yosemite National Park that reads, “For the Benefit and Enjoyment of the People.” I believe the public good is best met if we keep both of those goals in mind. That means that different portions of our federal lands will be managed differently; that our priorities will vary depending on the land. In some cases, we should honor the Muir model in which man has a light footprint and simply observes nature. In other areas, lands should be managed in accordance with the Pinchot principles of best-practices and allow for greater impact and management by man including the production of resources to benefit our lives and the economy.

Question 18: As Secretary, you will be making decisions that impact our water, air, land, and oceans. You have a record of questioning the scientific consensus on climate change and have alluded to our nation’s energy independence being more important than addressing climate change.

Energy independence does not necessarily have to come at the cost of our nation’s environment. Do you see opportunities for advancing our nation’s energy independence in tandem with mitigating climate change?

Response: Yes. From my years in the Navy, when I observed energy production around the world, I know that energy production in accordance with reasonable regulation here in the United States is preferable to energy production with little or no regulation elsewhere. As a result, I believe the production of domestic energy can both reduce our Nation’s dependence on energy imports and benefit the environment.

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Question 19: The Department of Energy, Department of Interior, and Bureau of Ocean Energy Management released their 2016 National Offshore Wind Strategy Report and discussed several important improvements to BOEM’s regulatory review process. The report recommended that BOEM’s existing regulatory process could be improved and made more efficient. This may include establishing more predictable review timelines and maintaining a reasonable level of flexibility given the early stage of the industry’s development.

Do you agree to work with the DOE to ensure the regulations and process that govern offshore wind development should be both efficient and fair to help facilitate the growth of infrastructure projects under the DOI’s jurisdiction?

Response: Yes, if confirmed.

Question 20: With the first offshore wind turbines currently spinning off the coast of Rhode Island, the potential for offshore wind development in the United States is finally starting to be realized. Part of the reason for the Block Island Wind Farm’s success is the extensive ocean planning process and corresponding stakeholder engagement process that helped identify an area for the wind farm that provided the least conflict with other users, and kept the broader ocean community well-informed of the project as it developed.

Do you agree ocean planning on a broader regional and national scale could also support other offshore renewable energy projects? Other areas that are also being considered for offshore wind energy development have not benefited from this level of community involvement and conflict identification prior to being bid. How will you direct BOEM to take into consideration the concerns of the fishing, shipping, and other pertinent industries early on in the lease sale process?

Response: President Obama issued an Executive Order entitled Stewardship of the Ocean, Our Coasts, and the Great Lakes in June 2010. If I am confirmed, I will review the Department’s compliance with this Executive Order and determine what steps the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management is taking to address the concerns of the fishing, shipping and other pertinent industries within the lease sale process.

Question 21: The Department of Interior is charged with managing the nation’s wildlife, natural resources, and public lands. All of these are threatened by climate change. Whether it be sea level rise stealing protected land from coastal National Wildlife Refuges, increased drought threatening migratory bird habitat, or milder winters allowing parasites, like ticks, to overburden large game animals like moose – the wildlife and habitats under the Department of Interior’s charge are at the frontline of the negative consequences of climate change. USGS, FWS, National Park Service, and other DOI agencies have all concluded that the science behind climate change is well established and have for years issued rules and followed policies consistent with this position. In 2014 you stated climate change “[is not a hoax, but it’s not proven science either.](#)”

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Will you direct DOI agencies to reconsider their decisions to act in accordance with climate science?

Response: Senator, as I said at the hearing, the Department's decisions in the past and future should be based on sound science. As I review past decisions and make new decisions, I will keep sound science in mind.

Question 22: The U.S. Geological Survey is an agency wholly dedicated to scientific research and advancement. Its talented and well-respected researchers have authored more than 130,000 publications since the agency's founding in 1879 and are looked to as national experts in the natural sciences.

Do you accept the scientific research and other products that have been produced by USGS? Further, the top mission area listed on [USGS's website](#) is currently "climate and land use change." Will you in any way try to limit USGS's work on climate change issues?

Response: As a student of geology, the USGS has a rich history and a proud tradition. I have been told various, sometimes inconsistent, things about the current work at the USGS labs, and I need to learn more. If confirmed, I will look at those issues. I will try to ensure that priorities are appropriately addressed. I anticipate that I will learn more about the USGS's role in climate change research versus the other the role of other agencies and departments if I am confirmed.

Question 23: How will you navigate the dual responsibilities of overseeing the protection of the nation's environment (including working to mitigate the effects of human-driven climate change) with managing extractive energy projects that are producing the fuel that is driving climate change?

Response: Managing these responsibilities in a balanced and appropriate manner is an essential duty for the Secretary of the Interior. If I am confirmed, I will work closely with the officers of the Department, the public, stakeholders and Congress to develop and execute Departmental policies in an appropriate manner.

Question 24: The Obama Administration was a leader in accelerating the deployment of clean energy on federal lands. Powering Our Future, through the Department of Interior, looks to permit gigawatts of renewable energy on public lands by 2020.

Do you support siting renewable energy projects on public lands? What will you do, if confirmed, to keep in place existing programs like Powering our Future?

Response: If I am confirmed, I will review these programs and work closely with Congress to ensure the appropriate funding levels for the Powering our Future program.

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Question 25: Some examples of invasive species that threaten our native habitat include mammals, birds, reptiles, plants, insects, and worms. These bioinvaders threaten all kinds of ecosystems across the country, ranging from swamps to deserts, seacoasts to mountain tops. Countering these threats would seem to require coordination across many players – federal and state agencies, Tribes, landowners, and other private entities. The National Invasive Species Council was created to facilitate this coordination. As you know, the Secretary of the Interior co-chairs the Council, and provides its staff.

How would you strengthen the Council’s leadership in these areas?

Response: If confirmed, I will explore ways to improve the operations of the National Invasive Species Council, and actively engage with the Secretaries of Commerce and Agriculture to get off to a strong start on this issue. I agree that we need to cooperatively engage with States, tribes, local governments, and private landowners to make progress on invasive species. One place to start will be to explore how we may work with the States and others to cooperatively implement the recent framework for early detection and rapid response to new invasive species introductions. We also need to create a more effective linkage between the National Invasive Species Council policy operation in Washington DC and the on-the-ground federal land managers across the country who deal with invasive species on a daily basis.

Question 26: Many people think that detecting invasive species as soon as possible and taking effective action to eradicate or contain them is a crucial component of an effective invasive species program. The Department (of Interior) and Council recently published a national “early detection and rapid response” strategy.

What steps would you take to implement this strategy?

Response: I agree that early detection and rapid response to new invasive species introductions is the most effective and cost-efficient way to protect our environment, and economy and public health from invasive species. If confirmed, I will direct my staff to quickly analyze the new framework for early detection and rapid response to new invasive species introductions, and provide me with recommendations on how we might work cooperatively with the States and others to more effectively and efficiently deal with new invasive species introductions.

Question 27: When President Richard Nixon signed the Endangered Species Act (ESA) into law on December 28, 1973, it had already passed the U.S. House of Representatives by an overwhelmingly vote of 355 to four. Over the last 42 years, the ESA has become one of our bedrock environmental laws. Among other things, it helped to save the American bald eagle, the whooping crane, and the black-footed ferret from extinction. The ESA has prevented the extinction of 99% of species placed under its protection and remains the most important law our nation has ever passed to protect imperiled species.

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Polling shows that the ESA continues to have overwhelming support from the American public (90% of Americans support the ESA).

Will you continue to enforce and strengthen this law that has proved so vital in preventing species extinction?

Response: If confirmed, I will swear an oath to uphold all of the laws of the United States, which includes the implementation of the Endangered Species Act.

Question 28: During our courtesy meeting you mentioned that one of your top priorities as Secretary will be to build trust. In the past you have come out on different sides of some very important issues. For example, in 2010 you sent a letter to President Obama urging him to take action on climate change but then later questioned the science that supports climate change. You also support keeping public lands public but just recently voted in favor of a rule that allows the House to consider federal land transfers cost-free and budget-neutral.

When you talk about building trust what do you mean? Do you mean within the Department of Interior, between the Department and the public, or between the Department and Members of Congress? Also, given your support for conflicting actions in the past, how do you specifically plan for people within the Department, the public, and Members of Congress trust you to maintain the priorities you note today throughout your term as Secretary?

Response: If confirmed as Secretary of the Interior, I intend to be a listening advocate and promote openness and transparency within the Department and its 70,000 talented employees as well as with local, state and federal elected officials, other experts and organizations, and the American public. 20 percent of U.S. land is managed by the Department and, if confirmed, I intend to work with Congress throughout my tenure to meet the priorities of the Trump Administration and those outlined for you today.

Question 29: During our meeting you mentioned that your three priorities for the Department are establishing trust, addressing DOI's infrastructure needs, and reorganizing the Department. Along the lines of infrastructure, you had mentioned not wanting to use the Land and Water Conservation fund to pay for the \$12.5 billion maintenance backlog within the National Park Service.

What specifically will you do as Secretary to address our infrastructure needs and how will you pay for it? What specific steps are needed to "grow our economy?"

Response: Senator, if confirmed, I am going to work with and on behalf of President-elect Trump to include funding to address our national parks' infrastructure backlog in

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infrastructure legislation. That package is envisioned to address national needs of which the backlog in the national parks is only a part, and I do not know how the administration will propose to pay for the entire package.

As to growing the economy, there are many steps that need to be taken, but a sound energy policy is one of the underpinnings of a strong and growing economy, and I am dedicated to ensuring that our federal resources are available in accordance with best management practices to support that goal.

Question 30: During our meeting you mentioned that one of your three priorities for the Department is to reorganize.

How would you go about reorganizing the Department? Can you elaborate on the specific steps you will take in reorganizing and the expertise you will take into consideration during the process?

Response: Senator, if confirmed, I intend to undertake a 100-year review of the Department's structure and management. I don't know what conclusions that review will reach, but I can imagine they will touch on fundamental issues about the manner in which the Department is structured, where its functions are located, and changes that should be made in resource allocation.

Question 31: If confirmed as Secretary, what would your top three policy objectives be for the Department? For example, one of Secretary Jewell's priorities for the Department was "ensuring healthy watersheds and sustainable, secure water supplies." In carrying out those three policy objectives how much consideration would you give to public and community input? What resources do you intend to rely upon to inform these policy objectives?

Response: Senator, as I said at the hearing on my designation, if confirmed, my three highest priorities are:

1. Restoring trust by working with rather than against local communities and states;
2. Prioritize the estimated \$12.5 billion backlog in maintenance at our national parks, and;
3. To ensure that the professionals on the front line, our rangers and field managers, have the right tools, right resources, and flexibility to make the right decisions that give a voice to the people they serve.

As to the amount of public and community input I will consider, I will say that public and community input is key to my highest priority of restoring trust. The Department must be a good listener.

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Question 32: During our courtesy meeting you mentioned the issue of sexual harassment within the National Park Service (NPS), that you have discussed it with Secretary Jewell, and that you have a zero tolerance policy.

What specifically will you do to prevent further occurrence of this within NPS? What steps will you take to hold employees accountable for reports of sexual harassment? How will you address retaliation? Will you institute reporting mechanisms that make it easier for victims to come forward with reports?

Response: Senator, I have zero tolerance for sexual harassment. If confirmed, I will ensure that the leadership at all levels of the Department understands how seriously I take the issue, and the issue will be addressed. In fact, I take this issue so seriously that, rather than give you a complete answer today, I would ask for you to give me some time, if confirmed, to better understand exactly what needs to be done and then to discuss with you my findings and the steps I will take to address the issue.

Questions for the Record from Senator Bill Cassidy

Question 1: Congressman, the President-Elect has talked many times about his desire to create jobs—a message well received in my state. In fact, he’s talked about “big league” jobs and establishing American energy dominance. The outgoing Administration will point to the declining unemployment rate (4.7 percent in December). Yet the Labor Participation Rate, now at 62.7 percent, has also steadily declined since President Obama took office, and that is not a positive trend. The Labor Participation Rate when President Obama took office in January 2009, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, was 65.7 percent. As I just mentioned, it has steadily declined and has remained at 62 percent since April 2014.

In my state, the oil and gas industry is one of our largest employers. The industry not only employs thousands of hard working men and women but the dollars my home state of Louisiana receives from energy development goes towards rebuilding our coastline. Due to the Obama Administration’s regulatory tactic of “death by one thousand cuts” as well as the decline in the price of oil, folks in my state have been losing their jobs and struggling to find adequate employment to

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provide for themselves and their families. Just last week there was a headline in one of my state's local newspapers that read "Baker Hughes to close Crowley facility." Another headline last month read "Shreveport near top for U.S. job losses".

According to the website 24/7WallStreet.com which analyzed data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Lafayette, Houma and Shreveport, Louisiana all rank at or near the top for job loss in 2016.

While I recognize that oil prices are one of the key drivers for development, regulations also play a pivotal role for the industry.

Congressman, how will you, if confirmed, work to fulfill the President-Elect's commitment to create a regulatory climate that encourages both American energy dominance and job creation while at the same time honoring the Department's mission to protect natural resources?

The departing Interior Department leadership repeatedly used oil prices and lack of industry interest as rationale for rescinding planned lease sales in the Atlantic and Artic.

- i. Do you believe that the current regulatory environment contributed to "lack of interest" in the prospect of OCS lease sales?
- ii. Considering these leases take several years to develop, do you believe temporary low oil and gas prices are an adequate reason to withhold lease acreage?

Response: Senator, I believe that an uncertain regulatory environment in which companies have reason to doubt whether permits will be issued causes potential lease bidders to reduce the price they are willing to pay. Regulatory uncertainty is reflected in bid prices. I believe reforms are necessary if we want to ensure both that production will be done in accordance with reasonable regulation and our taxpayers will receive true fair value for lease sales.

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Question 2: Last Congress, the committee passed my legislation that opened up access to the Eastern Gulf of Mexico and expanded the scope of Outer Continental Shelf state revenue sharing. At the end of last Congress, a majority of Senators, with a bi-partisan vote, supported a later iteration of my legislation that would expand revenue sharing for Gulf and Mid-Atlantic States as well as Alaska. In my opening statement, I mentioned that federal revenues from energy developed in the Gulf go to rebuild Louisiana's coast, which is vital to my state's future.

Unfortunately, the Obama Administration's 5-year OCS plan and aggressive effort to name new or expand current national monument areas means that states such as mine or Virginia where they have large budget deficits are missing out on additional or new dollars that could flow to states.

- iii. What are your thoughts on the most recent 5-year OCS plan proposed by the Interior Department, and will you pledge to work with myself and others in Congress to ensure the next five year plan pursues the goals of energy independence and robust job growth?
- iv. What are your thoughts on increasing and expanding the ability for coastal states to receive revenue payments from the federal leases on the OCS?

Response: If I am confirmed, I will work to implement President-elect Trump's energy independence policy. That will certainly require a require a review of our OCS lease plans, and I commit to working closely with Congress, the States, local governments and stakeholders to develop a comprehensive policy towards OCS leasing.

Questions for the Record from Senator Catherine Cortez Masto

Question 1: Minute 319 provides important guidelines for both Western States and Mexico regarding the management of the Colorado River's water, but expires at the end of 2017. The Upper and Lower Basin states have been working on a new agreement with Mexico, Minute 3 2X, which has been proposed based on Minute 319 and evolving basin conditions. What steps can the Department take to ensure the process is smooth and timely? Can you commit to working closely with the Western States to ensure their concerns are addressed before Minute 319 expires?

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Response: I understand there is a longstanding tradition of collaboration on Colorado River between the Secretary of the Interior and the Colorado River basin states. That's a tradition I intend to maintain. I will ensure that we work closely with basin states over the course of the year.

Question 2: Will you commit to strong tribal consultation when it comes to decisions, activities, and land management on Bureau of Land Management land?

Response: I have proudly represented the tribes of Montana in Congress. I appreciate the importance of tribal consultation and will work to implement a culture that ensures opportunities for consultation.

Question 3: In 2014, Department of Interior employees were under threat in Nevada during a standoff over BLM land use. As you are aware, the danger facing Interior employees has increased over the past several years, and we have seen an rise in similar incidents. If you are confirmed as Secretary of the Interior, you have an obligation to protect your employees from harm. What are your plans to protect the health and welfare of your employees? How will the Department provide the training and resources necessary to handle these kinds of situations in the future?

Response: If confirmed, and as someone who has spent 23 years in the Navy, nothing will be more important than ensuring Interior's employees have a safe place to work. I will learn more about the specific challenges the agency faces. If confirmed, I will work to free up some of the decision-making on the front lines and collaborate with local law enforcement, which I believe will foster greater trust.

ZINKE'S RECORD ON CONSERVATION AND PUBLIC LANDS

Op-eds & LTE

- [October 9, 2015](#): Op-ed in Montana papers about the previous day's markup, entitled 'LWCF foes need to take a hike,' was published.
- [November 22, 2015](#): LTE to the Washington Post about the importance of LWCF.
- [December 2, 2015](#): Billings Gazette op-ed urges Republicans to return to their conservation roots to support LWCF.

Leading Conservation Legislation

- [January 26, 2015](#): Became an original cosponsor of H.R.528, the Recreational Fishing and Hunting Heritage and Opportunities Act.
- [February 24, 2015](#): Cosponsored H.R.845, the National Forest System Trails Stewardship Act.
- [April 30, 2015](#): Voted against S.Con.Res. 11 – FY2016 Budget, which included a provision to sell federal lands.
- [June 15, 2015](#): Introduced H.R.2787, the East Rosebud Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.
- [July 14, 2015](#): Cosponsored H.R.1814, to permanently reauthorize the Land and Water Conservation Fund.
- [October 8, 2015](#): In a full Committee markup, voted in support of Rep. Huffman's amendment to H.R.2406, the SHARE Act, which would have permanently authorized LWCF. Rep. Zinke was the only Republican to support.
- [April 15, 2016](#): Cosponsored H.R.3173, the Sportsmen's Conservation and Outdoor Recreation Enhancement Act.
- [April 29, 2016](#): Cosponsored H.R.5114, the 21st Century Conservation Service Corps Act of 2016.
- [July 8, 2016](#): Cosponsored H.R.4151, to amend chapter 2003 of title 54, United States Code, to fund the Land and Water Conservation Fund and provide for the use of such funds, and for other purposes.
- [July 13, 2016](#): Introduced H.R.5778, the Alex Diekmann Peak Designation Act of 2016.

Congressman Zinke on public lands ownership

- In July, 2016, Zinke [resigned as a delegate](#) to the RNC because of a platform plank to sell public lands.

- In June 2016, Zinke [voted against a bill](#) offered by former Committee Chairman Don Young (R-AK), H.R. 3650, the State National Forest Management Act of 2015. This bill would permit up to two million acres of public lands owned by the U.S. Forest Service to be transferred to state ownership.
- In July of 2015, Zinke [again voted](#) for a Polis amendment to the Department of Interior Appropriations bill that would have prohibited the Department from using funding in violation of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976. Zinke was one of eight Republicans joining Democrats in support.
- In May 2015, Zinke [voted against the GOP budget](#) because it included vaguely-written language that would allow the sale of public lands.

Congressman Zinke has been a loyal and fierce advocate of LWCF since entering Congress:

- March 23, 2015: Signed appropriations request, led by Reps. Thompson and Meehan, advocating for ‘robust funding’ of the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) in Fiscal Year (FY) 2016.
- [April 15, 2015](#): First challenged Chairman Bishop’s concerns about LWCF at a hearing focused on LWCF and land acquisition, also reiterated our federal lands are not for sale.
- [July 14, 2015](#): Cosponsored H.R.1814, to permanently reauthorize the Land and Water Conservation Fund.
- September 22, 2015: Signed a bipartisan letter to Speaker John Boehner urging immediate reauthorization of the LWCF prior to its expiration on September 30.
- [October 8, 2015](#): In a full Committee markup, voted in support of Rep. Huffman’s amendment to H.R.2406, the SHARE Act, which would have permanently reauthorized LWCF. Rep. Zinke was the only Republican to support.
- [October 9, 2015](#): Op-ed about the previous day’s markup, entitled ‘LWCF foes need to take a hike,’ was published.
- [November 18, 2015](#): Directly challenged Chairman Bishop’s LWCF reform discussion draft, entered into the official Committee record over 19 letters from Montana groups about why this bill won’t work for the state.
- [November 22, 2015](#): Submitted an LTE to the Washington Post about the importance of LWCF.
- [December 2, 2015](#): Crafted Billings Gazette op-ed urging Republicans to return to their conservation roots to support LWCF.
- December 12, 2015: Sent letter to Chairman Hal Rogers urging funding of the Holland Ranch and Little Sheep properties in Beaverhead County.
- [December 18, 2015](#): Was the only Member of the Montana delegation to vote in support of the H.R.2029, the omnibus package, which included a three year

reauthorization of the program (after the program had lapsed in September) and an increase in funding, up to \$450 million, for FY2016.

- March 22, 2016: Signed appropriations request, led by Reps. Thompson and Meehan, advocating for 'robust funding' of LWCF in FY2017.
- May 20, 2016: Joined the Montana delegation in sending a letter to Director Dan Ashe, USFWS, in support of the Whitefish Lake Watershed Project.
- [May 25, 2016](#): Voted with Democrats on the House floor on a Motion to Instruct Conferees to include permanent reauthorization of LWCF in the conference of the House and Senate energy bills.
- [July 8, 2016](#): Cosponsored H.R.4151, to permanently reauthorize the Land and Water Conservation Fund

Conservation & Sportsmen support Zinke

- "We applaud Rep. Zinke's leadership on behalf of Montana's sportsmen and women and thank him." – **Land Tawney, President and CEO Backcountry Hunters and Anglers**
- "We appreciate Congressman Zinke's commitment to hunting and fishing through his support of the SCORE Act." – **Joel Webster, Director of Western Lands, Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership**
- "Montana Outfitters and Guides Association thanks Congressman Zinke for his vote and willingness to stand behind Montana's prized conservation and recreation values." – **Mac Minard, Montana Outfitters and Guides Association**
- "RMEF has learned Congressman Ryan Zinke (R-MT) is meeting with President-elect Trump today about possible appointment as Secretary of Interior, Secretary of Energy or Secretary of Veterans Affairs. Congressman Zinke's appointment to any of these cabinet posts would of course be important for Montana, but we'd really like to see him at Interior, given his understanding of and support for sportsmen, public lands and natural resource issues." - **David Allen, President and CEO of Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation**
- "Montana is fortunate to have a representative like Ryan Zinke in Congress," **said K.C. Walsh, president and owner of Bozeman-based Simms Fishing Products.** "Whether in Washington, D.C., or here at home, he fights for our land, water and people and supports Montana's thriving outdoor recreation economy. I am proud to join Outdoor Industry Association in support of Congressman Zinke's reelection."

- “Congressman Zinke understands the importance of Montana’s and our nation’s public lands and knows the benefits that outdoor recreation businesses bring to the economy of one of the most naturally beautiful states in the country,” said **OIA Executive Director Amy Roberts**. “His ability to find common sense solutions to protect our lands and waters and growing Montana’s outdoor recreation economy is why we are supporting his reelection this year.”

ZINKE'S RECORD ON ENERGY AND MINERAL RESOURCES

Op-eds

- [April 10, 2015](#): Don't let Gateway Pacific become next Keystone
- [July 10, 2015](#): Montana coal workers deserve a fighting chance

Oil, coal and gas legislation

- [January 6, 2015](#): Cosponsored H.R.161, the Natural Gas Pipeline Permitting Reform Act
- [January 6, 2015](#): Cosponsored H.R.3, the Keystone XL Pipeline Act
- [January 13, 2015](#): Cosponsored H.R.287, the American Job Creation and Strategic Alliances LNG Act
- [February 4, 2015](#): Cosponsored H.R.702, to adapt to changing crude oil market conditions.
- [March 25, 2015](#): Cosponsored H.R.1616, the Natural Gas Gathering Enhancement Act
- [March 26, 2015](#): Cosponsored H.R.1644, the Supporting Transparent Regulatory and Environmental Actions in Mining Act
- [October 9, 2015](#): Cosponsored H.R.3734, the Mining Schools Enhancement Act
- [December 3, 2015](#): Voted for H.R. 8, the North American Energy Security and Infrastructure Act, which included Zinke's H.R. 2358, the Electricity Reliability and Forest Protection Act
- [December 18, 2015](#): Zinke Makes History: Lifts the Ban on Crude Oil Exports
- [May 17, 2016](#): Daines, Zinke Introduce Legislation to Give States & Tribes Say in Energy Development
- [September 8, 2016](#): In Historic Vote, House Committee Passes Two Zinke Bills: Recognition of Little Shell and Certainty for States and Tribes Act

Congressman Zinke is a vocal and active supporter for coal, oil, and gas development

- [February 10, 2015](#): Zinke: The EPA Is Causing Montana to Bleed Jobs
- [February 24, 2015](#): Ryan Zinke Blasts Obama Veto of the bipartisan Keystone CL Pipeline
- [March 15, 2015](#): Zinke Calls for DoD Investigation into Col. Buck of Army Corps of Engineers
- [April 9, 2015](#): Rep Zinke presses BLM on fracking inexperience

- [July 28, 2015](#): Ryan Zinke and Bipartisan Coalition Urges Army Corps of Engineers to Complete Environmental Study on Gateway Pacific Terminal
- [August 3, 2015](#): Zinke on EPA Plan: Montana Knows Best
- [September 22, 2015](#): Zinke to DOI: "Sage Grouse Listing Clearly 'Not Warranted'"
- [October 23, 2015](#): Rep Zinke Supports AG Fox's Challenge of EPA
- [January 29, 2016](#): Zinke Urges President Obama to Meet Montanans And Understand What's At Stake
- [February 5, 2016](#): Zinke Statement on Obama's Oil Tax
- [March 16, 2015](#): Rep. Ryan Zinke Announces Permanent Indian Coal Production Tax Credit
- [April 20, 2016](#): Rep. Ryan Zinke's Statement on the Senate Energy Bill
- [May 9, 2016](#): Zinke: Crow Coal Terminal Killed by Army Corps of Engineers Political Actions
- [June 14, 2016](#): Rep. Zinke & Billing's Union Leader, Mike Johnson, hold hearing fighting for Montana coal jobs
- [June 30, 2016](#): Zinke & Daines Defend Montana Coal Country, Blast DOI Regulations
- [July 14, 2016](#): Zinke Applauds Passage of Department of Interior Appropriations, which includes Zinke's provisions to end Obama's federal coal moratorium and blocks new coal, gas and oil regulations
- [November 15, 2016](#): Zinke weighs in on new BLM rule against oil and gas development on federal and tribal land

Pro-Energy Groups and Tribal leaders support Zinke and his Certainty for States and Tribes Act

- "Tribes have long been cut out of the conversation when it comes to our own land. We want and need to develop our coal in order to provide jobs, services, and education to our people, but the federal government is making it near impossible. Congressman Zinke's leadership has been critical for the Crow to develop our coal," – **Dana Wilson, Vice Chairman of the Crow Tribe**
- "As a Montanan it makes me proud to know that Senator Daines and Representative Zinke are working for a better relationship with the Department of the Interior. I hope that this will save coal towns like mine, and give us the opportunity to prosper and keep Montana an energy exporter for many years to come." – **Ashley Dennehy, Colstrip United Co-Founder**
- "The State of Montana and the Musselshell County's fiscal health and stability are directly tied to the coal industry. Musselshell County is very dependent on the

health and vitality of the coal industry. The legislation Senator Daines and Congressman Zinke are proposing will ensure the voices of our communities, state and industry are being heard and good policy is being made.” –

Musselshell County Commissioners

- “The legislation introduced by Senator Daines and Congressman Zinke brings fairness, stakeholder input, and transparency to the Department of the Interior’s activities related to the Mineral Leasing Act. Balancing the use of our natural resources with environmental protections that are second to none is a far better approach than simply keeping valuable resources in the ground.” – **National Mining Association President and CEO, Hal Quinn**

ZINKE'S RECORD ON TRIBAL ISSUES

Legislation

- [January 12, 2015](#): Introduced H.R. 286, the Little Shell Tribe of Chippewa Indians Restoration Act of 2015
- [January 14, 2015](#): Was an original co-sponsor for H.R. 360, the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Reauthorization Act of 2015
- [January 22, 2015](#): Co-sponsored H.R. 511, the Tribal Labor Sovereignty Act of 2015
- [March 19, 2015](#): Introduced H.R. 1522, the Indian Coal Production Tax Credit
- [April 16, 2015](#): Co-sponsored H.R. 1842, the Indian Health Service Health Professions Tax Fairness Act of 2015
- [July 15, 2015](#): Co-sponsored H.R. 3080, the Tribal Employment and Jobs Protection Act
- [March 2, 2016](#): Co-sponsored H.Con.Res122, the PROTECT Patrimony Resolution
- [May 17, 2016](#): Introduced H.R. 5259, the Certainty for States and Tribes Act
- [June 12, 2016](#): Was an original co-sponsor for H.R. 2760, the American Indian Trust Responsibility Review Act of 2015
- [July 5, 2016](#): Introduced H.Res.807, Expressing support for designation of May 5, 2017, as "National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Native Women and Girls"
- [July 6, 2016](#): Introduced H.R. 5633, the Blackfeet Water Rights Settlement Act, which was signed into law by President Obama on December 16, 2016, as part of the S.612, the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation.

Letters

- [March 2, 2015](#): Sent a letter in support of funding for State and Tribal Wildlife Grants.
- [April 21, 2015](#): Strongly urged the Department of the Interior and Department of Justice to work expeditiously within the confines of Chairman Rob Bishop's new tribal water compact requirements to review, assess, and advance the Blackfeet Water Rights Settlement.
- [October 14, 2015](#): Requested Chairman Bishop include of H.R.286, the Little Shell Federal Recognition Bill, in a future markup following a successful subcommittee hearing vetting the legislation.
- [December 4, 2015](#): Following up with the Department of the Interior about ensuring the Blackfeet Water Settlement continues to include important language and funding as established in the Birch Creek Agreement.

- [March 24, 2016](#): Sent a support letter on behalf of the Northern Cheyenne Tribe to assist in accessing grant funding to revise their tribal constitution.
- [April 7, 2016](#): Sent a follow up letter to Deputy Secretary Connor of the Department of the Interior, urging the agency to finish work on the Blackfeet Water Settlement so the bill could be considered in a subcommittee hearing.
- [April 7, 2016](#): Advised the Department of the Interior and the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau to engage in sufficient government-to-government consultation about new regulatory standards, which was previously not occurring.
- [April 18, 2016](#): Joined the Montana delegation in sending a letter of support for the Montana Attorney General's application for the National Sexual Assault Kit Initiative competitive grant.
- [July 6, 2016](#): Engaged the Department of the Interior and Department of Justice about following through on meeting Chairman Bishop's tribal water compact criteria in order to allow the bill to be passed out of Committee.
- [August 5, 2016](#): Joined the Montana delegation's efforts urging FEMA to grant the Fort Peck Tribes' request for a major disaster declaration.
- [September 30, 2016](#): Urged House Leadership to allow the Blackfeet Water Compact to continue to be included in a final conference Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) package.
- [November 28, 2016](#): Joined Western Members in urging the President-elect to continue to maintain the Special Assistant to the President for Native American Affairs position.

Press Releases

- [January 1, 2015](#): Zinke Introduces Legislation to Extend Federal Recognition to the Little Shell Tribe
- [March 16, 2015](#): Rep. Ryan Zinke Announces Permanent Indian Coal Production Tax Credit
- [March 18, 2015](#): Zinke Calls on House to Advance Little Shell Recognition
- [September 29, 2015](#): House Holds First Hearing for Little Shell Federal Recognition in Years
- [November 17, 2015](#): Ryan Zinke votes to return sovereignty to tribes
- [April 26, 2016](#): Zinke Announces More than a Million Dollars in Grants for Montana Tribes
- [May 9, 2016](#): Crow Coal Terminal Killed by Army Corps of Engineers Political Actions
- [May 17, 2016](#): Daines, Zinke Introduce Legislation to Give States & Tribes Say in Energy Development

- [May 24, 2016](#): Zinke, Barnes & House of Reps. Hold First Ever Hearing on Blackfeet Water Compact
- [June 14, 2016](#): Video: Rep. Zinke & Billing's Union Leader, Mike Johnson, hold hearing fighting for Montana coal jobs
- [June 30, 2016](#): Zinke & Daines Defend Montana Coal Country, Blast DOI Regulations
- [July 6, 2016](#): Zinke Introduces Blackfeet Water Compact
- [July 14, 2016](#): Zinke Applauds Passage of Department of Interior Appropriations
- [September 8, 2016](#): In Historic Vote, House Committee Passes Two Zinke Bills: Recognition of Little Shell and Certainty for States and Tribes Act
- [September 26, 2016](#): Rep. Zinke Announces More Than \$520,000 in Grants for Montana Tribes
- [September 26, 2016](#): Zinke Announces \$1.1 million in Funding for Tribal Law Enforcement
- [December 8, 2016](#): Zinke-led U.S. House Passes Blackfeet Water Compact, Calls on Daines & Tester to whip Senate Democrats
- [December 13, 2016](#): Zinke & Daines Hail Passage of Blackfeet Water Compact

Tribal leaders support Zinke Legislation

"Tribes have long been cut out of the conversation when it comes to our own land. We want and need to develop our coal in order to provide jobs, services, and education to our people, but the federal government is making it near impossible. Congressman Zinke's leadership has been critical for the Crow to develop our coal," – **Dana Wilson, Vice Chairman of the Crow Tribe**

"We appreciate all that Congressman Zinke has done to support us by introducing H.R. 286. He has tirelessly fought for our people and to restore our federal recognition. We hope that Congress will listen to the strong voices in the State of Montana and pass Mr. Zinke's legislation." – **Gerald Gray, Chairman of the Little Shell Tribal Council.**

"What a truly historic day for the Blackfeet Nation and the entire state of Montana. Congressman Zinke has proven himself to be a true champion of the Blackfeet Nation, and thanks to his leadership in the House, we are closer than ever before to victory." – **Chairman Harry Barnes of the Blackfeet Nation.**

From: Cameron, Scott
To: [Ryan Nichols](#)
Subject: Fwd: RZ Docs
Date: Tuesday, February 21, 2017 10:36:01 AM
Attachments: [RZ - Committee Hearing Promises .pdf](#)
[RZ QFR Responses 1-17-17 SENR.pdf](#)
[RZ Record ConservationSportsmen.pdf](#)
[RZ Record EnergyMineralResources.pdf](#)
[RZ Record Tribes.pdf](#)

Ryan,

Please scan through all these documents and see if there are any instances where Rep. Zinke says anything about the budgets for Reclamation, CUPCA, or USGS, and if so, let me know what they are, by Friday noon.

Thanks,

Scott

Scott J. Cameron

Special Assistant

Office of the Secretary of the Interior

Desk 202 208 0969

Cell 202 706 9031

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Chambers, Micah <micah_chambers@ios.doi.gov>

Date: Tue, Feb 21, 2017 at 10:13 AM

Subject: RZ Docs

To: Virginia Johnson <virginia_johnson@ios.doi.gov>, Benjamin Keel <benjamin_keel@ios.doi.gov>, Katharine Macgregor <katharine_macgregor@ios.doi.gov>, "Cameron, Scott" <scott_cameron@ios.doi.gov>, "Magallanes, Downey" <downey_magallanes@ios.doi.gov>

Cc: James Cason <james_cason@ios.doi.gov>, "Domenech, Douglas" <douglas_domenech@ios.doi.gov>

All. I've attached the list of promises from his confirmation hearing along with a couple position papers and his QFR responses. Be glad to clarify any issues or questions as they come up if you'd find that helpful.

--

Micah Chambers

Special Assistant / Acting Director

Office of Congressional & Legislative Affairs

Office of the Secretary of the Interior

PROMISES, PROMISES

Congressman Zinke's Opening Statement Promises

Overall Commitment

“When asked about what my goals might be, I would say there are three immediate tasks.

The **first** is to restore trust by working with rather than against local communities and states. I fully recognize that there is distrust, anger, and even hatred against some federal management policies. Being a listening advocate rather than a deaf adversary is a good start.

Second, is to prioritize the estimated 12.5 billion dollars in backlog of maintenance and repair in our National Parks. The President-elect is committed to a jobs and infrastructure bill, and I am going to need your help in making sure that bill includes shoring up our Nations treasures.

And **third**, to ensure the professionals on the front line, our rangers and field managers, have the right tools, right resources, and flexibility to make the right decisions that give a voice to the people they serve.”

Senate Hearing Promises

Alabama, Jeff Sessions
None

Alaska, Lisa Murkowski

- Travel to Alaska
- Review King Cove access road issue
- Work with the people of Alaska to be sure promises are kept re the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act
- Conduct a formal review with the Park's service and wit NFW on the regs and then work with the state of Alaska re management decisions
- Conduct formal review of the Obama Administration's actions that took resource-bearing lands and waters in Alaska off the table - can the actions be reversed?

Arizona – visit second, Jeff Flake

- Travel to Arizona
- Review Tribal water rights issues
- Review Lower Colorado River drought contingency plan to be certain that Arizona has enough water
- Commitment to work with the Tribes and other parties in Arizona to move the Hualapai settlement forward, and to get the necessary clarifications to the White mountain Apache tribe settlement

Colorado, Cory Gardner

- Travel to Colorado
- Commit to work with Congress to make LWCF permanent
- Committed to look at DOI across the board, especially BLM, re moving agencies to the West
- Work to protect the private water rights and work with Congress on permits and water storage projects

Hawaii, Mazie Hirono

- Travel to Hawaii,
- Climate Change debate – more commitment in research
- Water research commitment – nothing specific
- Concerns on sexual harassment at NPS – need zero tolerance
- Travel to Guam, Puerto Rico, Palau, Marshall Islands, and Micronesia requested by Hirono

Idaho, Jim Risch

- Travel to Idaho, visit NIFC in Boise
- Sage grouse – FWS and BLM management review process
- Wild Fire plans/funding

Illinois, Tammy Duckworth

- Concerns on sexual harassment at NPS, what will you do other than listen to the front line?

Louisiana, Bill Cassidy

- Travel to Louisiana
- Leasing permit – complete review
- Coastal impact issues
- National Parks review
- Pipeline review process

Maine, Angus King

- Funding for maintenance of the National parks to address the backlog
- Attempt to fully fund the Land and Water Conservation Fund

Michigan, Debbie Stabenow

- Travel to Michigan
- Sexual harassment issue – create a work environment for victims free of fear of retaliation
- Great Lakes concerns – advocate funding for FWS to control invasive species (Carp)
- Support USGS science
- Support the right to clean water

Minnesota, Al Franken

- Travel to Minnesota

- Climate Change debate – more commitment in research
- Support for LWCF

Montana, Steve Daines

- Tribal water right agreements concerns
- Fossil fuel permit process – complete review
- Gas flaring – complete review
- Sage grouse – complete review
- Wild Fire funding – complete review

Nevada, Catherine Cortez Masto

- Concerns on federal land exchanges
- Commit to guarantee that tribal members on the 32 reservations will have a seat at the table when it comes to decisions, activities, and land management near their communities
- Address the wild horse and burro problem
- Commitment to working with the states on drought contingency plans

New Mexico, Martin Heinrich

- Travel to New Mexico
- Climate Change debate – commitment to more research
- Continue to work together on access issues
- Support for LWCF
- Pursue the pillage and profiting side of repatriating a sacred shield from an auction house in Paris working with the State and Justice Departments

North Dakota – visit third, John Hoeven

- Travel to North Dakota
- Dakota access pipeline protest – need BIA law enforcement to resolve situation-make sure the rule of law is followed
- Gas flaring – complete review
- Review Wild Fire management/funding
- Review buffer stream rule

Ohio, Rob Portman

- Travel to Ohio
- Help with funding the National Parks Centennial Act fully in the next appropriations cycle
- Review stream buffer rule in Eastern Ohio

Oregon, Ron Wyden

- Travel to Oregon
- Seek collaboration on bipartisan healthy forest issues
- Klamath River project – complete review
- Review wild fire funding
- Support for LWCF

Tennessee, Lamar Alexander

- Wild Fire review
- Look at allocation of funding between the Smokies and other parks
- Agreed to look ahead and think about ways to motivate and incentivize millennials by teaching the importance of the great outdoors.

Utah – visit first, Mike Lee

- Travel to Utah, talk to the people affected by the monument designation, and return to DC and make a recommendation to the President.
- Sage grouse – review policy
- Monument(s) – review
- Federal land exchange discussion – specific ask

Vermont, Bernie Sanders

- Climate Change analysis – RZ to further study
- Improve life (healthcare and education) for Native American people throughout the country

Washington, Maria Cantwell

- Travel to Washington
- Get rid of the maintenance backlogs in National parks
- Continue work on the Yakima River Basin project support
- Review/update of coal permits
- The war on coal – taxpayers' fairness
- Tribal concerns review sovereignty and tribal rights
- Pacific Gateway Terminal, follow NEPA process and complete EIS before making any decisions
- Technology review of LiDAR, and push for funding on the next budget request
- Look at ways to support the Spokane Tribe on their dam construction settlement

West Virginia, Joe Manchin

- Travel to West Virginia
- Discussion about appropriating AML funds

Wyoming, John Barrasso

- Travel to Wyoming
- End the moratorium on federal coal leasing
- Support efforts to reverse the venting and flaring rule under the Congressional Review Act
- Sage grouse – commit to returning conservation and management authority back to the states

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Questions for the Record from Chairman Lisa Murkowski

Question 1: From 1944 to 1982, the Interior Department conducted oil exploration in the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska, leaving behind 136 well sites in need of environmental remediation and proper plugging and abandonment. While I secured \$50 million in 2013 to clean up many of these legacy wells, by 2019, when that funding is exhausted, the Department estimates there will still be 29 wells in need of remediation. If you are confirmed as Secretary, will you commit to working with me to develop a plan to expedite the cleanup of all remaining wells, rather than allowing piecemeal, bare minimum federal efforts to continue year after year?

Response: Madam Chairman, I believe that cleaning up those legacy wells should be a priority, and, if confirmed, I look forward to working with you to achieve that goal.

Question 2: Fisheries and tourism are vital to the livelihoods of thousands of Southeast Alaskans, but the Canadian government is permitting new hardrock mines that could threaten transboundary watersheds if they do not adhere to strong environmental standards. While the State Department is generally the lead on this issue, one of Interior's agencies, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, has provided grant funding to study water quality on the Stikine, Taku, and Unuk Rivers. This will help establish a baseline and protect our ability to seek damages in the event of an environmental mishap under terms of a treaty between the U.S. and Canada. Are you willing to engage on this issue, consider increasing transboundary water studies, and consult with other Departments to encourage Canada to take all necessary steps to protect the environment in this region?

Response: If confirmed, yes.

Question 3: Will you review recently completed and ongoing Resource Management Plans in Alaska to ensure that these plans are consistent and do not prevent access to resources needed for economic development?

Response: If confirmed, yes.

Question 4: Will you staff the Alaska Special Assistant to the Secretary positions, both in Anchorage and Washington, DC?

Response: As I have discussed with you and your staff, Alaska deserves special attention given the large Federal footprint and impact on the state. With this in mind, if I am confirmed, I will work with you to fill the Special Assistant position based in Anchorage, and learn more as to why the position in Washington was eliminated.

Question 5: Will you ensure that all Interior agency actions affecting Alaska are consistent with recent principles set forth in Supreme Court decision in the *Sturgeon* case, requiring that agency organic acts' interpretations and all agency actions be consistent

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with the Alaska Statehood Act, the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, and the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act?

Response: I have been informed that the Supreme Court in the *Sturgeon* case, recognized that when passing the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act, Congress appreciated that Alaska is different in many respects from the lower 48 states in law. To the extent that the Congress has recognized such differences in the law, I will work to ensure that those differences are properly recognized in agency decisions.

Question 6: Will you review BLM's recent decision to require new cadastral survey standards for lands being transferred to the State of Alaska and Native corporations, which are opposed by the State, and which could affect the dependability of land title?

Response: If confirmed, yes.

Question 7: One of the greatest challenges facing Alaska is that our economic backbone, the Trans-Alaska-Pipeline System, is running three-quarters empty. It now carries just about 500,000 barrels per day—not due to a lack of resources, but instead an almost blanket lack of permission to access our federal areas. If you are confirmed as Interior Secretary, will you make it a priority to work with me, as well as Senator Sullivan, Congressman Young, and Governor Walker, to develop a plan to refill the Trans-Alaska Pipeline?

Response: President-elect Trump has declared energy dominance to be a strategic economic and foreign policy goal of the United States and that he intends to unleash America's \$50 trillion in untapped shale, oil, and natural gas reserves. Accomplishing that goal will, in part, depend on increasing flow on the Trans-Alaska Pipeline, and, if confirmed, I will work to ensure that happens.

Question 8: A critical element of statehood is the primary authority to regulate resident fish and wildlife and establish the means, methods, seasons, and bag limits for the taking of such resident fish and wildlife. This state authority also extends to federal lands unless and until expressly and specifically countermanded by Congress using its Property Clause authority. Congress later provided that federal land designations and administration were not to diminish this State authority. Do you concur that states, possess primary authority to regulate hunting and fishing on federal lands?

Response: Madam Chairman, I agree that, in general, states have primary responsibility for wildlife management and that authority generally extends to federal lands. Moreover, I am committed to collaborating with state wildlife managers to ensure that we jointly conserve our wildlife resources.

Questions for the Record from Ranking Member Maria Cantwell

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Question 1: If confirmed, do you intend to serve the entire four-year term as Secretary?

Response: Yes.

Question 2: Have you severed all ties with the Special Operations For America super PAC you formed in 2012?

Response: Yes.

There was a complaint filed against the Special Operations For America super PAC with the Federal Election Commission in 2014 that alleged improper contributions to your congressional campaign. What action did the FEC take on that complaint?

Response: Because I no longer have any role at Special Operations For America and am not a party to the complaint, I do not know all the actions the FEC has taken on that matter, but I do understand it remains under review.

Have you severed ties with SEAL PAC? If not, what involvement will you have with it if you are confirmed as Secretary? What steps will you take to avoid any conflicts of interest or the appearance of any conflicts of interest resulting from your association with SEAL PAC?

Response: SEAL PAC is my leadership PAC, and I will step down from my position with the PAC upon confirmation if confirmed.

If confirmed, I will abide by the recusal policy of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources which requires that I:

- (1) Abide by the recusal requirements imposed by federal conflict of interest laws and the Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch;
- (2) Seek the advice of my designated agency ethics officer before proceeding whenever faced with a situation that may give rise to an actual or apparent conflict of interest, and;
- (3) Adhere to the principles of ethical conduct and avoid any actions creating the appearance of violating the Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch

Question 3: Thinning at-risk ponderosa pine forests and re-introducing prescribed fires (when the conditions are acceptable) is an idea supported almost universally by the scientific community, the environmental groups, and the timber industry. Will you be helpful in getting the pine pilot we developed here last Congress—a program to expedite those thinnings—enacted?

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I know the House prevented any wildfire or forestry legislation from being enacted at the end of last Congress—I suppose thinking they'd have a better chance this Congress to enact some of the sweeping ideas and environmental waivers that have been floating around. But don't you think a program focused on collaborative projects in the most at-risk forests—which are supported by science—are a better approach to protecting our communities, strengthening our timber industry, and restoring our forests?

If confirmed, will you be supportive of fixing the fire-borrowing problem that plagues the Federal wildland-firefighting agencies? And working within the Administration and with your current House colleagues on putting in place a plan that takes this issue off the table once and for all?

Response: If confirmed, I will work with you, Members of the House of Representatives and my colleagues within the Administration to get a handle on the fire-borrowing problem.

Question 4: The Department of the Interior has put into place a robust scientific integrity policy. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the Department's Bureaus and Offices, including the Secretary, are using the highest quality science, subject to rigorous scientific and scholarly standards, to inform decision making. This policy is also in place to ensure that the production and use of science at the Department is insulated from political intervention.

What are your views on scientific integrity and how will you ensure that the highest standards of scientific integrity are maintained at the Department of the Interior?

Response: If confirmed, I will work to ensure that the U.S. Department of the Interior depends on the best available science for agency decision-making. I will review agency policies and guidance to ensure that scientific integrity underpins agency action.

Question 5: The U.S. Geological Survey is the Nation's primary earth science agency and is responsible for producing the science to ensure that our nation is prepared for hazards like floods and earthquakes, produces our nation's maps, assesses our nation's energy and mineral resources, conducts science necessary to understand and manage our nations lands and waters, and produced critical satellite imagery which is all over the world and by our own military and civilian agencies. Each of the Department's bureaus also produce science needed to carry out their missions.

What do you believe is the role of science in informing decision-making and how will you ensure that the USGS and science at the Department is properly resourced to provide for the safety and prosperity of our country?

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Response: The U.S. Department of Interior will rely on objective science and rigorous scientific review to inform agency decisions. I look forward to reviewing agency resources at the U.S. Geological Survey and other divisions if confirmed.

Questions for the Record from Senator John Barrasso

Question 1: In December 2016, the National Park Service issued its Record of Decision (ROD) for the Moose-Wilson Road Final Comprehensive Management Plan. The Moose-Wilson Corridor is a 7.1-mile stretch of road at the southern end of the Grand Teton National Park. Public access to the corridor is highly valued by locals, state residents, and national and international visitors alike for the unique opportunity it provides to view wildlife and enjoy the natural setting and beauty of the Grand Teton National Park.

The 2016 ROD represents a dramatic shift in the management approach for the Corridor from the 2007 Final Transportation Plan by severely limiting the public's access to this national park, forcing a 30-plus mile rerouting; eliminating a multi-use pathway from the southern entrance despite 2 tragic deaths from vehicle-cyclist collisions in this park; and reversing course on the 2007 decision to reroute the northern segment of the Road out of important wildlife habitat and wetlands. The Park Service has decided to limit access to the Corridor to no more than 200 vehicles—a threshold that lacks any rational scientific or factual basis, and will require new construction of 3-lane queuing station on both ends of the Corridor essentially cutting off public access to the Park. The second Environmental Impact Statement spent millions of taxpayer dollars for 7.1 miles of road planning – intended to keep the public out. The park even says it may be 2-4 years of through-road closures to pave 1.7 miles of the road and a spur entrance – which raises serious questions of intent to habituate the public to keep out of their national park.

Given the contrived and arbitrary nature of this decision and the dramatic shift from the Final Transportation Plan, will you consider reopening the Record of Decision (ROD) for the Moose-Wilson Road Final Comprehensive Management Plan?

Response: Senator, I am not sufficiently informed of the details of the situation to make a judgment today. However, access to our public lands is one of my highest priorities, and, from your description, it appears this may be an example of a situation that needs attention. I commit that, if confirmed, I will review this situation and consult with you further.

Question 2: In Wyoming, and other states across the West, agencies have identified limited land parcels that would be more suitable for management or ownership by the state, county, or other entity. Administratively, these lands could be made available for sale, transfer, or other means of disposal, but change in the status of these lands is limited by agency use of employee time and funding priorities. Given your support for H.R. 1214, the National Forest Small Tracts Act Amendments Act of 2015, will you commit to

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prioritizing funds for disposal of lands that have been identified, agreed upon, and approved by the respective agencies?

Response: I remain committed to managing our federal land in a way that best serves those who use it. Wyoming and Montana are very similar. Both our states understand the challenges and opportunities associated with Federal Land. I supported H.R. 1214's unanimous passage because it is common sense. While I oppose the large-scale sale or transfer of public land, small parcel exchanges or conveyances that benefit the local community have received my full support as a Congressman and will continue should I be confirmed as Secretary of the Interior.

Questions for the Record from Senator Ron Wyden

Question 1: When working on difficult forestry issues, which I've been doing for over 20 years, you learn that no one gets everything they want but everyone must get something they need. My O&C bill brings people together, it gets the harvest up, and it protects bedrock environmental laws. I understand the urge to streamline process, but forestry policies that stack the deck in favor of one side won't work, particularly if you're interested in rebuilding faith in the federal government, which you noted in your remarks and in our meeting.

Litigation reform bars the path to the courthouse and sufficiency language essentially hands forests over to just one side of the debate. Coupled together, you create a scenario where the actions of one side are deemed automatically compliant and the other side has no way of challenging the action. That's the definition of stacking the deck and it will drive the two sides of an issue further apart, rather than bringing them together in a collaborative way.

How would you encourage collaboration in forestry while balancing the needs of all interests and avoiding reforms, like sufficiency language, that hand the entire deck over to one side?

Response: I appreciate your concerns about the need for collaboration in balancing the needs of all interests while avoiding policies that stack the deck for one side of any issue. As a member of the Natural Resources Committee in the House, I supported legislation that would have expanded the collaborative model to help resolve natural resource conflicts on our public lands. I would like to work with you and the other members of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee to provide appropriate authority to the Department of the Interior to expand and protect the work of the Resource Advisory Committees under the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act, the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program, and the Community Wildfire Protection Plans that have been collaboratively developed under the Healthy Forest Restoration Act.

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Question 2: Representative Zinke, in our meeting, I told you about my bill, the Recreation Not Red-Tape Act, to cut the bureaucratic red tape that stands in the way of getting more people outdoors and opening access to America's special places. Recreation is an economic driver, particularly in rural areas, with studies showing recreation is a \$646 billion economy.

As Secretary, will you commit to working with me on my bill and prioritizing outdoor recreation and its vast economic potential on public lands, without sacrificing critical environmental protections?

Response: Senator, I appreciate the time you took to meet with me prior to the hearing. As we discussed, I believe public lands should be available for the enjoyment of all, and, if confirmed, outdoor recreation will be a priority of mine, and I believe recreation can occur while respecting and caring for the environment.

Question 3: Throughout the process of developing the Klamath water management agreements in Southern Oregon, the Bureau of Reclamation, under the direction of the Secretary of Interior, was a critical player in helping with stakeholder negotiations. Those agreements have expired and the future of the Klamath Basin remains uncertain. Are you familiar at all with what is happening in the Klamath Basin?

Response: Senator, I am somewhat familiar with the issues in the Klamath, but, if confirmed will need to learn a great deal more. I hope I will have the opportunity to visit the area with you and learn from you what needs to be done.

Question 4: Can you commit to working with me and the other members of the Oregon delegation and to supporting the Bureau of Reclamation and their efforts to help solve this complex problem in the Klamath Basin?

Response: If confirmed, yes.

Question 5: I've introduced the Wildfire Disaster Funding Act for the last several congresses, and I know you cosponsored the House companion bill in the past. While the issue of wildfire funding has been primarily a Forest Service issue, wildfires don't pay any attention to jurisdictional borders and they don't care who manages the land they're burning, so as Secretary of Interior, this is an issue you'll have to address. Do you think the practice of fire borrowing should be ended?

Response: Thank you for your leadership on the Wildfire Disaster Funding Act. The entire Montana delegation has cosponsored this bill because Western states like ours intimately know the devastation of forest fires. I understand the importance of fixing the current wildfire borrowing system, but I believe it is only one component of the problem. As Montana's Congressman, I have been an active proponent of forest management reforms so wildfires are less severe. Active management reforms will get to the root of

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the problem and lessen the burden of fighting wildfires. I fully agree that our firefighting funding mechanisms must be reformed, but it must be part of a comprehensive solution. I look forward to crafting those measures with you if I am confirmed.

Question 6: Do you think controlling the 10-year average cost of fires by freezing it at a certain level, or using some other budget control tool so it doesn't continue to erode the agency budgets, help the agencies better budget for and fund fires in the future as well as fund other non-fire programs in forest management and recreation?

Response: As you know, we are both supporters of the Wildfire Disaster Funding Act. I do believe these budget reforms would provide relief to the agencies to better invest in other priorities. However, if we do not tackle comprehensive management reforms, forest health will continue to deteriorate and escalate the potential for severe forest fires. Should I be confirmed, I look forward to working with you and your colleagues on comprehensive solutions that fix our budget process and management shortfalls.

Question 7: I'm sure you're aware of the situation that unfolded at the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge in Harney County Oregon this time last year and the disruptions it caused in the local communities. I was grateful that federal officials coordinated closely with the County Sheriff and Commissioners to ensure that community members were safe and that the rule of law was preserved. Incidents like this, led by extremists, that compromise our public lands are very concerning and I'm just glad it ended without escalating further.

If you are confirmed as the Secretary of Interior, you will be in charge of managing National Wildlife Refuges, Wilderness Areas, and recreation lands, in an era where hostility toward federal lands and federal officials is rampant, particularly in rural areas.

What will you do to ensure the protection of not only our incredible public lands that have been set aside by Republican and Democratic Presidents and Congresses, but also the protection of your employees, like the employees at the Malheur Refuge, who are not just federal employees, but Oregonians?

Response: Senator, as someone who has led soldiers in combat, I am committed to the safety of the Department's employees. I am also committed to restoring trust by freeing up our employees to make decisions and to collaborate with local law enforcement if things get difficult.

Question 8: Oregon is no stranger to an ESA listing, so ranchers and conservationists took a front seat in the collaborative efforts to establish land management plans to prevent one. After all the collaborative success, the last thing that the people of my state want to see is an Endangered Species Act (ESA) listing of the greater sage grouse. Fortunately, that was avoided in September 2015, when the Fish and Wildlife Service decided that listing the bird was unwarranted. However, FWS's decision was

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predicated on the strength of federal sage grouse conservation plans, without which, the bird would likely have been listed.

As secretary, can you outline what steps you will take to support the robust implementation of both federal and state grouse conservation plans, so that we can prevent an ESA listing and continue to support and encourage collaboration?

Response: I believe that the goals of the Endangered Species Act, which are to halt and reverse the trend towards species extinction, are very important. I am aware that there are several grant programs within the Department of the Interior to provide federal funding towards species recovery efforts. If I am confirmed, I will review these programs and work with Congress to set appropriate funding levels for them.

Question 9: Are you committed to meeting the goals of the Endangered Species Act and would you agree that federal funding to help recover threatened and endangered species is crucial to preserving our nation's wildlife and biodiversity?

Response: I support the goals of the Endangered Species Act. I agree that focusing efforts on the recovery of listed species is important and I look forward to working with you on this important issue.

Question 10: Can you help me understand your stance on public land ownership and tell me whether you think that public lands should remain in federal ownership or be sold or transferred to states or other jurisdictions?

Response: I believe that Teddy Roosevelt had it right when he put under federal protection millions of acres of federal lands. I share President-elect Trump's view that federal lands should not be sold to states and I have voted 17 times against such action.

Question 11: Oregonians and all West Coast residents are becoming increasingly concerned about the next major earthquake, which has become a matter of "when" and not "if." Preparation is key, and even just a few seconds of warning is enough to take steps to prevent casualties and mitigate destruction. In a few seconds, supplies of oil, natural gas, and chemicals can be turned off, trains and cars can be slowed or stopped, sensitive data can be secured, and people can get to safe places. This is a bipartisan priority and we need to get this system finished -- failing to prepare for these events is not an option, and could have dire consequences for West Coast populations. Given the importance of this technology to provide the kind of warning that exists for hurricane, winter storms, and other extreme events, how would you, if confirmed, work with USGS to ensure ShakeAlert becomes fully operational for the west coast?

Response: As a geologist, I am fully aware of the hazards along the western coast of the United States, and appreciate that the risks are a matter of "when" and not "if". Earthquakes are an important applied science focus of USGS' Natural Hazards Mission

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Area. I fully support the collaborative research and scientific efforts related to earth hazards and, if confirmed, will continue these efforts.

Question 12: Can you assure us that the annual budgets you would propose would back up your stated commitment to those resources with the actual conservation and maintenance dollars they clearly need?

Response: If I am confirmed, I will review these programs and work with Congress to set appropriate funding levels for them.

Question 13: The California water provisions that passed as part of the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation (WIIN) Act gives the Secretaries of Interior and Commerce discretion in implementing the mandates to maximize water deliveries to Central Valley farmers. How do you plan to balance the mandates to maximize water deliveries to farmers with the mandates to protect fishery resources and comply with the Endangered Species Act when making critical decisions about how to interpret and implement the provisions in this legislation?

Response: Water from the Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers Delta provides drinking water to 25 million Californians from the Bay area to San Diego and provides water supplies to over two million acres of farmland. In addition, it serves as an important stop on the Pacific flyway and is home or a gateway to the home for numerous endangered fish species. In addition to other provisions, the WIIN Act calls for the Secretaries of the Interior and of Commerce to use science and the adaptive management provisions of the existing biological opinions to maximize water supply and water supply reliability, consistent with the Endangered Species Act. If confirmed, I will work with the Secretary of Commerce and the State of California to fulfill the directives in the WIIN Act, consistent with the Endangered Species Act.

Question 14: The Fisheries Restoration and Irrigation Mitigation Act (FRIMA) provides funding in the Pacific Northwest (Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Montana and now California) to carry out fish passage projects and screen irrigation channels to reduce fish mortality. This program was recently reauthorized, but authorized funding was drastically reduced. Would you support funding for the implementation of this critical program that benefits farmers and fish?

Response: If I am confirmed, I will review these programs and work with Congress to set appropriate funding levels for them.

Question 15: The Secretary currently oversees eight regional DOI Climate Science Centers, including an active center at Oregon State University. Would you support the continued climate change research and education at these eight centers?

Response: I value and support collaboration with public and private research institutions. As mentioned at the confirmation hearing, I believe that programs are most

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effective when they operate according to “clear and precise” goals. I look forward to a complete review of the eight DOI Climate Science Centers and their results over the past six years as we develop an agenda for moving forward.

Question 16: In general, what do you see as your role and the role of the Department of Interior in combating climate change?

Response: Senator, that is a challenging question simply because it is so broad. Many programs at the Department relate to or impact the climate. In general, my role, if confirmed, and the Department’s role will be to ensure that we manage programs and makes decisions based upon best available information and sound science.

Question 17: The American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) has made the following statement: “The scientific evidence is clear: global climate change caused by human activities is occurring now, and it is a growing threat to society.” Would you agree with this statement?

Response: Senator, as I said at my confirmation hearing, I believe the climate is changing, and man is an influence.

Question 18: The American Geophysical Union has made the following statement: “The scientific evidence is clear: global climate change caused by human activities is occurring now, and it is a growing threat to society.” Would you agree with this statement?

Response: Senator, as I said at my confirmation hearing, I believe the climate is changing, and man is an influence.

Question 19: Representative Zinke, I noticed that, in 2010, you signed a letter to the President and the Congress calling for “comprehensive clean energy jobs and climate change legislation.” I applaud your leadership, and I have submitted that letter for the record. Do you still agree, as you apparently did in 2010, with the vast majority of scientists that climate change is happening and that we as humans are contributing to it?

Response: Senator, as I said at my confirmation hearing, I believe the climate is changing, and man is an influence.

Question 20: Do you still believe, as you did in your letter to the President in 2010, that “the clean energy and climate challenge is America’s new space race”? And that our country should not back down from a challenge on this scale?

Response: Senator, I believe that the impacts of climate change are uncertain and that we have not yet determined the best way or ways to address it.

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Question 21: Representative Zinke, do you think the American taxpayer should get a fair, market-value, return on the coal, oil and natural gas extracted from publicly-owned lands?

Response: Yes.

Question 22: The GAO found, for example, that in order to get a fair return on oil and gas from public lands, the BLM should update its more than 30-year old rules on the venting and flaring of gas. I assume you would agree that it is time to dust off these rules and make sure they're delivering appropriately for the American people? Correct?

Response: I am committed to ensuring that the American taxpayers get a fair return on all natural resource development on federal lands. While I have not been briefed on the details of the regulations covering the venting and flaring of gas, I will review them if I am confirmed and make a determination on whether those rules need to be updated.

Question 23: Using GAO's estimates about the amount of federally owned natural gas that is wasted due to venting and flaring, over \$63.5 million in royalties was lost, over \$31.1 million to individual states in 2013 alone. This is millions of dollars that could go to state infrastructure needs, schools, and emergency services. Do you believe that states should be receiving this money instead of allowing companies to waste American energy resources and not give the American public their due? If so, how do you plan to make sure that states are getting the money they should from wasted natural gas, especially since you stated in your nomination hearing before the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee your support for the repeal of the current rule under a Congressional Review Act joint resolution of disapproval?

Response: I am committed to ensuring that the American taxpayers get a fair return on all natural resource development on federal lands. While I have concerns about the current rules regarding venting and flaring on federal lands, I will commit to a review of the oil and natural gas leasing program in order to evaluate whether any further regulation is appropriate.

Question 24: A federal court in Wyoming refused to enjoin the BLM's new wasted gas rule on January 16th. The court found that the rule was "unambiguously" within the BLM's authority to regulate oil and gas development for the prevention of waste, has economic and environmental benefits, will not impinge on states' sovereign interests, and will not cause significant economic burden to states or oil and gas companies. Do you believe the BLM has the authority to regulate oil and gas production on federal lands so as to prevent waste?

Response: While I have not been briefed on the legal issues surrounding the litigation over the BLM rules regarding venting and flaring on federal lands, I will commit to a

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review of the oil and natural gas leasing program in order to evaluate those legal issues and determine whether additional regulation of these activities is appropriate.

Question 25: I applaud your comments in your nomination hearing before the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee that “we’re wasting a lot, we’re venting a lot, and we’re wasting energy, and that is troubling me... The amount of venting in North Dakota alone almost exceeds what we get out of the fields. Let us build a system that recaptures what is being wasted.” Given that only 9% of venting or flaring requests cite a lack of infrastructure as the reason, according to the GAO, and the vast majority of wasted gas can be traced to leaks, what would you do to fix this problem?

Response: I am committed to ensuring that the American taxpayers get a fair return on all natural resource development on federal lands. While I have concerns about the current rules regarding venting and flaring on federal lands, I will commit to a review of the oil and natural gas leasing program in order to evaluate whether any further regulation is appropriate.

Question 26: If you support the repeal of the current rule under a Congressional Review Act joint resolution of disapproval, as you stated in your nomination hearing before the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, how do you plan to use existing DOI authority to address what you say is troubling to you regarding the amount of wasted gas coming from production on federal lands?

Response: I am committed to ensuring that the American taxpayers get a fair return on all natural resource development on federal lands. While I have concerns about the current rules regarding venting and flaring on federal lands, I will commit to a review of the oil and natural gas leasing program in order to evaluate whether any further regulation is appropriate.

Question 27: Based on hundreds of thousands of public comments, on January 11, 2017, the Department of Interior has clearly identified there is a need to modernize the federal coal program. We have a responsibility to ensure the public gets a fair market-value return from the sale of America's coal, and that we operate the program efficiently, while minimizing the impact of coal production on our communities and environment. The only responsible next step is to continue the review and implement the commonsense measures identified in the Department’s recent roadmap. I want your commitment to continue the work of modernizing the federal coal program, through the completion of an above-board transparent, scientific and public process.

What assurances can you give me that you will continue this important work?

Response: I have not personally reviewed the Federal Coal Programmatic EIS scoping report published by the Bureau of Land Management, which I believe is the document you are referencing. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that decisions are based on

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objective science and transparency. I will examine the scoping document and visit with the Bureau of Land Management and determine the appropriate next steps to be taken as part of the NEPA process.

Question 28: What will you do to limit liabilities to the American people associated with the cleanup of mining on public lands, including bonding and other protections?

Response: As someone from Montana, I appreciate the need for reclamation and want to ensure that we hold companies appropriately accountable for their responsibilities.

Question 29: You have said that you are supportive of an “all of the above energy policy, which includes renewables.” I suspect we agree renewable that energy projects can be important drivers of economic development in rural communities, often supplementing the income of farmers and ranchers and raising needed tax revenue for small towns. Yet we must balance the need for clean energy with the need to protect wilderness and fragile habitat. What will you do to ensure the Department of Interior continues to support the responsible construction of renewable energy projects on public lands?

Response: I will support responsible construction of projects. However, I have not been fully briefed on the regulatory regime in place for permitting renewable projects on federal lands, but I do believe that the NEPA process is a critical component of any federal permitting decision. If confirmed, I will review the process for evaluating these projects and ensure that all of the Department’s actions are appropriate.

Question 30: What are your plans for the siting and leasing processes for offshore renewable energy development, such as wind and marine hydrokinetic? How do you plan to involve other maritime industries, such as fishing and shipping, to ensure that the development of offshore renewable energy is collaborative?

Response: I have not been fully briefed on the permit applications for these projects, but I do believe that the NEPA process is a critical component of any federal permitting decision. A critical component of the NEPA process is consultation with all affected stakeholders. If confirmed, I will review the process for evaluating these projects and ensure that all of the Department’s actions are appropriate.

Question 31: You recently made some misinformed comments about the competitiveness of wind and solar energy in relation to coal-fired electricity. Wind energy is one of the most affordable options for new electric generation, and wind energy is reliably providing over 30% of the electricity in Iowa, and over 20% in Kansas, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Oklahoma; and generating more than 10% of the electricity in eight additional states. In fact, 79% of electricity power generation jobs in Oregon are in wind and solar, according to the Energy Information Administration. Given the importance of renewable energy in so many states, will you state for the record your support for good,

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American jobs in renewable energy production that are not only affordable but also provide an over 13% share of US energy production?

Response: I strongly support good, American jobs in renewable energy production.

Question 32: I know you have been supportive of the Keystone XL pipeline. Although Keystone is an international project, other pipeline projects--like the Dakota access pipeline--could fall onto your plate. Could you give us some insight into how you would deal with such a sensitive tribal issue, such as the Dakota Access Pipeline?

Response: Senator, the current situation with regard to the Dakota Access Pipeline is very challenging and unfortunate. This country needs to build and operate infrastructure, and the permitting process for infrastructure needs to comply with all laws and regulations and be relatively predictable so that companies and individuals undertaking infrastructure projects can reasonably estimate costs and schedules.

We must also be sensitive to tribal issues. Our great Indian nations deserve respect, and, if confirmed, I will work to rebuild the trust that comes from mutual respect. I believe that, if we build and then maintain mutual trust, we can build relative consensus around infrastructure siting issues.

Question 33: Reuters has reported that the incoming administration aims to privatize oil-rich and coal-rich Indian reservations. Can you comment on your understanding of such conversations, and what is your opinion on whether we should privatize tribal lands for the purpose of extracting energy resources?

Response: I have not personally reviewed the referenced Reuters' report. I am unaware of any effort by anyone to privatize tribal lands.

Question 34: As Secretary of Interior, you are in charge of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and the trust relationship with all U.S. Tribes. What are your thoughts on tribal sovereignty and the role of the federal government in the tribal trust relationship?

Response: As I stated during the hearing, I believe tribal sovereignty is very important. I believe it should be meaningful. As a member of Congress, I have been a strong advocate for the Tribes in Montana.

Question 35: When Secretary Sally Jewell spoke of DOI's scientific integrity policies, she stated that the Department must be a leader in the federal efforts for robust scientific integrity policies because "science is the very foundation of our mission." Would you agree that science is the foundation of the DOI's mission and what would be your plan to ensure that the Department's integrity policies remain robust and reliable?

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Response: I have not studied the referenced policy. However, I would agree that DOI's mission has always included a strong science component within its bureaus. I will want to be informed by objective science as I make policy decisions, and I look forward to hearing from the Department's scientists in that regard.

Question 36: How will you work with your counterparts at the Defense and State Departments to support approval and implementation of the 2010 Agreement between the U.S and Palau to update and extend the strategic "Compact" relationship between our two nations?

Response: This is an important issue. As I have said, the relationship between the United States and the territories and freely associated states is important to me. If I am confirmed, I will learn more about this issue and work with you to address it in a way that benefits the people of Palau, and the U.S. Government.

Question 37: Will you, if confirmed, work with the ENR Committee and with the Departments of Justice, Treasury and Labor to fully investigate any allegations that money laundering and abuse of guest workers is occurring in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands?

Response: Allegations of the criminal abuse of workers anywhere are significant and serious. If I am confirmed, I will look into this matter, work with the appropriate law enforcement agencies, and act accordingly.

Question 38: Prior to 2008, even though the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) was under US sovereignty, it had authority to control its borders and immigration. However, the CNMI proved unable to properly control the border or to prevent the abuse of guest workers who were admitted to the CNMI under local immigration control. Consequently, Congress extended federal border and immigration control to the CNMI. Can you assure the Committee that you will oppose any proposal to weaken federal border and immigration control in the CNMI?

Response: Control of US borders is important whether in CNMI or anywhere. If I am confirmed, I will learn more about this issue and work with you and other federal agencies to develop an appropriate response.

Question 39: There have been press articles regarding the activities of "Best Sunshine" corporation in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Would you please review these articles and let me know what action, if any, should be taken by the Interior Department and other Departments.

Response: If I am confirmed, I will make it a priority to review this material and respond accordingly.

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Question 40: One responsibility of the Interior Department is to create economic opportunities and improve the quality of life for Americans in the insular areas of our nation: American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Marianas, and the Virgin Islands. There have been improvements over time. But in terms of income, infrastructure, and many other measures these insular areas still lag far behind the rest of America. Often they are not given the same level of funding or access to federal programs as other parts of our country. Federal agencies often don't compile data on the territories the way they do for the rest of the U.S. What specific plans do you have to increase the pace of development in the insular areas to bring them up to the economic level of the rest of America?

Response: Economic development is the best way to increase opportunity and the standard of living for all peoples. The U.S. territories face significant challenges and deserve special attention. If I am confirmed, I look forward to learning more about the ways we can work to correct these issues.

Question 41: Currently, an Interior Assistant Secretary heads the Office of Insular Affairs. That is a serious acknowledgement of the importance of the work of this office; and I think the office should continue to be led by an Assistant Secretary. Do you plan to maintain this position of Assistant Secretary?

Response: U.S. territories deserve recognition and representation within the Department. If I am confirmed, I will look into the ASIA position, but I am not aware of any effort to change the status of the position.

Question 42: In a bipartisan appropriation for the current fiscal year, FY17, the Senate voted to increase funding for the Office of Insular Affairs by \$6.9 million dollars. Will you be supportive of providing increased bipartisan support and funding to America's insular areas to create economic opportunity and improve quality of life?

Response: Providing resources is one important way the U.S. can support the challenges of the territories. If I am confirmed, I will work with you and the Congress on the proper appropriations levels for this and other areas of the budget.

Question 43: As a follow-up to my question on the Office of Insular Affairs, is more funding needed? And if so, how exactly do you think additional funds should be targeted to be most effective?

Response: If I am confirmed, I look forward to learning more about the budget needs and allocations and will work with your office as appropriate.

Question 44: A role of the Office of Insular Affairs is to make sure that all federal agencies take the islands into account when formulating and implementing policy. What plans do you have to make sure that the Interior Department's input is welcome—and

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listened to—by other agencies, when they put together and administer policies that affect the territories?

Response: This is an important issue to me. Often the parts of the federal family neglect the territories completely or forget to take into account their unique circumstances. If I am confirmed, I will learn more about the ways we can solve this problem.

Questions for the Record from Senator Bernard Sanders

Tribal Issues

Question 1: The Department of the Interior is the most important federal government agency for dealing with the issues that affect Native American tribes. The Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs “assists and supports the Secretary of the Interior in fulfilling the United States’ trust responsibility to the Federally recognized American Indian and Alaska Native tribes and villages and individual Indian trust beneficiaries, as well as in maintaining the Federal-Tribal government-to-government relationship.”

If confirmed, will you commit to an open door policy for the Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs to ensure sufficient access to you and recognition of the importance of Indian Affairs within the department? Will you commit to an open door policy for tribal leaders to ensure that the federal government upholds its trust responsibility and maintains its government-to-government relationship with tribal leaders?

Response: Yes.

Question 2: While the Department of Interior plays a primary role in upholding our Government’s obligations to Indian tribes, there are many other federal agencies that also work to meet the responsibility. Department of Health and Human Services plays a major role in providing health and mental health care. Department of Justice works to ensure the public safety. Department of Commerce, Department of Agriculture, and other agencies administer programs designed to help improve Indian reservation economic development.

To succeed in its tribal relationships and trust, Interior must work with these agencies and ensure that they work collaboratively with Indian tribes. President Obama formed the White House Council on Native American Affairs to help inter-agency coordination.

How will you ensure that inter-agency coordination remains a top priority in this new administration?

Response: Senator, I agree with you that the federal agencies with obligations to and responsibilities for Indian tribes need to coordinate effectively. I am not familiar with the White House Council on Native American Affairs, but, if confirmed, inter-agency

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coordination will be a priority of mine, and, if the Council continues, I will utilize it to advance the interests of Indian tribes.

Question 3: The failed federal policies of Removal, Allotment and Termination resulted in the forced taking of hundreds of millions of acres of Native American homelands. The Interior Secretary is authorized to restore tribal homelands through the Indian Reorganization Act and the administrative Part 151 Indian land to trust process. The U.S. Supreme Court attacked that process in 2009.

What are you prepared to do to ensure that the administrative land to trust process continues to move forward under your administration?

Response: I understand that the land into trust process is very important to the Tribes. I will meet with the Bureau of Indian Affairs to gain a greater appreciation of the specific administrative challenges caused by the referenced 2009 decision and determine how they are best addressed.

Hydropower

Question 4: The U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources debated several bills regarding energy and natural resource policy that culminated in the Energy Policy Modernization Act. One of the energy sources addressed in this legislation was hydropower, which accounts for roughly 7 percent of all energy produced in the United States today. While the legislation this committee reported, and the Senate sent to the House, protected the ability of states to manage water and the ability of the federal resource managers to rely on science and expertise, the House passed legislation effectively stripping them of the tools available to them.

Hydropower is a critical source of carbon-free energy, but it is not without negative externalities. Several states, including Vermont, support hydropower, but opposed these efforts to hobble oversight.

Question 5: As Secretary of the Interior, would you counsel the President to reject legislation that would eliminate the ability of states and federal resource managers to protect drinking water, outdoor recreation, fisheries, and vulnerable wildlife populations?

Response: If confirmed, I will seek to inform the President of my views on specific legislative proposals related to water, outdoor recreation, fisheries and wildlife as they arise.

Question 6: Would you resist efforts by industry to federalize all aspects of the hydropower licensing process and consolidate in the industry-captured FERC responsibilities for evaluating environmental impact?

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Response: If confirmed, I will work to gain a greater appreciation of the specific role Interior's agencies play in the hydropower licensing process.

Land and Water Conservation Fund

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) has been an important source for state and local outdoor recreation facilities, state parks improvements, and public park land acquisition. Vermont has benefitted extensively from LWCF funding.

Question 7: You have been a long-term supporter of the LWCF. If confirmed, do you plan to continue your strong advocacy for this important source of funding for states and local governments to create parks and open spaces, protect wilderness and forests, and provide outdoor recreation opportunities?

Response: You and I both share a deep appreciation for the LWCF. This program has been incredibly successful in Montana. I have seen the benefits of the program first-hand with critical projects in my hometown. Should I be confirmed, I look forward to continuing to work with you and your colleagues to protect and bolster this important program.

Question 8: As the Secretary of the Interior, will you recommend to the President that the LWCF be fully funded?

Response: LWCF has my full support. I have cosponsored two bipartisan pieces of legislation to permanently reauthorize the program, have opposed my own Chairman's reform proposals and was the only member of the Montana delegation to vote in support of the program's reauthorization and funding. As a Montanan, I have personally witnessed the good work LWCF does for local communities, the sportsmen and recreation community, and conservation. As the budget process moves forward, I look forward to working the President-elect and Congress to support LWCF's critical work.

Question 9: Federal funding programs like the LWCF often involve a lot of "red tape" which can make them inaccessible to small rural communities with limited staff and resources. Would you be willing to re-examine any of the rules and regulations related to applying for and using federal funds such as the LWCF monies?

Response: Since coming to Congress, I have been one of the most vocal proponents of LWCF. It is a great program that serves Montana and our nation incredibly well. However, that does not mean it is perfect. We both represent rural states and I share your concern regarding "red tape" and limited resources. I have consistently voiced my opposition to the excessive bureaucracy that inhibits funds from making their way to those who need them most. The process should be streamlined and I look forward to working with you and your colleagues to achieve this goal.

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Conservation and Public Lands

Question 10: During your time in Congress, you earned a 3 percent rating (out of 100 percent) from the League of Conservation Voters (LCV). The votes used to rate Senators and members of Congress are scored on protection of the environment, public lands, waters and air.

Your LCV score reflects that, with just one exception, you voted against federal conservation policies. You have voted for cutting back Antiquity Act authorities, against public review of hard rock mining on public lands, against a review process for grazing permits on drought-damaged public lands, and against removing harmful riders undermining protections for imperiled species including removing Endangered Species Act-protections for the gray wolf. All of these issues will be under your authority as Secretary of Interior.

Can you explain your anti-conservation voting record while in Congress? How does this record suggest that you will protect our lands, waters and wildlife against corporate short-term interests, like Teddy Roosevelt?

Response: The League of Conservation Voters (LCV) voting score does not accurately represent my commitment to clean air and water, conservation and protecting public lands. I am a firm believer in the multiple use doctrine that President Roosevelt championed. However, under the current administration, the Executive Branch has often governed by rules and regulations that should have been debated and passed by Congress. I fundamentally believe in the separate but equal roles of government and the rule of law. Many of the votes calculated by the LCV had to do with rules that I believed were outside the purview of the Executive Branch. If I am confirmed as Secretary of the Interior, you have my commitment to follow and enforce the laws passed by you and your colleagues in Congress rather than governing by Executive Order.

Question 11: You signed the Montana Constitutional Governance Pledge promising to “legally and administratively oppose the multitude of bureaucracies that have sprung up to enforce the unlawful seizure of our native land and its resources including, but not limited to: the Bureau of Land Management, the United States Park Service, the various bureaus of Wildlife and Fisheries, etc., and restore the rightful powers over the land to the state and private ownership.”

Could you provide examples of the “unlawful seizure of our native land and its resources” by the agencies of the Department of Interior and what measures you would support as Secretary of interior to “restore the rightful powers over the land to the state and private ownership?”

Response: States across the West are uniquely familiar with the ‘checkerboard’ of private, state, and federal lands. The mix of lands under different management poses

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numerous issues, ranging from protecting recreational access to respecting the rights of private land owners. If confirmed, I want to ensure our public lands remain in public hands, and private and state-owned lands are respected as well. This means making sure small tract land transfers and sales adhere to the proper procedures.

Question 12: You are on record as supporting retention of federal lands in public ownership yet you voted for H. R. 3650, the “State National Forest Management Act of 2015” which would transfer over two million acres of Forest Service land to the states for sale to private interests. Could you explain the apparent inconsistency?

Response: I would like to respectfully correct the record. I was actually the only Republican on the House Committee on Natural Resources to vote against H.R.3650 when it came up for a markup on June 15, 2016. After the bill passed committee without my support, I reiterated my promise to my constituents that I would not support any legislation that transfers or sells large portions of our public lands. I remain committed to that promise should I be confirmed as Secretary of the Interior.

Question 13: What improvements can be made to the management of federal public lands?

Response: If confirmed, I will work to improve the management of our federal lands for multiple uses, including recreation, conservation and responsible energy development. I intend to restore trust by working with states and local communities to inform agency decisions. I intend to promote greater public access, responsible development and ensure that professionals within the Department of the Interior receive the resources, training, and tools needed to make informed decisions that give voice to the American public. I also recognize and will preserve those lands that deserve special recognition and are better managed with man as an observer.

Scientific integrity

Question 14: Are you familiar with the scientific integrity policy at the Department of the Interior? What is the importance of the policy in your opinion?

Response: Senator, I have not had the opportunity to review the Department’s scientific integrity policy. I value sound science, and I will review the policy if confirmed.

Question 15: Should Department of the Interior scientists be allowed to express their personal opinions about any issue as private citizens as long as they provide a disclaimer that they are speaking in a personal capacity and not for the agency?

Response: Senator, I have not had the opportunity to review the Department’s scientific integrity policy. I value sound science, and I will review the policy if confirmed.

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Question 16: Should Department of the Interior scientists have the right of last review to ensure the accuracy of materials that rely on their scientific work or expertise—including scientific reports, executive summaries, congressional testimony, press releases, and websites?

Response: I will review federal guidelines and Departmental policies on this issue and rely on the best available science for agency decision-making, if confirmed.

Question 17: Are there any parts of the Department of the Interior websites that you believe contain incorrect, incomplete, or erroneous information? Specifically, do you believe that any web pages currently contain incorrect, incomplete, or erroneous descriptions of climate change science?

Response: I have not reviewed the full extent of the Interior Department website, but if confirmed, I look forward to reviewing it further and paying special attention to the questions you raise.

Question 18: The most robust federal government scientific integrity policies empower scientists to speak openly with the public and the press about scientific matters. Would you improve your agency's policy to make this explicit?

Response: Senator, I respect scientists and the need for scientific integrity. I have not yet reviewed the Department's scientific integrity policies, but I will do so, and I am certainly willing to discuss this with you further if I am confirmed.

Management of Government Employees

The Department of the Interior employs 70,000 people at nine technical bureaus and a number of other offices. The following questions ask about how you would manage these personnel.

Question 19: Do you support and promise to uphold the merit system principles set forth in Chapter 23 Title 5 U.S. Code, which prohibit factors other than merit from consideration in civil service employment decisions?

Response: I support the merit system principles.

Question 20: As Secretary, do you believe that Congress using the Holman Rule, which allows any member of Congress to propose amending an appropriations bill to single out a government employee or cut a specific program, to be an appropriate measure when used against your Department? Will you support Congress in passing an amendment under the Holman Rule or would you oppose?

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Response: The U.S. House of Representatives sets its rules. If confirmed, as Secretary, it will be my responsibility to express my views to the President on any specific legislative proposal, and I will do so.

Question 21: As Secretary, do you believe that you will be better able to recruit and retain top talent if Congress is able to individually target employees based on their political whims?

Response: If confirmed, I will work to restore trust and give the employees on the front lines – our rangers, field managers and managers – the space and support to make the decisions they need to make. If I do that, I believe we will continue to retain and recruit top level talent.

Question 22: As Secretary, do you support Congress targeting and altering the salaries of individuals within your Department?

Response: I recognize that Congress has the power of the purse pursuant to the Constitution.

Question 23: As Secretary, how do you view the division of responsibility and authority between Congress and your Department on personnel issues?

Response: The Senate has the responsibility of advice and consent. Beyond that, I believe the authority of specific personnel decisions rests with the Department of the Interior and its bureaus.

Questions for the Record from Senator Debbie Stabenow

Question 1: I serve as Ranking Member of the Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry Committee -- which has a good deal of oversight of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service. When we met, we discussed your position on the Forest Service in broad terms. Please answer, preferably with a simple yes or no, whether you would advocate for Congress to approve legislation to transfer the Forest Service to the Interior Department?

Response: Senator, when we met, I said that I think we should consider moving the Forest Service to the Department of the Interior. As we discussed, the structure we use to manage federal lands has not been given a comprehensive review since its inception, and I believe there are numerous issues that need to be addressed. Among those issues, I believe the current situation in which one federal agency manages the surface and a second manages subsurface issues creates unnecessary duplication and conflict.

I clearly got the impression in our meeting and from these questions that you have concerns about moving the Forest Service to the Department of Interior. If confirmed, I

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look forward to further discussions with you. My goal is to ensure that our public lands are managed consistent with the inscription in the Roosevelt Arch at Yosemite, “for the enjoyment and benefit of the people.”

Question 2: If you would recommend transferring the Forest Service to the Interior Department, why with all of the challenges facing the Forest Service – including ballooning costs for wildfire suppression, nationwide invasive species outbreaks, and record numbers of recreationists and sportsmen looking for well-maintained trails and facilities on their public lands – would you want to undertake a complex, multi-year bureaucratic reorganization that will cost millions of dollars and precious staff time?

Response: Senator, I agree there are real challenges facing our public lands agencies, and I want to work to solve those problems rather than make them worse. If confirmed, I will work with you to that end.

Question 3: As you know, the responsibility for suppressing wildfires is shared between the Interior Department and the Agriculture Department’s Forest Service. In recent years, as suppression costs have ballooned, critical resources have been siphoned away from programs to safeguard and enhance our public lands and are instead being used to fight wildfires. The Forest Service is now spending over half their budget fighting wildfires, which is up from 16% in 1996. If Congress does not act, the Forest Service will be spending 2/3 of their overall budget on wildfire in 2025.

Bipartisan bills have been introduced in both chambers to address this problem and you were a cosponsor of the latest House bill, the Wildfire Disaster Funding Act. As Interior Secretary, will you continue to support the measure and work with Congress to see it enacted?

Response: If confirmed, fighting forest fires will be a major effort of mine. We need to better manage our forests to reduce the risk and consequences of fire, better coordinate firefighting and firefighting policies among federal agencies, and we should develop a better method of funding firefighting efforts. I realize these are complex issues and that you have spent considerable effort working to address them. If confirmed, I want to work with you on these issues.

Question 4: In addition to the maintenance backlogs that exist on federal lands, which I am also concerned with, I am distressed about insufficient funding for staff on Park Service lands. For example, Sleeping Bear Dunes in Michigan has experienced more than a 7% reduction in base level park staff and more than a 12% reduction in its base budget between 2010 and 2015. If confirmed, will you support additional cuts in funding for park rangers and other on-the-ground personnel that are struggling to meet their mission with increasing numbers of visitors; or, is this an area in the budget that you think should be increased?

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Response: Senator, I want front-line Interior employees to love their jobs and be committed to their mission. That will require attractive benefits, ensuring that staffing levels are commensurate with the need, and that those employees have the resources they need to do their jobs well. You can be assured that I will be an advocate for on-the-ground personnel.

Question 5: U.S. Department of Agriculture grant programs through the Natural Resources Conservation Service provide hundreds of millions of dollars around the country for on-farm conservation projects that improve water management. The Bureau of Reclamation, through its WaterSMART water efficiency grant program, provides around \$30 million annually for water conservation projects proposed by its beneficiaries and other water suppliers. In June, USDA and Reclamation agreed to coordinate these programs for on and off farm funding to maximize the benefits of both programs, specifically in the Colorado River Basin. If confirmed as Secretary of the Interior, would you commit to continue this cooperation and make it a funding priority in your budget?

Response: If I am confirmed, I will review the coordination between DOI and USDA on these programs, as well as the funding levels for those programs and work with Congress to set appropriate funding levels for them.

Question 6: Farmers and ranchers in the west receive substantial assistance from federal conservation initiatives to improve sagebrush ecosystem, consistent with state wildlife recommendations. A key driver of these resources are the sage grouse conservation plans, which were a factor for the Fish and Wildlife Service decision against an endangered species listing for the sage grouse last year. Can farmers and ranchers be certain that you will continue to support funding for these land management efforts?

Response: I have not been fully briefed on the conservation plans that have been put into place for the sagebrush ecosystem. If I am confirmed, I will review those plans and work with Congress to set appropriate funding levels for them.

Questions for the Record from Senator Jeff Flake

Question 1: The Indian Gaming Regulatory Act, or “IGRA,” was intended to provide an economic engine for tribes on their traditional tribal lands. In Arizona, tribal casinos in the Phoenix metropolitan area have created some controversy. Late last year, the State of Arizona and the tribes agreed to amendments to their gaming compacts. Previous Secretaries of the Interior have rejected these compacts negotiated in good faith between tribes and states. Shouldn’t the Secretary foster the tribes’ collective rights to self-determination by giving deference to the compacts they negotiate?

Response: I am an advocate for tribal sovereignty and self-determination. In general, if a tribe and a state have reached an agreement, it should be given meaning, but I will have

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to learn more about specific instances such as the one to which you refer and I look forward to doing so.

Question 2: The Department's Colorado River Basin study identified a growing gap between water supply and demand in the basin. One of the options identified by the Department and the State of Arizona is desalination of seawater. Israel has been a world leader in desalination and there are a number of partnerships developing with Israel on water. These include the participation of Arizona Governor Ducey in a recent trade mission and water conference in Israel. What role do you see the Department playing in desalination technology and cooperation with Israel in the water field?

Response: Israel is our ally, and cooperation with Israel will be an important part of President Trump's foreign policy. Your question highlights one of the many ways that our country's cooperation with Israel can provide a benefit here at home. Finding new water supplies and securing existing supplies is important to all western state economies and desalination is one of the possible options. If confirmed, I look forward to learning more about this and working with you moving forward.

Questions for the Record from Senator Al Franken

Question 1: If you are confirmed as Secretary of Interior, you will be responsible for overseeing the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). With the multitude of problems in Indian Country today, from disturbingly high rates of youth suicide to a lack of sufficient economic opportunity and many others, we need a bipartisan commitment to address the living conditions on tribal lands. One of the most frustrating issues with the BIA has been the chronic underfunding of important programs and general lack of support from the federal government.

- a. As Secretary of Interior, would you advocate for strong funding for federal programs that support American Indians?

Response: Yes, as appropriate.

- b. Do you have a timeline for filling BIA positions?

Response: If confirmed, the timeline for filling positions at the BIA is the same as it is for all other positions – as quickly as possible.

- c. Will expand on your ideas for improving living conditions in Indian Country?

Response: I believe we need to listen to the tribes and we need to work to empower them, recognizing that each Tribe's situation is different.

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Question 2: Economic development is vital for improving Indian Country, and one area of opportunity is the energy sector. For example, there is significant potential for clean energy development in Indian Country—like wind, solar, and biomass.

- a. Will you commit to working with me to boost renewable energy generation on tribal lands, which would bring important funds and jobs to these communities?

Response: Yes. If confirmed, I will work with you.

- b. I have been working to fund the Tribal Energy Loan Guarantee Program (TIELGP), which was included in the Energy Policy Act of 2005 but has never been funded. This program would allow the DOE to guarantee up to 90 percent of the principal and interest of a loan issued to an Indian tribe for energy development. By leveraging federal resources, this program would encourage borrowers to partner with the private sector to develop energy projects. While I know that this program falls outside of the purview of the DOI, would you commit to working with me to get this program funded?

Response: I will commit to learning more about the program. I would be happy to work with the Secretary of Energy and you as appropriate.

Question 3: Many of the communities in my home state of Minnesota cannot safely rely on the water currently supplied to their homes. These communities and my state have worked tirelessly, investing millions of dollars, in a tristate water system known as the Lewis & Clark Regional Water System. A successful state and federal partnership, Lewis & Clark is funded by local communities, states and expected annual funds from the federal government. Like two water projects in your home state of Montana, federal funding for Lewis & Clark is allocated through the Department of Interior's Bureau of Reclamation. Nearly completed, all communities and states involved have paid their share of the project and in numerous cases, prefunded the necessary dollars to complete this critical water project. However, the federal share of the project has fallen short year-after-year, putting the project far behind construction schedule causing an increase in cost to the project. Will you support prioritizing the Lewis & Clark Regional Water System through the water funds allocated by the Bureau of Reclamation?

Response: I am unaware of the specifics regarding the funding for the referenced project, but I will look into it as the budget for the Department is developed, if I am confirmed.

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Question 4: I appreciate your support for the Land and Water Conservation Fund. In April of 2015, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and the Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board received one of 8 new Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership grants administered through the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) state and local assistance program for Sheridan Veteran’s Memorial Park. This grant is helping to connect low income communities to trail networks, an environmentally restored riverfront, and other outdoor recreation opportunities near Minneapolis’ newest war memorial. If confirmed as Secretary, will you commit to ensuring LWCF dollars continue to foster partnerships that connect people, particularly those in underserved communities, to safe, accessible places to enjoy the great outdoors and establish meaningful relationships with their communities and public lands?

Response: Senator, growing up in Whitefish, Montana, Glacier Park was the sort of national park I learned about as a kid. But I recognize that lots of kids don’t have the opportunity to visit parks like Glacier, and for them an urban park may be their gateway to our great national parks. I want our parks to serve and inspire all Americans, and I will work with you to accomplish that goal.

Question 5: Under what circumstances would support or oppose the transfer of public land to state governments? For example, if Congress passed a bill transferring large sections of public lands to the states, would you recommend that the President veto it?

Response: I generally oppose the sale or transfer of federal lands, and President-elect Trump shares that view. There are some situations in which commitments have previously been made, inholdings need to be swapped or exchanged, or land banks are well situated to address the needs of growing urban areas, where limited transfer is appropriate. However, to your question, while I would wait to evaluate any legislation based on its specifics, I am inclined to oppose legislation that would transfer “large sections of public lands to the states.”

Question 6: Do you support allowing state and local governments to manage federal public lands? From a practical standpoint, how is this different from transferring federal lands to states?

Response: Yes.

Federal lands belong to all Americans, but they need to be managed with particular consideration of the people in local communities whose lives and livelihoods depend on the land. Implicit in the notion of allowing local and state governments to manage federal lands is the belief that local and state officials will be more aware and respectful of the interests of their local constituents and that land will be managed differently based on local considerations. I believe that

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federal ownership and local management can provide the proper balance among interests and be a viable model for management of certain federal lands.

Question 7: According to the Bureau of Land Management’s statistics for Fiscal Year 2015, there are 32.1 million acres of public lands (approximately the size of Alabama) currently under lease for oil and gas activities. However, merely one-third of these acres are actually producing fuel. In fact, the United States has a record high 7,500 approved drilling permits that industry has yet to put to use. In light of this overcapacity, do you believe it is necessary for United States to open up additional public land for oil and gas production? If so, why?

Response: If I am confirmed, I will fully review the oil and gas leasing program at BLM and evaluate whether the acreage levels are appropriate.

Question 8: The United States has been chronically underfunding our National Parks for years. As you know, the parks currently face a more than \$12 billion backlog in deferred maintenance, including \$47 million in Minnesota. I appreciate that you have committed to working with Congress to solve this unacceptable deferred maintenance backlog.

- a. What do you feel would be the best way to approach this issue?
- b. Will you advocate including deferred maintenance in any infrastructure package the new administration is planning?

Response: As I said yesterday, I want to work to make our park system great again. In doing so, I look forward to working with you to find ways to address the maintenance backlog and enhance our parks’ infrastructure.

Question 9: Recently, there has been a lot of discussion about increasing coal production in the United States. Much of this discussion has centered around a supposed “war on coal” being launched by the Obama administration. However, rather than regulation, the decrease in coal jobs has been largely due to the steady progression of automation technology in coal mining, and that fact natural gas is now cheaper than coal due to innovations in hydraulic fracturing and horizontal drilling. One industry expert was quoted in the Wall Street Journal in December saying, “the truth is, gas has already made coal uneconomic.”

- a. If you are confirmed, you will be tasked with oversight of energy production on federal lands—including about 40 percent of our nation’s coal production. Given the current economic reality of energy what do you see as the future of coal?

Response: The Energy Information Administration has projected that coal will remain an important part of the American fuel mix for decades.

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a.b. The Obama Administration put a moratorium on new coal leasing on public lands while it assessed whether taxpayers were receiving a fair return for publically-owned resources. If you are confirmed, will you continue this process?

Response: I have not personally reviewed the Federal Coal Programmatic EIS scoping report published by the Bureau of Land Management, which I believe is the document you are referencing. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that decisions are based on objective science and transparency. I will examine the scoping document and visit with the Bureau of Land Management and determine the appropriate next steps to be taken as part of the NEPA process.

b.c. For a century DOI has managed all aspects of oil and gas development on federal lands. Do you believe it should exercise the same authority involving wells that are hydraulically fractured? For example, do you support the current requirement that wells on federal lands capture methane—rather than waste a valuable public resource by releasing a potent greenhouse gas?

Response: I have not been fully briefed on all the regulatory regimes for coal or for oil and natural gas development on federal lands. If I am confirmed, I will review both of these programs in order to determine what changes may be appropriate in the oil and natural gas leasing program.

Question 10: If confirmed, you will oversee the National Parks which currently has a major problem with sexual harassment in its workforce. As I understand it, Park Service employees with sexual harassment claims are forced to deal with a complex and opaque complaint process and are often afraid to come forward for fear of retaliation. How will you address the culture at the National Park Service that deters abused workers from coming forward with their claims? What steps will you take to ensure our national parks are safe for visitors and workers alike?

Response: If confirmed, as I described in yesterday's hearing, I will work to ensure we have zero tolerance policy for the sexual harassment in the workforce. In addition, if confirmed, I will need to learn more about the specific problems that exist and then address them in the context of a zero tolerance policy.

Question 11: With a changing climate, we are seeing longer wildfire seasons and more extreme fires. At the same time, more and more people in the United States are living in and around forests, grasslands, shrublands, and other vegetated natural areas – places commonly referred to as the wildland-urban interface (WUI). Approximately 70,000 communities nationwide are considered to be at

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high risk from wildland fire, including some in Minnesota. Defense of private property – much of which is located in the WUI – accounts for a large percentage of fire suppression costs. How will you work with the United States Forest Service to mitigate the costs of these fires while ensuring the safety of vulnerable communities?

Response: The issues surrounding the prevention of forest fires and funding for fire suppression efforts are tremendously important. If I am confirmed, I will fully evaluate the Department's current role in fire prevention and suppression and work closely with USDA, the Forest Service, the States and Congress to ensure that these programs are appropriately funded and managed.

Question 12: Do you believe that climate change impacts should be included in environmental reviews under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)?

Response: I have been informed that the Council on Environmental Quality has published guidance for all federal agencies, which requires them to include climate change impacts in environmental reviews under the National Environmental Policy Act. I have not studied the issue.

Question 13: Do you believe that climate change has a cost to society and that this social cost of carbon should be used in regulatory analyses?

Response: I have been informed that the Council on Environmental Quality has published guidance for all federal agencies which requires them to include the social cost of carbon in environmental reviews under the National Environmental Policy Act and other major federal rulemaking analyses.

Question 14: If confirmed, what will do you do to promote renewable electricity generation—including wind and solar—on public lands?

Response: Senator, I am a supporter of an all-of-the-above energy policy, and that includes the development of renewable energy projects and transmission projects on federal lands. That development should be conducted in accordance with the principles of multiple use and fully consider and preserve hunting, fishing and recreating on federal lands.

Question 15: One of the many impacts of climate change has been the increasingly difficult problem of invasive species. Large areas of public lands and waters managed by the Department of the Interior have been damaged by invasions of non-native plants and wildlife. This problem both significantly threatens our most valued ecosystems and places a difficult financial burden on federal and state wildlife management programs, which detracts from their other important duties. Minnesotans are on the frontlines of this problem with the onset

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harmful invasive species in our state such as emerald ash borer, zebra mussels, Asian carp, and Eurasian watermilfoil.

- a. What actions would you take to enhance effectiveness of invasive species control programs on public lands?
- b. The Lacey Act is the most important federal statute in addressing the spread of invasive species. If confirmed, would you enforce the Lacey Act in its current form and list potential invaders as injurious? Additionally, would you call for any legislative changes to be made to the Lacey Act?

Response: I share your concern, especially since my home state of Montana also has significant and numerous invasive species problems; most recently with a very worrisome invasion by zebra mussels. I think it is critical that federal land managers be encouraged and empowered to be good neighbors in controlling invasive species in cooperation with adjacent private land owners. We all need to work together if we are to succeed in defending our ecosystems, economy, and public health from the threats posed by invasive species. I will most definitely enforce the Lacey Act if confirmed, and I am aware that there is broad bipartisan frustration with the lack of an efficient process for listing injurious species under the Act. I will ask the Fish and Wildlife Service to provide me recommendations on how the Act's implementation may be approved, and if it seems that legislative changes may be helpful, I would be pleased to have that conversation with the Congress.

Questions for the Record from Senator Steve Daines

Question 1: You have been a strong partner in the House on improving treatment of our National Forests. As you know, in many ways, Montana is ground zero for obstructionist litigation which hold up common sense, collaboratively developed forest health projects. In the House, you introduced counterpart legislation to my *Litigation Relief for Forest Management Projects Act*. Senator Tester joined us in this effort as well as a cosponsor. This bill would avoid the effects of a disastrous 9th Circuit Court decision in *Cottonwood Environmental Law Center v. United States Forest Service (Cottonwood)* by codifying the Obama Administration's position into law.

In 2015, the Ninth Circuit Court ruled in *Cottonwood* that the U.S. Forest Service (FS) needed to reinitiate consultation with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) at the programmatic (plan) level following the 2009 designation of critical habitat for the Canada lynx. As a result of this ruling, courts have stopped projects during the consultation process throughout the 18 national forests inhabited by lynx. The Department of Justice (DOJ), advocating a view shared by the FS and FWS, argued that the Endangered Species Act does not require re-initiation of consultation on completed forest plans and that only project-level analysis is needed. The Tenth Circuit in 2007 ruled in favor of the FS/FWS' position in a similar case, *Forest Guardians v. Forsgren*.

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In May 2016, DOJ filed a writ of certiorari petition to the U.S. Supreme Court to ask for review of the Cottonwood ruling and resolve the conflicting circuit opinions. On October 11, 2016, the Supreme Court denied this request, allowing the Ninth Circuit's *Cottonwood* decision to stand. As such, federal lands in the states of Montana, Idaho, Washington, Oregon, Nevada, California, and Arizona must operate according to the *Cottonwood* ruling, and the impacts could spread to other circuits as well. According to the Obama Administration, the *Cottonwood* ruling could “shutdown land management,” substantially increases unnecessary paperwork requirements without conservation benefits, delays much-needed management projects, and encourages more litigation against important management projects. At least two forest management projects in Montana have been held up in Court as a result of the *Cottonwood* ruling.

Congress must act to reverse this disastrous ruling. Congressional action will require leadership from your Department and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and other land management agencies.

Will you commit to work with me and other colleagues to enact a legislative solution and protect worthwhile land management projects?

Response: I share your concerns about this issue. You have my commitment that, if confirmed, we will work together to address this.

Question 2: If it was not for your personal attention to shepherding the *Blackfeet Water Rights Settlement Act* through the House of Representatives, we would not have succeeded in enacting that historic legislation last Congress. As you know, our work is not finished for the Blackfeet people. In order to effectively implement the Compact and uphold our commitments to the Tribe, our state, and other water users in the Golden Triangle of our state—we need to fully-fund this water settlement.

Will you work with me through the Budget and Appropriations process to ensure robust funding for the Blackfeet Water Rights Settlement?

Response: Whether in Congress or the Administration, I am and will remain dedicated to ensuring that our commitments to the Blackfeet are met.

Questions for the Record from Senator Joe Manchin III

Question 1: Addressing invasive species

Controlling and managing Invasive species is a wide-ranging and constantly evolving challenge. As you know, Congressman Zinke, invasive species decrease biodiversity, damage infrastructure and negatively impact ecosystems. Congress has not been able to address this issue in a meaningful way, as no comprehensive legislation to address the

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treatment, management, and repair of invasive species has been signed into law. However there is a patchwork of laws, regulations, policies and programs in place to mitigate the damage of invasive species. One of the reasons managing invasive species is challenging in a state like West Virginia is because we are a heavily forested state, with considerable amounts of public lands and many large private landowners, including Timber Investment Management Organizations, Real Estate Investments Trusts, coal companies, forest products companies, and family forest owners. This patchwork of Federal, state and private lands makes for a challenging landscape, however it is obvious to me that this is an issue that needs to be addressed by the Federal government. If you are confirmed as Secretary, you will co-chair the National Invasive Species Council (NISC) along with the Secretaries of the Agriculture and Commerce.

What measures do you intend to undertake to prevent, eradicate, and control invasive species?

What steps can Congress take to help you address the issue legislatively?

Response: I share your concern, especially since my home state of Montana also has significant and numerous invasive species problems; including a number of forest pests that threaten the health of our forests. I think it is critical that federal land managers be encouraged and empowered to be good neighbors in controlling invasive species in cooperation with adjacent private land owners. We all need to work together if we are to succeed in defending our ecosystems, economy, and public health from the threats posed by invasive species. If confirmed, I will explore ways to improve the operations of the National Invasive Species Council, and actively engage with the Secretaries of Commerce and Agriculture to get off to a strong start on this issue. One place to start will be to explore how we may work with the States to cooperatively implement the recent framework for early detection and rapid response to new invasive species introductions. Eliminating new invasive species introductions before they become firmly established is the most effective and efficient way to avoid serious and expensive long-term problems from invasive species. Once I have undertaken a review of this issue, I would be pleased to explore with the Congress any legislative changes that might be helpful to better protect our environment, economy, and public health.

Question 2: Developing energy infrastructure

I am a longtime supporter of our nation's sportsmen and sportswomen. West Virginia's natural resources provide us with incredible vistas and outdoor recreational opportunities. I believe in protecting these resources for future generations of West Virginians and for our guests from around the nation and the globe. But, I am also a pragmatist and I believe that we must balance the economy and the environment. West Virginia has a long tradition of being an energy exporting state. That's a tradition that we are determined to continue but – in order to do so - our nation's energy infrastructure must be modernized and expanded in an environmentally responsible way. I want to

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make sure that, when these projects cross public lands, federal agencies with permitting authority are doing their part. I'm sure you are aware that the National Park Service, the Bureau of Land Management and other agencies are engaged in permitting several pipeline projects in my state. And I'm sure you know that the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) is the lead federal agency on these matters. The Department of the Interior is a big agency and while you have stated that you are supportive of responsible energy production, I'd like to get a better understanding of how you plan to manage infrastructure permitting and clarify duplications in the permitting process for pipelines.

What specifically will you do to ensure that your agencies' regional offices are being responsive to and transparent with project developers?

Response: As someone who has led the development of an EIS, I know how frustrating it can be to have another federal agency fail to participate as a cooperating agency. I will work to ensure consistency within the bureaus.

Question 3: The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) is a critical tool to ensuring environmental reviews are comprehensive; our natural resources are preserved; and the mitigation of environmental impacts are minimal. There is certainly room for improvement but energy companies rely on the NEPA process to provide them certainty and a "roadmap" for their projects. And, yet there seems to be increasing uncertainty when it comes to these projects - particularly when a federal agency does not participate as a "cooperating agency".

How will you work to encourage agencies like the National Park Service to act as a cooperating agency on a NEPA review in order to prevent duplication? Because I believe that would ensure that the Park Service is using its financial and staffing resources prudently in a manner that is not redundant.

Response: I have not been fully briefed on the cooperation between all of the Department's agencies on NEPA reviews. If I am confirmed, I will review these procedures and ensure that coordination is appropriate.

Questions for the Record from Senator Cory Gardner

Question 1: Senator Shaheen and I passed the Outdoor Recreation Jobs and Economic Impact Act in December 2016, and President Obama signed it into law. The law requires the Secretary of the Interior to work with the Secretaries of Commerce and Agriculture to measure the outdoor recreation economy. This marks the first time that the federal government will measure the outdoor recreation industry's contribution to our economy.

Should you be confirmed to be Secretary of the Interior, will you commit to supporting an ongoing, annual report on the economic impact of the outdoor recreation economy?

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Response: It is my understanding that the Secretary of Commerce is required to submit the referenced report. I will work with the Secretary of Commerce to support his efforts as appropriate.

Question 2: Will you commit to providing at least \$3 million in funding in the President's budget request for FY18 to the Arkansas Valley Conduit in Southeast Colorado and look for all opportunities to direct additional discretionary funding in FY17 to the Conduit?

Response: Senator, as we discussed in your office, I understand the importance of the Arkansas Valley Conduit, but I cannot make a commitment on behalf of the President-elect about his future budget requests. The most I can do is pledge to work with you on this, and I am committed to do that.

Question 3: As Secretary of the Interior, will you make a renewed effort to work with Tribes no matter what kind of energy resources they have, or potential resources, so they can make their own decisions to develop their own resources for the benefit of their members and the country?

Response: If confirmed, this will be one of my highest priorities. As I said at yesterday's hearing on my designation, tribal sovereignty is meaningful and important. I believe tribes should be able to make their own resource decisions for the benefit of their members.

Questions for the Record from Senator Martin Heinrich

Question 1: Will you work with western senators to make sure that renewable energy development and associated transmission projects will remain a priority on public lands, while protecting the places where we all love to hunt, hike, and fish?

Response: Senator, I am a supporter of an all-of-the-above energy policy, and that includes the development of renewable energy projects and transmission projects on federal lands. That development should be conducted in accordance with the principles of multiple use and fully consider and preserve hunting, fishing and recreating on federal lands.

Question 2: As the new administration looks at hiring freezes or budget cuts, will you commit to protecting critical functions at Interior agencies, including fire management, law enforcement, realty, and permit processing?

Response: I agree with you that those are critical DOI responsibilities, and I will work to ensure funding for those programs are adequate.

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Question 3: Congress enacted the Indian Reorganization Act in 1934 to help restore homelands for tribal governments. Interior Secretaries of both parties worked to move tribal fee lands into trust for nearly 75 years before the Supreme Court struck down a portion of this law in 2009. Since 2009, the Interior Solicitor's office has worked to ensure that the Administrative land to trust process will continue to work for tribes. Can you please share your thoughts for continuing the Administrative Indian land to trust process?

Response: I understand that the land into trust process is very important to the tribes. I will meet with the Bureau of Indian Affairs to gain a greater appreciation of the specific administrative challenges caused by the referenced 2009 decision and the efforts taken by the Solicitor's office.

Question 4: As you know, many national forests, parks, and lands were carved out of the ancestral homelands of Indian tribes. Many tribes retain their connections to these sacred lands and places. What are your views about ensuring that these lands remain under federal control, and the need for the Interior Department and other federal land managers to protect tribal sacred places and access to these places for Native Americans?

Response: Senator, as I said at the hearing on my designation, I believe federal lands should remain under federal control, and I deeply respect the rights and heritage of Indian tribes. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that the Department of Interior's management practices respect sacred places and Native Americans.

Question 5: Tribal water rights settlements like the Taos and Aamodt Settlement Agreements promise to resolve long-standing conflicts and reduce uncertainty over water rights. Will you commit to transparently implementing water rights settlements in a way that protects water rights and the environment while ensuring adequate future water supplies?

Response: I appreciate how important these tribal water rights settlements are throughout the western states and to the tribes. I am not aware of the specific issues regarding a lack of transparency in the area of water rights, but as a general matter I believe Interior should act in a transparent manner.

Question 6: Across the West, our quality of life, tourism, and outdoor recreation are driving an economic resurgence and sustainable, healthy rivers and streams, lakes, and reservoirs are foundational to this economic growth. How do we protect and promote these resources while ensuring we have reliable water supplies for farms, industry and municipal use?

Response: I believe we need to recognize that everything needs to be on the table when it comes to our water resources from increased conservation to additional infrastructure. If

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confirmed, I believe the executive branch and congress need to work together to address the issue of water supply and reliability for the next century.

Question 7: Facing persistent drought in the West, Congress has boosted support for the WaterSmart program, the Bureau of Reclamation's primary tool in promoting water conservation and modern, efficient water infrastructure in agricultural and municipal uses. Will you work with us on increased funding and capacity for WaterSmart and federal leadership on efficient water infrastructure?

Response: In the West, water infrastructure is the backbone of local and regional economies, including the infrastructure on Indian Reservations. If confirmed I think it will be important for the Department of the Interior to explore many ways in which it can provide assistance to local and regional efforts to improve water certainty. I look forward to learning more about the WaterSmart Program and how it can be used to improve local economies in the West.

Question 8: You have talked about working with states on Antiquities Act monument proclamations and policies, but you have not mentioned collaboration with affected tribes. Will you commit to meeting with and working with tribes and tribal communities whose ancestral lands and sacred sites are protected by Antiquities Act proclamations before making any decisions about them?

Response: Yes, if confirmed.

Question 9: The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service just finalized revisions to the eagle conservation/take permit program in December. Will you commit to work with industry to ensure a practical and workable implementation, including incorporating the latest data and an appropriate consideration of low-risk projects?

Response: I am not familiar with the specifics of this program. As a general matter, any program needs to be workable and practical to be successful. If it is not, it needs to be improved.

Questions for the Record from Senator Mazie Hirono

Question 1: In Hawaii and the Pacific Region, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service works closely with the Department of Defense (DoD) in ensuring that they meet their environmental obligations including requirements under the Endangered Species Act, the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. This work is critical as our nation continues to strengthen our strategic interests in the Indo-Asia-Pacific region. Yet, this coordination takes up a large part of Fish and Wildlife Service's resources in the Pacific Island Office.

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As Secretary of Interior, you will be responsible for managing the Fish and Wildlife Service and as such, I want to make sure you are aware of this engagement between the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the DoD. I want to work with you to both ensure that this important work can continue as well as to address other important resource management issues under the responsibility of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Hawaii and the Pacific Region.

Response: Senator, I do not know much about the relationship between the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Department of Defense on these issues. Thank you for bringing this to my attention, and I look forward to learning more about this important issue as we work together.

Question 2: While in the House you voted in favor of an amendment that would have blocked funding for any listed species for which the Fish and Wildlife Service has failed to complete a 5-year review as required by the Endangered Species Act even though the Fish and Wildlife Service failure to do so is due to insufficient appropriations by Congress. This amendment would have devastated conservation and recovery efforts for as many as 850 species across the country, 137 of which are in Hawaii.

As Secretary, will you work with Congress to ensure that sufficient funding is provided to Fish and Wildlife Service so that they can fulfill their duties, including completing 5-year reviews, to protect and recover our nation's endangered species?

Response: If I am confirmed, I will work closely with Congress to ensure that conservation and recovery programs are appropriately funded.

Question 3: Despite Hawaii and the Pacific Islands being home to a large percentage of endangered species, we have suffered from a lack of funding. For example, in FY 16 the Fish and Wildlife Service's Recovery Fund was \$17.8 million for Region 1. The Pacific Islands received only 37% of the funding, despite being home to over 90% of Region 1's endangered species.

Can you commit to working with me to provide more federal resources to Hawaii and the Pacific Islands in recovery funding for our endangered species?

Response: Senator, I recognize that Hawaii is a special place with unique needs. If I am confirmed, I will work with you to ensure that funding for recovery and conservation programs in Hawaii are appropriate.

Question 4: Funding for Fish and Wildlife Service's State Wildlife Grants is based on a formula that takes into account human population and land area, with the added caveat that no state receives less than 1% of funding. As Hawaii does not have a large land area or large human population, we receive the minimum amount of funding, despite having a disproportionately large need to protect our threatened and endangered species.

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If confirmed, can I count on working with you to either adjust the formula to account for need (including number of endangered species) or raise the minimum amount of funding that states shall receive?

Response: If I am confirmed, I will commit to fully review the funding formulas for the Fish and Wildlife Service's State Wildlife Grant program to determine whether adjustments to the program are appropriate. I will also work with you and Congress to ensure that funding levels for the program are appropriate.

Question 5: As you know, the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) is a priority for Hawaii. It drives local economies and is the cornerstone federal program that provides access to public lands for all Americans, and helps protect our incredible diversity of plants and wildlife that make Hawaii so unique and special, as previously mentioned.

Getting into specifics, I understand you supported legislation that reflected the Senate energy bill compromise language that permanently reauthorized the LWCF. Will you carry over that support into your role as Secretary? Will you work to ensure that annual full funding for LWCF is provided in your budget proposal including robust funding for critical federal land acquisition priorities? Along those same lines, will you work with me and other members of Congress to find a reliable long-term funding solution for LWCF?

Response: LWCF has my full support. I have cosponsored two bipartisan pieces of legislation to permanently reauthorize the program, have opposed my own Chairman's reform proposals, and was the only member of the Montana delegation to vote in support of the program's reauthorization and funding. As a Montanan, I have personally witnessed the good work LWCF does for local communities, the sportsmen and recreation community, and conservation. As the budget process moves forward, I look forward to working the President-elect and Congress to support LWCF's critical work. That includes identifying stable, diverse and long-term funding mechanisms to keep the fund viable for generations to come.

Question 6: Water security is becoming increasingly important across the nation. As an island state, we in Hawaii are in a unique situation where we must be self-reliant for our freshwater needs. Just this past fall I hosted a Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee field hearing to examine opportunities for federal and non-federal partnerships in watershed protection and efforts to improve water security in Hawaii.

During the field hearing a couple of Federally-funded projects that target specific geographic locations, including the Forest Service's Watershed Improvement Program and the Bureau of Reclamation's Western Watershed Enhancement Partnership, were mentioned. Due to Hawaii's limited endangered species resources and invasive species threat, coupled with the importance of maintaining the health of our forested watersheds,

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can I count on working with you to identify opportunities for similar DOI initiatives to focus on the Pacific Islands?

Response: Water security is important. I will work with you on opportunities for initiatives that could benefit the Pacific Islands.

Question 7: DOI's stated mission is as follows: "The Department of Interior protects and manages the Nation's natural resources and cultural heritage; provides scientific and other information about those resources; and honors its trust responsibilities or special commitments to American Indians, Alaska Natives, and affiliated island communities."

As Secretary, how do you plan to carry out the Department's mission? What will the Department look like in, say 2 years, compared to now? What parts of the Department do you seek to change or enhance?

Response: If confirmed, I intend to restore trust and strong management to America's public lands and resources. In our meeting in your office and at the hearing this week, I shared the impact that attending the ceremony at Yellowstone National Park commemorating the 100 year anniversary of the National Park Service had on me. I believe we need to ensure that our approach to responsibly managing America's public lands will make our children's children proud in the next century. If confirmed, I will review agency policies, resources, and priorities and look forward to the opportunity to meet with you to discuss areas that would benefit from changes or enhancements.

Question 8: In an op-ed that you wrote last spring you noted that it's our responsibility to "ensure our children and grandchildren's children enjoy the same outdoor opportunities that we have." In Hawaii a lot of our native species are found only in Hawaii and are under constant threat from invasive species, climate change, development, etc.

As Secretary of Interior, what will you do to ensure that our grandchildren's children in Hawaii get to enjoy our native species?

Response: Senator, during the hearing on my designation, you know that I referred on several occasions to my two granddaughters sitting behind me. I am committed to looking at issues facing the Department with a 100-year perspective. I want to ensure that our grandchildren's children look back and think, "They did right by us." Frankly, I don't know all that can be done to address the threat of non-native species, but, if confirmed, I will consult with you and Hawaiian officials, and we will work together to find the best possible solutions.

Question 9: The Senate Environment and Public Works Committee held a successful bipartisan hearing last year on the issue of marine debris. The Fish and Wildlife Service testified on how marine debris is harming wildlife and fouling coastal National Wildlife Refuges.

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Coming from a non-coastal state, what steps will you take to familiarize yourself with this global problem? Will you support the Fish and Wildlife Service and Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement to continue their participation in the Interagency Marine Debris Coordinating Committee? What other steps could the DOI take to help find global solutions to this growing problem?

Response: I am familiar with marine debris, given my 23 years in the Navy and I recognize that it is a serious problem. However, I will need to learn more about the specific role the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement have with the interagency committee.

Question 10: Many of our National parks are suffering severe damage by invasive species. Examples include pythons and other invasive wildlife in Everglades, wild boars and tree-killing insects in Great Smoky Mountains, and saltcedar and invasive grasses in Joshua Tree National Park. The parks in Hawai'i are particularly invaded. The forests of Hawai'i Volcanoes are under threat from many invasive plants, feral pigs, and the plant disease rapid o' hia death. The Park's unique birds are being decimated by mongooses, rats, and avian malaria.

What steps will you take to protect our National parks from invasive species?

Response: I share your concern, especially since my home state of Montana also has significant and numerous invasive species problems in our national parks. I think it is critical that federal land managers be encouraged and empowered to be good neighbors in controlling invasive species in cooperation with adjacent private land owners. We all need to work together if we are to succeed in defending our ecosystems, economy, and public health from the threats posed by invasive species. I am especially concerned that Hawaii's unique flora and fauna are vulnerable to invasive species. I would not want to see invasive species push any of these unique plants and animals onto the Endangered Species list. Once confirmed, I will ask the National Park Service to present me with options for better protecting our national parks from invasive species.

Question 11: I'm sure you are familiar with visitor concerns about noise from park overflights. I understand Glacier National Park deals with issue. Since the passage of the National Parks Air Tour Management Act of 2000 every national park unit with significant air tour operations (50 or more air tours annually) has been required to prepare an air tour management plan or agreement. This is a joint responsibility of the National Park Service and Federal Aviation Administration. There are 27 national park units that qualify for plans including two in my state, Haleakala and Hawai'i Volcanoes national parks. Yet only two parks have had plans completed thus far (Biscayne and Big Cypress) and both of those just last year.

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What will you do to protect the environment and visitor experience at our national parks from air tour noise?

Response: I hope to work to enhance the visitor experience in our Nation's National Parks across the board. Frankly, I have not given a lot of thought to the issue of air tour noise, but, if confirmed, I will, and I would appreciate your recommendations on how best to address the issue.

Question 12: Last Congress I cosponsored a bill introduced by Senators Murkowski and Cantwell called the "National Volcano Early Warning and Monitoring Program Act." As you know, we have a number of volcanoes in Hawaii and this bill would provide important updates as well as unify the monitoring systems of volcano observatories, including the Hawaiian Volcano Observatory.

As Secretary will you support this bill? Will you make volcano monitoring a priority for the Department and commit to working with myself and other members of Congress to advance this legislation?

Response: If confirmed as Secretary, I will fully support the mission and intent of the "National Volcano Early Warning and Monitoring Program Act". Advancing our technological capabilities in this area is important. Volcanos are an important applied science focus of USGS' Natural Hazards Mission Area. As a geologist, I am aware and fully appreciative of the natural hazards that we face, and will continue to support USGS's efforts to address these risks.

Question 13: When we had our courtesy meeting you said that what is important to me is important to you. In Hawaii there are a number of priorities affecting the state that are important to me and that fall within the purview of the Department. These include:

- securing our freshwater resources,
- Compact of Free Association,
- permanent reauthorization of and full funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund,
- protecting and recovering endangered species, and
- preventing and eradicating invasive species.

As Secretary of Interior, will you commit to working with me on these issues?

Response: Senator, I appreciate you taking the time to meet with me prior to the hearing on my designation. What is important to you is important to me. If confirmed, I look forward to working together to address these issues.

Question 14: Hawaii is the state most impacted by the three compacts of free association that the United States has entered into with the Republic of Palau, Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Federated States of Micronesia. I have worked in the past on a

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number of items, including fulfilling our financial commitments to Palau, working to restore Medicaid reimbursements for citizens of the Freely Associated States (FAS), and establishing a one-stop resource center to facilitate the resettlement needs of FAS citizens residing in Hawaii.

If confirmed, can Hawaii, Guam, the Northern Marianas, and American Samoa continue counting on your department—and enlist your assistance in dealing with other departments as well—to assist us in working to support U.S. states and territories with large FAS citizen populations?

Response: This is an important issue to me. The relationship between the US, our territories, and the Freely Associated States is significant and deserves special focused attention. If I am confirmed, I look forward to learning more and working with you on finding appropriate solutions to the issues they face.

Question 15: Protecting our freshwater resources is becoming increasingly important across the nation as well as to our national security. As an island state, we in Hawaii are in a unique situation where we must be self-reliant for our freshwater needs. Just this past fall I hosted a Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee field hearing to examine opportunities for federal and non-federal partnerships in watershed protection and efforts to improve water security in Hawaii.

During this Congress I will be working to identify and provide federal resources to address water security both in Hawaii and across the nation. Will you make finding solutions to protect our water resources a priority at the department? How will you prioritize funding resources for USGS streamgages and other observational equipment that we rely on? Can I count on you as Secretary to work with me on this issue?

Response: As I mentioned in my opening testimony at my confirmation hearing, water resource security is of critical importance to our nation. I understand and appreciate your concerns related to the complex interaction between fresh groundwater “lens” and saltwater and the critical need to prioritize self-reliance and freshwater security for Hawaii and the country as a whole. I support your efforts to identify potential opportunities for federal and non-federal partnerships related to watershed protection and water security, and look forward to working with Congress in developing its funding priorities for developing and protecting our freshwater resources.

Question 16: As our military focuses on the strategic importance of the Indo-Asia-Pacific region, we expect an increase in traffic throughout the Pacific region. With that traffic comes an increased threat of invasive species in Hawaii, which is the gateway to the mainland U.S. from Asia.

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As Secretary, what resources will your department provide to assist the Pacific island communities in protecting against this threat? Do you agree with the proverb that “an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure?” If so, can I count on working with you to protect our environment from existing and anticipated threats?

Response: If confirmed, I will work to enhance coordination with the Department of Defense and the Pacific island communities to reduce the risks posed by invasive species. I definitely agree that “an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.” One place to start will be to explore how we may implement the recent framework for early detection and rapid response to new invasive species introductions. Eliminating new invasive species introductions before they become firmly established is the most effective and efficient way to avoid serious and expensive long-term problems from invasive species.

Question 17: As Secretary, you will be responsible for managing over 500 million acres of public lands.

What are your priorities for utilization of these lands for the public good?

Response: Senator, as I said at the hearing on my designation, I am inspired by the inscription on the Roosevelt Arch in the Yosemite National Park that reads, “For the Benefit and Enjoyment of the People.” I believe the public good is best met if we keep both of those goals in mind. That means that different portions of our federal lands will be managed differently; that our priorities will vary depending on the land. In some cases, we should honor the Muir model in which man has a light footprint and simply observes nature. In other areas, lands should be managed in accordance with the Pinchot principles of best-practices and allow for greater impact and management by man including the production of resources to benefit our lives and the economy.

Question 18: As Secretary, you will be making decisions that impact our water, air, land, and oceans. You have a record of questioning the scientific consensus on climate change and have alluded to our nation’s energy independence being more important than addressing climate change.

Energy independence does not necessarily have to come at the cost of our nation’s environment. Do you see opportunities for advancing our nation’s energy independence in tandem with mitigating climate change?

Response: Yes. From my years in the Navy, when I observed energy production around the world, I know that energy production in accordance with reasonable regulation here in the United States is preferable to energy production with little or no regulation elsewhere. As a result, I believe the production of domestic energy can both reduce our Nation’s dependence on energy imports and benefit the environment.

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Question 19: The Department of Energy, Department of Interior, and Bureau of Ocean Energy Management released their 2016 National Offshore Wind Strategy Report and discussed several important improvements to BOEM’s regulatory review process. The report recommended that BOEM’s existing regulatory process could be improved and made more efficient. This may include establishing more predictable review timelines and maintaining a reasonable level of flexibility given the early stage of the industry’s development.

Do you agree to work with the DOE to ensure the regulations and process that govern offshore wind development should be both efficient and fair to help facilitate the growth of infrastructure projects under the DOI’s jurisdiction?

Response: Yes, if confirmed.

Question 20: With the first offshore wind turbines currently spinning off the coast of Rhode Island, the potential for offshore wind development in the United States is finally starting to be realized. Part of the reason for the Block Island Wind Farm’s success is the extensive ocean planning process and corresponding stakeholder engagement process that helped identify an area for the wind farm that provided the least conflict with other users, and kept the broader ocean community well-informed of the project as it developed.

Do you agree ocean planning on a broader regional and national scale could also support other offshore renewable energy projects? Other areas that are also being considered for offshore wind energy development have not benefited from this level of community involvement and conflict identification prior to being bid. How will you direct BOEM to take into consideration the concerns of the fishing, shipping, and other pertinent industries early on in the lease sale process?

Response: President Obama issued an Executive Order entitled Stewardship of the Ocean, Our Coasts, and the Great Lakes in June 2010. If I am confirmed, I will review the Department’s compliance with this Executive Order and determine what steps the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management is taking to address the concerns of the fishing, shipping and other pertinent industries within the lease sale process.

Question 21: The Department of Interior is charged with managing the nation’s wildlife, natural resources, and public lands. All of these are threatened by climate change. Whether it be sea level rise stealing protected land from coastal National Wildlife Refuges, increased drought threatening migratory bird habitat, or milder winters allowing parasites, like ticks, to overburden large game animals like moose – the wildlife and habitats under the Department of Interior’s charge are at the frontline of the negative consequences of climate change. USGS, FWS, National Park Service, and other DOI agencies have all concluded that the science behind climate change is well established and have for years issued rules and followed policies consistent with this position. In 2014 you stated climate change “[is not a hoax, but it’s not proven science either.](#)”

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Will you direct DOI agencies to reconsider their decisions to act in accordance with climate science?

Response: Senator, as I said at the hearing, the Department's decisions in the past and future should be based on sound science. As I review past decisions and make new decisions, I will keep sound science in mind.

Question 22: The U.S. Geological Survey is an agency wholly dedicated to scientific research and advancement. Its talented and well-respected researchers have authored more than 130,000 publications since the agency's founding in 1879 and are looked to as national experts in the natural sciences.

Do you accept the scientific research and other products that have been produced by USGS? Further, the top mission area listed on [USGS's website](#) is currently "climate and land use change." Will you in any way try to limit USGS's work on climate change issues?

Response: As a student of geology, the USGS has a rich history and a proud tradition. I have been told various, sometimes inconsistent, things about the current work at the USGS labs, and I need to learn more. If confirmed, I will look at those issues. I will try to ensure that priorities are appropriately addressed. I anticipate that I will learn more about the USGS's role in climate change research versus the other the role of other agencies and departments if I am confirmed.

Question 23: How will you navigate the dual responsibilities of overseeing the protection of the nation's environment (including working to mitigate the effects of human-driven climate change) with managing extractive energy projects that are producing the fuel that is driving climate change?

Response: Managing these responsibilities in a balanced and appropriate manner is an essential duty for the Secretary of the Interior. If I am confirmed, I will work closely with the officers of the Department, the public, stakeholders and Congress to develop and execute Departmental policies in an appropriate manner.

Question 24: The Obama Administration was a leader in accelerating the deployment of clean energy on federal lands. Powering Our Future, through the Department of Interior, looks to permit gigawatts of renewable energy on public lands by 2020.

Do you support siting renewable energy projects on public lands? What will you do, if confirmed, to keep in place existing programs like Powering our Future?

Response: If I am confirmed, I will review these programs and work closely with Congress to ensure the appropriate funding levels for the Powering our Future program.

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Question 25: Some examples of invasive species that threaten our native habitat include mammals, birds, reptiles, plants, insects, and worms. These bioinvaders threaten all kinds of ecosystems across the country, ranging from swamps to deserts, seacoasts to mountain tops. Countering these threats would seem to require coordination across many players – federal and state agencies, Tribes, landowners, and other private entities. The National Invasive Species Council was created to facilitate this coordination. As you know, the Secretary of the Interior co-chairs the Council, and provides its staff.

How would you strengthen the Council’s leadership in these areas?

Response: If confirmed, I will explore ways to improve the operations of the National Invasive Species Council, and actively engage with the Secretaries of Commerce and Agriculture to get off to a strong start on this issue. I agree that we need to cooperatively engage with States, tribes, local governments, and private landowners to make progress on invasive species. One place to start will be to explore how we may work with the States and others to cooperatively implement the recent framework for early detection and rapid response to new invasive species introductions. We also need to create a more effective linkage between the National Invasive Species Council policy operation in Washington DC and the on-the-ground federal land managers across the country who deal with invasive species on a daily basis.

Question 26: Many people think that detecting invasive species as soon as possible and taking effective action to eradicate or contain them is a crucial component of an effective invasive species program. The Department (of Interior) and Council recently published a national “early detection and rapid response” strategy.

What steps would you take to implement this strategy?

Response: I agree that early detection and rapid response to new invasive species introductions is the most effective and cost-efficient way to protect our environment, and economy and public health from invasive species. If confirmed, I will direct my staff to quickly analyze the new framework for early detection and rapid response to new invasive species introductions, and provide me with recommendations on how we might work cooperatively with the States and others to more effectively and efficiently deal with new invasive species introductions.

Question 27: When President Richard Nixon signed the Endangered Species Act (ESA) into law on December 28, 1973, it had already passed the U.S. House of Representatives by an overwhelmingly vote of 355 to four. Over the last 42 years, the ESA has become one of our bedrock environmental laws. Among other things, it helped to save the American bald eagle, the whooping crane, and the black-footed ferret from extinction. The ESA has prevented the extinction of 99% of species placed under its protection and remains the most important law our nation has ever passed to protect imperiled species.

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Polling shows that the ESA continues to have overwhelming support from the American public (90% of Americans support the ESA).

Will you continue to enforce and strengthen this law that has proved so vital in preventing species extinction?

Response: If confirmed, I will swear an oath to uphold all of the laws of the United States, which includes the implementation of the Endangered Species Act.

Question 28: During our courtesy meeting you mentioned that one of your top priorities as Secretary will be to build trust. In the past you have come out on different sides of some very important issues. For example, in 2010 you sent a letter to President Obama urging him to take action on climate change but then later questioned the science that supports climate change. You also support keeping public lands public but just recently voted in favor of a rule that allows the House to consider federal land transfers cost-free and budget-neutral.

When you talk about building trust what do you mean? Do you mean within the Department of Interior, between the Department and the public, or between the Department and Members of Congress? Also, given your support for conflicting actions in the past, how do you specifically plan for people within the Department, the public, and Members of Congress trust you to maintain the priorities you note today throughout your term as Secretary?

Response: If confirmed as Secretary of the Interior, I intend to be a listening advocate and promote openness and transparency within the Department and its 70,000 talented employees as well as with local, state and federal elected officials, other experts and organizations, and the American public. 20 percent of U.S. land is managed by the Department and, if confirmed, I intend to work with Congress throughout my tenure to meet the priorities of the Trump Administration and those outlined for you today.

Question 29: During our meeting you mentioned that your three priorities for the Department are establishing trust, addressing DOI's infrastructure needs, and reorganizing the Department. Along the lines of infrastructure, you had mentioned not wanting to use the Land and Water Conservation fund to pay for the \$12.5 billion maintenance backlog within the National Park Service.

What specifically will you do as Secretary to address our infrastructure needs and how will you pay for it? What specific steps are needed to "grow our economy?"

Response: Senator, if confirmed, I am going to work with and on behalf of President-elect Trump to include funding to address our national parks' infrastructure backlog in

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infrastructure legislation. That package is envisioned to address national needs of which the backlog in the national parks is only a part, and I do not know how the administration will propose to pay for the entire package.

As to growing the economy, there are many steps that need to be taken, but a sound energy policy is one of the underpinnings of a strong and growing economy, and I am dedicated to ensuring that our federal resources are available in accordance with best management practices to support that goal.

Question 30: During our meeting you mentioned that one of your three priorities for the Department is to reorganize.

How would you go about reorganizing the Department? Can you elaborate on the specific steps you will take in reorganizing and the expertise you will take into consideration during the process?

Response: Senator, if confirmed, I intend to undertake a 100-year review of the Department's structure and management. I don't know what conclusions that review will reach, but I can imagine they will touch on fundamental issues about the manner in which the Department is structured, where its functions are located, and changes that should be made in resource allocation.

Question 31: If confirmed as Secretary, what would your top three policy objectives be for the Department? For example, one of Secretary Jewell's priorities for the Department was "ensuring healthy watersheds and sustainable, secure water supplies." In carrying out those three policy objectives how much consideration would you give to public and community input? What resources do you intend to rely upon to inform these policy objectives?

Response: Senator, as I said at the hearing on my designation, if confirmed, my three highest priorities are:

1. Restoring trust by working with rather than against local communities and states;
2. Prioritize the estimated \$12.5 billion backlog in maintenance at our national parks, and;
3. To ensure that the professionals on the front line, our rangers and field managers, have the right tools, right resources, and flexibility to make the right decisions that give a voice to the people they serve.

As to the amount of public and community input I will consider, I will say that public and community input is key to my highest priority of restoring trust. The Department must be a good listener.

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Question 32: During our courtesy meeting you mentioned the issue of sexual harassment within the National Park Service (NPS), that you have discussed it with Secretary Jewell, and that you have a zero tolerance policy.

What specifically will you do to prevent further occurrence of this within NPS? What steps will you take to hold employees accountable for reports of sexual harassment? How will you address retaliation? Will you institute reporting mechanisms that make it easier for victims to come forward with reports?

Response: Senator, I have zero tolerance for sexual harassment. If confirmed, I will ensure that the leadership at all levels of the Department understands how seriously I take the issue, and the issue will be addressed. In fact, I take this issue so seriously that, rather than give you a complete answer today, I would ask for you to give me some time, if confirmed, to better understand exactly what needs to be done and then to discuss with you my findings and the steps I will take to address the issue.

Questions for the Record from Senator Bill Cassidy

Question 1: Congressman, the President-Elect has talked many times about his desire to create jobs—a message well received in my state. In fact, he’s talked about “big league” jobs and establishing American energy dominance. The outgoing Administration will point to the declining unemployment rate (4.7 percent in December). Yet the Labor Participation Rate, now at 62.7 percent, has also steadily declined since President Obama took office, and that is not a positive trend. The Labor Participation Rate when President Obama took office in January 2009, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, was 65.7 percent. As I just mentioned, it has steadily declined and has remained at 62 percent since April 2014.

In my state, the oil and gas industry is one of our largest employers. The industry not only employs thousands of hard working men and women but the dollars my home state of Louisiana receives from energy development goes towards rebuilding our coastline. Due to the Obama Administration’s regulatory tactic of “death by one thousand cuts” as well as the decline in the price of oil, folks in my state have been losing their jobs and struggling to find adequate employment to

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provide for themselves and their families. Just last week there was a headline in one of my state's local newspapers that read "Baker Hughes to close Crowley facility." Another headline last month read "Shreveport near top for U.S. job losses".

According to the website 24/7WallStreet.com which analyzed data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Lafayette, Houma and Shreveport, Louisiana all rank at or near the top for job loss in 2016.

While I recognize that oil prices are one of the key drivers for development, regulations also play a pivotal role for the industry.

Congressman, how will you, if confirmed, work to fulfill the President-Elect's commitment to create a regulatory climate that encourages both American energy dominance and job creation while at the same time honoring the Department's mission to protect natural resources?

The departing Interior Department leadership repeatedly used oil prices and lack of industry interest as rationale for rescinding planned lease sales in the Atlantic and Artic.

- i. Do you believe that the current regulatory environment contributed to "lack of interest" in the prospect of OCS lease sales?
- ii. Considering these leases take several years to develop, do you believe temporary low oil and gas prices are an adequate reason to withhold lease acreage?

Response: Senator, I believe that an uncertain regulatory environment in which companies have reason to doubt whether permits will be issued causes potential lease bidders to reduce the price they are willing to pay. Regulatory uncertainty is reflected in bid prices. I believe reforms are necessary if we want to ensure both that production will be done in accordance with reasonable regulation and our taxpayers will receive true fair value for lease sales.

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Question 2: Last Congress, the committee passed my legislation that opened up access to the Eastern Gulf of Mexico and expanded the scope of Outer Continental Shelf state revenue sharing. At the end of last Congress, a majority of Senators, with a bi-partisan vote, supported a later iteration of my legislation that would expand revenue sharing for Gulf and Mid-Atlantic States as well as Alaska. In my opening statement, I mentioned that federal revenues from energy developed in the Gulf go to rebuild Louisiana's coast, which is vital to my state's future.

Unfortunately, the Obama Administration's 5-year OCS plan and aggressive effort to name new or expand current national monument areas means that states such as mine or Virginia where they have large budget deficits are missing out on additional or new dollars that could flow to states.

- iii. What are your thoughts on the most recent 5-year OCS plan proposed by the Interior Department, and will you pledge to work with myself and others in Congress to ensure the next five year plan pursues the goals of energy independence and robust job growth?
- iv. What are your thoughts on increasing and expanding the ability for coastal states to receive revenue payments from the federal leases on the OCS?

Response: If I am confirmed, I will work to implement President-elect Trump's energy independence policy. That will certainly require a require a review of our OCS lease plans, and I commit to working closely with Congress, the States, local governments and stakeholders to develop a comprehensive policy towards OCS leasing.

Questions for the Record from Senator Catherine Cortez Masto

Question 1: Minute 319 provides important guidelines for both Western States and Mexico regarding the management of the Colorado River's water, but expires at the end of 2017. The Upper and Lower Basin states have been working on a new agreement with Mexico, Minute 3 2X, which has been proposed based on Minute 319 and evolving basin conditions. What steps can the Department take to ensure the process is smooth and timely? Can you commit to working closely with the Western States to ensure their concerns are addressed before Minute 319 expires?

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Response: I understand there is a longstanding tradition of collaboration on Colorado River between the Secretary of the Interior and the Colorado River basin states. That's a tradition I intend to maintain. I will ensure that we work closely with basin states over the course of the year.

Question 2: Will you commit to strong tribal consultation when it comes to decisions, activities, and land management on Bureau of Land Management land?

Response: I have proudly represented the tribes of Montana in Congress. I appreciate the importance of tribal consultation and will work to implement a culture that ensures opportunities for consultation.

Question 3: In 2014, Department of Interior employees were under threat in Nevada during a standoff over BLM land use. As you are aware, the danger facing Interior employees has increased over the past several years, and we have seen an rise in similar incidents. If you are confirmed as Secretary of the Interior, you have an obligation to protect your employees from harm. What are your plans to protect the health and welfare of your employees? How will the Department provide the training and resources necessary to handle these kinds of situations in the future?

Response: If confirmed, and as someone who has spent 23 years in the Navy, nothing will be more important than ensuring Interior's employees have a safe place to work. I will learn more about the specific challenges the agency faces. If confirmed, I will work to free up some of the decision-making on the front lines and collaborate with local law enforcement, which I believe will foster greater trust.

ZINKE'S RECORD ON CONSERVATION AND PUBLIC LANDS

Op-eds & LTE

- [October 9, 2015](#): Op-ed in Montana papers about the previous day's markup, entitled 'LWCF foes need to take a hike,' was published.
- [November 22, 2015](#): LTE to the Washington Post about the importance of LWCF.
- [December 2, 2015](#): Billings Gazette op-ed urges Republicans to return to their conservation roots to support LWCF.

Leading Conservation Legislation

- [January 26, 2015](#): Became an original cosponsor of H.R.528, the Recreational Fishing and Hunting Heritage and Opportunities Act.
- [February 24, 2015](#): Cosponsored H.R.845, the National Forest System Trails Stewardship Act.
- [April 30, 2015](#): Voted against S.Con.Res. 11 – FY2016 Budget, which included a provision to sell federal lands.
- [June 15, 2015](#): Introduced H.R.2787, the East Rosebud Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.
- [July 14, 2015](#): Cosponsored H.R.1814, to permanently reauthorize the Land and Water Conservation Fund.
- [October 8, 2015](#): In a full Committee markup, voted in support of Rep. Huffman's amendment to H.R.2406, the SHARE Act, which would have permanently authorized LWCF. Rep. Zinke was the only Republican to support.
- [April 15, 2016](#): Cosponsored H.R.3173, the Sportsmen's Conservation and Outdoor Recreation Enhancement Act.
- [April 29, 2016](#): Cosponsored H.R.5114, the 21st Century Conservation Service Corps Act of 2016.
- [July 8, 2016](#): Cosponsored H.R.4151, to amend chapter 2003 of title 54, United States Code, to fund the Land and Water Conservation Fund and provide for the use of such funds, and for other purposes.
- [July 13, 2016](#): Introduced H.R.5778, the Alex Diekmann Peak Designation Act of 2016.

Congressman Zinke on public lands ownership

- In July, 2016, Zinke [resigned as a delegate](#) to the RNC because of a platform plank to sell public lands.

- In June 2016, Zinke [voted against a bill](#) offered by former Committee Chairman Don Young (R-AK), H.R. 3650, the State National Forest Management Act of 2015. This bill would permit up to two million acres of public lands owned by the U.S. Forest Service to be transferred to state ownership.
- In July of 2015, Zinke [again voted](#) for a Polis amendment to the Department of Interior Appropriations bill that would have prohibited the Department from using funding in violation of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976. Zinke was one of eight Republicans joining Democrats in support.
- In May 2015, Zinke [voted against the GOP budget](#) because it included vaguely-written language that would allow the sale of public lands.

Congressman Zinke has been a loyal and fierce advocate of LWCF since entering Congress:

- March 23, 2015: Signed appropriations request, led by Reps. Thompson and Meehan, advocating for ‘robust funding’ of the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) in Fiscal Year (FY) 2016.
- [April 15, 2015](#): First challenged Chairman Bishop’s concerns about LWCF at a hearing focused on LWCF and land acquisition, also reiterated our federal lands are not for sale.
- [July 14, 2015](#): Cosponsored H.R.1814, to permanently reauthorize the Land and Water Conservation Fund.
- September 22, 2015: Signed a bipartisan letter to Speaker John Boehner urging immediate reauthorization of the LWCF prior to its expiration on September 30.
- [October 8, 2015](#): In a full Committee markup, voted in support of Rep. Huffman’s amendment to H.R.2406, the SHARE Act, which would have permanently reauthorized LWCF. Rep. Zinke was the only Republican to support.
- [October 9, 2015](#): Op-ed about the previous day’s markup, entitled ‘LWCF foes need to take a hike,’ was published.
- [November 18, 2015](#): Directly challenged Chairman Bishop’s LWCF reform discussion draft, entered into the official Committee record over 19 letters from Montana groups about why this bill won’t work for the state.
- [November 22, 2015](#): Submitted an LTE to the Washington Post about the importance of LWCF.
- [December 2, 2015](#): Crafted Billings Gazette op-ed urging Republicans to return to their conservation roots to support LWCF.
- December 12, 2015: Sent letter to Chairman Hal Rogers urging funding of the Holland Ranch and Little Sheep properties in Beaverhead County.
- [December 18, 2015](#): Was the only Member of the Montana delegation to vote in support of the H.R.2029, the omnibus package, which included a three year

reauthorization of the program (after the program had lapsed in September) and an increase in funding, up to \$450 million, for FY2016.

- March 22, 2016: Signed appropriations request, led by Reps. Thompson and Meehan, advocating for 'robust funding' of LWCF in FY2017.
- May 20, 2016: Joined the Montana delegation in sending a letter to Director Dan Ashe, USFWS, in support of the Whitefish Lake Watershed Project.
- [May 25, 2016](#): Voted with Democrats on the House floor on a Motion to Instruct Conferees to include permanent reauthorization of LWCF in the conference of the House and Senate energy bills.
- [July 8, 2016](#): Cosponsored H.R.4151, to permanently reauthorize the Land and Water Conservation Fund

Conservation & Sportsmen support Zinke

- "We applaud Rep. Zinke's leadership on behalf of Montana's sportsmen and women and thank him." – **Land Tawney, President and CEO Backcountry Hunters and Anglers**
- "We appreciate Congressman Zinke's commitment to hunting and fishing through his support of the SCORE Act." – **Joel Webster, Director of Western Lands, Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership**
- "Montana Outfitters and Guides Association thanks Congressman Zinke for his vote and willingness to stand behind Montana's prized conservation and recreation values." – **Mac Minard, Montana Outfitters and Guides Association**
- "RMEF has learned Congressman Ryan Zinke (R-MT) is meeting with President-elect Trump today about possible appointment as Secretary of Interior, Secretary of Energy or Secretary of Veterans Affairs. Congressman Zinke's appointment to any of these cabinet posts would of course be important for Montana, but we'd really like to see him at Interior, given his understanding of and support for sportsmen, public lands and natural resource issues." - **David Allen, President and CEO of Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation**
- "Montana is fortunate to have a representative like Ryan Zinke in Congress," **said K.C. Walsh, president and owner of Bozeman-based Simms Fishing Products.** "Whether in Washington, D.C., or here at home, he fights for our land, water and people and supports Montana's thriving outdoor recreation economy. I am proud to join Outdoor Industry Association in support of Congressman Zinke's reelection."

- “Congressman Zinke understands the importance of Montana’s and our nation’s public lands and knows the benefits that outdoor recreation businesses bring to the economy of one of the most naturally beautiful states in the country,” said **OIA Executive Director Amy Roberts**. “His ability to find common sense solutions to protect our lands and waters and growing Montana’s outdoor recreation economy is why we are supporting his reelection this year.”

ZINKE'S RECORD ON ENERGY AND MINERAL RESOURCES

Op-eds

- [April 10, 2015](#): Don't let Gateway Pacific become next Keystone
- [July 10, 2015](#): Montana coal workers deserve a fighting chance

Oil, coal and gas legislation

- [January 6, 2015](#): Cosponsored H.R.161, the Natural Gas Pipeline Permitting Reform Act
- [January 6, 2015](#): Cosponsored H.R.3, the Keystone XL Pipeline Act
- [January 13, 2015](#): Cosponsored H.R.287, the American Job Creation and Strategic Alliances LNG Act
- [February 4, 2015](#): Cosponsored H.R.702, to adapt to changing crude oil market conditions.
- [March 25, 2015](#): Cosponsored H.R.1616, the Natural Gas Gathering Enhancement Act
- [March 26, 2015](#): Cosponsored H.R.1644, the Supporting Transparent Regulatory and Environmental Actions in Mining Act
- [October 9, 2015](#): Cosponsored H.R.3734, the Mining Schools Enhancement Act
- [December 3, 2015](#): Voted for H.R. 8, the North American Energy Security and Infrastructure Act, which included Zinke's H.R. 2358, the Electricity Reliability and Forest Protection Act
- [December 18, 2015](#): Zinke Makes History: Lifts the Ban on Crude Oil Exports
- [May 17, 2016](#): Daines, Zinke Introduce Legislation to Give States & Tribes Say in Energy Development
- [September 8, 2016](#): In Historic Vote, House Committee Passes Two Zinke Bills: Recognition of Little Shell and Certainty for States and Tribes Act

Congressman Zinke is a vocal and active supporter for coal, oil, and gas development

- [February 10, 2015](#): Zinke: The EPA Is Causing Montana to Bleed Jobs
- [February 24, 2015](#): Ryan Zinke Blasts Obama Veto of the bipartisan Keystone CL Pipeline
- [March 15, 2015](#): Zinke Calls for DoD Investigation into Col. Buck of Army Corps of Engineers
- [April 9, 2015](#): Rep Zinke presses BLM on fracking inexperience

- [July 28, 2015](#): Ryan Zinke and Bipartisan Coalition Urges Army Corps of Engineers to Complete Environmental Study on Gateway Pacific Terminal
- [August 3, 2015](#): Zinke on EPA Plan: Montana Knows Best
- [September 22, 2015](#): Zinke to DOI: "Sage Grouse Listing Clearly 'Not Warranted'"
- [October 23, 2015](#): Rep Zinke Supports AG Fox's Challenge of EPA
- [January 29, 2016](#): Zinke Urges President Obama to Meet Montanans And Understand What's At Stake
- [February 5, 2016](#): Zinke Statement on Obama's Oil Tax
- [March 16, 2015](#): Rep. Ryan Zinke Announces Permanent Indian Coal Production Tax Credit
- [April 20, 2016](#): Rep. Ryan Zinke's Statement on the Senate Energy Bill
- [May 9, 2016](#): Zinke: Crow Coal Terminal Killed by Army Corps of Engineers Political Actions
- [June 14, 2016](#): Rep. Zinke & Billing's Union Leader, Mike Johnson, hold hearing fighting for Montana coal jobs
- [June 30, 2016](#): Zinke & Daines Defend Montana Coal Country, Blast DOI Regulations
- [July 14, 2016](#): Zinke Applauds Passage of Department of Interior Appropriations, which includes Zinke's provisions to end Obama's federal coal moratorium and blocks new coal, gas and oil regulations
- [November 15, 2016](#): Zinke weighs in on new BLM rule against oil and gas development on federal and tribal land

Pro-Energy Groups and Tribal leaders support Zinke and his Certainty for States and Tribes Act

- "Tribes have long been cut out of the conversation when it comes to our own land. We want and need to develop our coal in order to provide jobs, services, and education to our people, but the federal government is making it near impossible. Congressman Zinke's leadership has been critical for the Crow to develop our coal," – **Dana Wilson, Vice Chairman of the Crow Tribe**
- "As a Montanan it makes me proud to know that Senator Daines and Representative Zinke are working for a better relationship with the Department of the Interior. I hope that this will save coal towns like mine, and give us the opportunity to prosper and keep Montana an energy exporter for many years to come." – **Ashley Dennehy, Colstrip United Co-Founder**
- "The State of Montana and the Musselshell County's fiscal health and stability are directly tied to the coal industry. Musselshell County is very dependent on the

health and vitality of the coal industry. The legislation Senator Daines and Congressman Zinke are proposing will ensure the voices of our communities, state and industry are being heard and good policy is being made.” –

Musselshell County Commissioners

- “The legislation introduced by Senator Daines and Congressman Zinke brings fairness, stakeholder input, and transparency to the Department of the Interior’s activities related to the Mineral Leasing Act. Balancing the use of our natural resources with environmental protections that are second to none is a far better approach than simply keeping valuable resources in the ground.” – **National Mining Association President and CEO, Hal Quinn**

ZINKE'S RECORD ON TRIBAL ISSUES

Legislation

- [January 12, 2015](#): Introduced H.R. 286, the Little Shell Tribe of Chippewa Indians Restoration Act of 2015
- [January 14, 2015](#): Was an original co-sponsor for H.R. 360, the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Reauthorization Act of 2015
- [January 22, 2015](#): Co-sponsored H.R. 511, the Tribal Labor Sovereignty Act of 2015
- [March 19, 2015](#): Introduced H.R. 1522, the Indian Coal Production Tax Credit
- [April 16, 2015](#): Co-sponsored H.R. 1842, the Indian Health Service Health Professions Tax Fairness Act of 2015
- [July 15, 2015](#): Co-sponsored H.R. 3080, the Tribal Employment and Jobs Protection Act
- [March 2, 2016](#): Co-sponsored H.Con.Res122, the PROTECT Patrimony Resolution
- [May 17, 2016](#): Introduced H.R. 5259, the Certainty for States and Tribes Act
- [June 12, 2016](#): Was an original co-sponsor for H.R. 2760, the American Indian Trust Responsibility Review Act of 2015
- [July 5, 2016](#): Introduced H.Res.807, Expressing support for designation of May 5, 2017, as "National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Native Women and Girls"
- [July 6, 2016](#): Introduced H.R. 5633, the Blackfeet Water Rights Settlement Act, which was signed into law by President Obama on December 16, 2016, as part of the S.612, the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation.

Letters

- [March 2, 2015](#): Sent a letter in support of funding for State and Tribal Wildlife Grants.
- [April 21, 2015](#): Strongly urged the Department of the Interior and Department of Justice to work expeditiously within the confines of Chairman Rob Bishop's new tribal water compact requirements to review, assess, and advance the Blackfeet Water Rights Settlement.
- [October 14, 2015](#): Requested Chairman Bishop include of H.R.286, the Little Shell Federal Recognition Bill, in a future markup following a successful subcommittee hearing vetting the legislation.
- [December 4, 2015](#): Following up with the Department of the Interior about ensuring the Blackfeet Water Settlement continues to include important language and funding as established in the Birch Creek Agreement.

- [March 24, 2016](#): Sent a support letter on behalf of the Northern Cheyenne Tribe to assist in accessing grant funding to revise their tribal constitution.
- [April 7, 2016](#): Sent a follow up letter to Deputy Secretary Connor of the Department of the Interior, urging the agency to finish work on the Blackfeet Water Settlement so the bill could be considered in a subcommittee hearing.
- [April 7, 2016](#): Advised the Department of the Interior and the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau to engage in sufficient government-to-government consultation about new regulatory standards, which was previously not occurring.
- [April 18, 2016](#): Joined the Montana delegation in sending a letter of support for the Montana Attorney General's application for the National Sexual Assault Kit Initiative competitive grant.
- [July 6, 2016](#): Engaged the Department of the Interior and Department of Justice about following through on meeting Chairman Bishop's tribal water compact criteria in order to allow the bill to be passed out of Committee.
- [August 5, 2016](#): Joined the Montana delegation's efforts urging FEMA to grant the Fort Peck Tribes' request for a major disaster declaration.
- [September 30, 2016](#): Urged House Leadership to allow the Blackfeet Water Compact to continue to be included in a final conference Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) package.
- [November 28, 2016](#): Joined Western Members in urging the President-elect to continue to maintain the Special Assistant to the President for Native American Affairs position.

Press Releases

- [January 1, 2015](#): Zinke Introduces Legislation to Extend Federal Recognition to the Little Shell Tribe
- [March 16, 2015](#): Rep. Ryan Zinke Announces Permanent Indian Coal Production Tax Credit
- [March 18, 2015](#): Zinke Calls on House to Advance Little Shell Recognition
- [September 29, 2015](#): House Holds First Hearing for Little Shell Federal Recognition in Years
- [November 17, 2015](#): Ryan Zinke votes to return sovereignty to tribes
- [April 26, 2016](#): Zinke Announces More than a Million Dollars in Grants for Montana Tribes
- [May 9, 2016](#): Crow Coal Terminal Killed by Army Corps of Engineers Political Actions
- [May 17, 2016](#): Daines, Zinke Introduce Legislation to Give States & Tribes Say in Energy Development

- [May 24, 2016](#): Zinke, Barnes & House of Reps. Hold First Ever Hearing on Blackfeet Water Compact
- [June 14, 2016](#): Video: Rep. Zinke & Billing's Union Leader, Mike Johnson, hold hearing fighting for Montana coal jobs
- [June 30, 2016](#): Zinke & Daines Defend Montana Coal Country, Blast DOI Regulations
- [July 6, 2016](#): Zinke Introduces Blackfeet Water Compact
- [July 14, 2016](#): Zinke Applauds Passage of Department of Interior Appropriations
- [September 8, 2016](#): In Historic Vote, House Committee Passes Two Zinke Bills: Recognition of Little Shell and Certainty for States and Tribes Act
- [September 26, 2016](#): Rep. Zinke Announces More Than \$520,000 in Grants for Montana Tribes
- [September 26, 2016](#): Zinke Announces \$1.1 million in Funding for Tribal Law Enforcement
- [December 8, 2016](#): Zinke-led U.S. House Passes Blackfeet Water Compact, Calls on Daines & Tester to whip Senate Democrats
- [December 13, 2016](#): Zinke & Daines Hail Passage of Blackfeet Water Compact

Tribal leaders support Zinke Legislation

"Tribes have long been cut out of the conversation when it comes to our own land. We want and need to develop our coal in order to provide jobs, services, and education to our people, but the federal government is making it near impossible. Congressman Zinke's leadership has been critical for the Crow to develop our coal," – **Dana Wilson, Vice Chairman of the Crow Tribe**

"We appreciate all that Congressman Zinke has done to support us by introducing H.R. 286. He has tirelessly fought for our people and to restore our federal recognition. We hope that Congress will listen to the strong voices in the State of Montana and pass Mr. Zinke's legislation." – **Gerald Gray, Chairman of the Little Shell Tribal Council.**

"What a truly historic day for the Blackfeet Nation and the entire state of Montana. Congressman Zinke has proven himself to be a true champion of the Blackfeet Nation, and thanks to his leadership in the House, we are closer than ever before to victory." – **Chairman Harry Barnes of the Blackfeet Nation.**

From: Cameron, Scott
To: [Micah Chambers](#)
Subject: Fwd: From Greenwire -- PUBLIC LANDS: Alaska fights BLM over ANWR border
Date: Tuesday, February 21, 2017 2:06:36 PM

FYI.

Also, we ought to have the new improved map for Senator Murkowski tomorrow.

Thanks,
Scott
Scott J. Cameron
Special Assistant
Office of the Secretary of the Interior
Desk 202 208 0969
Cell 202 706 9031

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Wainman, Barbara <bwainman@usgs.gov>
Date: Tue, Feb 21, 2017 at 1:53 PM
Subject: Fwd: From Greenwire -- PUBLIC LANDS: Alaska fights BLM over ANWR border
To: Scott Cameron <scott_cameron@ios.doi.gov>

Just FYI I saw this (below link) on front page of Alaska Daily News earlier and now it is in E&E News just don't want our new Secretary to inadvertently get in the middle of this without awareness. The ADN story has a lot more of the background but as you know E&E has a wider distribution inside the Beltway.

<https://www.adn.com/business-economy/energy/2017/02/20/state-effort-to-peel-off-some-anwr-land-under-review-at-interior-department/> <<https://www.adn.com/business-economy/energy/2017/02/20/state-effort-to-peel-off-some-anwr-land-under-review-at-interior-department/>>

Barbara W. Wainman
Associate Director
Office of Communications and Publishing
US Geological Survey
(703) 648-5750

----- Forwarded message -----

From: bwainman <email_this@eenews.net>
Date: Tue, Feb 21, 2017 at 1:46 PM
Subject: From Greenwire -- PUBLIC LANDS: Alaska fights BLM over ANWR border
To: bwainman@usgs.gov

Alaska fights BLM over ANWR border

This Greenwire story was sent to you by: bwainman@usgs.gov
Greenwire <<http://www.eenews.net/gw>>
AN E&E NEWS PUBLICATION
PUBLIC LANDS
Alaska fights BLM over ANWR border

Published: Tuesday, February 21, 2017

Alaska's battle over a slice of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge dates back to the 1960s, when a Fairbanks pilot and oil and gas lease investor spotted a discrepancy from the air.

Andy Bachner said that on his flights across Alaska's North Slope, he realized that ANWR's northwest boundary, as enforced by federal officials, overshot the refuge's legal western boundary, the Canning River.

Today, the federal government says the boundary extends to the Staines River, because it is a channel of the Canning. But state officials argue the Staines is its own river and therefore outside the refuge.

The argument over the 20,000-acre wedge of land is now in front of the Interior Board of Land Appeals, and a win for Alaska could give it the title and a huge possible benefit if commercial amounts of oil are found there.

The Bureau of Land Management says Alaska has no right to appeal.

"There is nothing in the case files, nor is there evidence offered by the state, that the state ever objected to the decisions or the surveys upon which they were based — the last being issued in 1969 — 47 years ago," said BLM counsel Joe Darnell in August (Alex DeMarban, Alaska Dispatch News <<https://www.adn.com/business-economy/energy/2017/02/20/state-effort-to-peel-off-some-anwr-land-under-review-at-interior-department/>>, Feb. 20). — SM

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From: Chambers, Micah
To: [Salotti, Christopher](#)
Subject: Udall Responses
Date: Tuesday, February 28, 2017 10:55:26 AM
Attachments: [Ryan Zinke - Udall Responses.pdf](#)

I'm only a little late...

--

Micah Chambers
Special Assistant / Acting Director
Office of Congressional & Legislative Affairs
Office of the Secretary of the Interior

Questions for Congressman Ryan Zinke from Senator Tom Udall

Q: As the incoming Ranking Member on the Senate Indian Affairs Committee and a representative of 23 tribes and pueblos in New Mexico, there's no more important issue than making sure that our nation's commitments to American Indians and Alaska Natives are upheld. Can you talk about your personal commitment to upholding treaty obligations with tribes? Have you discussed the importance of these obligations with the incoming President, and will you help him understand the need for tribal consultation and self-determination?

Response: As I stated during the hearing, I believe tribal sovereignty is very important, and I believe it should be meaningful. Our great Indian nations deserve respect, and, if confirmed, I will work to rebuild the trust that comes from mutual respect. The President-elect and I spoke briefly about Indian issues when he interviewed me prior to my designation. In future conversations with the President-elect, I will be a strong advocate for Native Americans.

Q: I have worked very hard with this Administration on its efforts to reform the Bureau of Indian Education. I'm sure that you saw the recent lawsuit filed by the Havasupai tribe regarding their continued lack of decent educational services, and we constantly face challenges to provide basic services at tribal schools in New Mexico as well. Will you pledge to make BIE reform a top priority—and provide tribal schools with the resources they need?

Response: Senator, I am not familiar with the Havasupai suit, but, if confirmed, I will make improving the opportunities provided by the Bureau of Indian Education a top priority.

Q: Tribal infrastructure is part of our nation's trust responsibility, and brick and mortar needs in Indian Country are massive and well documented. Will you work to make sure that tribal needs are included in the President's infrastructure package?

Response: Senator, I understand the need to make significant infrastructure investments to support our Tribes. You can be assured this will be a priority for me, but I cannot make a commitment on behalf of the President-elect about his future budget requests. The most I can do is pledge to work with you on this if I am confirmed, and I am committed to do that.

Q: Chaco Culture National Historical Park in New Mexico and its surrounding area holds enormous significance to the tribes in the area. However, Chaco is also in the middle of one of the most productive oil and gas regions in the country—the San Juan Basin—and expanded development in the area is causing great public and tribal concerns. Currently, the area is going through a Resource Management Plan (RMP) revision that is taking into account the effects of hydraulic fracturing on the archaeological sites, among other things. The BIA has joined BLM as a co-lead in the RMP revision and the agencies are currently conducting scoping meetings throughout the area. I have worked closely with DOI on this process in recent years. Will you continue to continue this RMP process, so that we can strike a balance that adequately protects Chaco but still allows for responsible development in appropriate areas, thus minimizing the potential for future conflicts?

Response: I appreciate the opportunity to discuss this when we met today. I strongly support consensus building at the local level. I have said repeatedly that, if confirmed, I will seek to ensure that public lands in different states are managed differently in accordance with local considerations. If confirmed, I will look into this situation with an eye toward encouraging state and federal officials to reach agreement on how best to implement multiple-use policies.

Q: At the hearing yesterday there was a lot of discussion about the Antiquities Act and whether the incoming Administration will honor existing monument designations. I am very concerned about any efforts to weaken the President's authority to designate monuments—and I am particularly concerned about what position the Administration will take towards the Bears Ears National Monument. Does the Trump Administration plan to reexamine and reverse previous monument designations?

Response: Senator, the incoming Administration is going to review recent monument designations pursuant to the Antiquities Act. As you know, the Bears Ears designation has been controversial. My understanding is that, prior to the designation, effected communities had made great progress on reaching a consensus recommendation. If confirmed, I look forward to hearing from those communities and giving their views great consideration.

Q: This is a particularly sensitive issue for me because New Mexico's newest national monuments at Rio Grande del Norte and Organ Mountains Desert Peaks were years in the making and created with overwhelming local support. Those communities have done so much work already to promote the monuments, and they are already seeing the economic benefits. Will you commit to keeping these two monuments intact—and to providing them with the resources they need going forward so we can protect and manage them?

Response: Senator, I have not reviewed any issues specific to the Rio Grande del Norte and Organ Mountains Desert Peaks, but the overwhelming local support you describe is consistent with my goals regarding when monuments should be designated.

Q: I want to be clear that I support energy development—but I also support common-sense reforms to make sure that taxpayers are getting a fair return on the development of Federal lands, and that our policies recognize the impacts of energy development on our climate. I am sure you are aware that the current Administration just released a punch list of reforms that it believes are needed for BLM's Federal coal program, such as ensuring a fair return, considering impacts on communities and the environment, and preventing wasted natural gas. Do you plan to allow the ongoing environmental review of the coal program to continue, and ensure that climate and the environment continue to be aspects of the review?

Response: I have not personally reviewed the Federal Coal Programmatic EIS scoping report published by the Bureau of Land Management, which I believe is the document you are referencing. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that decisions are based on objective science and transparency. I will examine the scoping document and visit with the Bureau of Land Management and determine the appropriate next steps to be taken as part of the NEPA process.

Q: It is estimated that there is a billion dollars in revenue that has been lost from current coal practices; shouldn't we address uncompetitive bidding, consistent appraisals, and royalty reduction loopholes to ensure a fair return to the public?

Response: I am committed to ensuring that the American taxpayers get a fair return on all natural resource development on federal lands.

Q: The new BLM rule on methane venting and flaring is very important to New Mexico because of the methane cloud over the northwestern corner of the state and the preventable loss of revenues. I am also worried about Interior's ability to write future rules regulating waste if this commonsense one is dismantled. Will you help prevent this rule's demise, or will you support the Congressional Review Act disapproval?

Response: I am committed to ensuring that the American taxpayers get a fair return on all natural resource development on federal lands. While I have concerns about the current rules regarding venting and flaring on federal lands, I will commit to a review of the oil and natural gas leasing program in order to evaluate whether any further regulation is appropriate.

Q: Will you commit to directing DOI, including the Bureau of Reclamation, to continue working with my office closely on NM water issues, including technical assistance on our NM Drought Preparedness Act and any appropriations provisions?

Response: Senator, I commit that, if confirmed, I will work closely with you to ensure that the needs of New Mexicans are known to and considered by the Department.

Q: As part of that effort, will you direct DOI and Bureau of Reclamation to continue working with my office to identify ways to manage DOI water infrastructure on the Rio Grande, and enable voluntary water leasing options, to better benefit of all stakeholders, including instream flows for environmental purposes, so that we can preserve a living river and protect endangered species while also allowing New Mexico agriculture and other water users to continue to thrive in a changing climate with differing water availability?

Response: If confirmed, yes.

Q: I am greatly concerned about the desire to "legislate science," including efforts to weaken the Endangered Species Act. The ESA is supposed to be one of many tools that land managers use—but in reality, it's often the credible threat of listing that brings people to the table to create voluntary agreements to protect species. We have seen that in New Mexico, where ESA has led to voluntary conservation efforts for the sand dune lizard and lesser prairie chicken. At the same time, we also need to make sure that the Federal government can step in with stronger conservation measures where voluntary measures are not working. So I am very concerned by the so-called efforts to "repeal and replace" ESA with something far weaker. Do you agree that preserving wildlife and preventing extinction should be a priority for the Federal Government? And will you commit to implementing the Endangered Species Act, as currently written?

Response: I believe that the goals of the Endangered Species Act, which are to halt and reverse the trend towards species extinction, are very important. If confirmed, I will swear an oath to uphold all of the laws of the United States, which includes the implementation of the Endangered Species Act.

From: Douglas Domenech
To: [Davis Natalie](#)
Subject: Can you share with team?
Date: Tuesday, February 28, 2017 4:38:50 PM

**AFTERNOON COMMUNICATIONS BRIEFING
Feb. 28, 2017**

**PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS TO A JOINT
SESSION OF CONGRESS**

The President is committed to keeping his promises to the American people.

- He has already saved taxpayers millions of dollars by renegotiating promises, and will save billions more on contracts all across government.
- We have undertaken a historic effort to roll back over-burdensome regulations.
- The President has begun the process of draining the swamp of Washington corruption.
- He has cleared the way for pipeline construction and withdrew the country from the Trans-Pacific Partnership.

Looking forward, the President will lay out an optimistic vision for the nation with a focus on the government putting the interests of the American people first.

- There is a renewed spirit of optimism sweeping the country.
- We are thinking like Americans again – dreaming big, building and undertaking monumental tasks and solving enormous problems.
- But we must work together – across party lines – to do it.

We must restart the engine of America's economy.

- American businesses are being crushed under an avalanche of taxes and regulations.
- We must make it easier for companies to do business in America.
- We will deliver historic tax reform so that American businesses can compete and thrive.
- The middle class must get tax relief.
- We must have fair trade for our workers – foreign countries can no longer be allowed to tax our exports while shipping goods into our country for free.
- We must protect our workers by enforcing our immigration laws, and it is time to implement a merit-based immigration system.
- We will be guided by two core rules: Buy American, and Hire American.

Our people must have access to quality, affordable healthcare of their choosing.

- Congress must repeal Obamacare and replace it with a system that expands choice, increases access and lowers costs.
- Americans with pre-existing conditions must have coverage, and we must smooth the transition for Americans currently in the exchanges.
- Our governors must have flexibility and resources they need to ensure no one slips through the cracks.
- Americans must have the freedom to purchase health insurance in a national marketplace – it is time for competition that benefits consumers.
- We must eliminate the burdensome approval process for life-saving drugs so that more lives can be saved.

Every parent deserves a choice, and every child deserves a chance.

- Education is a civil rights issue – every child must have access to a quality education, no matter their zip code.
- Our disadvantaged youth, including millions of African-American and Latino children, deserve access to good schools and great teachers.
- We want to help our children break the cycle of poverty, and education is the key.

Every family deserves the opportunity to live in peace and safety in their homes and communities.

- We must break the cycle of violence in our cities.
- To accomplish this, we must support our men and women in law enforcement. They deserve our respect and appreciation.
- For our people to be truly safe, our men and women of the military must have the tools they need to prevent – and, if they must, win – a war.
- And when our veterans come home, they must be taken care of.

Looking abroad, an America First policy calls for robust engagement with the world in areas of mutual interest.

- We support NATO, but our partners must meet their financial obligations.
- Our strategic partners around the world must play meaningful roles in operations and help cover the costs.
- We must learn from the mistakes of the past that have led to so much destruction around the world.
- We are prepared to forge new partnerships where our interests align. We are looking for partners in peace.

OTHER NEWS OF THE DAY

Legislation and Executive Orders Signed Today

H.R. 321 – The INSPIRE Act

- This bill, which was passed unanimously by Congress, encourages NASA to have women and girls participate in science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and to pursue careers in aerospace, using existing programs and resources.
- Specifically, the bill encourages the expansion of the missions of:
 - NASA Girls & NASA Boys
 - Aspire to Inspire
 - The Summer Institute in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Research.
- Also requires NASA to produce a report in 90 days to detail how the agency can best support engagement for women and girls in aerospace and related fields.

H.R. 255 – The Promoting Women in Entrepreneurship Act

- Similar to the INSPIRE Act, H.R. 255 encourages the National Science Foundation to use existing programs to recruit and support women in the sciences.
- R. 255 was passed by unanimous consent in both the House and Senate and has no cost according to the Congressional Budget Office.
- This bill is in part of the Innovation Initiative, launched jointly by Leader McCarthy and Representative McHenry

Executive Order on the Waters of the United States (WOTUS)

- The Waters of the United States issue has had a long odyssey in the regulatory and legal world for the last 30 years, including 3 Supreme Court decisions and revised guidance from multiple administrations.
- The last administration overturned previous guidance and instituted the Clean Water Rule, previously known as the Waters of the U.S. Rule, a massive power grab that vastly expands federal jurisdiction into state and local areas and decisions regarding their land use.
 - This rule is strongly opposed by farmers, ranchers, and agricultural workers all across our country because it prohibits them from doing their jobs as efficiently as possible and treats our small farmers as if they were major industrial polluters.
- Past Supreme Court decisions have tried to make it clear that the jurisdiction of federal agencies who oversee this issue should be shrinking, not expanding.
- This order directs the Army Corps of Engineers and the EPA to review and reconsider the Obama administration's rule and provides instruction to the Attorney General for proceeding with current legal action regarding the rule.
- By eliminating this rule, we will unleash our farmers and ranchers to freely, yet still safely, expand their operations, and allow more Americans to make their living off our great land.

Executive Order on the Historically Black Colleges and Universities Initiative

- President Trump is making HBCUs a priority again by repositioning the

HBCU initiative in the White House.

- This repositioning will strengthen the initiative by:
 - Allowing it to function across all executive departments and agencies and utilize the full resources of the federal government
 - Establishing HBCUs as a strategic partner in the President's urban agenda of creating jobs, revitalizing communities, and making inner cities safe again
 - Increasing the private sector's role in supporting HBCUs
 - Strengthening HBCUs participation in federal programs that partner with outside groups or private organizations
- Each President since Jimmy Carter has issued an executive order on HBCUs. These previous initiatives lost track because they did not have the full force of the White House behind them. That stops with President Trump.

The President's Budget

- The President's first budget will be submitted to Congress on March 16th.
- The American people elected the President to prioritize their security, and that is exactly what he will do.
 - This budget provides for one of the largest increases in defense spending without increasing the debt.
 - There will be a \$54 billion increase in defense spending in Fiscal Year 2018, in addition to \$30 billion in supplemental spending for the current fiscal year.
 - This funding is vital. We must devote this money to protect the country.
 - We will also increase funding for our veterans, secure our border, and fund our other priorities.
- We are a nation that soon will be \$20 trillion in debt, so prioritizing financial security is as important as protecting our nation's physical security.
 - Families all across America have made tough choice in recent years over tradeoffs about what they can and cannot afford, but the federal government has continued to spend taxpayer dollars without pause.
 - The President has instructed his Budget Director, Mick Mulvaney, to write a budget that rebuilds our nation's military, while also making tough choices for the American people.
 - This budget will insist on \$54 billion in cuts to nondefense programs. The so-called "firewall" that protects lesser priorities from being used to pay for defense increases must go.
 - Foreign aid to other countries will be cut deeply. It is time to prioritize the security of this country and ask the rest of the world to step up and pay their fair share.
- Many government agencies will also experience cuts.
 - These cuts will be sensible, they will be rational, but they will be tough.
- That is what the moment calls for, and the President looks forward to

engaging the Congress in passing his first security budget.

ObamaCare

- ObamaCare has delivered Americans an unsustainable health care system with out of control premiums, rising deductibles and dwindling choices.
- Nancy Pelosi cited three critical fronts on which ObamaCare's success should be judged: lowering costs, expanding benefits, and increasing access. The law has completely failed all three.
 - Costs:
 - Under ObamaCare, the American people face rising premiums, unaffordable deductibles, fewer insurance choices, and higher taxes to pay for skyrocketing costs.
 - This year, the average premium for ObamaCare insurance plans in all four tiers (bronze, silver, gold, platinum) are facing a double-digit increase.
 - Expanding Benefits:
 - Obamacare's mandates have led to mass cancellations of coverage, soaring out of pocket costs, and enrollment figures declining as millions choose to pay a tax over buying government mandated insurance.
 - Increased Access:
 - As insurers leave the marketplace, Americans are left with fewer insurance choices, with 17% having only one insurer option available in their exchange.
 - The ObamaCare Co-Op program has failed, with 16 of 23 co-ops having failed and gone out of business.
- We are confident that once Americans see the choice between this failed system that has had two terms under the last president to deliver but has been unable to and another choice for a patient-centered plan that will return choice to the American consumer, both with insurers and doctors, and bring back down costs from where they have skyrocketed to, they will support our effort to repeal and responsibly replace ObamaCare.

POTUS SCHEDULE

- Meeting with National Association of Attorneys General
- Signs H.R. 321 and H.R. 255
- Signs Executive Orders on WOTUS and HBCUs
- Visit with Guests of First Address to the Joint Session of Congress
- Addresses Joint Session of Congress

ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND ON RECENT NEWS

New Extreme Vetting EO

- As the President said at his press conference, we'll be issuing a new

executive action that will comprehensively protect our country.

- The new executive order is being finalized - what we are doing now is running it through the different departments and agencies to ensure that it is executed in a flawless manner.
 - This is not a matter of delaying, it's a matter of getting it right.
- The court which made the misguided decision on the President's initial executive order had its decisions reversed by the Supreme Court a remarkable 79% between 2010 and 2015.

Anti-Semitic Attacks Against Jewish Community Centers and Cemeteries

- The President is deeply concerned by the reports of further vandalism at Jewish cemeteries.
- The cowardly destruction in Philadelphia this weekend comes on top of similar accounts from Missouri, and threats made to Jewish Community Centers across the country last week.
- The President continues to condemn these and any other anti-Semitic and hateful acts in the strongest terms.
- From our country's founding, we have been dedicated to protecting freedom of religion. No one in America should feel afraid to freely and openly follow the religion of their choosing.

White House Relationship with the Media

- Every time the media turns themselves into the story, the American people – among whom trust in the media remains near historical lows – roll their eyes.
- The truth is that this was simply a gaggle – not a full briefing – in a smaller space, and the pool was there to share what was said with their peers. The entire gaggle was also transcribed.
 - Background: A press pool is a rotating group of journalists from subscribing news organizations that pool resources and produce reports for all members to draw from in their reporting.
 - Further, we actually allowed more press in than usual for pooled events.
 - We could have kept it to the smaller pool, but instead expanded it as much as allowed by the space in the Press Secretary's office.
- It's completely false to suggest that outlets were "blocked." The media was represented by the pool, as it is in all situations when space or other factors limit the amount of press able to access an event.

False CNN Reporting

- The headlines and talking heads are completely ignoring the facts of this situation.
- The conversation, which centered entirely around the false New York Times report and was not related to any investigation, was initiated by the FBI, not the White House.
- Some reports have indicated communications between White House staff and the FBI might be inappropriate according to previous

practice. However, those restrictions do not apply to conversations of public affairs.

- The Deputy Director of the FBI reached out, on his own, to the White House Chief of Staff to let him know that the New York Times report regarding contact between Russia and the Trump campaign was inaccurate. There was no “pressure” exerted on the FBI to push back on the story.
- It was the logical next step for the Chief of Staff to ask, once told that the story was false, what could be done to correct the record.
- The FBI said it would be appropriate for the Chief of Staff to say publicly that he had been briefed by intelligence officials at the highest level regarding the inaccuracy of the report.
 - Quote from the Chief of Staff: “I have talked to the highest levels of intelligence officials, and they have assured me that the New York Times story about constant contacts is grossly overstated and inaccurate. So I wouldn't come on your show and say something like that if I didn't have a green light and approval to say it. It's not true.” – Fox & Friends (FNC), 2/17/17
- Just because reporters and anchors say something over and over again doesn't start to make it true. At some point, we get to a place where we have to move on and focus on the things that the American people actually care about. This has been asked and answered, let's move forward.

Liberal Activists at Town Halls

- Every American has a right to speak his or her mind at town halls or other events, and we respect that.
- Reports of lawmakers distancing themselves from the President are overblown and exaggerated.
- In a recent poll, 70% of Americans (including most Democrats) wanted Democrats in Washington to work with our Administration, not protest and oppose us at all turns. A vocal minority doesn't represent the majority.

Reporting on the Yemen Raid

- Every American owes Ryan Owens and his family a great deal of gratitude. He will always be remembered as an American hero who made the ultimate sacrifice in service of his country.
- It is standard operating procedure at the Department of Defense that, anytime there is a fatality on an operation, an investigation known as a 15-6 is triggered. It can take several months to complete and a redacted version is available to the public under FOIA.

White House Correspondent's Dinner

- POTUS Tweet: I will not be attending the White House Correspondents' Association Dinner this year. Please wish everyone well and have a great evening!
- The President's tweet speaks for itself. He wishes everyone who is attending well but will not be attending himself.

- The event was originally created for promoting scholarships for young journalists. It's lost that focus entirely and become just another chance for the dishonest media and professional Washington to celebrate themselves.

DHS Implementation Memos

Top Line:

- Department of Homeland Security Secretary Kelly issued two memoranda to the DHS workforce providing direction for implementing two of the President's executive orders: "Border Security and Immigration Improvement" and "Enhancing Public Safety in the Interior of the United States."
- These memos ensure that all DHS employees are intimately familiar with how to implement the President's executive orders, key stakeholders are in the loop and the public is well informed on the facts.
- These memos, along with fact sheets and Q&A documents, are easily accessible by both DHS staff and the general public at www.dhs.gov/executiveorders. This page will continue to be updated as appropriate.
- Ultimately, these memos direct DHS staff to faithfully execute the immigration laws of the United States and provide them with the appropriate resources to do so.
- Specific questions about these memos can be referred to DHS.

Border Security and Immigration Improvement Memo:

- This memo outlines how DHS will comply with the President's executive order by deploying all lawful means to secure the nation's southern border, prevent further illegal immigration into the United States, and to repatriate illegal immigrants swiftly, consistently, and humanely.
- This memo does not affect DACA recipients.
- Key policies in this memo include:
 - Establishing operational control of the border, including a physical barrier
 - Detaining illegal immigrants at our near the border
 - Ending the practice of "catch and release"
 - Hiring 5,000 additional border agents
 - Empowering state and local law enforcement to support federal enforcement of immigration law
 - Ensuring prosecution guidelines place a high priority on crimes near our southern border

Enhancing Public Safety in the Interior of the United States Memo:

- This memo addresses enforcement and removal of those who illegally enter or remain in the United States, particularly those who engage in criminal conduct while here.

Key policies in this memo include:

- Establishing the Victims of Immigration Crime Engagement (VOICE) Office within ICE to facilitate engagement with the victims and their families to ensure, to the extent permitted by law, they are provided with information about the offender, and that their additional questions and concerns regarding immigration enforcement efforts are addressed.
- Hiring 10,000 ICE agents and officers, as well as additional mission support and legal staff necessary
- Establishing a program to collect all fines and penalties for which the Department is authorized
- Facilitating the collection and reporting of data on the apprehensions and release of illegal immigrations

Appointment of Lieutenant General Herbert Raymond “H.R.” McMaster to serve as Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs

Top Line:

- General McMaster – known by his nickname, “The Iconoclast General” -- brings over three decades of experience to the post of National Security Advisor.
- The President’s first duty is to keep the American people safe. General McMaster has the knowledge and foresight necessary to provide the President with expert advice as he protects America’s interests at home and abroad.
- Bio:
 - General McMaster is a graduate of West Point and earned both his Masters of Arts and Ph.D degrees from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.
 - During his over three decades in the United States Army, General McMaster gained renown for his roles in the Gulf War, Operation Iraqi Freedom, and Operation Enduring Freedom.
 - He was a Captain in the Battle of 73 Easting, a critical engagement during which outnumbered American forces took advantage of superior military equipment and the element of surprise to destroy over 80 Iraqi Republican Guard vehicles without a single loss.
 - While serving during the Iraq War, General McMaster ran the model for the successful “clear, hold, and build” counterinsurgency method in the town of Tal Afar, a strategy credited with turning the war around during the surge.
 - General McMaster earned the Silver Star for his valor during the Gulf War.

Quote from President Trump:

- “General McMaster has served with distinction in the United States Army for over three decades and will now bring that tremendous experience with him to his new post as my National Security Advisor. My first duty as President is to keep the American people safe.

General McMaster has the knowledge and foresight necessary to provide me with expert advice as we work to protect America's interests at home and abroad. I am pleased to welcome him to our team."

Quote from General McMaster:

- "I am honored to serve as President Trump's National Security Advisor. The safety of the American people and security of the American homeland are our top priorities. I will work tirelessly in this new role to assist the President as he addresses the complex and growing threats our country is facing around the globe."

President Trump Inherited a Mess

- During his press conference on Thursday, President Trump explained that he "inherited a mess... As you know, our administration inherited many problems across government, and across the economy." Here are the facts:
- Economy
 - The economy grew by just 1.6 percent last year, and President Obama did not have a single year of 3+ percent economic growth.
 - President Obama was the first president since Herbert Hoover to not have at least one year of economic growth of 3 percent or higher.
 - Wage growth was stagnant under President Obama. The median U.S. hourly wage only increased by 34 cents, or 1.8 percent while he was in office. Salaries and benefits rose just 2.2 percent.
 - The nation lost over 200,000 manufacturing jobs under President Obama.
 - The homeownership rate decreased under President Obama and hit a five-decade low last year.
 - On President Obama's watch, the national debt increased by over 88 percent, a total of \$9.3 trillion.
- Healthcare
 - Obamacare is a mess, with higher costs and fewer choices.
 - Premiums for Obamacare's mid-level "Silver" plans are increasing by an average of 25 percent this year, coming on top of the 7.5 percent increase for 2016.
 - Lower level "Bronze" plans are facing premium increases of 21 percent this year.
 - As many as 8.4 million Americans will see a sharp rise in premiums this year, according to HHS.
 - Deductibles are rising, so consumers have to pay more before their insurance even kicks in.
 - Taxpayers are paying billions for skyrocketing premium subsidies.
- Foreign Policy
 - The Obama administration's foreign policy left the world in

disorder: from the disastrous nuclear deal with Iran to the failed Russian reset to the humanitarian crisis in Syria.

- According to former Director of National Intelligence James Clapper, there are more safe havens for terrorists “than at any time in history.”
- President Obama failed to foresee and counter the rise of ISIS, which he famously called a “JV Team.”
- North Korea became a more dangerous threat to their region and the world.
- Disunity
 - Race relations deteriorated under President Obama, with polls showing that “both blacks and whites believe race relations have deteriorated.” (AP)

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From: Macgregor, Katharine
To: [Kathleen Benedetto](#); [Marshall Critchfield](#)
Subject: Fwd: SG Interests testimony
Date: Tuesday, February 28, 2017 4:52:40 PM
Attachments: [testimony_guinn.pdf](#)

FYI.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Moran, Jill <jcmoran@blm.gov>
Date: Tue, Feb 28, 2017 at 3:23 PM
Subject: SG Interests testimony
To: Katharine Macgregor <katharine_macgregor@ios.doi.gov>, Richard Cardinale <richard_cardinale@ios.doi.gov>
Cc: Kathleen Lacko <ktlacko@blm.gov>

Kate,

Following up on our conversation during the Thompson Divide briefing, the BLM did not participate in a hearing on Thompson Divide. SG Interests did, however, testify at a USGS hearing on the USGS Mancos Shale Report. SG Interests testimony is attached (with reference to its leases in Thompson Divide.)

Thanks,
Jill

--

Jill Moran

Energy Program Analyst - BLM Liaison

Office of the Assistant Secretary - Land and Minerals Management

(202) 208-4114

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Kate MacGregor
1849 C ST NW
Room 6625
Washington DC 20240

202-208-3671 (Direct)

“Opportunities and Challenges of Developing the Mancos Shale Resource”

Testimony to the Subcommittee on Energy and Natural Resources Committee on Natural Resources July 12, 2016

Robert H. Guinn, II
Vice President, Land
Gordy Oil Company, General Partner of
SG Interests I, Ltd. and SG Interests VII, Ltd.

Chairman Lamborn, Ranking Member Lowenthal, and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide comments today. On behalf of Gordy Oil Company, we share the Committee’s interest in the development of the Mancos Shale. It is an exciting opportunity to explore for and develop this tremendous domestic oil and gas resource. Unfortunately, as I will share today, to do so on federal lands can be exceedingly difficult when land management decisions abruptly change—without any apparent legal, policy or common sense explanation. Our experience in purchasing and trying to develop eighteen federal leases in western Colorado is sobering.

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is preparing to cancel our federal leases before the end of the year for a mistake BLM made in 2003. The BLM and the U.S. Forest Service, rather than facilitating the development of the Mancos Shale, are making long-lasting land use planning decisions to prevent development of a significant portion of the Mancos Shale resource in the White River National Forest (WRNF) in Colorado.

We believe these agency actions ignore specific congressional direction to the BLM and Forest Service in the Mining and Minerals Policy Act of 1970, 30 U.S.C. § 21(a) to “foster and encourage private enterprise in . . . the development of domestic mineral resources to help assure satisfaction of industrial, security, and environmental needs.” That directive is underscored in BLM’s organic act, the Federal Land Policy Management Act, 43 U.S.C. § 1701(a)(12) (FLPMA), which requires “the public lands be managed in a manner which recognizes the Nation’s needs for domestic sources of minerals. . .from the public lands including implementation of the Mining and Minerals Policy Act of 1970.”

Moreover, BLM’s lease cancellation decision under these circumstances calls into question the very foundation for the development of federal oil and gas – the sanctity of a federal contract. As Congress well knows, federal oil and gas can’t be developed without private enterprise, knowledge and investment. Those private sector investments won’t be made if there is no longer confidence in a government lease contract.

We appreciate the opportunity to share this experience with the Committee. We only request that the BLM press the pause button on its National Environmental Policy Act (“NEPA”) process of lease cancellation. To do so is right for a number of reasons, but we highlight these two. First, BLM should take into account the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) Mancos Shale assessment and provide another opportunity for public comment. This report provides significant new information on the outstanding potential for oil and gas development in the region (now subject to BLM’s NEPA process) and warrants BLM’s review in that process and thorough public scrutiny. On June 6, 2016, SG filed an addendum to its comments on the BLM’s *White River National Forest Draft Environmental Impact Statement* (WRNF DEIS) providing a copy of the Mancos Shale assessment (June, 2016) with a request that BLM first analyze the USGS report, revise the alternatives and geological and socio-economic analyses and publish a revised DEIS for public comment.

Second, SG is working with a number of stakeholders in Colorado, including the State’s congressional delegation, local government officials and conservation groups to pursue a legislative exchange of these contested federal leases for other federal leases in an area open to oil and gas development with similar geological potential. However, pursuing a legislative exchange involves time-consuming and careful collaboration with these stakeholders. Those discussions need time. The House Appropriations Committee’s report accompanying the FY2017 legislation to fund the Department of the Interior (including BLM) contains language directing BLM to allow time for this effort to bear fruit. We respectfully ask the BLM to honor the directive of Congress and allow the multi-stakeholder process for a legislative exchange to continue to work towards a reasonable resolution.

The Challenges of Federal Lease Development: SG’s Attempt to Develop in 2003-2014

Why is the experience of a relatively small oil and gas operator worth sharing with Congress? In this era of calls to “Keep it in the Ground” — where some call for no new leasing and even no development of existing leases of fossil fuels on federal land—we are concerned that our experience with federal oil and gas leases will not be unique, but could become the “new normal” with detrimental impacts on the development of federal oil and gas. If so, this country would be turning its back on its growing domestic energy independence only to return to an over-reliance on foreign sources of energy that threaten our economy, well-being and national security. This is bad public policy that Congress must avoid.

In 2003, SG Interests VII, Ltd. (SG)¹ purchased eighteen² federal oil and gas leases with ten-year terms in the White River National Forest (WRNF) in Colorado. The Forest Service had identified this area in the 1993 WRNF Record of Decision (ROD) as open to oil and gas leasing,

¹ SG Interests VII, Ltd. is the lessee and SG Interests I, Ltd. is the operator of the leases (SG).

² Two of the eighteen leases were acquired from another oil and gas company in 2013.

a decision the Forest Service confirmed in the 2002 WRNF Revised ROD. In 2003, the Forest Service gave BLM the required “surface management agency” consent to sell these federal oil and gas leases and BLM sold the leases to SG without objection from the public.

In 2007, SG began the process to develop these leases within the ten-year lease term by conducting a detailed internal geological analysis. In 2009, based on that analysis, SG proposed and BLM agreed that a federal unit to develop these leases made the most sense — since a unit would reduce impacts to all resources, including surface resources, and would allow for the most efficient development of the federal resource. The Lake Ridge Unit application was submitted to BLM in May, 2011 and after BLM requested a slight physical modification of the Unit, the BLM deemed the Lake Ridge Unit application “complete” in March 2012. This is when things start to change.

A campaign led by Pitkin County, home county to Aspen, and several environmental groups, to prevent BLM’s approval of the Lake Ridge Unit began when SG submitted our application in May, 2011. A unit approval is a routine administrative, technical, geological decision that is categorically excluded from NEPA analysis. But for the first time in its history BLM allowed public comment on a unit application. Six months went by without BLM acting on this “complete” application. Every time SG contacted BLM, we were told a decision would come “soon.” It was not until October 6, 2012, that SG was informed by the Colorado BLM State Director that no unit decision would be issued because BLM had made a paperwork “mistake” in 2003. As a consequence, BLM had to conduct a NEPA analysis on its 2003 lease issuance decision. SG was then directed to address any questions to the BLM Director.

On December 6, 2012, SG met with the Acting BLM Director Mike Pool, then Principal Deputy Director and now Director, Neil Kornze, and the Principal Deputy Solicitor, Jack Haugrud, who confirmed that BLM would not act on the SG unit application and would prohibit all lease development until remedial NEPA was complete. As the reason for this decision, they pointed to a 2007 Interior Board of Land Appeals (IBLA or Board) decision, *Board of Commissioners of Pitkin County*, 173 IBLA 173 (2007) (*Pitkin County*). There the Board found that BLM, despite being an active participant in the Forest Service WRNF NEPA process as a cooperating agency, had failed to formally adopt the Forest Service NEPA and therefor was deemed not to have complied with BLM’s separate obligation to conduct NEPA analysis prior to lease issuance. The Board held that BLM could either formally adopt the Forest Service NEPA analysis or conduct its own NEPA.

It is worth underscoring that BLM’s new policy arrived more than *five years after* the IBLA issued its finding in *Pitkin County*. During that time, BLM never started a new NEPA analysis on its lease decision. Indeed, BLM did nothing, other than withdrawing the two leases at issue before the IBLA. To the contrary, BLM continued to rely on the Forest Service WRNF NEPA

for oil and gas leasing and development. BLM issued leases, designated federal units and communitization areas and approved drilling permits and master plans of development with site-specific NEPA that tiered to the Forest Service NEPA analysis. BLM and the Forest Service even successfully defended the validity of the subject leases and their respective NEPA compliance in federal court and, of course, collected rents and royalties—all from leases that BLM now claims are subject to a lease issuance infirmity.³

Based on government documents obtained from numerous FOIA requests, SG learned that BLM's December 2012 explanation for its abrupt change was a pretext. The real reason, as documented in Exhibit A (a chronology of FOIA documents), was to provide a legal gloss to a predetermined political decision to prevent any development of federal oil and gas in the so-called "Thompson Divide." The Thompson Divide is the name given to a 220,000 acre area on the eastern side of the Piceance Basin, much of it located in the WRNF, by proponents of a wilderness designation for these lands. This wilderness campaign has a long history, earlier as the Hidden Gems Wilderness and now the Thompson Divide.

By 2011-12, a routine BLM unit approval had the attention of two Cabinet Secretaries, two U.S. Senators and political appointees in two Departments. The result, as BLM admitted in their decision to grant a suspension of the SG lease term, was their "unusual delay" in consideration of the Lake Ridge Unit. BLM did not fault SG's development diligence, concluding "the full record shows that SG made adequate efforts at development...Nevertheless a decision on the unit application was delayed pending consideration and internal deliberation of the issues raised in comment from interest[ed *sic*] parties on that request." *See* BLM, SG Suspension Decision (April 9, 2013) at 4-5.

In early 2013, SG sought and received a suspension of the lease term to allow BLM time to conduct the remedial lease NEPA and then act on the Lake Ridge Unit application and six SG "Applications for Permits to Drill (APDs). In June 2012, in the face of BLM's continued delay to process the Lake Ridge Unit application and the looming May 2013 lease termination, SG began the work to submit APDs (including the unit obligation well) on six of its leases. The APDs were submitted to BLM and the Forest Service in October 2012–January 2013.

³ *See, e.g.*, BLM Notice of Proposed Action to Antero (April 18, 2011) ("Antero holds Federal oil and gas leases within the [Lava Boulder Creek] project area. The leases have created *contractual rights and obligations between Antero and the United States.*"); Cache Creek Master Development Plan EA, DOI-BLM-CO-N040-2009-0088-EA (2009) ("This decision will provide for the orderly, economical and environmentally sound exploration and development of oil and gas resources on *valid Federal oil and gas leases*;" and *Natural Resources Defense Council v. Forest Service, BLM, et al.*, 2011 WL 3471011 (D. Colo. August 5, 2011) (a successful federal defense of the Hells Gulch North, Phase 2 EA "[the] project underwent a *robust environmental review*" and "the Federal Defendants approval of [the project] was *consistent with the organic statutes governing the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management.*" The Colorado Federal District Court determined, "OXY USA holds an oil and gas lease entitling it to drill for natural gas on the land at issue."). Emphasis added.

The 2013 SG lease suspensions were extended twice by BLM, upon SG's request, in 2014 and 2016. With each request, SG faced another "first of its kind" public comment process on its suspension request, a request for State Director Review of the suspension decision followed by an appeal to the IBLA of the suspension decision. In *Bd. of Cty. Comm'rs of Pitkin Cty., Colo.*, 186 IBLA 288 (2015) the Board dismissed the appeals of BLM's decision affirming the 2013 and 2014 SG lease suspensions. This decision was reaffirmed by the Board upon a request for reconsideration. See *Bd. of Cty. Comm'rs of Pitkin Cty., Colo.*, 187 IBLA 328 (May 5, 2016). On May 27, 2016, an appeal was filed of the April 29, 2016 BLM decision denying a request for review of the 2016 lease suspension. Motions to dismiss this 2016 appeal are pending before the IBLA.

The suspension also allowed SG time to explore negotiations with interested parties in a good faith attempt to address their concerns. In 2012-2013, SG negotiated with a number of interested parties including BLM, Pitkin County, environmental interest groups and elected officials. SG proposed environmental mitigation measures for its development which were not acceptable to the County and environmental groups that wanted no development. SG negotiated with several groups and entities for a "buyout" of the SG leases, but received an offer with several unacceptable contingencies: i) SG's support for and/or the passage of federal legislation permanently withdrawing the area from oil and gas leasing; ii) SG's relinquishment of its valid leases; and iii) payment of the price negotiated for the leases at some point in the future after the funds were raised.

SG also approached BLM with the concept of an exchange of the SG leases for federal oil and gas leases in another location, but was told that a BLM regulation prohibited BLM from making such an exchange of oil and gas leases. SG worked with the State of Colorado on an exchange of SG's federal leases for state-owned leases, but was unable to conclude a deal with all interested parties before the identified state leases were sold.

At this point, BLM determined there was an impasse in the negotiations and elected to begin the remedial NEPA process. On April 2, 2014, BLM published the NEPA scoping notice which stated BLM would "address[] previous decisions to issue 65 leases underlying the White River National Forest . . ." and "determine whether these 65 leases should be voided, reaffirmed, [or] modified . . ." BLM, "Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for the Previously Issued Oil and Gas Leases in the White River National Forest," 79 *Fed. Reg.* 18576 (April 2, 2014). But rather than analyzing its decisions to lease with the facts in existence at the time of lease issuance, as BLM had done in similar instances,⁴ BLM in this case chose to rely on

⁴ See, e.g., *Pennaco Energy v. Department of the Interior*, 377 F.3d 1147 (10th Cir. 2004) (directing remedial NEPA on coalbed methane leases); *Environmental Assessment, Oil and Gas Leasing, Buffalo Field Office 070-05-064* (August 2005) ("to reconsider all relevant factors and issues that were known during the time period of issuance . . . ;" certain "issues were not considered in detail because they were not known during the time of issuance of the 285 leases.").

facts only known in 2014. BLM justified its choice by alleging, “BLM has identified new information that has become available since the 1993 WRNF Oil and Gas Leasing Final EIS decision that will need to be addressed in the BLM EIS . . .” *Id.* at 18577. SG filed scoping comments on May 16, 2014 and protested the remedial NEPA process as a violation of its lease rights.

BLM Begins a March to Lease Cancellation

On November 20, 2015, BLM issued the Draft EIS for the 65 leases under consideration. *Notice of Availability of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for Previously Issued Oil and Gas Leases in the White River National Forest, Colorado*, 80 *Fed. Reg.* 72733 (November 20, 2015) (DEIS). BLM explained in its cover letter to the DEIS why it failed to adopt the simple and straight-forward option provided by the IBLA in *Pitkin County* – adoption of the existing Forest Service NEPA – by concluding: “the BLM determined that the U.S. Forest Service NEPA analysis conducted for the 65 previously issued leases is no longer adequate due to changes in laws, regulations, policies and conditions since the earlier EIS was finalized in 1993.” Of course, this statement is undercut by BLM’s several official decisions which continued to rely on this “no longer adequate” NEPA at least through 2011. *See supra* note 3. In the DEIS, BLM chose to rely on a U.S. Forest Service 2014/2015 WRNF Final EIS and Record of Decision—BLM “incorporated as much of the Forest Service’s new NEPA analysis of future oil and gas leasing on the WRNF as possible into this analysis.” *See* DEIS at 1-1.

Yet in the WRNF FEIS/ROD, the Forest Service took the position that the SG leases are “valid existing oil and gas lease rights that allow development to continue...through the term of the lease” and that the area of SG’s leasehold has a “high potential” for oil and gas development. *See* WRNF FEIS at 608. Nonetheless, because “up to this point no producing wells have been developed on these lands” and “they are on the edge of the Piceance formation,” the Forest Service made the decision to put the entire Thompson Divide area in the WRNF, some 61,000 acres, off-limits for future leasing. WRNF ROD at 6.

SG participated in the comment period on the WRNF FEIS/ROD and filed a formal objection (administrative appeal) to this decision. SG argued, among other things, that the Forest Service’s 2010 *Reasonably Foreseeable Development Scenario for Oil and Gas Activities*, that formed the foundation for the 2014 FEIS analysis, was out of date and inappropriately based on historical oil and gas development. In particular, SG and several industry groups submitted comments that pointed out the substantial potential of the Mancos Shale Formation in the WRNF based on government analyses and the many exploratory wells that confirmed this potential.

For example, SG in January, 2016 announced the results of a well that it had drilled into the Mancos Shale about seven miles south of the SG leases in the Thompson Divide area. This well

had an average production for the first 21 days of 6,451 MCFD with 3,382 psi of casing pressure and to date has produced 1 BCF of gas. *See also* Dennis Webb, “Industry: Thompson area well is a gusher,” *Grand Junction Sentinel* (January 5, 2016). Despite their knowledge of the “high oil and gas potential” of the area, in the 2015 ROD the Forest Service closed this area to future oil and gas leasing “in order to maintain the natural character of the landscape and continue to protect the outstanding wildlife and recreation values of these lands.”

Unfortunately, BLM’s adoption in the WRNF DEIS of the Forest Service’s flawed NEPA analysis means the out-of-date data, the reliance on past development and technologies and the flawed decision-making to prevent development in high potential areas will be perpetuated. BLM has decided that its *past* leasing decision should conform to the Forest Service’s decision for *future* leasing. On February 9, 2016, the BLM announced that the WRNF FEIS “preliminary preferred alternative” would be to cancel the twenty-five “Thompson Divide” leases including all eighteen SG leases. *See* Dennis Webb, “BLM planning to cancel Thompson Divide leases,” *Grand Junction Sentinel* (February 11, 2016). Tellingly, the BLM’s preferred alternative, unlike those in the DEIS, requires no significant changes to the producing leases—those leases will continue to operate under the “no longer adequate” Forest Service NEPA in existence at the time of lease issuance. The BLM plans to publish the FEIS this month and finalize the ROD this fall.

Policy Impacts of the Federal Government’s Decisions

These decisions by the BLM and the Forest Service carry far-reaching consequences that set a terrible precedent for oil and gas development on federal lands. These decisions not only reduce the likelihood of development of Mancos Shale on federal lands, but are unsupported by law and undercut the sanctity of contract between the federal government and the private sector. The contract between the federal government and “private enterprise,” as Congress recognized in the Mining and Mineral Policy Act, is fundamental to a viable domestic mineral resource development program that helps to “assure satisfaction of industrial, security, and environmental needs.”

First and foremost, these actions by the Forest Service and BLM to knowingly prevent development of “high potential” oil and gas resources do not comply with the directive in the Mining and Minerals Policy Act to “foster and encourage private enterprise” or the agencies’ organic statutes that emphasize multiple use. *See e.g.* FLPMA 43 U.S.C. § 1701(a)(12).

Second, these actions set a bad precedent for the management of federal oil and gas in the Mancos Shale Formation and beyond. What can be lost as a result of this precedent is underscored by the USGS in its revised assessment of the Mancos Shale development potential. The report highlights the significance of the natural gas resource that underlies the Piceance

Basin as the second-largest potential continuous gas resource in the nation.⁵ But can this resource be developed? As one experienced Piceance Basin geological consultant put it, getting access to federal land is the “big question mark” for the Mancos Shale. *See* Dennis Webb, “An even bigger beast?” *Grand Junction Sentinel* (June 25, 2016).

We are concerned that BLM’s proposed action to cancel a long-issued federal lease will create a precedent that will have a chilling effect on the private sector’s interest in developing federal minerals. The rule of law and the sanctity of contract are fundamental to this country’s economic success and it is important that the government abide by the contracts it enters into. If the private sector can’t rely on a federal lease contract it will look elsewhere to deploy its investment capital. BLM set a number of unusual precedents in its handling of this matter – allowing public comment on BLM technical unit decisions and lease suspensions and deciding that disparate treatment of leases with the same lease issuance flaw was appropriate. But the most troubling precedent is BLM’s argument that it can wait 10 years or more to cancel a lease it has previously recognized as valid for a BLM “mistake” made at lease issuance. Of course, here, this “mistake” merely provided a rationale for the agency’s political decision to change its mind *after* it had entered into a lease contract. If this post hoc decision making becomes the “new normal” how can leaseholders trust that the federal government will hold up its end of the bargain in future lease contracts?

As SG has told BLM repeatedly, lease cancellation under these factual circumstances is unlawful and is a breach of the lease contract that SG executed with the BLM. The BLM’s preferred alternative of lease cancellation is therefore subject to challenge under the Administrative Procedure Act as “arbitrary and capricious” and SG is entitled to monetary damages for BLM’s breach of the lease contract.⁶

SG is not in business to litigate or to seek monetary damages. We want to produce oil and gas. That is why SG continues to seek a congressionally legislated lease exchange that would allow us to do what we do best with other federal leases. This concept of a legislative exchange, which would call for Congress to direct the exchange of the leases held by SG in the contested area of the Thompson Divide for federal leases of equivalent value in a nearby, geologically similar area, is bipartisan in nature and has gained stakeholder support in Colorado. SG has devoted substantial time, funds and energy in pursuit of this exchange. We believe that if accomplished this exchange would result in a broad range of public policy objectives—economic development in struggling communities; development of a significant tax base to fund local social objectives;

⁵ Hawkins, S.J., Charpentier, R.R., Schenk, C.J., Leathers-Miller, H.M., Klett, T.R., Brownfield, M.E., Finn, T.M., Gaswirth, S.B., Marra, K.R., Le, P.A., Mercier, T.J., Pitman, J.K., and Tennyson, M.E., “Assessment of Continuous (Unconventional) Oil and Gas Resources in the Late Cretaceous Mancos Shale of the Piceance Basin, Uinta-Piceance Province, Colorado and Utah, 2016: U.S. Geological Survey Fact Sheet 2016-3030” (May 2016), 4 p., <http://dx.doi.org/10.3133/fs20163030> (USGS Mancos Shale Report).

⁶ *See e.g. Griffen Exploration, LLC v. United States*, 116 Fed. Cl. 163, 173 (Fed. Cl. 2014).

environmental protection in the Thompson Divide area; and, of course, for SG a just result for a private sector entity that has invested significant resources in the development of the eighteen leases subject to BLM's proposed cancellation decision.

But securing bipartisan, multi-sector stakeholder support for a legislative exchange takes time. If BLM cancels our leases before the legislation has been enacted the situation will be made more difficult. We've already experienced a chilling effect on progress for these efforts as a direct result of the BLM's announcement in February of its preferred alternative of lease cancellation. Nonetheless, progress is still ongoing, and parties continue to talk.

We merely ask that the BLM slow down, take the time to review the USGS Mancos Shale assessment in a revised WRNF DEIS, and allow us the time to work on a legislated exchange that provides benefits to all stakeholders.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert H. Guinn, II, Vice President, Land
Gordy Oil Company

From: Douglas Domenech
To: [Chambers Micah](mailto:Chambers.Micah@ios.doi.gov); scott_hommel@ios.doi.gov; [Jorjani Daniel](mailto:Jorjani.Daniel@ios.doi.gov); [Cason James](mailto:Cason.James@ios.doi.gov); megan_bloomgren@ios.doi.gov
Subject: Fwd: Senate Update // Votes this week
Date: Tuesday, February 28, 2017 7:52:20 PM

McConnell's office.

Will Tammy be able to photograph the swearing in?

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Suarez, Erica (McConnell)" <Erica_Suarez@mcconnell.senate.gov>
Date: February 28, 2017 at 7:45:33 PM EST
To: "Suarez, Erica (McConnell)" <Erica_Suarez@mcconnell.senate.gov>
Subject: **Senate Update // Votes this week**

Good evening,

The Senate is in the up to 30-hours of post-cloture debate time on the **[nomination of Ryan Zinke, to be Secretary of the Interior](#)**.

Yesterday, the Senate voted to confirm **[Wilbur Ross, Jr., of Florida, to be Secretary of Commerce \(72-27\)](#)**. The Senate also voted to **[invoke cloture on Ryan Zinke, of Montana, to be Secretary of the Interior \(67-31-1\)](#)**.

Tomorrow (March 1st):

[At approximately 10:30 am, the Senate will vote to confirm Ryan Zinke of Montana to be Secretary of the Interior](#).

After completion of this vote, and up to ten minutes of debate, the Senate will conduct a **[cloture vote on the nomination of Benjamin S. Carson, Sr., to be Secretary of Housing and Urban Development \(HUD\)](#)**.

Votes on Rick Perry to be Secretary of Energy are also expected after the Carson votes.

(Note: By consent, if cloture is invoked on the Carson nomination, the up to 30 hours of post-cloture debate time will be counted as if it started at 1 am on Wednesday. Also, all time during Leader remarks, morning business, recess and adjournment will count toward the up to 30 hours of post-cloture debate on these nominations.)

Please read Leader McConnell's remarks below discussing the **[President's speech this evening](#)**. Also, please see his comments and a document regarding the ill-advised **[Waters of the U.S. \(WOTUS\) rule](#)**, as well as a document from the Senate GOP Communications Center regarding the **[failures of Obamacare](#)**.

Thanks,
Erica

Erica Suarez

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MITCH McCONNELL

SENATE MAJORITY LEADER
U.S. SENATOR *for* KENTUCKY

For Immediate Release, Tuesday, February 28, 2017
Contacts: Don Stewart, David Popp 202-224-2979
Robert Steurer, Stephanie Penn 202-224-8288
Release: <http://bit.ly/2lv7evm>
YouTube: <http://bit.ly/2lPOxW4>

McConnell Welcomes the President to the Capitol

Majority Leader McConnell discusses the President's Address to a Joint Session of Congress, Judge Neil Gorsuch, and Obamacare.

WASHINGTON, D.C. —U.S. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) made the following remarks on Senate floor today regarding the president's address to Congress, Judge Gorsuch and Obamacare:

"The past eight years have not been easy for America's middle class. Americans labored under an economy that failed to deliver. They fought against red tape that threatened their jobs and small businesses. And when they looked to Washington, they saw an administration that repeatedly put its left-wing ideology ahead of their middle-class interests.

"Kentuckians understand this better than most. They watched as the last administration launched a war on vulnerable families in coal country. They watched as the last administration launched a direct attack on the middle class in the form of Obamacare.

"Kentuckians were promised that health insurance premiums would go down, but they soared — by as much as 47 percent this year. Kentuckians were promised that health choices would increase, but they plummeted — down to just one exchange provider in nearly half of our counties. Kentuckians were also promised they could keep their health plans, but many continue to find themselves forced into insurance so expensive, insurance that so few of their doctors will accept, it's basically useless.

"Obamacare has pushed Kentucky's insurance market to the brink of collapse, and now Democrats want to throw a victory party? I'm not sure how else to interpret their choice to respond to the president's address tonight. The absolute Obamacare disaster that Governor Beshear presided over continues to harm Kentucky today — even after he's left office.

"Kentuckians have since repudiated that legacy in election after election. They replaced him with an anti-Obamacare Governor and Legislature. They voted for a president who listened to them and promised to repeal and replace Obamacare. They sent Republicans back to the Senate and House who listened to them and promised to repeal and replace this partisan law too.

"Governor Beshear was correct to note that 'the American people by their votes don't agree with [Democrats].' So maybe he'll agree it's time to finally listen to Kentuckians and families around the country and move on from this disastrous law. Otherwise, we'll never move forward. I hope that's the message Governor Beshear can find within himself to deliver tonight.

"I'm sure it's the message President Trump will deliver. In November, the American people elected a new president who offered a new direction. He'll now have an opportunity to talk about how we can make that change. We already know what needs to be done. We need to leave Obamacare in the past and replace it with common-sense reforms so we can bring relief to the middle class. We need to make regulations smarter so we can get the economy moving. We need to make taxes simpler so we can create more jobs.

"I look forward to hearing what the president has to say on all of these matters. I also hope he'll provide more thoughts on how we can help our veterans and strengthen our military. Getting even one of these items achieved would be a win for our country. Getting all of them done will be a

significant undertaking.

“Congress may hold the key on getting many things done, but the Executive Branch has important authority as well. The president and his Cabinet Secretaries have already taken critical action to move us forward on many of these issues. It’s another reason why the rest of his Cabinet needs to be confirmed as soon as possible. The Senate is working hard to get that done.

“The Senate is also working hard to confirm another one of his nominees, an outstanding jurist named Neil Gorsuch. He is going to make an exceptional Supreme Court justice. It’s a sentiment you hear expressed right across the political spectrum. The president made a brilliant choice with Judge Gorsuch.

“And we’re all looking forward to what the president has to say tonight. It’s a big moment for him. More importantly, it’s a big moment for our country. Americans are ready to move forward. They’re ready to get our economy moving. They’re ready to leave the failures of the status quo behind, like Obamacare, and move toward a more hopeful future. And, after eight long years, that’s something we can all use.”

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Senate Republican
Communications Center

2 0 2 • 2 2 8 • N E W S

Contact:

Antonia Ferrier 202.228.NEWS

<http://bit.ly/2l8T3jJ>

Hard At Work ‘Repealing Obama EPA Water Rule’ ‘Obama-Era Regulation ... Was Just A Blatant Power Grab By The Federal Government To Regulate Every Pothole, Ditch, And Puddle In The Nation’

SEN. MITCH McCONNELL (R-KY): “President Trump should be commended for doing what he can to begin turning back this attack on middle class families in Kentucky and across the country. Although this Obama-era regulation claimed to protect this nation’s waterways, it was just a blatant power grab by the federal government to regulate every pothole, ditch, and puddle in the nation. Based more on ideology than fact, the rule would directly harm the Middle Class.” (Sen. McConnell, Press Release, 2/28/17)

President Trump’s Executive Order ‘The First Step Toward Repealing The 2015 Water Rule’

“President Trump on Tuesday instructed the Environmental Protection Agency and Army Corps of Engineers to review and reconsider a 2015 rule known as the Waters of the United States rule...” ([“Trump Directs Rollback Of Obama-Era Water Rule He Calls ‘Destructive And Horrible.’” The Washington Post, 2/28/17](#))

- “It’s the first step toward repealing the 2015 water rule, which asserted federal power over small waterways like wetlands and streams...” ([“Trump Directs EPA To Reconsider Obama Water Rule.” The Hill, 2/28/17](#))

"President Trump [signed] an executive order Tuesday scrapping a controversial Environmental Protection Agency rule that expanded the agency's jurisdiction over the nation's waterways during the second term of former President Obama. The regulation, known as the Waters of the U.S. rule, broadened the definition of the type of water body that would fall under EPA's formidable clean water enforcement powers, making everything from streams to ditches and watering holes subject to the EPA's and Army Corps of Engineers' oversight." (["Trump Executive Order Scraps EPA Water Rule," Washington Examiner, 2/28/2017](#))

- "Speaking to reporters Monday, the senior administration official said the regulation issued in 2015 'vastly expands federal jurisdictions over state waters, and we think ... it could potentially violate previous Supreme Court decisions.'" (["Trump To Direct Rollback Of Obama-Era Water Rule Tuesday," The Washington Post, 2/27/2017](#))

"The executive order is the first step toward fulfilling one of Trump's key campaign promises, repealing a regulation ... [T]he order will instruct the EPA and the Army Corps of Engineers to formally reconsider the rule, which could lead to its repeal or a significant rewrite." (["Trump Moves Toward Repealing Obama EPA Water Rule," The Hill, 2/28/2017](#))

'One Of The [Obama] Administration's Most High-Profile And Controversial Regulations'

"The water regulation... has become one of the administration's most high-profile and controversial regulations in recent years. Opponents of the rule, which include a range of agriculture and energy companies and their congressional representatives from rural and energy-intensive states, say the regulation amounts to a federal intrusion into states' rights." (["House Votes to Overturn Expanded Waterway Regulations," The Wall Street Journal, 1/13/2016](#))

"Barack Obama's water war... a massive power grab by Washington." (["Barack Obama's Water War," Politico, 5/27/2015](#))

- "...it will give bureaucrats carte blanche to swoop in and penalize landowners every time a cow walks through a ditch." (["Barack Obama's Water War," Politico, 5/27/2015](#))

SEN. HEIDI HEITKAMP (D-ND): "There is not one single federal regulation in the entire country that has caused more concern in the state of North Dakota than this Waters of the United States proposed regulation," Heitkamp said. "There is incredible uncertainty out there." (["Senators Target Obama's Water Rule," The Hill, 4/30/2015](#))

- SEN. HEITKAMP: "Farmers across North Dakota and the nation deserve better than the sweeping federal rules regulating possibly every pothole on their land – they deserve certainty, and they deserve to be heard before any rule goes into effect." (["Sen. Heitkamp, Press Release, 8/27/2015](#))

SEN. JOE MANCHIN (D-WV): "Today, the EPA is once again dangerously overreaching its boundaries by expanding the definition of water sources it can regulate," Senator Manchin said. "It is completely unreasonable that our country's ditches, puddles and other un-navigable waters be subjected to the same regulations as our greatest lakes and rivers, and implementing this rule will certainly have a significant impact on West Virginia's economy, hindering businesses, manufacturing and energy production. The bottom line is that no federal agency should go around Congress to control what has not been legislated, especially when its actions will harm economic growth. I urge my colleagues to take immediate action on the bipartisan Water Quality Protection Act to rein in this harmful rule." (["Sen. Manchin, Press Release, 5/27/2015](#))

SEN. JOE DONNELLY (D-IN): "That is why it is incredibly important that the EPA rewrite the Waters of the United States rule with input from the people who live and work on the land and alongside these waters every day." (["Sen. Donnelly, Press Release, 4/30/2015](#))

Obama-Era Rule 'A Nightmare For Farmers' And 'For Small Businesses'

American Farm Bureau Federation's Don Parrish: "It's going to cause a nightmare for farmers. ... Our members own the majority of the landscape that's going to be impacted by this. ... It's going to make their land, the most valuable thing they possess, less valuable. It could reduce the value of some farmland by as much as 40 percent."

[\("Obama Announces New Rule Limiting Water Pollution," The New York Times, 5/27/2015\)](#)

NFIB Vice President of Public Policy Amanda Austin: "The Waters of the United States rule would make developing property a nightmare for small businesses. Small businesses simply don't have the resources to pay the fees and hire the consultants to help them navigate the Clean Water Act. The Environmental Protection Agency didn't even bother to consider how this rule would affect small firms with limited ability to cut through the red tape." (["Small Business Calls on House to Stop Waters Rule," NFIB Website, 1/12/2016\)](#))

- "As a result of this new regulation, the Agencies are bringing seasonal streams, ponds, ditches, and depressions in fields into federal jurisdiction. The financial impact of this rule will affect small businesses disproportionately; Clean Water Act permits can cost tens of thousands of dollars and lead to lengthy project delays." ([NFIB, Letter to House Members, 1/11/2016\)](#))

FLASHBACK

Bipartisan Votes In Both Houses To Overturn The Regulation Last Congress

"President Obama on Tuesday rejected an attempt by congressional Republicans to overturn his landmark regulation asserting federal power over small bodies of water." (["Obama Vetoes GOP Attempt To Block Water Rule," The Hill, 1/19/2016\)](#))

"The House voted Wednesday to overturn a contentious rule from the Environmental Protection Agency that asserts federal authority over small waterways. The House passed the resolution 253-166 Wednesday, with 12 Democrats supporting it." (["House Votes To Overturn Obama Water Rule," The Hill, 1/13/2016\)](#))

"The Senate approved a bill Wednesday to block the Obama administration's new regulation setting federal authority over small waterways. The Congressional Review Act (CRA) resolution against the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) water rule passed on a 53-44 vote. Three Democrats joined every Republican except [one] in advancing the bill." (["Senate Votes To Kill EPA's Water Rule," The Hill, 11/4/2015\)](#))

Federal Courts Temporarily Blocked The Controversial Regulation In 2015

"Issued in 2015, the WOTUS rule unleashed a torrent of Federal litigation. Thirty-one states, many local governments, and private industry asserted that the rule unconstitutionally expanded the Clean Water Act's (CWA) reach and misapplied Justice Anthony Kennedy's 'significant nexus' opinion in the 2006 Rapanos case." (["U.S. Supreme Court's 'Waters Of The U.S.' Gift To The Trump Administration," The Hill, 1/20/17\)](#))

- "Various Courts of Appeal challenges had been consolidated before the Sixth Circuit in Cincinnati, which granted a nationwide wide stay in November 2015." (["U.S. Supreme Court's 'Waters Of The U.S.' Gift To The Trump Administration," The Hill, 1/20/17\)](#))
- "The [U.S. District J]udge said the rule appears to be too broad in some cases. He said the definition of tributary, for example, could include many waters that are unlikely to have a significant connection to larger waters downstream. He also said the rules are 'arbitrary and capricious,' and would cover some waters that are 'remote and intermittent.'" (["Judge Rules Obama Administration Water Rule Should Be Halted," The Associated Press, 8/27/2015\)](#))

###

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MITCH McCONNELL

SENATE MAJORITY LEADER
U.S. SENATOR *for* KENTUCKY

For Immediate Release, Tuesday, February 28, 2017
Contacts: Don Stewart, David Popp 202-224-2979
Robert Steurer, Stephanie Penn 202-224-8288

Senator McConnell Comments on President Trump's Executive Order on Waters of the United States Regulation

WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) made the following comments today regarding President Donald Trump's executive order directing the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Army Corps of Engineers to begin a formalized review of the Waters of the United States (WOTUS) regulation:

“President Trump should be commended for doing what he can to begin turning back this attack on middle class families in Kentucky and across the country.

“Although this Obama-era regulation claimed to protect waterways, it was a blatant power grab by the federal government to regulate every pothole, ditch, and puddle in the nation. Based more on ideology than fact, the rule would directly harm the Middle Class.

“The Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals issued a nationwide stay against the rule in 2015. It recognized the serious legal questions about the rule.

“Earlier this year, I [sent a letter](#) to then President-Elect Trump, in which I asked him to begin the process of overturning this harmful regulation. I am thrilled to see that President Trump has decided to join our cause to protect Kentucky families and stop the growth of government bureaucracy.

“Together, we can find better ways to protect our environment without a regulatory assault on the Middle Class. That's why I've previously joined with my colleagues to sponsor [common-sense legislation](#) to keep our waterways clean.

“I look forward to continuing to work with the Administration and my colleagues in the Senate to promote safety through reasonable solutions.”

###



Senate Republican
Communications Center

202 • 228 • NEWS

Contact:
Antonia Ferrier 202.228.NEWS
<http://bit.ly/2IPS5r2>

Beshear 'The "Poster Child" For Obamacare's Failures'

In Kentucky, Premiums Have Skyrocketed By As Much As 47 Percent This Year

'Risky Pick For Response,' 'Beshear Could Disappoint Democrats'

Steve Beshear "the 'poster child' for Obamacare's failures." (["McConnell Slams Beshear Ahead Of Trump Rebuttal," Politico, 2/28/17](#))

"Dems Make a Risky Pick for Response to Trump's Big Speech to Congress" (["Dems Make A Risky Pick For Response To Trump's Big Speech To Congress," New York Magazine, 2/24/17](#))

- "Who, then, will the donkey party... offer up to rally the troops? ... former Kentucky governor Steve Beshear. He's been out of office for over a year, and is a 72-year-old politician who first won public office during the Nixon administration. ... Beshear could disappoint Democrats..." (["Dems Make A Risky Pick For Response To Trump's Big Speech To Congress," New York Magazine, 2/24/17](#))
- 'Beshear isn't a rising star in the democratic party' (["Why Steve Beshear Is Doing The State Of The Union Response," Vox, 2/24/17](#))
- "In choosing Beshear, who left office in December 2015, the party appears to be ignoring the clamor from pundits who say Democrats desperately need to present fresh faces to reinvigorate the party's standing with voters..." (["Democrats Pick Ex-Kentucky Governor To Respond To Trump Speech To Congress," NPR, 2/24/17](#))

In Kentucky, 'My Family Is Being Pushed Out Of The Middle Class By The Obamacare Law'

[Kentucky Mom](#): "My family is being pushed out of the middle class by the Obamacare law. ...how can we pay almost \$1,200 a month on health insurance?" (Sen. McConnell, Constituent Mail)

[In Kentucky, Skyrocketing Premiums](#): "Kentuckians who rely on the state's health exchange for insurance should brace themselves for premiums that will skyrocket as much as 47 percent in 2017." (["Some Premiums For Ky. Health Exchange To Increase 47 Percent In 2017," WKYT, 8/25/2016](#))

- "Get ready to pay more for health insurance. The Kentucky Department of Insurance has [approved](#) health insurance rate hikes of up to 47 percent for individuals and up to nearly 13 percent for small groups." (["Get Ready To Pay More For Health Insurance In Kentucky," Insider Louisville, 8/03/2016](#))
- [Nationwide](#): "Insurers are raising the 2017 premiums for a popular and significant group of health plans sold through [HealthCare.gov](#) by an average of 25 percent, more than triple the percentage increase of this year's plans, according to new government figures. The steep increase in rates serves broadly to confirm what has become evident piecemeal in recent months: Prompted by a burden of unexpectedly sick Affordable Care Act customers, some insurers are dropping out while many remaining companies are struggling to cover their costs." (["Average Premiums For Popular ACA Plans Rising 25 Percent," The Washington Post, 10/24/2016](#))

[In Kentucky, Less Choice](#): "Kynect on life support: Only one insurance provider in 54 counties next year. Kentuckians who obtain health insurance through the state exchange can say goodbye to competition. In nearly half the counties, residents next year will have only one option on Kynect ... if they want health insurance through the Affordable Care Act. That's a big switch from this year, when Kentuckians in all counties could choose from at least two insurers, and most could choose from at least three." (["Kynect On Life Support: Only One Insurance Provider In 54 Counties Next Year," Insider Louisville, 8/31/16](#))

- Nationwide: "For the people losing plans, there are fewer and fewer choices. One estimate by the Kaiser Family Foundation predicts that for at least 19 percent of the people in Obamacare's individual market next year there will be only one insurer to choose from." (["More Than 1 Million In Obamacare To Lose Plans As Insurers Quit." Bloomberg, 10/14/16](#))

Democrats, Don't Let Beshear Pull The Wool Over Your Eyes Yet Again!

"The selection of former Kentucky Gov. Steve Beshear is a sign that Democrats are making a clear choice. Whatever it is that Trump talks about, they are going to talk about health care... For multiple election cycles, Democrats often seemed reluctant to defend or brag about the signature legislative achievement of the Obama administration. Now that the Affordable Care Act is on the verge of destruction, the party has finally decided that it is a winning issue." (["Why Steve Beshear Is Doing The State Of The Union Response." Vox, 2/24/17](#))

FLASHBACK: Beshear Previously Promised Dems Obamacare Was 'Going To Be A Plus'

2013: "Beshear was on the Hill Thursday to buck up House Democrats [on Obamacare], who have been downtrodden about the law's disastrous rollout. 'My main message to the House caucus today was a message that's tough for folks to listen to when you have elections coming up but it's simply this: Be patient. Take a deep breath,' Beshear said. 'Because I'll guarantee you by next November, this issue is going to look a lot different than it looks right here on the Hill right now.' He encouraged Democrats to talk about the health care overhaul in their campaigns. 'I think it's going to be a plus,' he said. 'If I were running for anything, I sure would be running on it.'" (["Ky. Gov Hits McConnell On ACA." Politico, 12/5/13](#))

2014: "Gov. Steve Beshear urges fellow democrats to take Obamacare 'and run with it,' ...[Beshear] does see the landscape changing enough for not just one (Grimes) but potentially two female Democratic candidates to win statewide. 'I think [Hillary Clinton] would have a great shot at carrying Kentucky [in 2016],' said Beshear." (["Gov. Steve Beshear Urges Fellow Democrats To Take Obamacare 'And Run With It.'" Huffington Post, 6/24/14](#))

- "Obama's State of Union speech includes praise for Beshear for Kentucky's health care push: President Barack Obama on Tuesday night hailed Kentucky Gov. Steve Beshear for implementing the president's health care law in Kentucky, praising the governor who attended the speech in Washington, D.C., as Obama's guest." (["Obama's State Of Union Speech Includes Praise For Beshear For Kentucky's Health Care Push." Lexington Herald Leader, 1/28/14](#))

2015: "Matt Bevin, a Republican political novice ... was elected Kentucky's next governor on Tuesday and swept fellow Republicans into statewide office with him. The stunning victory heralds a new era in a state where Democrats have held the governor's mansion for all but four of the last 44 years... [President] Obama's health care law was an especially contentious issue in the race, and some see the Bevin victory as a rebuke to Gov. Steve Beshear, a Democrat..." (["Matt Bevin, Republican, Wins Governor's Race In Kentucky." The New York Times, 11/03/2015](#))

2016: "Republicans achieved the trifecta in Kentucky politics Tuesday, wresting control of the state House from Democrats in a landslide to complement their rule over the governor's office and state Senate. 'The people of Kentucky have been heard and they want a new direction for the commonwealth of Kentucky,' said an ebullient Gov. Matt Bevin, who is expected to benefit mightily with a GOP-led House committed to his conservative agenda. Republicans last led the chamber in 1921." (["Republicans Take The Kentucky House After 95 Years Of Democratic Control." Lexington Herald Leader, 11/8/16](#))

###

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From: Swift, Heather
Subject: NYT Profile on Secretary Zinke
Date: Wednesday, March 01, 2017 11:29:33 AM

https://www.nytimes.com/2017/03/01/us/for-interior-montanan-with-deep-roots-and-inconsistent-record.html?_r=0

For Interior, Montanan With Deep Roots and Inconsistent Record

WHITEFISH, Mont. — As a child in this town at the edge of the Continental Divide, Ryan Zinke cut his own trails through alpine forest, swam laps in Whitefish Lake and hiked the snow-packed paths of nearby Glacier National Park.

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President Trump has tapped Mr. Zinke, 55, a House member and fifth-generation Montanan who grew up in this timber-and-tourism community, to be secretary of the interior. He was confirmed by the Senate on Wednesday by a vote of 68 to 31.

The position puts Mr. Zinke in control of 500 million acres of United States land — roughly a fifth of the nation — and he would be charged with balancing the department’s contradictory job of conserving land and mining it for resources at a time of intense pressure from energy producers, environmental activists, state lawmakers and his own boss, who made fossil fuel jobs a crucial part of his campaign platform.

Mr. Zinke’s portfolio includes not only the country’s 59 national parks but also millions of acres rich in coal, oil, timber and natural gas, as well as the management of land and services for 567 native tribes.

Here in the West, where officials like to say the interior secretary’s power is second only to that of the president, many are training a careful eye on Mr. Zinke’s past, searching for clues to how he will chart their future. While he has cast himself in an uncommon role — a conservative conservationist — his critics say he is less of a friend to the environment than he would like to think.

“I want to be optimistic, because he’s a Westerner,” said Chris Schustrom, 49, a Whitefish resident who was the ball boy for Mr. Zinke’s 1979 state championship football team and is now Montana chairman of the nonprofit conservation group Trout Unlimited.

“Ryan, he’s always called himself a Teddy Roosevelt Republican,” Mr. Schustrom said. “But his record has been inconsistent.”

Westerners angered by land restrictions are hoping that Mr. Zinke will help them peel back Washington’s grip on public acres. For miners, ranchers and politicians in resource-rich regions, the Obama years were a rough ride. President Barack Obama blocked new coal leases, imposed moratoriums on uranium drilling near the Grand Canyon and set aside 553 million acres for national monuments, more than any other president.

“I could not be more thrilled that Donald Trump selected him,” said Representative Jason Chaffetz, Republican of Utah, who has tried to transfer millions of acres of public lands out of federal control.

Mr. Chaffetz cited a stop he had made the day before in Emery County, Utah. “We talked about: ‘The war on coal is over. We’ve got friendlier, greener pastures ahead of us.’ And there is a great deal of optimism and smiles on people’s faces that we haven’t seen in years.”

Mr. Zinke (pronounced ZINK-ee) spent his childhood fishing cutthroat trout from Good Creek with his stepfather, John Petersen, and hitching joy rides on train car ladders, a habit he called “hooky bobbing.” His high school voted him class president three times, and he guided the Whitefish Bulldogs football team through an undefeated season during his senior year. At the time, Whitefish was still a one-stoptown.

It was in Whitefish and as a Boy Scout, he has recounted, that he developed his admiration for Roosevelt, who put aside 234 million acres of protected land, saving redwoods and ancient rock formations even as detractors harped that the president imperiled states’ rights and hampered economic growth.

“I am an unapologetic admirer of Teddy Roosevelt,” Mr. Zinke said at a January nomination hearing before the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, where he evoked Roosevelt on 10 occasions. “I fully recognize and appreciate there are lands that deserve special recognition and are better managed under the John Muir model of wilderness, where man has a light touch and is an observer.”

After college, at the University of Oregon, Mr. Zinke joined the Navy SEALs, serving for 23 years and solidifying a disdain for leaders he called “desk jockeys” who directed policies from Washington offices. In his 2016 book, “American Commander,” he wrote that front-line fighters were the ones best equipped to make decisions about everything from the battlefield to land management.

Mr. Zinke entered politics in 2009, serving two terms in the Montana Legislature, and became the state’s at-large representative in the United States House of Representatives in 2015. He splits time among Washington, Whitefish and Santa Barbara, Calif., the hometown of his wife, Lola. He has three adult children: Wolfgang, Konrad and Jennifer.

In office, Mr. Zinke has repeatedly said he is against the transfer of federal lands to state hands, bucking Republican colleagues who say Washington controls too many Western acres. In 2016, after federal land transfer was added to the Republican platform, he resigned as a delegate to the party’s national convention.

He has campaigned for more money for the Land and Water Conservation Fund, which uses energy royalties to preserve outdoor space. And in his nomination hearing, he disputed Mr. Trump’s claim that climate change is a hoax. Some hope that means he will focus on the effects of shifting temperatures, which have altered and stressed everything from the crucial Rocky Mountain snowpack to the habitat of a rabbitlike mammal called the pika.

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More recently, he held listening sessions for a bill that would overhaul the Antiquities Act by requiring approval from local residents before a president designates a national monument. Roosevelt signed the 1906 law, and presidents have used it to push through unpopular preservation projects.

And on Jan. 3, Mr. Zinke voted yes on a package that included a rule that would make it easier to transfer public lands out of federal hands.

In some Whitefish circles, that set alarm bells clanging. “It seemed to contravene, to contradict, his stance that public lands are sacrosanct,” said Richard Hildner, 71, the deputy mayor.

As secretary, Mr. Zinke will face several challenges, including a \$12.5 billion maintenance backlog at national parks; ecosystems and budgets ravaged by drought and fire; environmental activists invigorated by the highly public protest of the Dakota Access Pipeline; tattered relations between Interior Department employees and local communities; and a president whose job promises may hinge on his ability to push fossil fuel projects through the door.

It is expected that Mr. Trump will push the interior secretary to restart drilling off the Alaskan and the Atlantic coasts, which Mr. Obama had blocked through 2022. Mr. Obama made the decision to close off the Atlantic drilling after residents from hundreds of coastal cities and towns, from Richmond, Va. to Charleston, S.C., passed resolutions opposing the drilling.

Opening the waters off tourist towns like Myrtle Beach, S.C., back up to drilling could reignite protests.

At the same time, Mr. Trump’s 2018 fiscal blueprint calls for a steep 11 percent cut to the Interior Department’s roughly \$13 billion annual budget. The White House is expected to push for most cuts to come from the Interior Department’s Fish and Wildlife Service, which designates endangered species. Yet the office is under a court order to determine whether more than 500 species of animals and plants qualify as endangered.

An early point of contention will be Bears Ears National Monument in Utah, a vast canyon region set aside for protection in late December by Mr. Obama, using the Antiquities Act. Some conservative lawmakers hope that Mr. Zinke will push Mr. Trump to overturn that decision, which they say will hurt the local economy.

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From: Bloomgren, Megan
To: [Swift, Heather](#)
Subject: Re: NYT Profile on Secretary Zinke
Date: Wednesday, March 01, 2017 11:58:36 AM

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From: Swift, Heather
To: [Bloomgren, Megan](mailto:Bloomgren.Megan)
Subject: Re: NYT Profile on Secretary Zinke
Date: Wednesday, March 01, 2017 12:02:40 PM

Agreed. Out of all the people who we offered she didn't include any positive quotes from any of them.

-

Heather Swift
Department of the Interior
@DOIPressSec
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On Wed, Mar 1, 2017 at 11:57 AM, Bloomgren, Megan <megan_bloomgren@ios.doi.gov> wrote:

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Here in the West, where officials like to say the interior secretary’s power is second only to that of the president, many are training a careful eye on Mr. Zinke’s past, searching for clues to how he will chart their future. While he has cast himself in an uncommon role —

a conservative conservationist — his critics say he is less of a friend to the environment than he would like to think.

“I want to be optimistic, because he’s a Westerner,” said Chris Schustrom, 49, a Whitefish resident who was the ball boy for Mr. Zinke’s 1979 state championship football team and is now Montana chairman of the nonprofit conservation group Trout Unlimited.

“Ryan, he’s always called himself a Teddy Roosevelt Republican,” Mr. Schustrom said. “But his record has been inconsistent.”

Westerners angered by land restrictions are hoping that Mr. Zinke will help them peel back Washington’s grip on public acres. For miners, ranchers and politicians in resource-rich regions, the Obama years were a rough ride. President Barack Obama blocked new coal leases, imposed moratoriums on uranium drilling near the Grand Canyon and set aside 553 million acres for national monuments, more than any other president.

“I could not be more thrilled that Donald Trump selected him,” said Representative Jason Chaffetz, Republican of Utah, who has tried to transfer millions of acres of public lands out of federal control.

Mr. Chaffetz cited a stop he had made the day before in Emery County, Utah. “We talked about: ‘The war on coal is over. We’ve got friendlier, greener pastures ahead of us.’ And there is a great deal of optimism and smiles on people’s faces that we haven’t seen in years.”

Mr. Zinke (pronounced ZINK-ee) spent his childhood fishing cutthroat trout from Good Creek with his stepfather, John Petersen, and hitching joy rides on train car ladders, a habit he called “hooky bobbing.” His high school voted him class president three times, and he guided the Whitefish Bulldogs football team through an undefeated season during his senior year. At the time, Whitefish was still a one-stoplight town.

It was in Whitefish and as a Boy Scout, he has recounted, that he developed his admiration for Roosevelt, who put aside 234 million acres of protected land, saving redwoods and ancient rock formations even as detractors harped that the president imperiled states’ rights and hampered economic growth.

“I am an unapologetic admirer of Teddy Roosevelt,” Mr. Zinke said at a January nomination hearing before the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, where he evoked Roosevelt on 10 occasions. “I fully recognize and appreciate there are lands that deserve special recognition and are better managed under the John Muir model of wilderness, where man has a light touch and is an observer.”

After college, at the University of Oregon, Mr. Zinke joined the Navy SEALs, serving for 23 years and solidifying a disdain for leaders he called “desk jockeys” who directed policies from Washington offices. In his 2016 book, “American Commander,” he wrote that front-line fighters were the ones best equipped to make decisions about everything from the battlefield to land management.

Mr. Zinke entered politics in 2009, serving two terms in the Montana Legislature, and became the state’s at-large representative in the United States House of Representatives in

2015. He splits time among Washington, Whitefish and Santa Barbara, Calif., the hometown of his wife, Lola. He has three adult children: Wolfgang, Konrad and Jennifer.

In office, Mr. Zinke has repeatedly said he is against the transfer of federal lands to state hands, bucking Republican colleagues who say Washington controls too many Western acres. In 2016, after federal land transfer was added to the Republican platform, he resigned as a delegate to the party's national convention.

He has campaigned for more money for the Land and Water Conservation Fund, which uses energy royalties to preserve outdoor space. And in his nomination hearing, he disputed Mr. Trump's claim that climate change is a hoax. Some hope that means he will focus on the effects of shifting temperatures, which have altered and stressed everything from the crucial Rocky Mountain snowpack to the habitat of a rabbitlike mammal called the pika.

"When my family and I have eaten lunch on Grinnell Glacier, the glacier has receded during lunch," he said of Glacier National Park, where the number of ice sheets has dropped to 25 from 150 in 1850. "Climate is changing; man is an influence. I think where there's debate on it is what that influence is, what we can do about it."

Mr. Zinke's critics, however, point to policies they call "far from Rooseveltian."

He has a 4 percent lifetime score from the League of Conservation Voters, and oil and gas companies have donated nearly \$350,000 to his campaigns. He is a strong supporter of coal — "we are not going to power our nation on pixie dust and hope," he told a local crowd in 2014 — and has pushed to end Mr. Obama's moratorium on new coal leases.

More recently, he held listening sessions for a bill that would overhaul the Antiquities Act by requiring approval from local residents before a president designates a national monument. Roosevelt signed the 1906 law, and presidents have used it to push through unpopular preservation projects.

And on Jan. 3, Mr. Zinke voted yes on a package that included a rule that would make it easier to transfer public lands out of federal hands.

In some Whitefish circles, that set alarm bells clanging. "It seemed to contravene, to contradict, his stance that public lands are sacrosanct," said Richard Hildner, 71, the deputy mayor.

As secretary, Mr. Zinke will face several challenges, including a \$12.5 billion maintenance backlog at national parks; ecosystems and budgets ravaged by drought and fire; environmental activists invigorated by the highly public protest of the Dakota Access Pipeline; tattered relations between Interior Department employees and local communities; and a president whose job promises may hinge on his ability to push fossil fuel projects through the door.

It is expected that Mr. Trump will push the interior secretary to restart drilling off the Alaskan and the Atlantic coasts, which Mr. Obama had blocked through 2022. Mr. Obama made the decision to close off the Atlantic drilling after residents from hundreds of coastal cities and towns, from Richmond, Va. to Charleston, S.C., passed resolutions opposing the

drilling.

Opening the waters off tourist towns like Myrtle Beach, S.C., back up to drilling could reignite protests.

At the same time, Mr. Trump's 2018 fiscal blueprint calls for a steep 11 percent cut to the Interior Department's roughly \$13 billion annual budget. The White House is expected to push for most cuts to come from the Interior Department's Fish and Wildlife Service, which designates endangered species. Yet the office is under a court order to determine whether more than 500 species of animals and plants qualify as endangered.

An early point of contention will be Bears Ears National Monument in Utah, a vast canyon region set aside for protection in late December by Mr. Obama, using the Antiquities Act. Some conservative lawmakers hope that Mr. Zinke will push Mr. Trump to overturn that decision, which they say will hurt the local economy.

But no president has ever undone the wilderness protections designated by a previous president under the act.

"He's going to be moving into uncharted territory if he does that," said Eric Washburn, an expert on Interior Department policies at Bracewell, a Washington law firm.

In his testimony before Congress, Mr. Zinke said he would visit Utah and make a recommendation, adding that his general view was that if local lawmakers oppose a monument, "we should defer a lot of that to the state."

From: Kaster, Amanda
To: [Megan Bloomgren](#); [Swift, Heather](#)
Subject: Fwd: FW: RELEASE: Daines: Zinke Confirmed as Interior Secretary
Date: Wednesday, March 01, 2017 12:09:02 PM

There are also a few Montanan quotes in this press release.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Marino Thacker, Meghan (Daines)** <[Meghan_Thacker@daines.senate.gov](mailto: Meghan_Thacker@daines.senate.gov)>
Date: Wed, Mar 1, 2017 at 11:32 AM
Subject: FW: RELEASE: Daines: Zinke Confirmed as Interior Secretary
To: "Amanda Kaster ([amanda_kaster@ios.doi.gov](mailto: amanda_kaster@ios.doi.gov))" <[amanda_kaster@ios.doi.gov](mailto: amanda_kaster@ios.doi.gov)>

And this.

From: Press (Daines)
Sent: Wednesday, March 1, 2017 11:29 AM
To:
Subject: RELEASE: Daines: Zinke Confirmed as Interior Secretary

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 1, 2017

Daines: Zinke Confirmed as Interior Secretary

U.S. SENATE —U.S. Senator Steve Daines today released the following statement after the U.S. Senate voted to confirm President Donald J. Trump’s nominee for Secretary of the U.S. Department of the Interior, Montana’s U.S. Representative Ryan Zinke.

“This is a historic moment for Montana as Congressman Zinke is the first Montanan to ever serve in a President’s cabinet,” Daines stated. **“Ryan is a Montanan who grew up in America’s public lands. He knows that we must strike the right balance between conservation and responsible energy development, and he understands more than most that one-size fits all policies from Washington, D.C., never work for real America.”**

On the Senate floor, Daines called for the vote to confirm Zinke. Following Zinke’s

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Matt Rosendale, Montana State Auditor: “Big congratulations to Ryan Zinke on being confirmed as our new Secretary of Interior. It's great to have a fellow Montanan serving in the cabinet who understands the importance of improving access to our public lands.”

Elsie Arntzen, State Superintendent: “Congratulations to Ryan Zinke on becoming our nation's next Interior Secretary. As Vice-Chair of the Montana Land Board, I look forward working with Secretary Zinke in his new capacity to put Montana students first. The Land Board is crucial to school funding and it will be very beneficial to have Montana leadership managing our public lands at the U.S. Department of the Interior.”

Senate President Scott Sales, R - Bozeman: “I congratulate Congressman Zinke and look forward to the leadership he will bring as Secretary to the Department of the Interior concerning the management of our lands here in the west. It is also good that the clock will start regarding the selection of his replacement in Congress. It is imperative that Montana's voice is heard in the U.S. House of Representatives.”

Senate Majority Leader Fred Thomas, R - Stevensville: “This is truly one of the highlights of my political tenure. To see a Montana Congressman become the Secretary of the Interior is absolutely a tribute to Montana and its citizens!”

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Immediately following Zinke's confirmation, Daines sent a letter to Zinke outlining Montana priorities for the Department of Interior.

Daines' letter is available to download [HERE](#) and below:

Dear Secretary Zinke:

What an historic day for Montana! Congratulations on your appointment as Secretary of the Department of the Interior (Department). As a fellow Montanan, a member of the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources and the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies, I look forward to working with you in your new role. Serving at the helm of the Department of the Interior, you will be a strong advocate for our public lands, help uphold the federal trust responsibility to Indian tribes, will help unleash American energy and will strengthen our water infrastructure. As you begin to set priorities and goals for the Department, including informing the President's budget request for Fiscal Year 2018 and the important work of addressing our nation's infrastructure challenges, I would like to highlight several specific policies that demand your immediate and personal attention.

Unleash American Energy

Terminate Secretarial Order 3338. This order imposed a moratorium on federal coal leasing, paused ongoing lease applications and modification reviews, and launched a programmatic review of the federal coal leasing program, including overhauling the leasing process and changing royalty rates. This moratorium and Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement will put nearly 65,000 direct and indirect mining jobs at risk, as well as impact the billions of dollars in revenues to states like Montana, as well as to Indian tribes, used to pay for schools, reclamation, and other infrastructure projects. I urge you to rescind this damaging order.

Utilize coal export terminals. As you are well aware, Powder River Basin coal is lower in sulfur content than Indonesian coal. Currently, Montana coal producers must rely on Canadian ports to bring our coal to market. I urge you to assist other departments in ensuring coal export terminal permits are issued in a timely manner. Doing so will help Montana coal reach international demand, thereby creating more American jobs here at home instead of across our border while keeping global emissions down.

Help approve the Keystone XL pipeline. The Keystone XL pipeline will be a much-needed lifeline to many rural Montana communities, entering the United States through Phillips County, traveling about 284 miles across eastern Montana to South Dakota. After nearly a decade of environmental review and then ultimate denial by the Obama Administration, thanks to President Trump, Montana and builders across the country stand on the cusp of finally building this pipeline. In Montana, the pipeline would create about 800 jobs, help keep

electricity prices affordable for families, and generate more than \$80 million in Montana property taxes, more than \$16 million of which would be distributed to Montana's schools and university system. While the Keystone XL pipeline project proceeds through the Presidential permitting process, there are several rights-of-way permits under review by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in Montana and throughout the proposed route. I urge your attention to those permits to ensure the Keystone XL project can become a reality.

Empower states and tribes to take the lead in natural resource development and protecting the environment. Rules such as the BLM's Methane and Waste Reduction Rule and hydraulic fracturing rule are duplicative and unnecessary, conflict with current state laws, such as those put in place in Montana, and would discourage state-driven solutions to managing emissions. The BLM hydraulic fracturing rule, in particular, would make it harder to do business with Native nations and make them less competitive in energy markets. Furthermore, the BLM Sage-Grouse Conservation Plans are yet another example of federal requirements' dissonance with work states have already done. Whether through regulation of our nation's vast energy resources, or approaches to wildlife management, I believe state and tribal governments are best suited to lead in addressing these issues, not an overreaching and out-of-touch federal bureaucracy.

Strengthen our nation's critical mineral supply. Our foreign mineral dependence is a mounting threat to our economy, national security, and international competitiveness. Despite our nation's abundant resources, including Montana's supply of palladium, platinum, molybdenum, and other minerals, our nation's permitting process for mineral development remains one of the longest in the world. I believe there are ways to streamline our critical mineral production while protecting our environment and urge you to work with Congress toward that end by prioritizing formulating a robust domestic critical mineral strategy.

Consolidated Federal Oil and Gas and Federal and Indian Coal Valuation Reform Rule (81 Fed. Reg. 43338). While we must be committed to protecting the federal taxpayer and our states' fair share of mineral royalties, this rule as finalized will have a detrimental effect to American energy production, could decrease shared revenues and royalties in our states, and place our nation's energy and infrastructure security and good-paying energy jobs at risk. The rule's complexity has caused much uncertainty and has the potential to risk financial ruin to energy operators and mine-mouth electricity generators who are critical to meeting our nation's energy needs and important to our state economies. Although the Department postponed implementation of the rule, I urge you to rescind the rule and implement a common-sense royalty policy that would protect the economic use of our nation's vast energy resources while ensuring our states and the federal taxpayer continue to receive revenue they deserve.

Protect our Sportsmen's Heritage and Increase Access to Public Lands

Address the National Park Service maintenance backlog. As two Montana kids who grew up neighboring two crown jewels of the National Park System, I know we share high regard for the importance of strengthening and sustaining our National Park System for future generations. The Park Service currently has an over \$11.9 billion backlog in deferred maintenance projects. As the Chair of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Subcommittee on National Parks and a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I ask for your cooperation to reexamine prioritization of these projects and work with Congress to address these challenges.

Endangered Species Act and Federal Forest Management. As you know well, federal forest management reform continues to be a major priority in Montana. Too often a handful of fringe groups are able to exploit the flawed Endangered Species Act to obstruct projects through obstructionist litigation. Many of these stymied projects would have widespread benefits, such as creating forest jobs, reducing the threat of wildfire, enhancing wildlife habitat, and increasing outdoor recreation. The Ninth Circuit Court of Appeal's *Cottonwood* decision is a prime example of where smart forest management projects are held hostage to fringe groups litigating on ESA. I urge you to ensure that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service stands shoulder-to-shoulder with the U.S. Forest Service and the Department of Justice in support of statutorily reversing the disastrous *Cottonwood* ruling. I also ask that you work with Congress to modernize and strengthen the ESA so that it protects our diverse wildlife without having severe impacts on livelihoods and local communities.

Land and Water Conservation Fund. The Land and Water Conservation Fund is an important tool for protecting, conserving and expanding access to our public lands. Full funding and permanent reauthorization of this program is a critical step toward ensuring that Montanans can continue to enjoy the beauty of our state for generations to come.

Facilitating more local and state input in management of federal lands. Too many land-use decisions, such as Antiquities Act designations and their land-use plans or land planning more broadly, like the BLM's Planning 2.0 Rule, have occurred with the Department's disregard for impacts of these decisions to those who live closest to the land. Farmers, ranchers and other land users have spent generations working and protecting the land they use every day. I ask that you work with them and states to increase their voice when making land management decisions.

Director's Order 219. The Obama Administration's midnight directive ban on the use of lead ammunition and fishing tackle on federal lands is an example of a misguided and rushed directive from the top. I am concerned this directive was motivated by politics, not sound science, and would jeopardize the revenues hunters and anglers generate for conservation purposes. I ask that you rescind the directive and work with the states and Congress to address the use of lead in ammunition and fishing tackle.

Securing Water Infrastructure

Stop the spread of aquatic invasive species. As you know, last year invasive mussel larvae were detected in Montana waters managed by the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR). Should these larvae propagate, it will have detrimental impacts on Montana's ecosystem, obstruct irrigation and hydropower infrastructure, and negatively impact our economy. In your new role, I urge you to work with the Corps of Engineers and other federal, tribal and state agencies to ensure these mussels do not proliferate.

Complete and Fund Rural Water Projects. The Dry-Redwater Regional Water Authority and Musselshell-Judith Rural Water System have spent seven and 11 years, respectfully, in deliberation with BOR, as well as \$7 million in combined state, local, and federal funding to date without authorization. Authorizing these projects would help provide access to a dependable and clean water supply to the nearly 25,000 residents in central and eastern Montana who currently lack access to reliable water supply systems that meet the basic drinking water requirements. Montana is also home to two rural water projects authorized that are in dire need of dedicated funding. We worked together in Congress to advance their authorizations and fund our authorized projects in Montana. I ask for your continued cooperation to reexamine prioritization of these projects and work with Congress to secure authorization and address resource challenges, including consistent and robust funding.

Promoting Prosperity in Indian Country

Fund Implementation of the Blackfeet Water Rights Settlement Act. Together with your leadership in the House of Representatives, we were able to enact an historic water settlement for the Blackfeet people. In order for the settlement to become effective, however, the funding authorized in the settlement, approximately \$422 million, must be appropriated no later January 21, 2026. Fully funding this settlement is a crucial step to upholding the commitment made by Congress, the Administration, and the State of Montana to the Blackfeet people and neighboring communities. I urge your assistance in requesting robust funding for this settlement each year, beginning with at least \$100 million in the President's Budget request for 2018.

Recognize the Little Shell Tribe. The Little Shell Tribe has been fighting for federal recognition for nearly four decades. While I remain committed to seeing the Little Shell Tribe of Chippewa Indians Restoration Act--which would legislatively grant federal acknowledgement to the tribe--into law, the Department of the Interior is uniquely positioned to grant that recognition unilaterally in a way that has the potential to be more expeditious than the legislative process. I urge you to do so and give them the dignity they deserve.

Facilitate development of tribal energy resources. A good-paying job is the key to a brighter future for Indian tribal communities and for many tribes, development of their natural resources would stimulate economic growth. Unfortunately, Indian tribes face obstacles in

tapping into their rich natural resources potential, almost all of which has gone undeveloped. Furthermore, according to a 2014 Department document, Indian energy resources are underdeveloped relative to surrounding non-Indian resources. I ask that you work with me to remedy these troubling statistics by facilitating easier all-of-the-above energy development on Indian lands and helping tribes cut through existing red tape that stands in the way.

Keep Indian Country safer. Over three thousand Native American veterans transition out of the military each year. This pipeline of talent offers a potential pool of highly qualified and civic-minded personnel to fill challenging vacancies in law enforcement positions across Indian Country. I hope that the Department can work constructively with the Office of Personnel Management to reduce the bureaucratic maze that confronts applicants who are willing to fill critical law enforcement vacancies. The talent pool exists to fill these positions, but if the time required to complete the hiring process and finalize background checks remains excessive, prospects may lose interest and look for opportunities elsewhere.

While not an exhaustive list, I believe the above policies reflect important areas to begin your important work leading the Department of the Interior. I look forward to working with you on these issues; and, I extend an invitation for you to join me in Montana to meet face-to-face with our constituents directly impacted by the Department.

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Contact:

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Amanda Kaster-Averill
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Office of Congressional and Legislative Affairs
U.S. Department of the Interior
(202) 208-3337
amanda_kaster@ios.doi.gov

From: Bloomgren, Megan
To: [Thomas Baptiste](mailto:Thomas.Baptiste)
Cc: [Amy Mitchell](mailto:Amy.Mitchell); [Swift, Heather](mailto:Swift.Heather)
Subject: Fwd: FW: RELEASE: Daines: Zinke Confirmed as Interior Secretary
Date: Wednesday, March 01, 2017 12:28:36 PM

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Kaster, Amanda** <amanda_kaster@ios.doi.gov>
Date: Wed, Mar 1, 2017 at 12:08 PM
Subject: Fwd: FW: RELEASE: Daines: Zinke Confirmed as Interior Secretary
To: Megan Bloomgren <megan_bloomgren@ios.doi.gov>, "Swift, Heather" <heather_swift@ios.doi.gov>

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Date: Wed, Mar 1, 2017 at 11:32 AM
Subject: FW: RELEASE: Daines: Zinke Confirmed as Interior Secretary
To: "Amanda Kaster (amanda_kaster@ios.doi.gov)" <amanda_kaster@ios.doi.gov>

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Securing Water Infrastructure

Stop the spread of aquatic invasive species. As you know, last year invasive mussel larvae were detected in Montana waters managed by the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR). Should these larvae propagate, it will have detrimental impacts on Montana's ecosystem, obstruct irrigation and hydropower infrastructure, and negatively impact our economy. In your new role, I urge you to work with the Corps of Engineers and other federal, tribal and state agencies to ensure these mussels do not proliferate.

Complete and Fund Rural Water Projects. The Dry-Redwater Regional Water Authority and Musselshell-Judith Rural Water System have spent seven and 11 years, respectfully, in deliberation with BOR, as well as \$7 million in combined state, local, and federal funding to date without authorization. Authorizing these projects would help provide access to a dependable and clean water supply to the nearly 25,000 residents in central and eastern Montana who currently lack access to reliable water supply systems that meet the basic drinking water requirements. Montana is also home to two rural water projects authorized that are in dire need of dedicated funding. We worked together in Congress to advance their authorizations and fund our authorized projects in Montana. I ask for your continued cooperation to reexamine prioritization of these projects and work with Congress to secure authorization and address resource challenges, including consistent and robust funding.

Promoting Prosperity in Indian Country

Fund Implementation of the Blackfeet Water Rights Settlement Act. Together with your leadership in the House of Representatives, we were able to enact an historic water settlement for the Blackfeet people. In order for the settlement to become effective, however, the funding authorized in the settlement, approximately \$422 million, must be appropriated no later January 21, 2026. Fully funding this settlement is a crucial step to upholding the commitment made by Congress, the Administration, and the State of Montana to the Blackfeet people and neighboring communities. I urge your assistance in requesting robust funding for this settlement each year, beginning with at least \$100 million in the President's Budget request for 2018.

Recognize the Little Shell Tribe. The Little Shell Tribe has been fighting for federal

recognition for nearly four decades. While I remain committed to seeing the Little Shell Tribe of Chippewa Indians Restoration Act--which would legislatively grant federal acknowledgement to the tribe--into law, the Department of the Interior is uniquely positioned to grant that recognition unilaterally in a way that has the potential to be more expeditious than the legislative process. I urge you to do so and give them the dignity they deserve.

Facilitate development of tribal energy resources. A good-paying job is the key to a brighter future for Indian tribal communities and for many tribes, development of their natural resources would stimulate economic growth. Unfortunately, Indian tribes face obstacles in tapping into their rich natural resources potential, almost all of which has gone undeveloped. Furthermore, according to a 2014 Department document, Indian energy resources are underdeveloped relative to surrounding non-Indian resources. I ask that you work with me to remedy these troubling statistics by facilitating easier all-of-the-above energy development on Indian lands and helping tribes cut through existing red tape that stands in the way.

Keep Indian Country safer. Over three thousand Native American veterans transition out of the military each year. This pipeline of talent offers a potential pool of highly qualified and civic-minded personnel to fill challenging vacancies in law enforcement positions across Indian Country. I hope that the Department can work constructively with the Office of Personnel Management to reduce the bureaucratic maze that confronts applicants who are willing to fill critical law enforcement vacancies. The talent pool exists to fill these positions, but if the time required to complete the hiring process and finalize background checks remains excessive, prospects may lose interest and look for opportunities elsewhere.

While not an exhaustive list, I believe the above policies reflect important areas to begin your important work leading the Department of the Interior. I look forward to working with you on these issues; and, I extend an invitation for you to join me in Montana to meet face-to-face with our constituents directly impacted by the Department.

###

Contact:

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From: Swift, Heather
To: [Megan Bloomgren](#); [Amy Mitchell](#); [Domenech, Douglas](#); [Daniel Jorjani](#)
Subject: Fwd: Morning Energy, presented by Utah Diné Bikéyah: Zinke, Perry address their teams for first time — Keystone won't have to be built with American steel — Congressional pressure for FERC nominees continues
Date: Friday, March 03, 2017 7:22:02 AM

After the heart of a certain Twitter lover we are

Must follows: [@SecretaryPerry](#) and [@SecretaryZinke](#). ME is impressed with Zinke's early social media game and cautiously optimistic he'll bring a less stuffy online persona than previous agency heads. His first official day included tweets [congratulating Perry on his confirmation](#), touting a "[top notch](#)" rodeo in Montana and offering [behind-the-scenes pictures](#) of his memorable entrance.

-
Heather Swift
Department of the Interior
[@DOIPressSec](#)
Heather_Swift@ios.doi.gov | Interior_Press@ios.doi.gov

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **POLITICO Pro Energy** <politicoemail@politicopro.com>
Date: Fri, Mar 3, 2017 at 5:54 AM
Subject: Morning Energy, presented by Utah Diné Bikéyah: Zinke, Perry address their teams for first time — Keystone won't have to be built with American steel — Congressional pressure for FERC nominees continues
To: heather_swift@ios.doi.gov

By Anthony Adragna | 03/03/2017 05:51 AM EDT

With help from Darius Dixon

TRUMP'S ENERGY CABINET IS COMPLETE! Newly-confirmed Energy Secretary Rick Perry and Interior chief Ryan Zinke deliver their first remarks to agency personnel this morning, as President Donald Trump now has his energy and environmental Cabinet personnel fully installed. Zinke plans to [address his employees](#) from the fancy-sounding Bison Bistro on agency grounds today at 11:00 a.m. on the Interior Department's 168th birthday. Perry plans to make [his inaugural remarks](#) at 10:30 a.m., according to a post on DOE's website.

That comes after Vice President Mike Pence swore in Perry to his new role shortly after 6:00 p.m. Thursday evening. "We collectively understand that the opportunity that we have been given, this maybe once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, Mr. Vice President, to truly put America on a course that will deliver for future generations extraordinary opportunities," the former Texas governor said after taking his oath using the Bible signed by every person he ever swore in as governor.

Washington's most-watched commute: One day after Zinke [won the Internet](#) by coming to work by horse, everyone wondered how Perry could top him. And the former Texas governor played ball. "On a single-stage rocket ... what could go wrong," he quipped, before adding to a skeptical pool at the White House that he planned to "quietly drive over and go to work."

Must follows: [@SecretaryPerry](#) and [@SecretaryZinke](#). ME is impressed with Zinke's early social media game and cautiously optimistic he'll bring a less stuffy online persona than previous agency heads. His first official day included tweets [congratulating Perry on his confirmation](#), touting a "[top notch](#)" rodeo in Montana and offering [behind-the-scenes pictures](#) of his memorable entrance. Shortly after being sworn in, Perry [tweeted](#): "Thanks for this opportunity to serve you. Let's get to work!"

This one's for you: Perry hasn't even gotten a chance to enjoy the lovely view from his new office at the Energy Department yet, but the Heritage Foundation has already lined up an agenda for him. In a [7-page paper published shortly](#) after Perry's Senate confirmation, the conservative think tank pumped out a mission statement: Pull the conditional loan guarantees, stop tightening energy efficiency regulations, move the agency more towards basic science and away from deploying technology, and cease its use of the social cost of carbon/methane/nitrous oxide figures. Instead, DOE needs to focus more intently on cleaning up the Cold War nuclear sites, completing the licensing process for the Yucca Mountain nuclear waste project and expediting liquefied natural gas applications. The national labs also got some love from Heritage on an issue near and dear to those 17 sites: The group urges Perry to reduce the "bureaucratic micromanagement" of the labs, a subject reviewed several times by the agency and Congress that is still a sensitive topic for headquarters and the labs.

MEANWHILE, PRUITT SPRINGS INTO ACTION: Thousands of oil and gas companies no longer have to report detailed technical information about their operations' methane emissions after EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt pulled an Obama-era mandatory information request, Pro's Alex Guillén [reports](#). That comes one day after 11 state attorneys general [asked](#) the agency to abandon what they called an "unnecessary and onerous burden on oil and gas producers." Pruitt's action marks EPA's first step away from an Obama-era plan to regulate methane emissions from existing oil and gas operations.

METHANE CRA STILL COMING: Senior Republicans say they're still committed to bringing up a Congressional Review Act resolution nullifying a BLM rule aimed at curbing methane emissions on public lands but wouldn't comment on whether they had the votes for passage. "It's on the list, but the order hasn't been decided yet," Senate Majority Whip [John Cornyn](#) told ME. A senior GOP Senate aide told ME the CRA would be brought up when "attendance" could be assured, suggesting a close final vote.

TGIF MY FRIENDS! I'm your host Anthony Adragna, and Sens. John Hoeven and Angus King are currently the only members of the Senate mustache club. Your end-of-the-week quiz: At the start of the 1st Congress (in 1789), how many House seats were there? Send your tips, energy gossip and comments to aadragna@politico.com, or follow us on Twitter [@AnthonyAdragna](#), [@Morning_Energy](#), and [@POLITICOPro](#).

Pro subscribers: Are you getting all the content you want? Make sure your keywords are up to date and customized via your settings page at <http://politico.pro/1iDAlk9>.

A KEYSTONE-SHAPED LOOPHOLE: The Keystone XL pipeline won't have to comply with Trump's executive order requiring infrastructure projects to be built with American steel, a White House spokeswoman [told](#) Pro's Ben Lefebvre. That order called for U.S. steel to be used in "all new pipelines, as well as retrofitted, repaired or expanded pipelines" inside the U.S. projects "to the maximum extent possible." But that won't include Keystone: "The Keystone XL pipeline is currently in the process of being constructed, so it does not count as a new, retrofitted, repaired, or expanded pipeline," the White House spokeswoman said.

PAGE MET WITH RUSSIAN ENVOY: Oil industry consultant Carter Page, a former unpaid foreign policy adviser to Trump, met with Russian Ambassador Sergey Kislyak during the GOP convention last summer, POLITICO's Josh Meyer [reports](#). Page declined to comment about what they discussed during their conversation, saying in a text message that "Everyone assumes everything is nefarious!" Trump officials have distanced themselves from Page, who left the campaign in late September.

**** A message from Utah Diné Bikéyah:** The protection of the Bears Ears National Monument reflected the will of Utahns and Native Americans. Now, President Trump and Interior Secretary-nominee Ryan Zinke are considering undermining this designation and threatening this sacred public land. Join us as we ask them to honor Tribes and stand with Bears Ears: <http://bit.ly/2luGehY> **

'THEY REALLY NEED TO BE EDUCATED': Senate Democrats are deeply concerned with the targeted cuts to EPA from the Trump administration, but they have a blunt reality check for the president's team: they'll need 60 votes for legislation to pass the Senate. "I think they really need to be educated about how everything works," [Tom Udall](#), top Democrat on the subcommittee handling EPA funding, told ME. "A lot of Republicans were not very supportive of this, so that's encouraging to me." [Brian Schatz](#), another appropriator, said Congress simply wouldn't go along with the 24 percent EPA cut sought by Trump's team. "They're still in campaign mode and they're still declaring things to be true that they wish to be true, but now that they have to govern and contend with co-equal branches of government, they're getting knocked around a little bit," the Hawaii Democrat told ME.

CONCERTED FERC PUSH CONTINUES: Senior congressional Republicans continue to push Trump's team to fill FERC vacancies, as the agency seeks a quorum necessary to conduct much of its business. "I've expressed my interest in getting those filled," Senate EPW Chairman [John Barrasso](#) told ME. That comes as two senior House Republicans — Energy and Commerce Chairman [Greg Walden](#) (R-Ore.) and former Chairman [Fred Upton](#) (R-Mich.) — sent a letter to Trump warning "without a quorum, major decisions are stalled, including those involving the licensing of interstate natural gas pipelines, liquefied natural gas terminals, and hydropower projects." They called for Trump to "swiftly" nominate FERC commissioners.

AWK-WARD: Nevada Rep. [Dina Titus](#) [tweeted](#) shortly before Perry's confirmation vote "Any senator that supports Perry's nomination is advocating for the Trump administration's position on Yucca Mountain." (Side note: That position on Yucca Mountain is not super clear.) But Titus' own Nevada colleagues — Republican [Dean Heller](#) and Democrat [Catherine Cortez Masto](#) — both [backed](#) Perry's nomination.

GAO TO THE NRC: SHOW YOUR MATH: The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has been less than fully transparent in how it explains the fees it puts on the industries it oversees, government watchdogs say in a new report. About 90 percent of the NRC's budget is covered with fees on nuclear power plants but, in a [report released Thursday](#), the Government Accountability Office says the agency's fee rules haven't defined "key terms, use terms consistently, or provide key calculations, and included errors, all of which obscured NRC's calculations and limited industry stakeholders' ability to understand them." The NRC has started a project aimed at increasing the transparency of its fee calculations, GAO said, but that "they have not established goals for performance or a way to measure progress toward meeting these goals."

Piggybacking on the report, Republican Rep. [Adam Kinzinger](#) and Democrat Rep. [Mike Doyle](#) introduced the Nuclear Utilization of Keynote Energy Act, H.R. 1320, on Thursday, which aims to improve the "efficiency" of NRC licensing and regulatory processes.

ISSA JOINS BIPARTISAN CLIMATE CAUCUS: California Reps. [Darrell Issa](#) (R) and [Juan Vargas](#) (D) are the latest pair of lawmakers to join the Climate Solutions Caucus, Issa's office confirmed to ME. "Coastal communities, like mine in Southern California, are counting on us to come up with solutions that encourage a strong and vibrant economy, while also ensuring we are taking care of our environment," Issa said.

MINIBUSES LEAVING THE STATION? House Appropriators are hoping to avoid another short-term stopgap spending bill by bundling up the remaining fiscal 2017 spending bills into the packages for the floor, POLITICO's Sarah Harris [reports](#). Speaker [Paul Ryan](#) earlier Thursday [ruled out](#) the possibility of considering individual spending bills on the House floor, citing a time crunch.

WINTER IS COMING? Frustrated with the leaks from the federal bureaucracy, advisers to Trump are pushing him to remove remaining officials from the Obama administration and install new people more loyal to him, POLITICO's Josh Dawsey [reports](#). But the reality is more complex with some Cabinet secretaries saying they need the Obama people during a rocky transition and other advisers warning that aggressively going after federal employees carries its own risks. "The administration needs to be careful not to make too many dramatic changes because the federal bureaucracy itself is a powerful machine, and they tend to have very establishment ideas," Newsmax CEO Chris Ruddy, a longtime Trump friend, said.

MAIL CALL! FIRST DAY, FIRST DOCUMENT REQUEST: House Oversight Chairman [Jason Chaffetz](#) isn't forgetting about seven unresolved, Obama-era document requests and sent Zinke [a letter](#) to "reiterate" his demands. Chaffetz is seeking information on BLM's fracking rule, Obama's decision to use the Antiquities Act on a number of national monuments and BLM activities in Nevada and Utah, among others. The letter also reiterates a fairly meta request for a briefing on how Interior responds to demands from members of Congress and FOIA requests.

MINING GROUP PUSHES ROSS TO SLASH REGULATIONS: Warning it takes between seven and 10 years to obtain the necessary permits for projects, the National Mining Association sent Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross [a letter](#) urging the Trump administration to take action to streamline the process. "The length, complexity and uncertainty of the permitting process are primary reasons investors give for not investing in U.S. mineral projects," CEO Hal Quinn wrote in a letter obtained Thursday. "These best practices include better coordination among state and federal agencies, clarifying responsibilities, minimizing duplication, setting goals and timeframes and introducing more accountability among agencies."

MORMON LEADERS BACK BEARS EARS: More than 200 members of the Mormon faith sent [a letter](#) to Zinke and congressional leaders urging them to support the Obama-era Bears Ears National Monument designation. "We urge you to reject any proposal to repeal it or change its boundaries," they said.

CONSERVATIVES HOPE REINS SUPREME: FreedomWorks sent [a letter](#) to Senate offices Thursday urging them to push leadership to take up the REINS Act (S. 21) for a full chamber vote. House members passed the bill, which would require explicit congressional

approval for any new major regulation, as one of their first actions this Congress. But the Senate has never taken it up. The legislation would need the support of eight Democratic senators to clear the chamber — an unlikely feat despite the number of moderates up for reelection in 2018.

CHEMISTRY COUNCIL PUSHES FOR INFRASTRUCTURE SPENDING: As Trump lays the groundwork for shepherding a \$1 trillion infrastructure package through Congress, companies and industries are strategizing on how to get their priorities included in the legislation. The latest move comes from the American Chemistry Council, which commissioned [a report](#) from PricewaterhouseCoopers on how an infrastructure spending boost could fuel a chemical manufacturing "renaissance." The report identifies shortcomings in the truck, marine and rail infrastructure the industry relies on. The council's member companies include giants like Dow, DuPont, Honeywell, 3M, Merck and Monsanto (h/t POLITICO Influence).

LIFE COMES AT YA FAST: One year ago, more than 95 percent of California was in drought conditions. Today? Just 8.73 percent, federal scientists [report](#). That's the lowest level of drought in the Golden State since 2011.

MOVERS, SHAKERS: Todd Lester has joined FTI Consulting as senior managing director in its economic consulting branch and a member of the Energy, Power and Products practice.

Thomas Cunningham has joined Statoil's Washington office as director of international affairs; he was most recently with Atlantic Council Global Energy Center after 13 years with the State Department.

QUICK HITS

— Lawyers Request EPA Intervention For Lead In East Chicago Water. [Indiana Public Media](#).

— Was Aubrey McClendon a Billionaire, or Broke? [The Wall Street Journal](#).

— Judge throws out recall effort against Sen. Ericksen. [KGMI](#).

— Top Trump Advisers Are Split on Paris Agreement on Climate Change. [The New York Times](#).

— Oil Falls to Three-Week Low as Record U.S. Supply Outweighs OPEC. [Bloomberg](#).

HAPPENING TODAY

8:20 a.m. — POLITICO Playbook [breakfast](#) on the first 100 days of the Trump administration, Newseum, 555 Pennsylvania Ave. NW

12:00 p.m. — "Carbon Capture: Tomorrow Just Happened," American Energy Society, 2075 Rayburn

THAT'S ALL FOR ME!

**** A message from Utah Diné Bikéyah:** The designation of the Bears Ears National Monument reflected the will of a majority of Utahns and Native American Tribes. This

monument permanently protected public lands threatened by vandalism and looting in southeast Utah that we consider sacred. Yet already, politicians are pushing President Trump and Interior Secretary-nominee Ryan Zinke to reduce or undo its protections. We call on President Trump to resist efforts to seize or sell off Bears Ears and other parks and monuments. Stand with Bears Ears. Let's protect our national public lands for future generations of all people. Learn more at: <http://bit.ly/2luGehY> **

To view online:

<https://www.politicopro.com/tipsheets/morning-energy/2017/03/zinke-perry-address-their-teams-for-first-time-021654>

Stories from POLITICO Pro

Zinke shows up on horseback for first day at Interior [Back](#)

By Eric Wolff | 03/02/2017 09:54 AM EDT

Newly confirmed Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke decided to ride to work on a horse this morning, his first day on the job.

According to [a picture](#) posted by the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement, Zinke donned a black Stetson and saddled up for his inaugural trip to his new office.

An Interior spokesperson did not immediately respond to a request for comment on Zinke's unorthodox commute.

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EPA pulls methane information request [Back](#)

By Alex Guillén | 03/02/2017 04:36 PM EDT

EPA says more than 15,000 oil and gas companies no longer have to report detailed technical information about methane emissions from their operations.

The move was announced via a Federal Register [notice](#) that will be published on March 7 but will take immediate effect.

It is the agency's first step away from an Obama-era plan to regulate methane emissions from existing oil and gas operations. EPA in November directed oil and gas operators to respond to an "information collection request" on the topic that the agency estimated would cost companies, which are required by law to respond, about \$42 million in total.

"By taking this step, EPA is signaling that we take these concerns seriously and are committed to strengthening our partnership with the states," EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt said in a release. "Today's action will reduce burdens on businesses while we take a closer look at the need for additional information from this industry."

EPA also noted it received a letter on Wednesday from eleven state attorneys general or governors, including new Oklahoma Attorney General Mike Hunter, [asking](#) EPA to drop the

"onerous" request.

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AGs ask EPA to drop methane information request [Back](#)

By Alex Guillén | 03/01/2017 12:50 PM EDT

Eleven state attorneys general today [asked](#) EPA to halt its ongoing direction for oil and gas companies to answer questions related to Obama-era plans for methane emission regulations.

EPA [finalized](#) its Information Collection Request just days after the election. The ICR requires oil and gas companies to answer a litany of technical questions and is the first step toward regulating methane emissions from existing oil and gas operations.

The AGs note EPA itself predicted it would cost companies more than \$42 million and 284,000 hours to comply with the request.

"We believe the EPA's requests to be an unnecessary and onerous burden on oil and gas producers that is more harassment than a genuine search for pertinent and appropriate information," the letter says.

EPA's request "comes at a time when the oil and gas industry is recovering from its most significant economic downturn in decades," it adds. "Many of the company can ill-afford the time and expense to comply with yet another empty regulatory burden."

The signatories include EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt's successor as Oklahoma attorney general, Mike Hunter.

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White House: Keystone exempt from 'Buy American' requirements [Back](#)

By Ben Lefebvre | 03/02/2017 09:12 PM EDT

The Keystone XL pipeline will not be subject to President Donald Trump's executive order requiring infrastructure projects to be built with American steel, a White House spokeswoman said today.

Trump signed the order calling for the Commerce Department to develop a plan for U.S. steel to be used in "all new pipelines, as well as retrofitted, repaired or expanded pipelines" inside the US projects "to the maximum extent possible."

By the White House's judgment, that description would not include Keystone XL, which developer TransCanada first proposed in 2008.

"The Keystone XL pipeline is currently in the process of being constructed, so it does not count as a new, retrofitted, repaired, or expanded pipeline," the White House spokeswoman said.

That interpretation removes one potential [hurdle](#) for Keystone, and it clarifies shifting rhetoric from Trump on the order.

"We put you heavy into the pipeline business because we approved, as you know, the Keystone Pipeline, but they have to buy ... steel made in this country and pipelines made in this country," Trump told U.S. Steel chief executive Mario Longhi at a Feb. 23 meeting.

However, in his address to Congress earlier this week, Trump spoke of the order in the same sentence as Keystone but carefully described it as directing "that new American pipelines be made with American steel."

Removing the steel condition could help convince TransCanada to fully drop the \$15 billion NAFTA complaint against the US, which it suspended earlier this week.

A TransCanada spokesman declined today to comment on the NAFTA lawsuit.

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Former Trump adviser Carter Page also met with Russian envoy [Back](#)

By Josh Meyer | 03/02/2017 07:32 PM EDT

When Russian Ambassador Sergey Kislyak traveled to the GOP convention last summer, he met with then Sen. Jeff Sessions, as well as with two other Trump campaign advisers, including oil industry consultant Carter Page.

Page, at the time an unpaid foreign policy adviser to Trump, engaged in a conversation with the ambassador at the same July 20 luncheon in Cleveland where Sessions, now attorney general, and Kislyak chatted, according to J.D. Gordon, a national security adviser to the Trump campaign who was also present at the lunch.

Page declined to comment Thursday about what he and the Russian ambassador discussed, saying it was a private, off-the-record conversation. "Everyone assumes everything is nefarious!" Page said in a text message. "Thanks, but no comment."

Contacts between Russian officials and Trump campaign staff are now the subject of investigations by the FBI and congressional committees into Russian interference in the election, and whether Trump campaign representatives played any role in it. On Thursday, Sessions recused himself from investigations into Russian efforts to sway the 2016 election in Trump's favor.

The disclosure that other Trump officials met with Kislyak raise additional questions about White House assertions that the Trump campaign had little or no contact with Russian officials prior to the election.

Page's conversation with Kislyak just days after news reports of Russian hacking of the Democratic National Committee is part of a broader pattern of activity by Page that raised U.S. suspicions about his interactions with the Russians, according to a former Obama White House official. At the time of the lunch, Page had just returned from a trip to Moscow.

The official said the Obama administration was gravely concerned in its final days about

increasingly apparent ties between Trump associates and Russians, and about what appeared to be promises made by more than one individual to people affiliated with Russian President Vladimir Putin about policy changes that would occur once Trump was sworn in as president. The Obama official declined to discuss specifics but said Page was one of the Trump associates whose activities had drawn the most U.S. attention and concern.

Trump has defended Sessions. White House spokesman Sean Spicer repeated Thursday afternoon that Sessions and other officials have not done anything wrong. "There's no there there," Spicer told reporters.

Gordon, a retired Navy commander, said Page and Kislyak spoke at some length about how to improve relations between the two countries on issues like counterterrorism and energy security. "Carter told him we should have a new chapter of U.S.-Russia relations that build on mutual respect and common goals and that there is no need to keep up this hostility," Gordon said. "He said we should have better relations with Russia."

He added that Kislyak suggested the two countries cooperate "so that we don't have problems like the Tsarnaev brothers," the Chechen-Americans who set off two pressure-cooker bombs at the 2013 Boston Marathon, more than a year after Russia tried to warn U.S. officials about one of them.

Page and Sessions were among several people affiliated with the Trump campaign who engaged with Kislyak while in Cleveland, including at the lunch, which was part of a State Department-funded initiative to bring foreign ambassadors to both political conventions, Gordon said. "The Trump campaign advisers were there to interact with the ambassadors, just like [the ambassadors] were interacting with the Democrats in Philadelphia the next week," Gordon said. "That was the whole point of the program."

Trump officials have distanced themselves from Page, who left the campaign in late September. The founder and managing partner of Global Energy Capital, Page spent seven years as an investment banker at Merrill Lynch in London, Moscow and New York. His website says he has been involved in more than \$25 billion of transactions in the energy and power sector, and that he spent 3 years in Moscow where he was an adviser on key transactions for Russian state-owned gas company Gazprom and other energy-related companies.

After Trump identified Page as one of his foreign policy and energy advisers last March, Page said in a Bloomberg News interview that he had been an investor in, and adviser to, the Gazprom. He also criticized the Obama administration sanctions on Russia imposed because of its annexation of Crimea.

Officially, Page's role was "advising Mr. Trump on energy policy and Russia," according to a campaign release at the time. Throughout the spring and summer, Page sent policy memos to the campaign and kept in contact with Trump's national security advisory board, including Sessions, Gordon said. "He wanted access to Trump, he wanted his policy memos to be reflected in Trump speeches. And he wanted to go to Russia, which we thought was a bad idea," he added.

He said Page was discouraged from taking that trip by some campaign officials but went anyway after others in the campaign approved the trip, though he was told he could not represent the campaign.

During the trip, two weeks before the GOP convention, Page made remarks critical of U.S. policy at an event in Moscow held by a Russian organization with ties to pro-Putin oligarchs. At the time, Page refused to comment on whether he was meeting with Russian officials. "It was a terrible idea," Gordon said of the trip. "It just reflected negatively on the campaign, because people drew conclusions that weren't there. And he fed right into it and walked right into the lion's den."

By September, three months after his conversation with Kislyak in Cleveland, U.S. intelligence officials were seeking to determine whether Page had opened up private communications with senior Russian officials, [Yahoo News reported](#), including talks about the possible lifting of economic sanctions if the Republican nominee became president.

After lawmakers were briefed on suspected efforts by Russia to meddle in the election, then-Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid of Nevada asked FBI Director James Comey to investigate meetings between a Trump official, later identified as Page, and "high ranking sanctioned individuals" in Moscow who Reid believed were evidence of "significant and disturbing ties" between the Trump campaign and Moscow.

In late September, as allegations of ties between Page and Russian officials intensified, he took leave from the campaign. His name later appeared repeatedly in the controversial dossier on Trump-Russia ties compiled by a former British Intelligence operative that alleges a pattern of interactions between the Trump campaign and Moscow.

On Thursday, Page said he's never been questioned by the FBI, insisted that he has done nothing wrong and blamed Democrats and the Clinton campaign for drumming up false allegations against him.

When pressed for details of his talk with Kislyak and his visits to Moscow, Page said, "Go ask the Clinton campaign and associates about their illegal activities. That's a real story for you, as opposed to this same fake news theme."

Page wrote Comey in September asking the FBI director to quickly clear him of wrongdoing, saying what a "complete waste of time this witch-hunt directed at me is," and blaming the Clinton campaign, the media and others. He said his July 7 commencement address at the New Economic School in Moscow was based on his scholarly research, that his visit was "outside of my informal, unpaid role" on the Trump campaign and that he had divested any stake in Gazprom. Also, he said, he had "not met this year with any sanctioned official in Russia despite the fact that there are no restrictions on U.S. persons speaking with such individuals."

Three weeks ago, Page wrote to the Justice Department, asking to be publicly cleared. In the 37-page letter, Page said that besides harming his reputation and ability to advise the Trump campaign, the "continued false questions aimed at me also carry immediate risks to U.S. national security as political opponents of the President try to derail his agenda - most likely their main objective for this whole exercise."

Page said that he has not heard from either the FBI or Justice Department on the status of any investigations. Kislyak and the press office at the Russian embassy in Washington did not respond to requests for comment.

In an interview with MSNBC's Chris Hayes Thursday night, Page initially evaded questions on whether he met with Kislyak in Cleveland, before saying, "I'm not going to deny that I

talked to him. Although I will say that I never met him anywhere outside of Cleveland, let's just say that much."

Page also denied acting as a liaison between Russia and the Trump campaign, and said he "was not aware of" speaking to any intelligence officials during his July 2016 visit to Moscow, where he met with "scholars and professors and some students there."

Page also refused to answer whether he was in contact with anyone at the White House, saying that while he knows "various people there ... I don't talk about any specific discussions."

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Appropriators predict series of Fiscal 2017 minibuses [Back](#)

By Sarah Ferris | 03/02/2017 02:53 PM EDT

House Republican leaders are considering passing "packages" of Fiscal 2017 spending bills to avoiding another stopgap spending measure in April.

House Appropriations Chairman [Rodney Frelinghuysen](#) believes "it is likely" the panel will bundle the remaining fiscal 2017 spending bills and send them to the House floor before next month's deadline, according to a committee aide.

"The commitment and intention from the committee and leadership is to pass all remaining bills. It is likely that it would be processed via 'packages' of bills," the aide said, adding that those bundles would come from the House side.

Frelinghuysen has personally discussed that path with GOP leaders, the aide said.

That strategy offers the clearest indication yet on how GOP leaders plan to avoid a major spending fight and a potential government shutdown in April.

Earlier today, House Speaker [Paul Ryan ruled out](#) the possibility of considering individual spending bills on the House floor, citing a time crunch.

That statement signals a shift from the plan some House lawmakers had been expecting after House GOP leaders announced they would vote on the Fiscal 2017 defense package next week.

Some lawmakers have openly speculated the Senate could turn the defense bill into a larger spending package. But Ryan declined today to say whether he expects the measure to come back to the House with additional appropriations measures attached.

"Whether or not they can take it up, or if they are going to do something with it, merge it with something else, that's more of a Senate question," Ryan said.

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Ryan not ruling out fiscal 2017 spending package ahead of CR deadline [Back](#)

By Sarah Ferris | 03/02/2017 02:03 PM EDT

House Speaker [Paul Ryan](#) suggested today that Congress will need to pass another stopgap spending bill or bundled appropriations package to finish out fiscal 2017 and avoid government shutdown.

Ryan told reporters the House would not have time to vote on all 11 spending bills still pending for fiscal 2017 before the current continuing resolution expires April 28.

"Are we going to have 11 bills moving? No," Ryan said. "We don't have the time for that."

The speaker was asked about the fate of fiscal 2017 appropriations just after House GOP leaders [announced](#) this year's defense spending bill would get a vote next week. That measure has bipartisan support in the House, and some Democrats are hopeful it could make it through the Senate as part of a package with other domestic spending.

Any decision to package the bills would likely take place in the upper chamber, and Ryan declined to comment on the prospects.

"We're passing that bill off the floor here in the House. Whether or not they can take it up, or if they are going to do something with it, merge it with something else, that's more of a Senate question," Ryan said.

He added that House leaders are planning to pass the defense bill "first" because a short-term spending bill is "uniquely bad for the military."

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Trump's advisers push him to purge Obama appointees [Back](#)

By Josh Dawsey | 03/02/2017 07:19 PM EDT

Advisers to President Donald Trump are urging him to purge the government of former President Barack Obama's political appointees and quickly install more people who are loyal to him, amid a cascade of damaging stories that have put his nascent administration in seemingly constant crisis-control mode.

A number of his advisers believe Obama officials are behind the leaks and are seeking to undermine his presidency, with just the latest example coming from reports that Attorney General Jeff Sessions met twice last year with the Russian ambassador to the U.S. and apparently misled senators about the interactions during his confirmation hearing.

That was coupled with a New York Times story that Obama appointees spread information about the investigation into the Trump campaign's contacts with Russia in an attempt to create a paper trail about the probe. Trump's aides have also blamed Obama appointees for other damaging leaks, like Trump's erratic phone calls with foreign leaders.

Inside the White House, the chatter about Obama officials in the government has heightened in recent weeks, one administration official said. And advisers are saying it is time to take action.

"His playbook should be to get rid of the Obama appointees immediately," said Newt Gingrich, a top surrogate. "There are an amazing number of decisions that are being made by appointees that are totally opposed to Trump and everything he stands for. Who do you think those people are responding to?"

"If you employ people who aren't loyal to you, you can't be surprised when they leak," said Roger Stone, another longtime adviser. A third person close to Trump said: "He should have gotten these people who are out to get him out a long time ago, a long, long time ago. I think they know that now."

The reality, however, is more complicated: The White House has thousands of open jobs across the agencies, many nonpolitical civilian employees are critical of the administration, and some Cabinet secretaries say they need the Obama people during a rocky transition.

Only a few dozen Obama political appointees remain in the federal government apparatus, according to the Partnership for Public Service. Many of them are in crucial positions, including Robert Work, a top official at the Department of Defense, and Thomas Shannon, the acting deputy at the State Department.

Even if Trump were to ax those remaining senior political appointees, he would still have to reckon with the hundreds of thousands of civilian employees, who stay with every administration. Many of them are skeptical of Trump because they resent his assault on Washington and its culture, his impulsive decisions and his seeming lack of intellectual curiosity about their agencies and work.

They have spent the past six weeks on edge. Many are quietly on the job market, but others have been clashing with Trump appointees, either in the open or privately among colleagues, according to officials across agencies. From Homeland Security to Defense and beyond, it's become a regular conversation among employees about what lines they will not cross before quitting, and how best to slow-walk orders from above to frustrate implementation.

Amid those conversations is a running thread: how long they'd be willing to hold out to bear witness, and try to improve a climate they increasingly hate, or whether to leak information about changes they see in order to try and stop them. "I want to be able to tell people what's happening here," one State Department official said.

"Nixon essentially tried to bypass the federal bureaucracy, and the bureaucracy won and removed him from office," said Newsmax CEO Chris Ruddy, a longtime Trump friend. "The administration needs to be careful not to make too many dramatic changes because the federal bureaucracy itself is a powerful machine, and they tend to have very establishment ideas."

Gingrich added: "Ninety-five percent of the bureaucrats are against him."

The White House did not respond to a request for comment.

Some in Trump's inner circle increasingly fear that the FBI and the intelligence community are out to damage him. But some of the damaging leaks have also come from within his administration, advisers say, because the West Wing is plagued by competing factions that are vying for Trump's attention and affection.

"You hire a bunch of people in the West Wing who are hacks and aren't loyal to you, and

you'll have a bunch of leaks," Stone said. "There aren't that many Trump loyalists in the White House."

In meetings, Trump aides like Stephen Miller, his senior policy adviser, have frequently complained about leaks and blamed the Obama appointees and longtime bureaucrats. Other aides have complained about having to sit in inter-agency meetings with Obama holdovers in senior positions. And Trump aides have told their people at agencies not to share plans and documents with Obama holdovers or others who are not sympathetic to them.

Yet across federal agencies, there are few Trump people. Candidates for only about three dozen of 550 critical Senate-confirmed positions have even been nominated, according to the Partnership for Public Service.

Several advisers and people close to Trump described the problem like this: During the transition, aides ignored hundreds of names that had been developed during New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie's time leading the transition. For several weeks after he was removed, work stopped as the team came to grips with Trump's improbable win.

Then, little was done to pick officials beneath the Cabinet level after Trump made a series of wham-bam choices. Picks have frequently been held up by the White House because they weren't loyal to Trump during the campaign, and people have grown increasingly skittish about being employed in a West Wing frequently described as chaotic and dysfunctional.

"I wish I had more of my staff on board," Sessions said Thursday, during a news conference in which he announced that he would recuse himself from any investigation related to the presidential campaigns.

In a twist, it will be an Obama appointee, Dana Boente, who will now be handling the investigation into the Trump campaign and Russian officials. Sally Yates, who was previously the No. 2 Justice Department official under Obama, was fired in late January after she refused to defend his controversial travel ban.

Gingrich said he blamed Sen. Chuck Schumer for slow-walking the nominees, though Schumer's office notes that many of the picks were not properly vetted: At least three have already dropped out. The Office of Government Ethics remains overwhelmed with applications now, "but they are beginning to catch up," one person involved in the nominations said. At many agencies, no top positions are filled, which means the layers of political appointees that report to them haven't been picked, either.

"I didn't get it early on. This is not about slowing down the Cabinet. This is about keeping working control of the government for Obama," Gingrich said. "It's actually very shrewd on Schumer's part. Trump is not going to have control of the government until at least June."






Others say it could be even longer. And that a massive purge is not the answer.

"The solution is not to purge the Obama holdovers but rather to actually identify people and move them forward," said Max Stier, president of the Partnership for Public Service, which has advised the Trump team. "Historically, it has taken a year plus for administrations to get their entire team in place. I'm afraid the Trump team is behind that, and that would not be a good thing. He has to have his own team in place if he's going to be able to get things done."

Edward-Isaac Dovere contributed to this report.

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Cc: [Megan Bloomgren](#); [Domenech, Douglas](#); [Daniel Jorjani](#)
Subject: Re: Morning Energy, presented by Utah Diné Bikéyah: Zinke, Perry address their teams for first time — Keystone won't have to be built with American steel — Congressional pressure for FERC nominees continues
Date: Friday, March 03, 2017 9:04:36 AM

Nicely done, Heather!

On Fri, Mar 3, 2017 at 7:21 AM, Swift, Heather <heather_swift@ios.doi.gov> wrote:

After the heart of a certain Twitter lover we are

Must follows: [@SecretaryPerry](#) and [@SecretaryZinke](#). ME is impressed with Zinke's early social media game and cautiously optimistic he'll bring a less stuffy online persona than previous agency heads. His first official day included tweets [congratulating Perry on his confirmation](#), touting a "[top notch](#)" rodeo in Montana and offering [behind-the-scenes pictures](#) of his memorable entrance.

-

Heather Swift
Department of the Interior
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----- Forwarded message -----

From: POLITICO Pro Energy <politicoemail@politicopro.com>
Date: Fri, Mar 3, 2017 at 5:54 AM
Subject: Morning Energy, presented by Utah Diné Bikéyah: Zinke, Perry address their teams for first time — Keystone won't have to be built with American steel — Congressional pressure for FERC nominees continues
To: heather_swift@ios.doi.gov

By Anthony Adragna | 03/03/2017 05:51 AM EDT

With help from Darius Dixon

TRUMP'S ENERGY CABINET IS COMPLETE! Newly-confirmed Energy Secretary Rick Perry and Interior chief Ryan Zinke deliver their first remarks to agency personnel this morning, as President Donald Trump now has his energy and environmental Cabinet personnel fully installed. Zinke plans to [address his employees](#) from the fancy-sounding Bison Bistro on agency grounds today at 11:00 a.m. on the Interior Department's 168th birthday. Perry plans to make [his inaugural remarks](#) at 10:30 a.m., according to a post on DOE's website.

That comes after Vice President Mike Pence swore in Perry to his new role shortly after 6:00 p.m. Thursday evening. "We collectively understand that the opportunity that we have been given, this maybe once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, Mr. Vice President, to truly put America on a course that will deliver for future generations extraordinary opportunities," the former Texas governor said after taking his oath using the Bible signed by every person he ever swore in as governor.

Washington's most-watched commute: One day after Zinke [won the Internet](#) by coming to

work by horse, everyone wondered how Perry could top him. And the former Texas governor played ball. "On a single-stage rocket ... what could go wrong," he quipped, before adding to a skeptical pool at the White House that he planned to "quietly drive over and go to work."

Must follows: [@SecretaryPerry](#) and [@SecretaryZinke](#). ME is impressed with Zinke's early social media game and cautiously optimistic he'll bring a less stuffy online persona than previous agency heads. His first official day included tweets [congratulating Perry on his confirmation](#), touting a "[top notch](#)" rodeo in Montana and offering [behind-the-scenes pictures](#) of his memorable entrance. Shortly after being sworn in, Perry [tweeted](#): "Thanks for this opportunity to serve you. Let's get to work!"

This one's for you: Perry hasn't even gotten a chance to enjoy the lovely view from his new office at the Energy Department yet, but the Heritage Foundation has already lined up an agenda for him. In a [7-page paper published shortly](#) after Perry's Senate confirmation, the conservative think tank pumped out a mission statement: Pull the conditional loan guarantees, stop tightening energy efficiency regulations, move the agency more towards basic science and away from deploying technology, and cease its use of the social cost of carbon/methane/nitrous oxide figures. Instead, DOE needs to focus more intently on cleaning up the Cold War nuclear sites, completing the licensing process for the Yucca Mountain nuclear waste project and expediting liquefied natural gas applications. The national labs also got some love from Heritage on an issue near and dear to those 17 sites: The group urges Perry to reduce the "bureaucratic micromanagement" of the labs, a subject reviewed several times by the agency and Congress that is still a sensitive topic for headquarters and the labs.

MEANWHILE, PRUITT SPRINGS INTO ACTION: Thousands of oil and gas companies no longer have to report detailed technical information about their operations' methane emissions after EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt pulled an Obama-era mandatory information request, Pro's Alex Guillén [reports](#). That comes one day after 11 state attorneys general [asked](#) the agency to abandon what they called an "unnecessary and onerous burden on oil and gas producers." Pruitt's action marks EPA's first step away from an Obama-era plan to regulate methane emissions from existing oil and gas operations.

METHANE CRA STILL COMING: Senior Republicans say they're still committed to bringing up a Congressional Review Act resolution nullifying a BLM rule aimed at curbing methane emissions on public lands but wouldn't comment on whether they had the votes for passage. "It's on the list, but the order hasn't been decided yet," Senate Majority Whip [John Cornyn](#) told ME. A senior GOP Senate aide told ME the CRA would be brought up when "attendance" could be assured, suggesting a close final vote.

TGIF MY FRIENDS! I'm your host Anthony Adragna, and Sens. John Hoeven and Angus King are currently the only members of the Senate mustache club. Your end-of-the-week quiz: At the start of the 1st Congress (in 1789), how many House seats were there? Send your tips, energy gossip and comments to aadragna@politico.com, or follow us on Twitter [@AnthonyAdragna](#), [@Morning_Energy](#), and [@POLITICOPro](#).

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A KEYSTONE-SHAPED LOOPHOLE: The Keystone XL pipeline won't have to comply

with Trump's executive order requiring infrastructure projects to be built with American steel, a White House spokeswoman [told](#) Pro's Ben Lefebvre. That order called for U.S. steel to be used in "all new pipelines, as well as retrofitted, repaired or expanded pipelines" inside the U.S. projects "to the maximum extent possible." But that won't include Keystone: "The Keystone XL pipeline is currently in the process of being constructed, so it does not count as a new, retrofitted, repaired, or expanded pipeline," the White House spokeswoman said.

PAGE MET WITH RUSSIAN ENVOY: Oil industry consultant Carter Page, a former unpaid foreign policy adviser to Trump, met with Russian Ambassador Sergey Kislyak during the GOP convention last summer, POLITICO's Josh Meyer [reports](#). Page declined to comment about what they discussed during their conversation, saying in a text message that "Everyone assumes everything is nefarious!" Trump officials have distanced themselves from Page, who left the campaign in late September.

**** A message from Utah Diné Bikéyah:** The protection of the Bears Ears National Monument reflected the will of Utahns and Native Americans. Now, President Trump and Interior Secretary-nominee Ryan Zinke are considering undermining this designation and threatening this sacred public land. Join us as we ask them to honor Tribes and stand with Bears Ears: <http://bit.ly/2luGehY> **

'THEY REALLY NEED TO BE EDUCATED': Senate Democrats are deeply concerned with the targeted cuts to EPA from the Trump administration, but they have a blunt reality check for the president's team: they'll need 60 votes for legislation to pass the Senate. "I think they really need to be educated about how everything works," [Tom Udall](#), top Democrat on the subcommittee handling EPA funding, told ME. "A lot of Republicans were not very supportive of this, so that's encouraging to me." [Brian Schatz](#), another appropriator, said Congress simply wouldn't go along with the 24 percent EPA cut sought by Trump's team. "They're still in campaign mode and they're still declaring things to be true that they wish to be true, but now that they have to govern and contend with co-equal branches of government, they're getting knocked around a little bit," the Hawaii Democrat told ME.

CONCERTED FERC PUSH CONTINUES: Senior congressional Republicans continue to push Trump's team to fill FERC vacancies, as the agency seeks a quorum necessary to conduct much of its business. "I've expressed my interest in getting those filled," Senate EPW Chairman [John Barrasso](#) told ME. That comes as two senior House Republicans — Energy and Commerce Chairman [Greg Walden](#) (R-Ore.) and former Chairman [Fred Upton](#) (R-Mich.) — sent a letter to Trump warning "without a quorum, major decisions are stalled, including those involving the licensing of interstate natural gas pipelines, liquefied natural gas terminals, and hydropower projects." They called for Trump to "swiftly" nominate FERC commissioners.

AWK-WARD: Nevada Rep. [Dina Titus](#) [tweeted](#) shortly before Perry's confirmation vote "Any senator that supports Perry's nomination is advocating for the Trump administration's position on Yucca Mountain." (Side note: That position on Yucca Mountain is not super clear.) But Titus' own Nevada colleagues — Republican [Dean Heller](#) and Democrat [Catherine Cortez Masto](#) — both [backed](#) Perry's nomination.

GAO TO THE NRC: SHOW YOUR MATH: The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has been less than fully transparent in how it explains the fees it puts on the industries it oversees, government watchdogs say in a new report. About 90 percent of the NRC's budget

is covered with fees on nuclear power plants but, in a [report released Thursday](#), the Government Accountability Office says the agency's fee rules haven't defined "key terms, use terms consistently, or provide key calculations, and included errors, all of which obscured NRC's calculations and limited industry stakeholders' ability to understand them." The NRC has started a project aimed at increasing the transparency of its fee calculations, GAO said, but that "they have not established goals for performance or a way to measure progress toward meeting these goals."

Piggybacking on the report, Republican Rep. [Adam Kinzinger](#) and Democrat Rep. [Mike Doyle](#) introduced the Nuclear Utilization of Keynote Energy Act, H.R. 1320, on Thursday, which aims to improve the "efficiency" of NRC licensing and regulatory processes.

ISSA JOINS BIPARTISAN CLIMATE CAUCUS: California Reps. [Darrell Issa](#) (R) and [Juan Vargas](#) (D) are the latest pair of lawmakers to join the Climate Solutions Caucus, Issa's office confirmed to ME. "Coastal communities, like mine in Southern California, are counting on us to come up with solutions that encourage a strong and vibrant economy, while also ensuring we are taking care of our environment," Issa said.

MINIBUSES LEAVING THE STATION? House Appropriators are hoping to avoid another short-term stopgap spending bill by bundling up the remaining fiscal 2017 spending bills into the packages for the floor, POLITICO's Sarah Harris [reports](#). Speaker [Paul Ryan](#) earlier Thursday [ruled out](#) the possibility of considering individual spending bills on the House floor, citing a time crunch.

WINTER IS COMING? Frustrated with the leaks from the federal bureaucracy, advisers to Trump are pushing him to remove remaining officials from the Obama administration and install new people more loyal to him, POLITICO's Josh Dawsey [reports](#). But the reality is more complex with some Cabinet secretaries saying they need the Obama people during a rocky transition and other advisers warning that aggressively going after federal employees carries its own risks. "The administration needs to be careful not to make too many dramatic changes because the federal bureaucracy itself is a powerful machine, and they tend to have very establishment ideas," Newsmax CEO Chris Ruddy, a longtime Trump friend, said.

MAIL CALL! FIRST DAY, FIRST DOCUMENT REQUEST: House Oversight Chairman [Jason Chaffetz](#) isn't forgetting about seven unresolved, Obama-era document requests and sent Zinke [a letter](#) to "reiterate" his demands. Chaffetz is seeking information on BLM's fracking rule, Obama's decision to use the Antiquities Act on a number of national monuments and BLM activities in Nevada and Utah, among others. The letter also reiterates a fairly meta request for a briefing on how Interior responds to demands from members of Congress and FOIA requests.

MINING GROUP PUSHES ROSS TO SLASH REGULATIONS: Warning it takes between seven and 10 years to obtain the necessary permits for projects, the National Mining Association sent Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross [a letter](#) urging the Trump administration to take action to streamline the process. "The length, complexity and uncertainty of the permitting process are primary reasons investors give for not investing in U.S. mineral projects," CEO Hal Quinn wrote in a letter obtained Thursday. "These best practices include better coordination among state and federal agencies, clarifying responsibilities, minimizing duplication, setting goals and timeframes and introducing more accountability among agencies."

MORMON LEADERS BACK BEARS EARS: More than 200 members of the Mormon faith sent [a letter](#) to Zinke and congressional leaders urging them to support the Obama-era Bears Ears National Monument designation. "We urge you to reject any proposal to repeal it or change its boundaries," they said.

CONSERVATIVES HOPE REINS SUPREME: FreedomWorks sent [a letter](#) to Senate offices Thursday urging them to push leadership to take up the REINS Act (S. 21) for a full chamber vote. House members passed the bill, which would require explicit congressional approval for any new major regulation, as one of their first actions this Congress. But the Senate has never taken it up. The legislation would need the support of eight Democratic senators to clear the chamber — an unlikely feat despite the number of moderates up for reelection in 2018.

CHEMISTRY COUNCIL PUSHES FOR INFRASTRUCTURE SPENDING: As Trump lays the groundwork for shepherding a \$1 trillion infrastructure package through Congress, companies and industries are strategizing on how to get their priorities included in the legislation. The latest move comes from the American Chemistry Council, which commissioned [a report](#) from PricewaterhouseCoopers on how an infrastructure spending boost could fuel a chemical manufacturing "renaissance." The report identifies shortcomings in the truck, marine and rail infrastructure the industry relies on. The council's member companies include giants like Dow, DuPont, Honeywell, 3M, Merck and Monsanto (h/t POLITICO Influence).

LIFE COMES AT YA FAST: One year ago, more than 95 percent of California was in drought conditions. Today? Just 8.73 percent, federal scientists [report](#). That's the lowest level of drought in the Golden State since 2011.

MOVERS, SHAKERS: Todd Lester has joined FTI Consulting as senior managing director in its economic consulting branch and a member of the Energy, Power and Products practice.

Thomas Cunningham has joined Statoil's Washington office as director of international affairs; he was most recently with Atlantic Council Global Energy Center after 13 years with the State Department.

QUICK HITS

- Lawyers Request EPA Intervention For Lead In East Chicago Water. [Indiana Public Media](#).
- Was Aubrey McClendon a Billionaire, or Broke? [The Wall Street Journal](#).
- Judge throws out recall effort against Sen. Ericksen. [KGMI](#).
- Top Trump Advisers Are Split on Paris Agreement on Climate Change. [The New York Times](#).
- Oil Falls to Three-Week Low as Record U.S. Supply Outweighs OPEC. [Bloomberg](#).

HAPPENING TODAY

8:20 a.m. — POLITICO Playbook [breakfast](#) on the first 100 days of the Trump

administration, Newseum, 555 Pennsylvania Ave. NW

12:00 p.m. — "Carbon Capture: Tomorrow Just Happened," American Energy Society, 2075 Rayburn

THAT'S ALL FOR ME!

**** A message from Utah Diné Bikéyah:** The designation of the Bears Ears National Monument reflected the will of a majority of Utahns and Native American Tribes. This monument permanently protected public lands threatened by vandalism and looting in southeast Utah that we consider sacred. Yet already, politicians are pushing President Trump and Interior Secretary-nominee Ryan Zinke to reduce or undo its protections. We call on President Trump to resist efforts to seize or sell off Bears Ears and other parks and monuments. Stand with Bears Ears. Let's protect our national public lands for future generations of all people. Learn more at: <http://bit.ly/2luGehY> **

To view online:

<https://www.politicopro.com/tipsheets/morning-energy/2017/03/zinke-perry-address-their-teams-for-first-time-021654>

Stories from POLITICO Pro

Zinke shows up on horseback for first day at Interior [Back](#)

By Eric Wolff | 03/02/2017 09:54 AM EDT

Newly confirmed Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke decided to ride to work on a horse this morning, his first day on the job.

According to [a picture](#) posted by the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement, Zinke donned a black Stetson and saddled up for his inaugural trip to his new office.

An Interior spokesperson did not immediately respond to a request for comment on Zinke's unorthodox commute.

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EPA pulls methane information request [Back](#)

By Alex Guillén | 03/02/2017 04:36 PM EDT

EPA says more than 15,000 oil and gas companies no longer have to report detailed technical information about methane emissions from their operations.

The move was announced via a Federal Register [notice](#) that will be published on March 7 but will take immediate effect.

It is the agency's first step away from an Obama-era plan to regulate methane emissions from existing oil and gas operations. EPA in November directed oil and gas operators to respond to an "information collection request" on the topic that the agency estimated would

cost companies, which are required by law to respond, about \$42 million in total.

"By taking this step, EPA is signaling that we take these concerns seriously and are committed to strengthening our partnership with the states," EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt said in a release. "Today's action will reduce burdens on businesses while we take a closer look at the need for additional information from this industry."

EPA also noted it received a letter on Wednesday from eleven state attorneys general or governors, including new Oklahoma Attorney General Mike Hunter, [asking](#) EPA to drop the "onerous" request.

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AGs ask EPA to drop methane information request [Back](#)

By Alex Guillén | 03/01/2017 12:50 PM EDT

Eleven state attorneys general today [asked](#) EPA to halt its ongoing direction for oil and gas companies to answer questions related to Obama-era plans for methane emission regulations.

EPA [finalized](#) its Information Collection Request just days after the election. The ICR requires oil and gas companies to answer a litany of technical questions and is the first step toward regulating methane emissions from existing oil and gas operations.

The AGs note EPA itself predicted it would cost companies more than \$42 million and 284,000 hours to comply with the request.

"We believe the EPA's requests to be an unnecessary and onerous burden on oil and gas producers that is more harassment than a genuine search for pertinent and appropriate information," the letter says.

EPA's request "comes at a time when the oil and gas industry is recovering from its most significant economic downturn in decades," it adds. "Many of the company can ill-afford the time and expense to comply with yet another empty regulatory burden."

The signatories include EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt's successor as Oklahoma attorney general, Mike Hunter.

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White House: Keystone exempt from 'Buy American' requirements [Back](#)

By Ben Lefebvre | 03/02/2017 09:12 PM EDT

The Keystone XL pipeline will not be subject to President Donald Trump's executive order requiring infrastructure projects to be built with American steel, a White House spokeswoman said today.

Trump signed the order calling for the Commerce Department to develop a plan for U.S.

steel to be used in "all new pipelines, as well as retrofitted, repaired or expanded pipelines" inside the US projects "to the maximum extent possible."

By the White House's judgment, that description would not include Keystone XL, which developer TransCanada first proposed in 2008.

"The Keystone XL pipeline is currently in the process of being constructed, so it does not count as a new, retrofitted, repaired, or expanded pipeline," the White House spokeswoman said.

That interpretation removes one potential [hurdle](#) for Keystone, and it clarifies shifting rhetoric from Trump on the order.

"We put you heavy into the pipeline business because we approved, as you know, the Keystone Pipeline, but they have to buy ... steel made in this country and pipelines made in this country," Trump told U.S. Steel chief executive Mario Longhi at a Feb. 23 meeting.

However, in his address to Congress earlier this week, Trump spoke of the order in the same sentence as Keystone but carefully described it as directing "that new American pipelines be made with American steel."

Removing the steel condition could help convince TransCanada to fully drop the \$15 billion NAFTA complaint against the US, which it suspended earlier this week.

A TransCanada spokesman declined today to comment on the NAFTA lawsuit.

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Former Trump adviser Carter Page also met with Russian envoy [Back](#)

By Josh Meyer | 03/02/2017 07:32 PM EDT

When Russian Ambassador Sergey Kislyak traveled to the GOP convention last summer, he met with then Sen. Jeff Sessions, as well as with two other Trump campaign advisers, including oil industry consultant Carter Page.

Page, at the time an unpaid foreign policy adviser to Trump, engaged in a conversation with the ambassador at the same July 20 luncheon in Cleveland where Sessions, now attorney general, and Kislyak chatted, according to J.D. Gordon, a national security adviser to the Trump campaign who was also present at the lunch.

Page declined to comment Thursday about what he and the Russian ambassador discussed, saying it was a private, off-the-record conversation. "Everyone assumes everything is nefarious!" Page said in a text message. "Thanks, but no comment."

Contacts between Russian officials and Trump campaign staff are now the subject of investigations by the FBI and congressional committees into Russian interference in the election, and whether Trump campaign representatives played any role in it. On Thursday, Sessions recused himself from investigations into Russian efforts to sway the 2016 election in Trump's favor.

The disclosure that other Trump officials met with Kislyak raise additional questions about White House assertions that the Trump campaign had little or no contact with Russian officials prior to the election.

Page's conversation with Kislyak just days after news reports of Russian hacking of the Democratic National Committee is part of a broader pattern of activity by Page that raised U.S. suspicions about his interactions with the Russians, according to a former Obama White House official. At the time of the lunch, Page had just returned from a trip to Moscow.

The official said the Obama administration was gravely concerned in its final days about increasingly apparent ties between Trump associates and Russians, and about what appeared to be promises made by more than one individual to people affiliated with Russian President Vladimir Putin about policy changes that would occur once Trump was sworn in as president. The Obama official declined to discuss specifics but said Page was one of the Trump associates whose activities had drawn the most U.S. attention and concern.

Trump has defended Sessions. White House spokesman Sean Spicer repeated Thursday afternoon that Sessions and other officials have not done anything wrong. "There's no there there," Spicer told reporters.

Gordon, a retired Navy commander, said Page and Kislyak spoke at some length about how to improve relations between the two countries on issues like counterterrorism and energy security. "Carter told him we should have a new chapter of U.S.-Russia relations that build on mutual respect and common goals and that there is no need to keep up this hostility," Gordon said. "He said we should have better relations with Russia."

He added that Kislyak suggested the two countries cooperate "so that we don't have problems like the Tsarnaev brothers," the Chechen-Americans who set off two pressure-cooker bombs at the 2013 Boston Marathon, more than a year after Russia tried to warn U.S. officials about one of them.

Page and Sessions were among several people affiliated with the Trump campaign who engaged with Kislyak while in Cleveland, including at the lunch, which was part of a State Department-funded initiative to bring foreign ambassadors to both political conventions, Gordon said. "The Trump campaign advisers were there to interact with the ambassadors, just like [the ambassadors] were interacting with the Democrats in Philadelphia the next week," Gordon said. "That was the whole point of the program."

Trump officials have distanced themselves from Page, who left the campaign in late September. The founder and managing partner of Global Energy Capital, Page spent seven years as an investment banker at Merrill Lynch in London, Moscow and New York. His website says he has been involved in more than \$25 billion of transactions in the energy and power sector, and that he spent 3 years in Moscow where he was an adviser on key transactions for Russian state-owned gas company Gazprom and other energy-related companies.

After Trump identified Page as one of his foreign policy and energy advisers last March, Page said in a Bloomberg News interview that he had been an investor in, and adviser to, the Gazprom. He also criticized the Obama administration sanctions on Russia imposed because of its annexation of Crimea.

Officially, Page's role was "advising Mr. Trump on energy policy and Russia," according to a campaign release at the time. Throughout the spring and summer, Page sent policy memos to the campaign and kept in contact with Trump's national security advisory board, including Sessions, Gordon said. "He wanted access to Trump, he wanted his policy memos to be reflected in Trump speeches. And he wanted to go to Russia, which we thought was a bad idea," he added.

He said Page was discouraged from taking that trip by some campaign officials but went anyway after others in the campaign approved the trip, though he was told he could not represent the campaign.

During the trip, two weeks before the GOP convention, Page made remarks critical of U.S. policy at an event in Moscow held by a Russian organization with ties to pro-Putin oligarchs. At the time, Page refused to comment on whether he was meeting with Russian officials. "It was a terrible idea," Gordon said of the trip. "It just reflected negatively on the campaign, because people drew conclusions that weren't there. And he fed right into it and walked right into the lion's den."

By September, three months after his conversation with Kislyak in Cleveland, U.S. intelligence officials were seeking to determine whether Page had opened up private communications with senior Russian officials, [Yahoo News reported](#), including talks about the possible lifting of economic sanctions if the Republican nominee became president.

After lawmakers were briefed on suspected efforts by Russia to meddle in the election, then-Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid of Nevada asked FBI Director James Comey to investigate meetings between a Trump official, later identified as Page, and "high ranking sanctioned individuals" in Moscow who Reid believed were evidence of "significant and disturbing ties" between the Trump campaign and Moscow.

In late September, as allegations of ties between Page and Russian officials intensified, he took leave from the campaign. His name later appeared repeatedly in the controversial dossier on Trump-Russia ties compiled by a former British Intelligence operative that alleges a pattern of interactions between the Trump campaign and Moscow.

On Thursday, Page said he's never been questioned by the FBI, insisted that he has done nothing wrong and blamed Democrats and the Clinton campaign for drumming up false allegations against him.

When pressed for details of his talk with Kislyak and his visits to Moscow, Page said, "Go ask the Clinton campaign and associates about their illegal activities. That's a real story for you, as opposed to this same fake news theme."

Page wrote Comey in September asking the FBI director to quickly clear him of wrongdoing, saying what a "complete waste of time this witch-hunt directed at me is," and blaming the Clinton campaign, the media and others. He said his July 7 commencement address at the New Economic School in Moscow was based on his scholarly research, that his visit was "outside of my informal, unpaid role" on the Trump campaign and that he had divested any stake in Gazprom. Also, he said, he had "not met this year with any sanctioned official in Russia despite the fact that there are no restrictions on U.S. persons speaking with such individuals."

Three weeks ago, Page wrote to the Justice Department, asking to be publicly cleared. In the 37-page letter, Page said that besides harming his reputation and ability to advise the Trump campaign, the "continued false questions aimed at me also carry immediate risks to U.S. national security as political opponents of the President try to derail his agenda - most likely their main objective for this whole exercise."

Page said that he has not heard from either the FBI or Justice Department on the status of any investigations. Kislyak and the press office at the Russian embassy in Washington did not respond to requests for comment.

In an interview with MSNBC's Chris Hayes Thursday night, Page initially evaded questions on whether he met with Kislyak in Cleveland, before saying, "I'm not going to deny that I talked to him. Although I will say that I never met him anywhere outside of Cleveland, let's just say that much."

Page also denied acting as a liaison between Russia and the Trump campaign, and said he "was not aware of" speaking to any intelligence officials during his July 2016 visit to Moscow, where he met with "scholars and professors and some students there."

Page also refused to answer whether he was in contact with anyone at the White House, saying that while he knows "various people there ... I don't talk about any specific discussions."

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Appropriators predict series of Fiscal 2017 minibuses [Back](#)

By Sarah Ferris | 03/02/2017 02:53 PM EDT

House Republican leaders are considering passing "packages" of Fiscal 2017 spending bills to avoiding another stopgap spending measure in April.

House Appropriations Chairman [Rodney Frelinghuysen](#) believes "it is likely" the panel will bundle the remaining fiscal 2017 spending bills and send them to the House floor before next month's deadline, according to a committee aide.

"The commitment and intention from the committee and leadership is to pass all remaining bills. It is likely that it would be processed via 'packages' of bills," the aide said, adding that those bundles would come from the House side.

Frelinghuysen has personally discussed that path with GOP leaders, the aide said.

That strategy offers the clearest indication yet on how GOP leaders plan to avoid a major spending fight and a potential government shutdown in April.

Earlier today, House Speaker [Paul Ryan ruled out](#) the possibility of considering individual spending bills on the House floor, citing a time crunch.

That statement signals a shift from the plan some House lawmakers had been expecting after House GOP leaders announced they would vote on the Fiscal 2017 defense package next week.

Some lawmakers have openly speculated the Senate could turn the defense bill into a larger spending package. But Ryan declined today to say whether he expects the measure to come back to the House with additional appropriations measures attached.

"Whether or not they can take it up, or if they are going to do something with it, merge it with something else, that's more of a Senate question," Ryan said.

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Ryan not ruling out fiscal 2017 spending package ahead of CR deadline [Back](#)

By Sarah Ferris | 03/02/2017 02:03 PM EDT

House Speaker [Paul Ryan](#) suggested today that Congress will need to pass another stopgap spending bill or bundled appropriations package to finish out fiscal 2017 and avoid government shutdown.

Ryan told reporters the House would not have time to vote on all 11 spending bills still pending for fiscal 2017 before the current continuing resolution expires April 28.

"Are we going to have 11 bills moving? No," Ryan said. "We don't have the time for that."

The speaker was asked about the fate of fiscal 2017 appropriations just after House GOP leaders [announced](#) this year's defense spending bill would get a vote next week. That measure has bipartisan support in the House, and some Democrats are hopeful it could make it through the Senate as part of a package with other domestic spending.

Any decision to package the bills would likely take place in the upper chamber, and Ryan declined to comment on the prospects.

"We're passing that bill off the floor here in the House. Whether or not they can take it up, or if they are going to do something with it, merge it with something else, that's more of a Senate question," Ryan said.

He added that House leaders are planning to pass the defense bill "first" because a short-term spending bill is "uniquely bad for the military."

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Trump's advisers push him to purge Obama appointees [Back](#)

By Josh Dawsey | 03/02/2017 07:19 PM EDT

Advisers to President Donald Trump are urging him to purge the government of former President Barack Obama's political appointees and quickly install more people who are loyal to him, amid a cascade of damaging stories that have put his nascent administration in seemingly constant crisis-control mode.

A number of his advisers believe Obama officials are behind the leaks and are seeking to undermine his presidency, with just the latest example coming from reports that Attorney

General Jeff Sessions met twice last year with the Russian ambassador to the U.S. and apparently misled senators about the interactions during his confirmation hearing.

That was coupled with a New York Times story that Obama appointees spread information about the investigation into the Trump campaign's contacts with Russia in an attempt to create a paper trail about the probe. Trump's aides have also blamed Obama appointees for other damaging leaks, like Trump's erratic phone calls with foreign leaders.

Inside the White House, the chatter about Obama officials in the government has heightened in recent weeks, one administration official said. And advisers are saying it is time to take action.

"His playbook should be to get rid of the Obama appointees immediately," said Newt Gingrich, a top surrogate. "There are an amazing number of decisions that are being made by appointees that are totally opposed to Trump and everything he stands for. Who do you think those people are responding to?"

"If you employ people who aren't loyal to you, you can't be surprised when they leak," said Roger Stone, another longtime adviser. A third person close to Trump said: "He should have gotten these people who are out to get him out a long time ago, a long, long time ago. I think they know that now."

The reality, however, is more complicated: The White House has thousands of open jobs across the agencies, many nonpolitical civilian employees are critical of the administration, and some Cabinet secretaries say they need the Obama people during a rocky transition.

Only a few dozen Obama political appointees remain in the federal government apparatus, according to the Partnership for Public Service. Many of them are in crucial positions, including Robert Work, a top official at the Department of Defense, and Thomas Shannon, the acting deputy at the State Department.

Even if Trump were to ax those remaining senior political appointees, he would still have to reckon with the hundreds of thousands of civilian employees, who stay with every administration. Many of them are skeptical of Trump because they resent his assault on Washington and its culture, his impulsive decisions and his seeming lack of intellectual curiosity about their agencies and work.

They have spent the past six weeks on edge. Many are quietly on the job market, but others have been clashing with Trump appointees, either in the open or privately among colleagues, according to officials across agencies. From Homeland Security to Defense and beyond, it's become a regular conversation among employees about what lines they will not cross before quitting, and how best to slow-walk orders from above to frustrate implementation.

Amid those conversations is a running thread: how long they'd be willing to hold out to bear witness, and try to improve a climate they increasingly hate, or whether to leak information about changes they see in order to try and stop them. "I want to be able to tell people what's happening here," one State Department official said.

"Nixon essentially tried to bypass the federal bureaucracy, and the bureaucracy won and removed him from office," said Newsmax CEO Chris Ruddy, a longtime Trump friend. "The administration needs to be careful not to make too many dramatic changes because the

federal bureaucracy itself is a powerful machine, and they tend to have very establishment ideas."

Gingrich added: "Ninety-five percent of the bureaucrats are against him."

The White House did not respond to a request for comment.

Some in Trump's inner circle increasingly fear that the FBI and the intelligence community are out to damage him. But some of the damaging leaks have also come from within his administration, advisers say, because the West Wing is plagued by competing factions that are vying for Trump's attention and affection.

"You hire a bunch of people in the West Wing who are hacks and aren't loyal to you, and you'll have a bunch of leaks," Stone said. "There aren't that many Trump loyalists in the White House."

In meetings, Trump aides like Stephen Miller, his senior policy adviser, have frequently complained about leaks and blamed the Obama appointees and longtime bureaucrats. Other aides have complained about having to sit in inter-agency meetings with Obama holdovers in senior positions. And Trump aides have told their people at agencies not to share plans and documents with Obama holdovers or others who are not sympathetic to them.

Yet across federal agencies, there are few Trump people. Candidates for only about three dozen of 550 critical Senate-confirmed positions have even been nominated, according to the Partnership for Public Service.

Several advisers and people close to Trump described the problem like this: During the transition, aides ignored hundreds of names that had been developed during New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie's time leading the transition. For several weeks after he was removed, work stopped as the team came to grips with Trump's improbable win.

Then, little was done to pick officials beneath the Cabinet level after Trump made a series of wham-bam choices. Picks have frequently been held up by the White House because they weren't loyal to Trump during the campaign, and people have grown increasingly skittish about being employed in a West Wing frequently described as chaotic and dysfunctional.

"I wish I had more of my staff on board," Sessions said Thursday, during a news conference in which he announced that he would recuse himself from any investigation related to the presidential campaigns.

In a twist, it will be an Obama appointee, Dana Boente, who will now be handling the investigation into the Trump campaign and Russian officials. Sally Yates, who was previously the No. 2 Justice Department official under Obama, was fired in late January after she refused to defend his controversial travel ban.

Gingrich said he blamed Sen. Chuck Schumer for slow-walking the nominees, though Schumer's office notes that many of the picks were not properly vetted: At least three have already dropped out. The Office of Government Ethics remains overwhelmed with applications now, "but they are beginning to catch up," one person involved in the nominations said. At many agencies, no top positions are filled, which means the layers of political appointees that report to them haven't been picked, either.

"I didn't get it early on. This is not about slowing down the Cabinet. This is about keeping working control of the government for Obama," Gingrich said. "It's actually very shrewd on Schumer's part. Trump is not going to have control of the government until at least June."






Others say it could be even longer. And that a massive purge is not the answer.

"The solution is not to purge the Obama holdovers but rather to actually identify people and move them forward," said Max Stier, president of the Partnership for Public Service, which has advised the Trump team. "Historically, it has taken a year plus for administrations to get their entire team in place. I'm afraid the Trump team is behind that, and that would not be a good thing. He has to have his own team in place if he's going to be able to get things done."

Edward-Isaac Doveve contributed to this report.

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To: [Swift, Heather](#)
Cc: [Megan Bloomgren](#); [Amy Mitchell](#); [Daniel Jorjani](#)
Subject: Re: Morning Energy, presented by Utah Diné Bikéyah: Zinke, Perry address their teams for first time — Keystone won't have to be built with American steel — Congressional pressure for FERC nominees continues
Date: Friday, March 03, 2017 10:30:37 AM

Fantastic job team.

Sent from my iPhone

On Mar 3, 2017, at 7:22 AM, Swift, Heather <heather_swift@ios.doi.gov> wrote:

After the heart of a certain Twitter lover we are

Must follows: [@SecretaryPerry](#) and [@SecretaryZinke](#). ME is impressed with Zinke's early social media game and cautiously optimistic he'll bring a less stuffy online persona than previous agency heads. His first official day included tweets [congratulating Perry on his confirmation](#), touting a "[top notch](#)" rodeo in Montana and offering [behind-the-scenes pictures](#) of his memorable entrance.

-

Heather Swift
Department of the Interior
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----- Forwarded message -----

From: **POLITICO Pro Energy** <politicoemail@politicopro.com>
Date: Fri, Mar 3, 2017 at 5:54 AM
Subject: Morning Energy, presented by Utah Diné Bikéyah: Zinke, Perry address their teams for first time — Keystone won't have to be built with American steel — Congressional pressure for FERC nominees continues
To: heather_swift@ios.doi.gov

By Anthony Adragna | 03/03/2017 05:51 AM EDT

With help from Darius Dixon

TRUMP'S ENERGY CABINET IS COMPLETE! Newly-confirmed Energy Secretary Rick Perry and Interior chief Ryan Zinke deliver their first remarks to agency personnel this morning, as President Donald Trump now has his energy and environmental Cabinet personnel fully installed. Zinke plans to [address his employees](#) from the fancy-sounding Bison Bistro on agency grounds today at 11:00 a.m. on the Interior Department's 168th birthday. Perry plans to make [his inaugural remarks](#) at 10:30 a.m., according to a post on DOE's website.

That comes after Vice President Mike Pence swore in Perry to his new role shortly after 6:00 p.m. Thursday evening. "We collectively understand that the opportunity that we have been given, this maybe once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, Mr. Vice President, to truly put America on a course that will deliver for future

generations extraordinary opportunities," the former Texas governor said after taking his oath using the Bible signed by every person he ever swore in as governor.

Washington's most-watched commute: One day after Zinke [won the Internet](#) by coming to work by horse, everyone wondered how Perry could top him. And the former Texas governor played ball. "On a single-stage rocket ... what could go wrong," he quipped, before adding to a skeptical pool at the White House that he planned to "quietly drive over and go to work."

Must follows: [@SecretaryPerry](#) and [@SecretaryZinke](#). ME is impressed with Zinke's early social media game and cautiously optimistic he'll bring a less stuffy online persona than previous agency heads. His first official day included tweets [congratulating Perry on his confirmation](#), touting a "[top notch](#)" rodeo in Montana and offering [behind-the-scenes pictures](#) of his memorable entrance. Shortly after being sworn in, Perry [tweeted](#): "Thanks for this opportunity to serve you. Let's get to work!"

This one's for you: Perry hasn't even gotten a chance to enjoy the lovely view from his new office at the Energy Department yet, but the Heritage Foundation has already lined up an agenda for him. In a [7-page paper published shortly](#) after Perry's Senate confirmation, the conservative think tank pumped out a mission statement: Pull the conditional loan guarantees, stop tightening energy efficiency regulations, move the agency more towards basic science and away from deploying technology, and cease its use of the social cost of carbon/methane/nitrous oxide figures. Instead, DOE needs to focus more intently on cleaning up the Cold War nuclear sites, completing the licensing process for the Yucca Mountain nuclear waste project and expediting liquefied natural gas applications. The national labs also got some love from Heritage on an issue near and dear to those 17 sites: The group urges Perry to reduce the "bureaucratic micromangement" of the labs, a subject reviewed several times by the agency and Congress that is still a sensitive topic for headquarters and the labs.

MEANWHILE, PRUITT SPRINGS INTO ACTION: Thousands of oil and gas companies no longer have to report detailed technical information about their operations' methane emissions after EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt pulled an Obama-era mandatory information request, Pro's Alex Guillén [reports](#). That comes one day after 11 state attorneys general [asked](#) the agency to abandon what they called an "unnecessary and onerous burden on oil and gas producers." Pruitt's action marks EPA's first step away from an Obama-era plan to regulate methane emissions from existing oil and gas operations.

METHANE CRA STILL COMING: Senior Republicans say they're still committed to bringing up a Congressional Review Act resolution nullifying a BLM rule aimed at curbing methane emissions on public lands but wouldn't comment on whether they had the votes for passage. "It's on the list, but the order hasn't been decided yet," Senate Majority Whip [John Cornyn](#) told ME. A senior GOP Senate aide told ME the CRA would be brought up when "attendance" could be assured, suggesting a close final vote.

TGIF MY FRIENDS! I'm your host Anthony Adragna, and Sens. John Hoeven

and Angus King are currently the only members of the Senate mustache club. Your end-of-the-week quiz: At the start of the 1st Congress (in 1789), how many House seats were there? Send your tips, energy gossip and comments to aadragna@politico.com, or follow us on Twitter [@AnthonyAdragna](https://twitter.com/AnthonyAdragna), [@Morning_Energy](https://twitter.com/Morning_Energy), and [@POLITICOPro](https://twitter.com/POLITICOPro).

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A KEYSTONE-SHAPED LOOPHOLE: The Keystone XL pipeline won't have to comply with Trump's executive order requiring infrastructure projects to be built with American steel, a White House spokeswoman [told](#) Pro's Ben Lefebvre. That order called for U.S. steel to be used in "all new pipelines, as well as retrofitted, repaired or expanded pipelines" inside the U.S. projects "to the maximum extent possible." But that won't include Keystone: "The Keystone XL pipeline is currently in the process of being constructed, so it does not count as a new, retrofitted, repaired, or expanded pipeline," the White House spokeswoman said.

PAGE MET WITH RUSSIAN ENVOY: Oil industry consultant Carter Page, a former unpaid foreign policy adviser to Trump, met with Russian Ambassador Sergey Kislyak during the GOP convention last summer, POLITICO's Josh Meyer [reports](#). Page declined to comment about what they discussed during their conversation, saying in a text message that "Everyone assumes everything is nefarious!" Trump officials have distanced themselves from Page, who left the campaign in late September.

**** A message from Utah Diné Bikéyah:** The protection of the Bears Ears National Monument reflected the will of Utahns and Native Americans. Now, President Trump and Interior Secretary-nominee Ryan Zinke are considering undermining this designation and threatening this sacred public land. Join us as we ask them to honor Tribes and stand with Bears Ears: <http://bit.ly/2luGehY> **

'THEY REALLY NEED TO BE EDUCATED': Senate Democrats are deeply concerned with the targeted cuts to EPA from the Trump administration, but they have a blunt reality check for the president's team: they'll need 60 votes for legislation to pass the Senate. "I think they really need to be educated about how everything works," [Tom Udall](#), top Democrat on the subcommittee handling EPA funding, told ME. "A lot of Republicans were not very supportive of this, so that's encouraging to me." [Brian Schatz](#), another appropriator, said Congress simply wouldn't go along with the 24 percent EPA cut sought by Trump's team. "They're still in campaign mode and they're still declaring things to be true that they wish to be true, but now that they have to govern and contend with co-equal branches of government, they're getting knocked around a little bit," the Hawaii Democrat told ME.

CONCERTED FERC PUSH CONTINUES: Senior congressional Republicans continue to push Trump's team to fill FERC vacancies, as the agency seeks a quorum necessary to conduct much of its business. "I've expressed my interest in getting those filled," Senate EPW Chairman [John Barrasso](#) told ME. That comes

as two senior House Republicans — Energy and Commerce Chairman [Greg Walden](#) (R-Ore.) and former Chairman [Fred Upton](#) (R-Mich.) — sent a letter to Trump warning "without a quorum, major decisions are stalled, including those involving the licensing of interstate natural gas pipelines, liquefied natural gas terminals, and hydropower projects." They called for Trump to "swiftly" nominate FERC commissioners.

AWK-WARD: Nevada Rep. [Dina Titus](#) [tweeted](#) shortly before Perry's confirmation vote "Any senator that supports Perry's nomination is advocating for the Trump administration's position on Yucca Mountain." (Side note: That position on Yucca Mountain is not super clear.) But Titus' own Nevada colleagues — Republican [Dean Heller](#) and Democrat [Catherine Cortez Masto](#) — both [backed](#) Perry's nomination.

GAO TO THE NRC: SHOW YOUR MATH: The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has been less than fully transparent in how it explains the fees it puts on the industries it oversees, government watchdogs say in a new report. About 90 percent of the NRC's budget is covered with fees on nuclear power plants but, in a [report released Thursday](#), the Government Accountability Office says the agency's fee rules haven't defined "key terms, use terms consistently, or provide key calculations, and included errors, all of which obscured NRC's calculations and limited industry stakeholders' ability to understand them." The NRC has started a project aimed at increasing the transparency of its fee calculations, GAO said, but that "they have not established goals for performance or a way to measure progress toward meeting these goals."

Piggybacking on the report, Republican Rep. [Adam Kinzinger](#) and Democrat Rep. [Mike Doyle](#) introduced the Nuclear Utilization of Keynote Energy Act, H.R. 1320, on Thursday, which aims to improve the "efficiency" of NRC licensing and regulatory processes.

ISSA JOINS BIPARTISAN CLIMATE CAUCUS: California Reps. [Darrell Issa](#) (R) and [Juan Vargas](#) (D) are the latest pair of lawmakers to join the Climate Solutions Caucus, Issa's office confirmed to ME. "Coastal communities, like mine in Southern California, are counting on us to come up with solutions that encourage a strong and vibrant economy, while also ensuring we are taking care of our environment," Issa said.

MINIBUSES LEAVING THE STATION? House Appropriators are hoping to avoid another short-term stopgap spending bill by bundling up the remaining fiscal 2017 spending bills into the packages for the floor, POLITICO's Sarah Harris [reports](#). Speaker [Paul Ryan](#) earlier Thursday [ruled out](#) the possibility of considering individual spending bills on the House floor, citing a time crunch.

WINTER IS COMING? Frustrated with the leaks from the federal bureaucracy, advisers to Trump are pushing him to remove remaining officials from the Obama administration and install new people more loyal to him, POLITICO's Josh Dawsey [reports](#). But the reality is more complex with some Cabinet secretaries saying they need the Obama people during a rocky transition and other advisers warning that aggressively going after federal employees carries its own risks. "The administration needs to be careful not to make too many dramatic changes

because the federal bureaucracy itself is a powerful machine, and they tend to have very establishment ideas," Newsmax CEO Chris Ruddy, a longtime Trump friend, said.

MAIL CALL! FIRST DAY, FIRST DOCUMENT REQUEST: House Oversight Chairman [Jason Chaffetz](#) isn't forgetting about seven unresolved, Obama-era document requests and sent Zinke [a letter](#) to "reiterate" his demands. Chaffetz is seeking information on BLM's fracking rule, Obama's decision to use the Antiquities Act on a number of national monuments and BLM activities in Nevada and Utah, among others. The letter also reiterates a fairly meta request for a briefing on how Interior responds to demands from members of Congress and FOIA requests.

MINING GROUP PUSHES ROSS TO SLASH REGULATIONS: Warning it takes between seven and 10 years to obtain the necessary permits for projects, the National Mining Association sent Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross [a letter](#) urging the Trump administration to take action to streamline the process. "The length, complexity and uncertainty of the permitting process are primary reasons investors give for not investing in U.S. mineral projects," CEO Hal Quinn wrote in a letter obtained Thursday. "These best practices include better coordination among state and federal agencies, clarifying responsibilities, minimizing duplication, setting goals and timeframes and introducing more accountability among agencies."

MORMON LEADERS BACK BEARS EARS: More than 200 members of the Mormon faith sent [a letter](#) to Zinke and congressional leaders urging them to support the Obama-era Bears Ears National Monument designation. "We urge you to reject any proposal to repeal it or change its boundaries," they said.

CONSERVATIVES HOPE REINS SUPREME: FreedomWorks sent [a letter](#) to Senate offices Thursday urging them to push leadership to take up the REINS Act (S. 21) for a full chamber vote. House members passed the bill, which would require explicit congressional approval for any new major regulation, as one of their first actions this Congress. But the Senate has never taken it up. The legislation would need the support of eight Democratic senators to clear the chamber — an unlikely feat despite the number of moderates up for reelection in 2018.

CHEMISTRY COUNCIL PUSHES FOR INFRASTRUCTURE SPENDING: As Trump lays the groundwork for shepherding a \$1 trillion infrastructure package through Congress, companies and industries are strategizing on how to get their priorities included in the legislation. The latest move comes from the American Chemistry Council, which commissioned [a report](#) from PricewaterhouseCoopers on how an infrastructure spending boost could fuel a chemical manufacturing "renaissance." The report identifies shortcomings in the truck, marine and rail infrastructure the industry relies on. The council's member companies include giants like Dow, DuPont, Honeywell, 3M, Merck and Monsanto (h/t POLITICO Influence).

LIFE COMES AT YA FAST: One year ago, more than 95 percent of California was in drought conditions. Today? Just 8.73 percent, federal scientists [report](#).

That's the lowest level of drought in the Golden State since 2011.

MOVERS, SHAKERS: Todd Lester has joined FTI Consulting as senior managing director in its economic consulting branch and a member of the Energy, Power and Products practice.

Thomas Cunningham has joined Statoil's Washington office as director of international affairs; he was most recently with Atlantic Council Global Energy Center after 13 years with the State Department.

QUICK HITS

— Lawyers Request EPA Intervention For Lead In East Chicago Water. [Indiana Public Media](#).

— Was Aubrey McClendon a Billionaire, or Broke? [The Wall Street Journal](#).

— Judge throws out recall effort against Sen. Ericksen. [KGMI](#).

— Top Trump Advisers Are Split on Paris Agreement on Climate Change. [The New York Times](#).

— Oil Falls to Three-Week Low as Record U.S. Supply Outweighs OPEC. [Bloomberg](#).

HAPPENING TODAY

8:20 a.m. — POLITICO Playbook [breakfast](#) on the first 100 days of the Trump administration, Newseum, 555 Pennsylvania Ave. NW

12:00 p.m. — "Carbon Capture: Tomorrow Just Happened," American Energy Society, 2075 Rayburn

THAT'S ALL FOR ME!

**** A message from Utah Diné Bikéyah:** The designation of the Bears Ears National Monument reflected the will of a majority of Utahns and Native American Tribes. This monument permanently protected public lands threatened by vandalism and looting in southeast Utah that we consider sacred. Yet already, politicians are pushing President Trump and Interior Secretary-nominee Ryan Zinke to reduce or undo its protections. We call on President Trump to resist efforts to seize or sell off Bears Ears and other parks and monuments. Stand with Bears Ears. Let's protect our national public lands for future generations of all people. Learn more at: <http://bit.ly/2luGehY> **

To view online:

<https://www.politicopro.com/tipsheets/morning-energy/2017/03/zinke-perry-address-their-teams-for-first-time-021654>

Stories from POLITICO Pro

Zinke shows up on horseback for first day at Interior [Back](#)

By Eric Wolff | 03/02/2017 09:54 AM EDT

Newly confirmed Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke decided to ride to work on a horse this morning, his first day on the job.

According to [a picture](#) posted by the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement, Zinke donned a black Stetson and saddled up for his inaugural trip to his new office.

An Interior spokesperson did not immediately respond to a request for comment on Zinke's unorthodox commute.

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EPA pulls methane information request [Back](#)

By Alex Guillén | 03/02/2017 04:36 PM EDT

EPA says more than 15,000 oil and gas companies no longer have to report detailed technical information about methane emissions from their operations.

The move was announced via a Federal Register [notice](#) that will be published on March 7 but will take immediate effect.

It is the agency's first step away from an Obama-era plan to regulate methane emissions from existing oil and gas operations. EPA in November directed oil and gas operators to respond to an "information collection request" on the topic that the agency estimated would cost companies, which are required by law to respond, about \$42 million in total.

"By taking this step, EPA is signaling that we take these concerns seriously and are committed to strengthening our partnership with the states," EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt said in a release. "Today's action will reduce burdens on businesses while we take a closer look at the need for additional information from this industry."

EPA also noted it received a letter on Wednesday from eleven state attorneys general or governors, including new Oklahoma Attorney General Mike Hunter, [asking](#) EPA to drop the "onerous" request.

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AGs ask EPA to drop methane information request [Back](#)

By Alex Guillén | 03/01/2017 12:50 PM EDT

Eleven state attorneys general today [asked](#) EPA to halt its ongoing direction for oil and gas companies to answer questions related to Obama-era plans for

methane emission regulations.

EPA [finalized](#) its Information Collection Request just days after the election. The ICR requires oil and gas companies to answer a litany of technical questions and is the first step toward regulating methane emissions from existing oil and gas operations.

The AGs note EPA itself predicted it would cost companies more than \$42 million and 284,000 hours to comply with the request.

"We believe the EPA's requests to be an unnecessary and onerous burden on oil and gas producers that is more harassment than a genuine search for pertinent and appropriate information," the letter says.

EPA's request "comes at a time when the oil and gas industry is recovering from its most significant economic downturn in decades," it adds. "Many of the company can ill-afford the time and expense to comply with yet another empty regulatory burden."

The signatories include EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt's successor as Oklahoma attorney general, Mike Hunter.

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White House: Keystone exempt from 'Buy American' requirements [Back](#)

By Ben Lefebvre | 03/02/2017 09:12 PM EDT

The Keystone XL pipeline will not be subject to President Donald Trump's executive order requiring infrastructure projects to be built with American steel, a White House spokeswoman said today.

Trump signed the order calling for the Commerce Department to develop a plan for U.S. steel to be used in "all new pipelines, as well as retrofitted, repaired or expanded pipelines" inside the US projects "to the maximum extent possible."

By the White House's judgment, that description would not include Keystone XL, which developer TransCanada first proposed in 2008.

"The Keystone XL pipeline is currently in the process of being constructed, so it does not count as a new, retrofitted, repaired, or expanded pipeline," the White House spokeswoman said.

That interpretation removes one potential [hurdle](#) for Keystone, and it clarifies shifting rhetoric from Trump on the order.

"We put you heavy into the pipeline business because we approved, as you know, the Keystone Pipeline, but they have to buy ... steel made in this country and pipelines made in this country," Trump told U.S. Steel chief executive Mario Longhi at a Feb. 23 meeting.

However, in his address to Congress earlier this week, Trump spoke of the order in the same sentence as Keystone but carefully described it as directing "that new American pipelines be made with American steel."

Removing the steel condition could help convince TransCanada to fully drop the \$15 billion NAFTA complaint against the US, which it suspended earlier this week.

A TransCanada spokesman declined today to comment on the NAFTA lawsuit.

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Former Trump adviser Carter Page also met with Russian envoy [Back](#)

By Josh Meyer | 03/02/2017 07:32 PM EDT

When Russian Ambassador Sergey Kislyak traveled to the GOP convention last summer, he met with then Sen. Jeff Sessions, as well as with two other Trump campaign advisers, including oil industry consultant Carter Page.

Page, at the time an unpaid foreign policy adviser to Trump, engaged in a conversation with the ambassador at the same July 20 luncheon in Cleveland where Sessions, now attorney general, and Kislyak chatted, according to J.D. Gordon, a national security adviser to the Trump campaign who was also present at the lunch.

Page declined to comment Thursday about what he and the Russian ambassador discussed, saying it was a private, off-the-record conversation. "Everyone assumes everything is nefarious!" Page said in a text message. "Thanks, but no comment."

Contacts between Russian officials and Trump campaign staff are now the subject of investigations by the FBI and congressional committees into Russian interference in the election, and whether Trump campaign representatives played any role in it. On Thursday, Sessions recused himself from investigations into Russian efforts to sway the 2016 election in Trump's favor.

The disclosure that other Trump officials met with Kislyak raise additional questions about White House assertions that the Trump campaign had little or no contact with Russian officials prior to the election.

Page's conversation with Kislyak just days after news reports of Russian hacking of the Democratic National Committee is part of a broader pattern of activity by Page that raised U.S. suspicions about his interactions with the Russians, according to a former Obama White House official. At the time of the lunch, Page had just returned from a trip to Moscow.

The official said the Obama administration was gravely concerned in its final days about increasingly apparent ties between Trump associates and Russians, and about what appeared to be promises made by more than one individual to people affiliated with Russian President Vladimir Putin about policy changes that would

occur once Trump was sworn in as president. The Obama official declined to discuss specifics but said Page was one of the Trump associates whose activities had drawn the most U.S. attention and concern.

Trump has defended Sessions. White House spokesman Sean Spicer repeated Thursday afternoon that Sessions and other officials have not done anything wrong. "There's no there there," Spicer told reporters.

Gordon, a retired Navy commander, said Page and Kislyak spoke at some length about how to improve relations between the two countries on issues like counterterrorism and energy security. "Carter told him we should have a new chapter of U.S.-Russia relations that build on mutual respect and common goals and that there is no need to keep up this hostility," Gordon said. "He said we should have better relations with Russia."

He added that Kislyak suggested the two countries cooperate "so that we don't have problems like the Tsarnaev brothers," the Chechen-Americans who set off two pressure-cooker bombs at the 2013 Boston Marathon, more than a year after Russia tried to warn U.S. officials about one of them.

Page and Sessions were among several people affiliated with the Trump campaign who engaged with Kislyak while in Cleveland, including at the lunch, which was part of a State Department-funded initiative to bring foreign ambassadors to both political conventions, Gordon said. "The Trump campaign advisers were there to interact with the ambassadors, just like [the ambassadors] were interacting with the Democrats in Philadelphia the next week," Gordon said. "That was the whole point of the program."

Trump officials have distanced themselves from Page, who left the campaign in late September. The founder and managing partner of Global Energy Capital, Page spent seven years as an investment banker at Merrill Lynch in London, Moscow and New York. His website says he has been involved in more than \$25 billion of transactions in the energy and power sector, and that he spent 3 years in Moscow where he was an adviser on key transactions for Russian state-owned gas company Gazprom and other energy-related companies.

After Trump identified Page as one of his foreign policy and energy advisers last March, Page said in a Bloomberg News interview that he had been an investor in, and adviser to, the Gazprom. He also criticized the Obama administration sanctions on Russia imposed because of its annexation of Crimea.

Officially, Page's role was "advising Mr. Trump on energy policy and Russia," according to a campaign release at the time. Throughout the spring and summer, Page sent policy memos to the campaign and kept in contact with Trump's national security advisory board, including Sessions, Gordon said. "He wanted access to Trump, he wanted his policy memos to be reflected in Trump speeches. And he wanted to go to Russia, which we thought was a bad idea," he added.

He said Page was discouraged from taking that trip by some campaign officials but went anyway after others in the campaign approved the trip, though he was told he could not represent the campaign.

During the trip, two weeks before the GOP convention, Page made remarks critical of U.S. policy at an event in Moscow held by a Russian organization with ties to pro-Putin oligarchs. At the time, Page refused to comment on whether he was meeting with Russian officials. "It was a terrible idea," Gordon said of the trip. "It just reflected negatively on the campaign, because people drew conclusions that weren't there. And he fed right into it and walked right into the lion's den."

By September, three months after his conversation with Kislyak in Cleveland, U.S. intelligence officials were seeking to determine whether Page had opened up private communications with senior Russian officials, [Yahoo News reported](#), including talks about the possible lifting of economic sanctions if the Republican nominee became president.

After lawmakers were briefed on suspected efforts by Russia to meddle in the election, then-Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid of Nevada asked FBI Director James Comey to investigate meetings between a Trump official, later identified as Page, and "high ranking sanctioned individuals" in Moscow who Reid believed were evidence of "significant and disturbing ties" between the Trump campaign and Moscow.

In late September, as allegations of ties between Page and Russian officials intensified, he took leave from the campaign. His name later appeared repeatedly in the controversial dossier on Trump-Russia ties compiled by a former British Intelligence operative that alleges a pattern of interactions between the Trump campaign and Moscow.

On Thursday, Page said he's never been questioned by the FBI, insisted that he has done nothing wrong and blamed Democrats and the Clinton campaign for drumming up false allegations against him.

When pressed for details of his talk with Kislyak and his visits to Moscow, Page said, "Go ask the Clinton campaign and associates about their illegal activities. That's a real story for you, as opposed to this same fake news theme."

Page wrote Comey in September asking the FBI director to quickly clear him of wrongdoing, saying what a "complete waste of time this witch-hunt directed at me is," and blaming the Clinton campaign, the media and others. He said his July 7 commencement address at the New Economic School in Moscow was based on his scholarly research, that his visit was "outside of my informal, unpaid role" on the Trump campaign and that he had divested any stake in Gazprom. Also, he said, he had "not met this year with any sanctioned official in Russia despite the fact that there are no restrictions on U.S. persons speaking with such individuals."

Three weeks ago, Page wrote to the Justice Department, asking to be publicly cleared. In the 37-page letter, Page said that besides harming his reputation and ability to advise the Trump campaign, the "continued false questions aimed at me also carry immediate risks to U.S. national security as political opponents of the President try to derail his agenda - most likely their main objective for this whole exercise."

Page said that he has not heard from either the FBI or Justice Department on the status of any investigations. Kislyak and the press office at the Russian embassy in Washington did not respond to requests for comment.

In an interview with MSNBC's Chris Hayes Thursday night, Page initially evaded questions on whether he met with Kislyak in Cleveland, before saying, "I'm not going to deny that I talked to him. Although I will say that I never met him anywhere outside of Cleveland, let's just say that much."

Page also denied acting as a liaison between Russia and the Trump campaign, and said he "was not aware of" speaking to any intelligence officials during his July 2016 visit to Moscow, where he met with "scholars and professors and some students there."

Page also refused to answer whether he was in contact with anyone at the White House, saying that while he knows "various people there ... I don't talk about any specific discussions."

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Appropriators predict series of Fiscal 2017 minibuses [Back](#)

By Sarah Ferris | 03/02/2017 02:53 PM EDT

House Republican leaders are considering passing "packages" of Fiscal 2017 spending bills to avoiding another stopgap spending measure in April.

House Appropriations Chairman [Rodney Frelinghuysen](#) believes "it is likely" the panel will bundle the remaining fiscal 2017 spending bills and send them to the House floor before next month's deadline, according to a committee aide.

"The commitment and intention from the committee and leadership is to pass all remaining bills. It is likely that it would be processed via 'packages' of bills," the aide said, adding that those bundles would come from the House side.

Frelinghuysen has personally discussed that path with GOP leaders, the aide said.

That strategy offers the clearest indication yet on how GOP leaders plan to avoid a major spending fight and a potential government shutdown in April.

Earlier today, House Speaker [Paul Ryan ruled out](#) the possibility of considering individual spending bills on the House floor, citing a time crunch.

That statement signals a shift from the plan some House lawmakers had been expecting after House GOP leaders announced they would vote on the Fiscal 2017 defense package next week.

Some lawmakers have openly speculated the Senate could turn the defense bill into a larger spending package. But Ryan declined today to say whether he expects the measure to come back to the House with additional appropriations measures attached.

"Whether or not they can take it up, or if they are going to do something with it, merge it with something else, that's more of a Senate question," Ryan said.

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Ryan not ruling out fiscal 2017 spending package ahead of CR deadline [Back](#)

By Sarah Ferris | 03/02/2017 02:03 PM EDT

House Speaker [Paul Ryan](#) suggested today that Congress will need to pass another stopgap spending bill or bundled appropriations package to finish out fiscal 2017 and avoid government shutdown.

Ryan told reporters the House would not have time to vote on all 11 spending bills still pending for fiscal 2017 before the current continuing resolution expires April 28.

"Are we going to have 11 bills moving? No," Ryan said. "We don't have the time for that."

The speaker was asked about the fate of fiscal 2017 appropriations just after House GOP leaders [announced](#) this year's defense spending bill would get a vote next week. That measure has bipartisan support in the House, and some Democrats are hopeful it could make it through the Senate as part of a package with other domestic spending.

Any decision to package the bills would likely take place in the upper chamber, and Ryan declined to comment on the prospects.

"We're passing that bill off the floor here in the House. Whether or not they can take it up, or if they are going to do something with it, merge it with something else, that's more of a Senate question," Ryan said.

He added that House leaders are planning to pass the defense bill "first" because a short-term spending bill is "uniquely bad for the military."

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Trump's advisers push him to purge Obama appointees [Back](#)

By Josh Dawsey | 03/02/2017 07:19 PM EDT

Advisers to President Donald Trump are urging him to purge the government of former President Barack Obama's political appointees and quickly install more people who are loyal to him, amid a cascade of damaging stories that have put his nascent administration in seemingly constant crisis-control mode.

A number of his advisers believe Obama officials are behind the leaks and are seeking to undermine his presidency, with just the latest example coming from reports that Attorney General Jeff Sessions met twice last year with the Russian

ambassador to the U.S. and apparently misled senators about the interactions during his confirmation hearing.

That was coupled with a New York Times story that Obama appointees spread information about the investigation into the Trump campaign's contacts with Russia in an attempt to create a paper trail about the probe. Trump's aides have also blamed Obama appointees for other damaging leaks, like Trump's erratic phone calls with foreign leaders.

Inside the White House, the chatter about Obama officials in the government has heightened in recent weeks, one administration official said. And advisers are saying it is time to take action.

"His playbook should be to get rid of the Obama appointees immediately," said Newt Gingrich, a top surrogate. "There are an amazing number of decisions that are being made by appointees that are totally opposed to Trump and everything he stands for. Who do you think those people are responding to?"

"If you employ people who aren't loyal to you, you can't be surprised when they leak," said Roger Stone, another longtime adviser. A third person close to Trump said: "He should have gotten these people who are out to get him out a long time ago, a long, long time ago. I think they know that now."

The reality, however, is more complicated: The White House has thousands of open jobs across the agencies, many nonpolitical civilian employees are critical of the administration, and some Cabinet secretaries say they need the Obama people during a rocky transition.

Only a few dozen Obama political appointees remain in the federal government apparatus, according to the Partnership for Public Service. Many of them are in crucial positions, including Robert Work, a top official at the Department of Defense, and Thomas Shannon, the acting deputy at the State Department.

Even if Trump were to ax those remaining senior political appointees, he would still have to reckon with the hundreds of thousands of civilian employees, who stay with every administration. Many of them are skeptical of Trump because they resent his assault on Washington and its culture, his impulsive decisions and his seeming lack of intellectual curiosity about their agencies and work.

They have spent the past six weeks on edge. Many are quietly on the job market, but others have been clashing with Trump appointees, either in the open or privately among colleagues, according to officials across agencies. From Homeland Security to Defense and beyond, it's become a regular conversation among employees about what lines they will not cross before quitting, and how best to slow-walk orders from above to frustrate implementation.

Amid those conversations is a running thread: how long they'd be willing to hold out to bear witness, and try to improve a climate they increasingly hate, or whether to leak information about changes they see in order to try and stop them. "I want to be able to tell people what's happening here," one State Department official said.

"Nixon essentially tried to bypass the federal bureaucracy, and the bureaucracy won and removed him from office," said Newsmax CEO Chris Ruddy, a longtime Trump friend. "The administration needs to be careful not to make too many dramatic changes because the federal bureaucracy itself is a powerful machine, and they tend to have very establishment ideas."

Gingrich added: "Ninety-five percent of the bureaucrats are against him."

The White House did not respond to a request for comment.

Some in Trump's inner circle increasingly fear that the FBI and the intelligence community are out to damage him. But some of the damaging leaks have also come from within his administration, advisers say, because the West Wing is plagued by competing factions that are vying for Trump's attention and affection.

"You hire a bunch of people in the West Wing who are hacks and aren't loyal to you, and you'll have a bunch of leaks," Stone said. "There aren't that many Trump loyalists in the White House."

In meetings, Trump aides like Stephen Miller, his senior policy adviser, have frequently complained about leaks and blamed the Obama appointees and longtime bureaucrats. Other aides have complained about having to sit in inter-agency meetings with Obama holdovers in senior positions. And Trump aides have told their people at agencies not to share plans and documents with Obama holdovers or others who are not sympathetic to them.

Yet across federal agencies, there are few Trump people. Candidates for only about three dozen of 550 critical Senate-confirmed positions have even been nominated, according to the Partnership for Public Service.

Several advisers and people close to Trump described the problem like this: During the transition, aides ignored hundreds of names that had been developed during New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie's time leading the transition. For several weeks after he was removed, work stopped as the team came to grips with Trump's improbable win.

Then, little was done to pick officials beneath the Cabinet level after Trump made a series of wham-bam choices. Picks have frequently been held up by the White House because they weren't loyal to Trump during the campaign, and people have grown increasingly skittish about being employed in a West Wing frequently described as chaotic and dysfunctional.

"I wish I had more of my staff on board," Sessions said Thursday, during a news conference in which he announced that he would recuse himself from any investigation related to the presidential campaigns.

In a twist, it will be an Obama appointee, Dana Boente, who will now be handling the investigation into the Trump campaign and Russian officials. Sally Yates, who was previously the No. 2 Justice Department official under Obama, was fired in late January after she refused to defend his controversial travel ban.

Gingrich said he blamed Sen. Chuck Schumer for slow-walking the nominees, though Schumer's office notes that many of the picks were not properly vetted: At least three have already dropped out. The Office of Government Ethics remains overwhelmed with applications now, "but they are beginning to catch up," one person involved in the nominations said. At many agencies, no top positions are filled, which means the layers of political appointees that report to them haven't been picked, either.

"I didn't get it early on. This is not about slowing down the Cabinet. This is about keeping working control of the government for Obama," Gingrich said. "It's actually very shrewd on Schumer's part. Trump is not going to have control of the government until at least June."






Others say it could be even longer. And that a massive purge is not the answer.

"The solution is not to purge the Obama holdovers but rather to actually identify people and move them forward," said Max Stier, president of the Partnership for Public Service, which has advised the Trump team. "Historically, it has taken a year plus for administrations to get their entire team in place. I'm afraid the Trump team is behind that, and that would not be a good thing. He has to have his own team in place if he's going to be able to get things done."

Edward-Isaac Doveve contributed to this report.

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Cc: [Swift, Heather](#); [Amy Mitchell](#); [Daniel Jorjani](#)
Subject: Re: Morning Energy, presented by Utah Diné Bikéyah: Zinke, Perry address their teams for first time — Keystone won't have to be built with American steel — Congressional pressure for FERC nominees continues
Date: Friday, March 03, 2017 10:32:20 AM

Kudos to Heather!!!

On Mar 3, 2017, at 10:30 AM, Douglas Domenech <douglas_domenech@ios.doi.gov> wrote:

Fantastic job team.

Sent from my iPhone

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After the heart of a certain Twitter lover we are

Must follows: [@SecretaryPerry](#) and [@SecretaryZinke](#). ME is impressed with Zinke's early social media game and cautiously optimistic he'll bring a less stuffy online persona than previous agency heads. His first official day included tweets [congratulating Perry on his confirmation](#), touting a "[top notch](#)" rodeo in Montana and offering [behind-the-scenes pictures](#) of his memorable entrance.

-

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From: **POLITICO Pro Energy** <politicoemail@politicopro.com>
Date: Fri, Mar 3, 2017 at 5:54 AM
Subject: Morning Energy, presented by Utah Diné Bikéyah: Zinke, Perry address their teams for first time — Keystone won't have to be built with American steel — Congressional pressure for FERC nominees continues
To: heather_swift@ios.doi.gov

By Anthony Adragna | 03/03/2017 05:51 AM EDT

With help from Darius Dixon

TRUMP'S ENERGY CABINET IS COMPLETE! Newly-confirmed Energy Secretary Rick Perry and Interior chief Ryan Zinke deliver their first remarks to agency personnel this morning, as President Donald Trump now has his energy and environmental Cabinet personnel fully installed. Zinke plans to [address his](#)

[employees](#) from the fancy-sounding Bison Bistro on agency grounds today at 11:00 a.m. on the Interior Department's 168th birthday. Perry plans to make [his inaugural remarks](#) at 10:30 a.m., according to a post on DOE's website.

That comes after Vice President Mike Pence swore in Perry to his new role shortly after 6:00 p.m. Thursday evening. "We collectively understand that the opportunity that we have been given, this maybe once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, Mr. Vice President, to truly put America on a course that will deliver for future generations extraordinary opportunities," the former Texas governor said after taking his oath using the Bible signed by every person he ever swore in as governor.

Washington's most-watched commute: One day after Zinke [won the Internet](#) by coming to work by horse, everyone wondered how Perry could top him. And the former Texas governor played ball. "On a single-stage rocket ... what could go wrong," he quipped, before adding to a skeptical pool at the White House that he planned to "quietly drive over and go to work."

Must follows: [@SecretaryPerry](#) and [@SecretaryZinke](#). ME is impressed with Zinke's early social media game and cautiously optimistic he'll bring a less stuffy online persona than previous agency heads. His first official day included tweets [congratulating Perry on his confirmation](#), touting a "[top notch](#)" rodeo in Montana and offering [behind-the-scenes pictures](#) of his memorable entrance. Shortly after being sworn in, Perry [tweeted](#): "Thanks for this opportunity to serve you. Let's get to work!"

This one's for you: Perry hasn't even gotten a chance to enjoy the lovely view from his new office at the Energy Department yet, but the Heritage Foundation has already lined up an agenda for him. In a [7-page paper published shortly](#) after Perry's Senate confirmation, the conservative think tank pumped out a mission statement: Pull the conditional loan guarantees, stop tightening energy efficiency regulations, move the agency more towards basic science and away from deploying technology, and cease its use of the social cost of carbon/methane/nitrous oxide figures. Instead, DOE needs to focus more intently on cleaning up the Cold War nuclear sites, completing the licensing process for the Yucca Mountain nuclear waste project and expediting liquefied natural gas applications. The national labs also got some love from Heritage on an issue near and dear to those 17 sites: The group urges Perry to reduce the "bureaucratic micromanagement" of the labs, a subject reviewed several times by the agency and Congress that is still a sensitive topic for headquarters and the labs.

MEANWHILE, PRUITT SPRINGS INTO ACTION: Thousands of oil and gas companies no longer have to report detailed technical information about their operations' methane emissions after EPA

Administrator Scott Pruitt pulled an Obama-era mandatory information request, Pro's Alex Guillén [reports](#). That comes one day after 11 state attorneys general [asked](#) the agency to abandon what they called an "unnecessary and onerous burden on oil and gas producers." Pruitt's action marks EPA's first step away from an Obama-era plan to regulate methane emissions from existing oil and gas operations.

METHANE CRA STILL COMING: Senior Republicans say they're still committed to bringing up a Congressional Review Act resolution nullifying a BLM rule aimed at curbing methane emissions on public lands but wouldn't comment on whether they had the votes for passage. "It's on the list, but the order hasn't been decided yet," Senate Majority Whip [John Cornyn](#) told ME. A senior GOP Senate aide told ME the CRA would be brought up when "attendance" could be assured, suggesting a close final vote.

TGIF MY FRIENDS! I'm your host Anthony Adragna, and Sens. John Hoeven and Angus King are currently the only members of the Senate mustache club. Your end-of-the-week quiz: At the start of the 1st Congress (in 1789), how many House seats were there? Send your tips, energy gossip and comments to aadragna@politico.com, or follow us on Twitter [@AnthonyAdragna](#), [@Morning_Energy](#), and [@POLITICOPro](#).

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A KEYSTONE-SHAPED LOOPHOLE: The Keystone XL pipeline won't have to comply with Trump's executive order requiring infrastructure projects to be built with American steel, a White House spokeswoman [told](#) Pro's Ben Lefebvre. That order called for U.S. steel to be used in "all new pipelines, as well as retrofitted, repaired or expanded pipelines" inside the U.S. projects "to the maximum extent possible." But that won't include Keystone: "The Keystone XL pipeline is currently in the process of being constructed, so it does not count as a new, retrofitted, repaired, or expanded pipeline," the White House spokeswoman said.

PAGE MET WITH RUSSIAN ENVOY: Oil industry consultant Carter Page, a former unpaid foreign policy adviser to Trump, met with Russian Ambassador Sergey Kislyak during the GOP convention last summer, POLITICO's Josh Meyer [reports](#). Page declined to comment about what they discussed during their conversation, saying in a text message that "Everyone assumes everything is nefarious!" Trump officials have distanced themselves from Page, who left the campaign in late September.

**** A message from Utah Diné Bikéyah:** The protection of the Bears Ears National Monument reflected the will of Utahns and Native

Americans. Now, President Trump and Interior Secretary-nominee Ryan Zinke are considering undermining this designation and threatening this sacred public land. Join us as we ask them to honor Tribes and stand with Bears Ears: <http://bit.ly/2luGehY> **

'THEY REALLY NEED TO BE EDUCATED': Senate Democrats are deeply concerned with the targeted cuts to EPA from the Trump administration, but they have a blunt reality check for the president's team: they'll need 60 votes for legislation to pass the Senate. "I think they really need to be educated about how everything works," [Tom Udall](#), top Democrat on the subcommittee handling EPA funding, told ME. "A lot of Republicans were not very supportive of this, so that's encouraging to me." [Brian Schatz](#), another appropriator, said Congress simply wouldn't go along with the 24 percent EPA cut sought by Trump's team. "They're still in campaign mode and they're still declaring things to be true that they wish to be true, but now that they have to govern and contend with co-equal branches of government, they're getting knocked around a little bit," the Hawaii Democrat told ME.

CONCERTED FERC PUSH CONTINUES: Senior congressional Republicans continue to push Trump's team to fill FERC vacancies, as the agency seeks a quorum necessary to conduct much of its business. "I've expressed my interest in getting those filled," Senate EPW Chairman [John Barrasso](#) told ME. That comes as two senior House Republicans — Energy and Commerce Chairman [Greg Walden](#) (R-Ore.) and former Chairman [Fred Upton](#) (R-Mich.) — sent a letter to Trump warning "without a quorum, major decisions are stalled, including those involving the licensing of interstate natural gas pipelines, liquefied natural gas terminals, and hydropower projects." They called for Trump to "swiftly" nominate FERC commissioners.

AWK-WARD: Nevada Rep. [Dina Titus](#) [tweeted](#) shortly before Perry's confirmation vote "Any senator that supports Perry's nomination is advocating for the Trump administration's position on Yucca Mountain." (Side note: That position on Yucca Mountain is not super clear.) But Titus' own Nevada colleagues — Republican [Dean Heller](#) and Democrat [Catherine Cortez Masto](#) — both [backed](#) Perry's nomination.

GAO TO THE NRC: SHOW YOUR MATH: The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has been less than fully transparent in how it explains the fees it puts on the industries it oversees, government watchdogs say in a new report. About 90 percent of the NRC's budget is covered with fees on nuclear power plants but, in a [report released Thursday](#), the Government Accountability Office says the agency's fee rules haven't defined "key terms, use terms consistently, or provide key calculations, and included errors, all of which obscured NRC's calculations and limited industry stakeholders' ability to understand them." The NRC has started a project aimed at increasing

the transparency of its fee calculations, GAO said, but that "they have not established goals for performance or a way to measure progress toward meeting these goals."

Piggybacking on the report, Republican Rep. [Adam Kinzinger](#) and Democrat Rep. [Mike Doyle](#) introduced the Nuclear Utilization of Keynote Energy Act, H.R. 1320, on Thursday, which aims to improve the "efficiency" of NRC licensing and regulatory processes.

ISSA JOINS BIPARTISAN CLIMATE CAUCUS: California Reps. [Darrell Issa](#) (R) and [Juan Vargas](#) (D) are the latest pair of lawmakers to join the Climate Solutions Caucus, Issa's office confirmed to ME. "Coastal communities, like mine in Southern California, are counting on us to come up with solutions that encourage a strong and vibrant economy, while also ensuring we are taking care of our environment," Issa said.

MINIBUSES LEAVING THE STATION? House Appropriators are hoping to avoid another short-term stopgap spending bill by bundling up the remaining fiscal 2017 spending bills into the packages for the floor, POLITICO's Sarah Harris [reports](#). Speaker [Paul Ryan](#) earlier Thursday [ruled out](#) the possibility of considering individual spending bills on the House floor, citing a time crunch.

WINTER IS COMING? Frustrated with the leaks from the federal bureaucracy, advisers to Trump are pushing him to remove remaining officials from the Obama administration and install new people more loyal to him, POLITICO's Josh Dawsey [reports](#). But the reality is more complex with some Cabinet secretaries saying they need the Obama people during a rocky transition and other advisers warning that aggressively going after federal employees carries its own risks. "The administration needs to be careful not to make too many dramatic changes because the federal bureaucracy itself is a powerful machine, and they tend to have very establishment ideas," Newsmax CEO Chris Ruddy, a longtime Trump friend, said.

MAIL CALL! FIRST DAY, FIRST DOCUMENT REQUEST: House Oversight Chairman [Jason Chaffetz](#) isn't forgetting about seven unresolved, Obama-era document requests and sent Zinke [a letter](#) to "reiterate" his demands. Chaffetz is seeking information on BLM's fracking rule, Obama's decision to use the Antiquities Act on a number of national monuments and BLM activities in Nevada and Utah, among others. The letter also reiterates a fairly meta request for a briefing on how Interior responds to demands from members of Congress and FOIA requests.

MINING GROUP PUSHES ROSS TO SLASH

REGULATIONS: Warning it takes between seven and 10 years to obtain the necessary permits for projects, the National Mining Association sent Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross [a letter](#) urging the Trump administration to take action to streamline the process. "The

length, complexity and uncertainty of the permitting process are primary reasons investors give for not investing in U.S. mineral projects," CEO Hal Quinn wrote in a letter obtained Thursday. "These best practices include better coordination among state and federal agencies, clarifying responsibilities, minimizing duplication, setting goals and timeframes and introducing more accountability among agencies."

MORMON LEADERS BACK BEARS EARS: More than 200 members of the Mormon faith sent [a letter](#) to Zinke and congressional leaders urging them to support the Obama-era Bears Ears National Monument designation. "We urge you to reject any proposal to repeal it or change its boundaries," they said.

CONSERVATIVES HOPE REINS SUPREME: FreedomWorks sent [a letter](#) to Senate offices Thursday urging them to push leadership to take up the REINS Act (S. 21) for a full chamber vote. House members passed the bill, which would require explicit congressional approval for any new major regulation, as one of their first actions this Congress. But the Senate has never taken it up. The legislation would need the support of eight Democratic senators to clear the chamber — an unlikely feat despite the number of moderates up for reelection in 2018.

CHEMISTRY COUNCIL PUSHES FOR INFRASTRUCTURE SPENDING: As Trump lays the groundwork for shepherding a \$1 trillion infrastructure package through Congress, companies and industries are strategizing on how to get their priorities included in the legislation. The latest move comes from the American Chemistry Council, which commissioned [a report](#) from PricewaterhouseCoopers on how an infrastructure spending boost could fuel a chemical manufacturing "renaissance." The report identifies shortcomings in the truck, marine and rail infrastructure the industry relies on. The council's member companies include giants like Dow, DuPont, Honeywell, 3M, Merck and Monsanto (h/t POLITICO Influence).

LIFE COMES AT YA FAST: One year ago, more than 95 percent of California was in drought conditions. Today? Just 8.73 percent, federal scientists [report](#). That's the lowest level of drought in the Golden State since 2011.

MOVERS, SHAKERS: Todd Lester has joined FTI Consulting as senior managing director in its economic consulting branch and a member of the Energy, Power and Products practice.

Thomas Cunningham has joined Statoil's Washington office as director of international affairs; he was most recently with Atlantic Council Global Energy Center after 13 years with the State Department.

QUICK HITS

— Lawyers Request EPA Intervention For Lead In East Chicago Water. [Indiana Public Media](#).

— Was Aubrey McClendon a Billionaire, or Broke? [The Wall Street Journal](#).

— Judge throws out recall effort against Sen. Ericksen. [KGMI](#).

— Top Trump Advisers Are Split on Paris Agreement on Climate Change. [The New York Times](#).

— Oil Falls to Three-Week Low as Record U.S. Supply Outweighs OPEC. [Bloomberg](#).

HAPPENING TODAY

8:20 a.m. — POLITICO Playbook [breakfast](#) on the first 100 days of the Trump administration, Newseum, 555 Pennsylvania Ave. NW

12:00 p.m. — "Carbon Capture: Tomorrow Just Happened," American Energy Society, 2075 Rayburn

THAT'S ALL FOR ME!

**** A message from Utah Diné Bikéyah:** The designation of the Bears Ears National Monument reflected the will of a majority of Utahns and Native American Tribes. This monument permanently protected public lands threatened by vandalism and looting in southeast Utah that we consider sacred. Yet already, politicians are pushing President Trump and Interior Secretary-nominee Ryan Zinke to reduce or undo its protections. We call on President Trump to resist efforts to seize or sell off Bears Ears and other parks and monuments. Stand with Bears Ears. Let's protect our national public lands for future generations of all people. Learn more at: <http://bit.ly/2luGehY> **

To view online:

<https://www.politicopro.com/tipsheets/morning-energy/2017/03/zinke-perry-address-their-teams-for-first-time-021654>

Stories from POLITICO Pro

Zinke shows up on horseback for first day at Interior [Back](#)

By Eric Wolff | 03/02/2017 09:54 AM EDT

Newly confirmed Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke decided to ride to work on a horse this morning, his first day on the job.

According to [a picture](#) posted by the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement, Zinke donned a black Stetson and

saddled up for his inaugural trip to his new office.

An Interior spokesperson did not immediately respond to a request for comment on Zinke's unorthodox commute.

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EPA pulls methane information request [Back](#)

By Alex Guillén | 03/02/2017 04:36 PM EDT

EPA says more than 15,000 oil and gas companies no longer have to report detailed technical information about methane emissions from their operations.

The move was announced via a Federal Register [notice](#) that will be published on March 7 but will take immediate effect.

It is the agency's first step away from an Obama-era plan to regulate methane emissions from existing oil and gas operations. EPA in November directed oil and gas operators to respond to an "information collection request" on the topic that the agency estimated would cost companies, which are required by law to respond, about \$42 million in total.

"By taking this step, EPA is signaling that we take these concerns seriously and are committed to strengthening our partnership with the states," EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt said in a release. "Today's action will reduce burdens on businesses while we take a closer look at the need for additional information from this industry."

EPA also noted it received a letter on Wednesday from eleven state attorneys general or governors, including new Oklahoma Attorney General Mike Hunter, [asking](#) EPA to drop the "onerous" request.

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AGs ask EPA to drop methane information request [Back](#)

By Alex Guillén | 03/01/2017 12:50 PM EDT

Eleven state attorneys general today [asked](#) EPA to halt its ongoing direction for oil and gas companies to answer questions related to Obama-era plans for methane emission regulations.

EPA [finalized](#) its Information Collection Request just days after the election. The ICR requires oil and gas companies to answer a litany of technical questions and is the first step toward regulating methane emissions from existing oil and gas operations.

The AGs note EPA itself predicted it would cost companies more than \$42 million and 284,000 hours to comply with the request.

"We believe the EPA's requests to be an unnecessary and onerous burden on oil and gas producers that is more harassment than a genuine search for pertinent and appropriate information," the letter says.

EPA's request "comes at a time when the oil and gas industry is recovering from its most significant economic downturn in decades," it adds. "Many of the company can ill-afford the time and expense to comply with yet another empty regulatory burden."

The signatories include EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt's successor as Oklahoma attorney general, Mike Hunter.

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White House: Keystone exempt from 'Buy American' requirements [Back](#)

By Ben Lefebvre | 03/02/2017 09:12 PM EDT

The Keystone XL pipeline will not be subject to President Donald Trump's executive order requiring infrastructure projects to be built with American steel, a White House spokeswoman said today.

Trump signed the order calling for the Commerce Department to develop a plan for U.S. steel to be used in "all new pipelines, as well as retrofitted, repaired or expanded pipelines" inside the US projects "to the maximum extent possible."

By the White House's judgment, that description would not include Keystone XL, which developer TransCanada first proposed in 2008.

"The Keystone XL pipeline is currently in the process of being constructed, so it does not count as a new, retrofitted, repaired, or expanded pipeline," the White House spokeswoman said.

That interpretation removes one potential [hurdle](#) for Keystone, and it clarifies shifting rhetoric from Trump on the order.

"We put you heavy into the pipeline business because we approved, as you know, the Keystone Pipeline, but they have to buy ... steel made in this country and pipelines made in this country," Trump told U.S. Steel chief executive Mario Longhi at a Feb. 23 meeting.

However, in his address to Congress earlier this week, Trump spoke of the order in the same sentence as Keystone but carefully described it as directing "that new American pipelines be made with American steel."

Removing the steel condition could help convince TransCanada to fully drop the \$15 billion NAFTA complaint against the US, which it suspended earlier this week.

A TransCanada spokesman declined today to comment on the NAFTA lawsuit.

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Former Trump adviser Carter Page also met with Russian envoy

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By Josh Meyer | 03/02/2017 07:32 PM EDT

When Russian Ambassador Sergey Kislyak traveled to the GOP convention last summer, he met with then Sen. Jeff Sessions, as well as with two other Trump campaign advisers, including oil industry consultant Carter Page.

Page, at the time an unpaid foreign policy adviser to Trump, engaged in a conversation with the ambassador at the same July 20 luncheon in Cleveland where Sessions, now attorney general, and Kislyak chatted, according to J.D. Gordon, a national security adviser to the Trump campaign who was also present at the lunch.

Page declined to comment Thursday about what he and the Russian ambassador discussed, saying it was a private, off-the-record conversation. "Everyone assumes everything is nefarious!" Page said in a text message. "Thanks, but no comment."

Contacts between Russian officials and Trump campaign staff are now the subject of investigations by the FBI and congressional committees into Russian interference in the election, and whether Trump campaign representatives played any role in it. On Thursday, Sessions recused himself from investigations into Russian efforts to sway the 2016 election in Trump's favor.

The disclosure that other Trump officials met with Kislyak raise additional questions about White House assertions that the Trump campaign had little or no contact with Russian officials prior to the election.

Page's conversation with Kislyak just days after news reports of Russian hacking of the Democratic National Committee is part of a broader pattern of activity by Page that raised U.S. suspicions about his interactions with the Russians, according to a former Obama White House official. At the time of the lunch, Page had just returned from a trip to Moscow.

The official said the Obama administration was gravely concerned in

its final days about increasingly apparent ties between Trump associates and Russians, and about what appeared to be promises made by more than one individual to people affiliated with Russian President Vladimir Putin about policy changes that would occur once Trump was sworn in as president. The Obama official declined to discuss specifics but said Page was one of the Trump associates whose activities had drawn the most U.S. attention and concern.

Trump has defended Sessions. White House spokesman Sean Spicer repeated Thursday afternoon that Sessions and other officials have not done anything wrong. "There's no there there," Spicer told reporters.

Gordon, a retired Navy commander, said Page and Kislyak spoke at some length about how to improve relations between the two countries on issues like counterterrorism and energy security. "Carter told him we should have a new chapter of U.S.-Russia relations that build on mutual respect and common goals and that there is no need to keep up this hostility," Gordon said. "He said we should have better relations with Russia."

He added that Kislyak suggested the two countries cooperate "so that we don't have problems like the Tsarnaev brothers," the Chechen-Americans who set off two pressure-cooker bombs at the 2013 Boston Marathon, more than a year after Russia tried to warn U.S. officials about one of them.

Page and Sessions were among several people affiliated with the Trump campaign who engaged with Kislyak while in Cleveland, including at the lunch, which was part of a State Department-funded initiative to bring foreign ambassadors to both political conventions, Gordon said. "The Trump campaign advisers were there to interact with the ambassadors, just like [the ambassadors] were interacting with the Democrats in Philadelphia the next week," Gordon said. "That was the whole point of the program."

Trump officials have distanced themselves from Page, who left the campaign in late September. The founder and managing partner of Global Energy Capital, Page spent seven years as an investment banker at Merrill Lynch in London, Moscow and New York. His website says he has been involved in more than \$25 billion of transactions in the energy and power sector, and that he spent 3 years in Moscow where he was an adviser on key transactions for Russian state-owned gas company Gazprom and other energy-related companies.

After Trump identified Page as one of his foreign policy and energy advisers last March, Page said in a Bloomberg News interview that he had been an investor in, and adviser to, the Gazprom. He also criticized the Obama administration sanctions on Russia imposed because of its annexation of Crimea.

Officially, Page's role was "advising Mr. Trump on energy policy and Russia," according to a campaign release at the time. Throughout the spring and summer, Page sent policy memos to the campaign and kept in contact with Trump's national security advisory board, including Sessions, Gordon said. "He wanted access to Trump, he wanted his policy memos to be reflected in Trump speeches. And he wanted to go to Russia, which we thought was a bad idea," he added.

He said Page was discouraged from taking that trip by some campaign officials but went anyway after others in the campaign approved the trip, though he was told he could not represent the campaign.

During the trip, two weeks before the GOP convention, Page made remarks critical of U.S. policy at an event in Moscow held by a Russian organization with ties to pro-Putin oligarchs. At the time, Page refused to comment on whether he was meeting with Russian officials. "It was a terrible idea," Gordon said of the trip. "It just reflected negatively on the campaign, because people drew conclusions that weren't there. And he fed right into it and walked right into the lion's den."

By September, three months after his conversation with Kislyak in Cleveland, U.S. intelligence officials were seeking to determine whether Page had opened up private communications with senior Russian officials, [Yahoo News reported](#), including talks about the possible lifting of economic sanctions if the Republican nominee became president.

After lawmakers were briefed on suspected efforts by Russia to meddle in the election, then-Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid of Nevada asked FBI Director James Comey to investigate meetings between a Trump official, later identified as Page, and "high ranking sanctioned individuals" in Moscow who Reid believed were evidence of "significant and disturbing ties" between the Trump campaign and Moscow.

In late September, as allegations of ties between Page and Russian officials intensified, he took leave from the campaign. His name later appeared repeatedly in the controversial dossier on Trump-Russia ties compiled by a former British Intelligence operative that alleges a pattern of interactions between the Trump campaign and Moscow.

On Thursday, Page said he's never been questioned by the FBI, insisted that he has done nothing wrong and blamed Democrats and the Clinton campaign for drumming up false allegations against him.

When pressed for details of his talk with Kislyak and his visits to Moscow, Page said, "Go ask the Clinton campaign and associates about their illegal activities. That's a real story for you, as opposed to this same fake news theme."

Page wrote Comey in September asking the FBI director to quickly clear him of wrongdoing, saying what a "complete waste of time this witch-hunt directed at me is," and blaming the Clinton campaign, the media and others. He said his July 7 commencement address at the New Economic School in Moscow was based on his scholarly research, that his visit was "outside of my informal, unpaid role" on the Trump campaign and that he had divested any stake in Gazprom. Also, he said, he had "not met this year with any sanctioned official in Russia despite the fact that there are no restrictions on U.S. persons speaking with such individuals."

Three weeks ago, Page wrote to the Justice Department, asking to be publicly cleared. In the 37-page letter, Page said that besides harming his reputation and ability to advise the Trump campaign, the "continued false questions aimed at me also carry immediate risks to U.S. national security as political opponents of the President try to derail his agenda - most likely their main objective for this whole exercise."

Page said that he has not heard from either the FBI or Justice Department on the status of any investigations. Kislyak and the press office at the Russian embassy in Washington did not respond to requests for comment.

In an interview with MSNBC's Chris Hayes Thursday night, Page initially evaded questions on whether he met with Kislyak in Cleveland, before saying, "I'm not going to deny that I talked to him. Although I will say that I never met him anywhere outside of Cleveland, let's just say that much."

Page also denied acting as a liaison between Russia and the Trump campaign, and said he "was not aware of" speaking to any intelligence officials during his July 2016 visit to Moscow, where he met with "scholars and professors and some students there."

Page also refused to answer whether he was in contact with anyone at the White House, saying that while he knows "various people there ... I don't talk about any specific discussions."

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Appropriators predict series of Fiscal 2017 minibuses [Back](#)

By Sarah Ferris | 03/02/2017 02:53 PM EDT

House Republican leaders are considering passing "packages" of Fiscal 2017 spending bills to avoiding another stopgap spending measure in April.

House Appropriations Chairman [Rodney Frelinghuysen](#) believes "it

is likely" the panel will bundle the remaining fiscal 2017 spending bills and send them to the House floor before next month's deadline, according to a committee aide.

"The commitment and intention from the committee and leadership is to pass all remaining bills. It is likely that it would be processed via 'packages' of bills," the aide said, adding that those bundles would come from the House side.

Frelinghuysen has personally discussed that path with GOP leaders, the aide said.

That strategy offers the clearest indication yet on how GOP leaders plan to avoid a major spending fight and a potential government shutdown in April.

Earlier today, House Speaker [Paul Ryan ruled out](#) the possibility of considering individual spending bills on the House floor, citing a time crunch.

That statement signals a shift from the plan some House lawmakers had been expecting after House GOP leaders announced they would vote on the Fiscal 2017 defense package next week.

Some lawmakers have openly speculated the Senate could turn the defense bill into a larger spending package. But Ryan declined today to say whether he expects the measure to come back to the House with additional appropriations measures attached.

"Whether or not they can take it up, or if they are going to do something with it, merge it with something else, that's more of a Senate question," Ryan said.

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Ryan not ruling out fiscal 2017 spending package ahead of CR deadline [Back](#)

By Sarah Ferris | 03/02/2017 02:03 PM EDT

House Speaker [Paul Ryan](#) suggested today that Congress will need to pass another stopgap spending bill or bundled appropriations package to finish out fiscal 2017 and avoid government shutdown.

Ryan told reporters the House would not have time to vote on all 11 spending bills still pending for fiscal 2017 before the current continuing resolution expires April 28.

"Are we going to have 11 bills moving? No," Ryan said. "We don't have the time for that."

The speaker was asked about the fate of fiscal 2017 appropriations just after House GOP leaders [announced](#) this year's defense spending bill would get a vote next week. That measure has bipartisan support in the House, and some Democrats are hopeful it could make it through the Senate as part of a package with other domestic spending.

Any decision to package the bills would likely take place in the upper chamber, and Ryan declined to comment on the prospects.

"We're passing that bill off the floor here in the House. Whether or not they can take it up, or if they are going to do something with it, merge it with something else, that's more of a Senate question," Ryan said.

He added that House leaders are planning to pass the defense bill "first" because a short-term spending bill is "uniquely bad for the military."

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Trump's advisers push him to purge Obama appointees [Back](#)

By Josh Dawsey | 03/02/2017 07:19 PM EDT

Advisers to President Donald Trump are urging him to purge the government of former President Barack Obama's political appointees and quickly install more people who are loyal to him, amid a cascade of damaging stories that have put his nascent administration in seemingly constant crisis-control mode.

A number of his advisers believe Obama officials are behind the leaks and are seeking to undermine his presidency, with just the latest example coming from reports that Attorney General Jeff Sessions met twice last year with the Russian ambassador to the U.S. and apparently misled senators about the interactions during his confirmation hearing.

That was coupled with a New York Times story that Obama appointees spread information about the investigation into the Trump campaign's contacts with Russia in an attempt to create a paper trail about the probe. Trump's aides have also blamed Obama appointees for other damaging leaks, like Trump's erratic phone calls with foreign leaders.

Inside the White House, the chatter about Obama officials in the government has heightened in recent weeks, one administration official said. And advisers are saying it is time to take action.

"His playbook should be to get rid of the Obama appointees immediately," said Newt Gingrich, a top surrogate. "There are an amazing number of decisions that are being made by appointees that

are totally opposed to Trump and everything he stands for. Who do you think those people are responding to?"

"If you employ people who aren't loyal to you, you can't be surprised when they leak," said Roger Stone, another longtime adviser. A third person close to Trump said: "He should have gotten these people who are out to get him out a long time ago, a long, long time ago. I think they know that now."

The reality, however, is more complicated: The White House has thousands of open jobs across the agencies, many nonpolitical civilian employees are critical of the administration, and some Cabinet secretaries say they need the Obama people during a rocky transition.

Only a few dozen Obama political appointees remain in the federal government apparatus, according to the Partnership for Public Service. Many of them are in crucial positions, including Robert Work, a top official at the Department of Defense, and Thomas Shannon, the acting deputy at the State Department.

Even if Trump were to ax those remaining senior political appointees, he would still have to reckon with the hundreds of thousands of civilian employees, who stay with every administration. Many of them are skeptical of Trump because they resent his assault on Washington and its culture, his impulsive decisions and his seeming lack of intellectual curiosity about their agencies and work.

They have spent the past six weeks on edge. Many are quietly on the job market, but others have been clashing with Trump appointees, either in the open or privately among colleagues, according to officials across agencies. From Homeland Security to Defense and beyond, it's become a regular conversation among employees about what lines they will not cross before quitting, and how best to slow-walk orders from above to frustrate implementation.

Amid those conversations is a running thread: how long they'd be willing to hold out to bear witness, and try to improve a climate they increasingly hate, or whether to leak information about changes they see in order to try and stop them. "I want to be able to tell people what's happening here," one State Department official said.

"Nixon essentially tried to bypass the federal bureaucracy, and the bureaucracy won and removed him from office," said Newsmax CEO Chris Ruddy, a longtime Trump friend. "The administration needs to be careful not to make too many dramatic changes because the federal bureaucracy itself is a powerful machine, and they tend to have very establishment ideas."

Gingrich added: "Ninety-five percent of the bureaucrats are against him."

The White House did not respond to a request for comment.

Some in Trump's inner circle increasingly fear that the FBI and the intelligence community are out to damage him. But some of the damaging leaks have also come from within his administration, advisers say, because the West Wing is plagued by competing factions that are vying for Trump's attention and affection.

"You hire a bunch of people in the West Wing who are hacks and aren't loyal to you, and you'll have a bunch of leaks," Stone said. "There aren't that many Trump loyalists in the White House."

In meetings, Trump aides like Stephen Miller, his senior policy adviser, have frequently complained about leaks and blamed the Obama appointees and longtime bureaucrats. Other aides have complained about having to sit in inter-agency meetings with Obama holdovers in senior positions. And Trump aides have told their people at agencies not to share plans and documents with Obama holdovers or others who are not sympathetic to them.

Yet across federal agencies, there are few Trump people. Candidates for only about three dozen of 550 critical Senate-confirmed positions have even been nominated, according to the Partnership for Public Service.

Several advisers and people close to Trump described the problem like this: During the transition, aides ignored hundreds of names that had been developed during New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie's time leading the transition. For several weeks after he was removed, work stopped as the team came to grips with Trump's improbable win.

Then, little was done to pick officials beneath the Cabinet level after Trump made a series of wham-bam choices. Picks have frequently been held up by the White House because they weren't loyal to Trump during the campaign, and people have grown increasingly skittish about being employed in a West Wing frequently described as chaotic and dysfunctional.

"I wish I had more of my staff on board," Sessions said Thursday, during a news conference in which he announced that he would recuse himself from any investigation related to the presidential campaigns.

In a twist, it will be an Obama appointee, Dana Boente, who will now be handling the investigation into the Trump campaign and Russian officials. Sally Yates, who was previously the No. 2 Justice Department official under Obama, was fired in late January after she refused to defend his controversial travel ban.

Gingrich said he blamed Sen. Chuck Schumer for slow-walking the nominees, though Schumer's office notes that many of the picks were

not properly vetted: At least three have already dropped out. The Office of Government Ethics remains overwhelmed with applications now, "but they are beginning to catch up," one person involved in the nominations said. At many agencies, no top positions are filled, which means the layers of political appointees that report to them haven't been picked, either.

"I didn't get it early on. This is not about slowing down the Cabinet. This is about keeping working control of the government for Obama," Gingrich said. "It's actually very shrewd on Schumer's part. Trump is not going to have control of the government until at least June."






Others say it could be even longer. And that a massive purge is not the answer.

"The solution is not to purge the Obama holdovers but rather to actually identify people and move them forward," said Max Stier, president of the Partnership for Public Service, which has advised the Trump team. "Historically, it has taken a year plus for administrations to get their entire team in place. I'm afraid the Trump team is behind that, and that would not be a good thing. He has to have his own team in place if he's going to be able to get things done."

Edward-Isaac Doveve contributed to this report.

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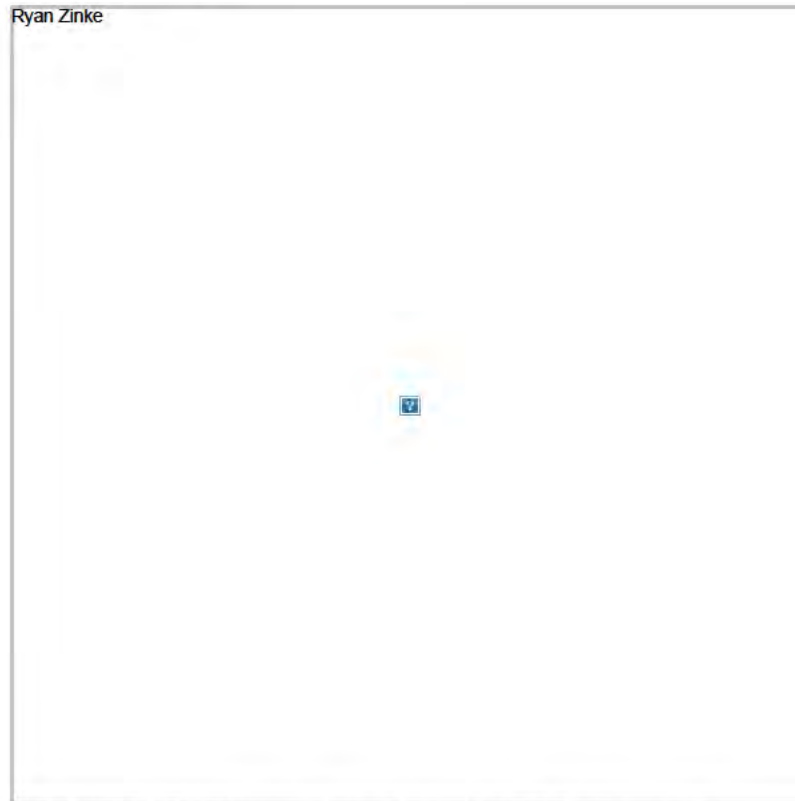
From: Swift, Heather
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INTERIOR

Zinke promises reorganization, fight against budget cuts

Corbin Hiar and Brittany Patterson, E&E News reporters

Published: Friday, March 3, 2017



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Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke addresses employees on his second day in office. Photo by Pamela King.

In his first all-employee address, Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke today hinted at big changes for the department's 70,000 employees.

"You might hear some rumors about reorganization. They're true," he said, prompting nervous laughter to ripple across the basement cafeteria of the agency's headquarters.

"The last time the Department of the Interior had been organized was about 100 years ago," Zinke said. "So the reorganization is going to be bold and look at, just as Teddy Roosevelt did, look out 100 years from now and make sure that we're organized to address the challenges of the future. And I need all your help."

The secretary, in his second full day on the job, noted that past efforts to rethink how the sprawling agency operates had focused on consolidation and removing resources from front-line employees.

"That's not the reorganization that we're going to do," he promised. "We're going to reorganize to address the challenges we see coming. And there are a lot of challenges."

Zinke encouraged employees in the standing-room-only cafeteria and those viewing his unscripted speech remotely to "think about what the Department of the Interior should look like a hundred years from now."

During his confirmation process, Zinke expressed openness to adding the Forest Service, which is currently part of the Agriculture Department, to Interior ([E&E Daily](#), Feb. 1).

One immediate change the secretary announced, to boisterous cheers from the D.C. staff: "We're going to make the building dog friendly," he said. Both his wife, Lolita, and dog, Ragnar, attended his talk.

Other applause lines in his brief speech to employees included a vow to not sell or transfer federal lands and to push back against a 10 percent budget cut that the White House is demanding ([Greenwire](#), Feb. 28).

"I looked at the budget," he said. "I'm not happy. But we're going to fight about it, and I think I'm going to win at the end of the day."

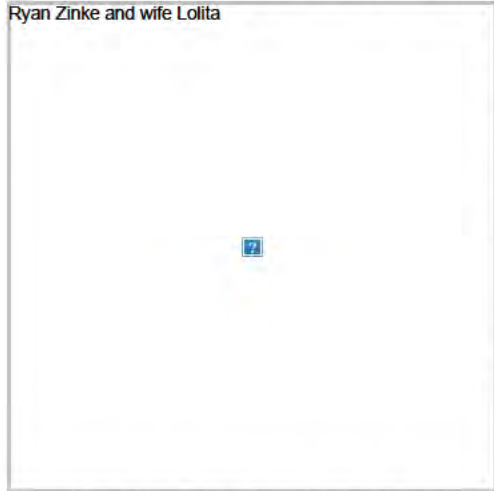
Zinke also expanded upon the top three priorities he had laid out to employees in an email yesterday: to reduce the National Park Service backlog, increase employee morale and authority, and promote American Indian sovereignty (*Greenwire*, March 2).

"We're behind in infrastructure," he said. "I'm going to ask the president for the whole enchilada to make sure that we focus on rebuilding our parks and make sure that our refuges out there have what we need."

National parks and wildlife refuges, the secretary noted, are often the most visible way in which he public interacts with the agency.

Speaking about his general take on land management issues, Zinke said, "The one-size-fits-all [approach] often fits no one. So we're going to work very hard at being the Department of Yep."

Ryan Zinke and wife Lolita



Zinke and his wife, Lolita, meet with Interior employees after his brief address. Photo by Pamela King.

After asking everyone to rededicate to themselves to their jobs — from the front door guards to the cafeteria workers — Zinke declared that "the expectation of the Department of the Interior is pretty simple: We are going to be the best department in the government."

When the speech ended, Zinke greeted a long line of employees and then spoke with reporters. He offered few details about his reorganization plans.

"I think we're too short on the front lines," he said. "Looking at employee surveys within the department, the further you go out, the sadness meter tends to go up."

Zinke didn't talk about adding more managers or rangers, which would be a challenge under the Trump

administration's federal employee hiring freeze. Instead, the secretary said he would make sure local officials "have the right authorities."

In response to reporters' questions, the secretary also made clear that he intends to reopen the offshore oil and gas leasing plan.

"I'm going to review anything that didn't go through Congress," he said. "The last-minute policies, he last-minute decisions, tell me that it was not vetted or didn't have a consensus."

Zinke also offered hints about how he would approach the coal program.

"We're going to look at everything across the board," he said. "On leasing, a concern I've had is ... when a company offers a lease, it's been low because there is no probability that actually you can do with that lease what's intended with it. So, we have to look at when we offer a lease, rather than selling a junk bond, we need to look at maybe selling a double-A bond and ... make sure the reclamation process is in there so when a company values that lease, we think the taxpayer should get more value on that."

Zinke added that the department would be "looking at a new way at doing the leasing appropriately" but cautioned that "it will take awhile to flesh it true."

From: Macgregor, Katharine
To: [Drager, Kjersten S](mailto:Drager_Kjersten_S)
Cc: douglas.w.domenech@ptt.gov; james.cason@ios.doi.gov; kathleen.benedetto@ios.doi.gov; [Dabbar, John M](mailto:Dabbar_John_M)
Subject: Re: E&E NPR-A Article
Date: Friday, March 03, 2017 2:42:24 PM

Thx for sharing.

On Fri, Mar 3, 2017 at 12:51 PM, Drager, Kjersten S
<Kjersten.S.Drager@conocophillips.com> wrote:

Doug, Jim, Kate and Kathy:

Given our recent discussions about our ConocoPhillips projects in NPR-A, our Willow discovery and the development potential that exists in the NPR-A overall and on the N. Slope of Alaska, I wanted to flag this article for you in the event you've not seen it. This is fairly accurate reporting (for a change) and gives a pretty good overview. Doug and Jim - we're working on the follow-up information that you asked for from us and will be sending that very soon.

Best, Kjersten Drager

ARCTIC
Alaska petroleum reserve poised for drilling resurgence
[Margaret Kriz Hobson](#), E&E News reporter

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ConocoPhillips' CD5 drilling site was the first to begin pumping oil from the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska. Photo courtesy of ConocoPhillips.

In December, as temperatures plummeted across the Arctic tundra, ConocoPhillips contractors headed to Alaska's sunless North Slope to build ice roads for this year's work season in the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska.

Over the course of the frigid winter, the company is installing an 8-mile gravel road with two bridges and an 11.8-acre well pad at its Greater Mooses Tooth 1 (GMT1) drill site in the northeast corner of the Alaska reserve.

West of that site, ConocoPhillips is conducting 3-D seismic tests at the Greater Mooses Tooth 2 (GMT2) site and at the company's newest discovery, known as Willow.

The wintertime operations are part of the company's methodical and relentless westward push into the 22.8-million-acre NPR-A, the largest block of federally managed land in the United States.

Over the past 17 years, ConocoPhillips has drilled almost 30 wells in the Alaska petroleum reserve. But it wasn't until 2015 that the Houston-based oil company pumped the first-ever commercial oil from those lands.

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ConocoPhillips and its minority partner Anadarko E&P Onshore now dominate the oil-rich northeastern corner of the NPR-A, owning over a million acres of leases — more than any other company.

But major new oil plays discovered by ConocoPhillips and two small independent petroleum companies, Armstrong Energy and Caelus Energy LLC, could trigger a significant resurgence in oil industry interest in the remote Alaskan Arctic.

U.S. Geological Survey research geologist David Houseknecht described the companies' massive new oil plays as "game changers" for Alaska.

"If the sizes of these new discoveries hold up or are proven by development," Houseknecht said, "it's likely to kick off a much, much broader set of exploration activities [on the North Slope] than we're talking about today."

ConocoPhillips has discovered at least 300 million barrels of recoverable oil at its new Willow oil field located within the NPR-A, 28 miles west of the company's prolific Alpine oil production operation. Company executives estimate the Willow field could produce 100,000 barrels of oil per day beginning in 2023 ([E&E News PM](#), Jan. 13).

On state lands just to the east of Alpine, Armstrong is developing a massive new hydrocarbon deposit at its Nanushuk oil field within its Pikka unit. The Denver-based company reports that its discovery holds probable oil reserves of 1.4 billion barrels and could produce up to 120,000 barrels per day.

The Army Corps of Engineers is working on a draft environmental impact assessment on Nanushuk, which is expected to be released in early August.

Meanwhile, Caelus Energy executives are predicting that their Smith Bay leases, located north of the NPR-A in state waters, could contain 2.4 billion barrels of recoverable oil. The Dallas-based company estimated that the discovery has the potential to produce 200,000 barrels per day. However, the company's estimates have not been independently verified.

The Caelus oil play would be the most difficult to commercialize because it's located more than 100 miles from the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System (TAPS). Although the wells are located on state lands, developing the oil would require construction of commercial facilities and a pipeline across protected NPR-A lands.

These three sites are the largest oil discoveries on the North Slope since Arco Alaska tapped the Alpine field in the Colville River Delta in 1994. That field, which was projected to hold 430 million barrels of oil, is now part of ConocoPhillips' North Slope operations.

If the three companies succeed in tapping their prodigious new discoveries, they would go a long way to re-energizing TAPS, which carries crude from the

North Slope oil fields to the Valdez export terminal.

The pipeline's daily throughput peaked at 2 million barrels in 1988 and has since steadily declined to 500,000 barrels of oil, threatening the long-term viability of the 800-mile pipeline system.

Fresh evidence of NPR-A's vast reserves

The NPR-A, which is roughly the size of the state of Indiana, was originally set aside by the U.S. government in 1923 as an emergency oil supply for the Navy. In 1976, those lands were transferred to the Bureau of Land Management.

The petroleum reserve is one of three potentially oil-rich territories in the American Arctic that President Trump has promised to open to new oil and gas development. Also targeted for future leasing are the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) and the offshore federal waters of the Beaufort and Chukchi seas.

But opening ANWR and the Arctic waters to resource development will be far more difficult than permitting oil drilling in the NPR-A. Those blocks of land are protected by federal wildlife preservation laws. Efforts to overturn the mandates could face bipartisan resistance in Congress, as well as heated legal battles from conservationists determined to protect the regions' diverse wildlife, ecologically sensitive lands and Native subsistence lifestyle.



ConocoPhillips' Alaska headquarters in Anchorage. Photo by Paxson Woelber, courtesy of Wikipedia.

By contrast, ConocoPhillips is already pumping oil from the NPR-A at its CD5 operation. That site, a western satellite of the Alpine unit, is providing the first steppingstone for a string of new wells in the petroleum reserve.

The company's GMT1 well site, its second operation in the NPR-A, is expected to begin production in late 2018. Meanwhile, ConocoPhillips executives contend that federal regulators are dragging their feet in approving a third well site, GMT2. BLM regulators recently predicted that a draft environmental impact assessment for GMT2 will be completed by the end of the year.

Just how much oil is available in the NPR-A has been the subject of a series of conflicting federal studies. In 2002, USGS predicted that the reserve could hold a bountiful 10.6 billion barrels of undiscovered oil.

Eight years later, however, federal geologists dramatically downgraded that estimate. Citing disappointing industry exploration data, USGS concluded that much of the petroleum reserve holds more gas than oil. As a result, federal geologists set the NPR-A's undiscovered oil reserves at only 896 million barrels.

All that is about to change as a result of the ConocoPhillips, Armstrong and

Caelus discoveries. Those plays are providing enticing evidence that the 2010 USGS assessment vastly underestimated the reserve's oil potential.

"What really surprises in this case is the size of the discoveries that are being announced," USGS's Houseknecht said. "If the pools turn out to be as big as these estimates, this has blown the door off the upper end of the case that we used when we did the [2010] assessment."

He said USGS is considering updating its 7-year-old assessment of the petroleum reserve's undiscovered oil and gas potential. First, however, scientists need detailed information from the oil companies on the promising new wells.

"Very little critical well data has been released" by the companies, Houseknecht noted. "We may need to wait until certain proprietary well data are released."

A new federal assessment of the NPR-A would also consider technology advances in the oil industry since the 2010 report was written.

Geologist Mark Myers, former commissioner of Alaska's Department of Natural Resources, observed that drillers on Alaska's North Slope will greatly benefit from the innovations in horizontal drilling and hydraulic fracturing that have revolutionized shale oil development in the Lower 48.

"The USGS dismissed areas of the NPR-A that were low-quality reservoirs," said Myers, who headed USGS during the George W. Bush administration.

"They were basing them on the state-of-the-art knowledge in 2010," he said. Today, however, "there's much more technically recoverable oil in these lower-quality reservoirs than we previously thought" thanks to new drilling techniques.

Push for more space

ConocoPhillips owns the vast majority of federal leases in northeast corner of the petroleum reserve. That region has long been recognized as containing the most readily available oil resources in the NPR-A.

But the company is blocked from expanding directly west into the petroleum reserve. The Obama administration's 2013 NPR-A management plan banned oil and gas drilling on 3.65 million acres of land around Teshekpuk Lake. That 22-mile-wide body of water, located 80 miles southeast of Barrow, provides critical habitat for migratory birds, caribou and other wildlife populations.

All told, President Obama's management plan blocked resource development on 13 million acres of the 22.8-million-acre reserve ([Greenwire](#), Dec. 20, 2012).

Scientists examining the recent oil discoveries at Willow, Nanushuk and Smith Bay say the oil-rich geological formations that underlie those attractive well sites could also be present in the Teshekpuk Lake special management area. If that's true, the protected lands could hold immense new oil plays.

Land divisions on Alaska's North Slope



[\[+\]](#) This map of northern Alaska shows the location of the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska and the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Map by the U.S. Geological Survey, courtesy of Wikipedia.

The Armstrong and ConocoPhillips fields are located just east of the Teshekpuk Lake protection area. Caelus' Smith Bay site is in state waters at the northern edge of the federal reserve, right next to the protected lands. According to Caelus executives, the geology underlying the Smith Bay discovery suggests the region could contain a massive 10 billion barrels of oil.

As scientists take a harder look at the North Slope geological formations, Alaska Sen. Lisa Murkowski (R) is urging the Trump team to expand the amount of NPR-A lands available for petroleum development.

"Under the Obama administration, effectively half of the NPR-A was pretty much taken off-limits," noted Murkowski, chairwoman of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee. "I'd like to see a national petroleum reserve with greater opportunity for exploration activity."

ConocoPhillips agreed, issuing a statement saying that it would also "like to see the BLM consider making lands west of our leases in NPRA available for leasing."

To open the NPR-A's protected regions to oil drilling, the Trump administration would have to rewrite Obama's management plan for the refuge and develop a new environmental impact assessment for those lands. That process could take at least two years to complete and would likely attract legal challenges from conservation groups.

During his first weeks in office, Trump has already begun easing environmental restrictions on oil development in the NPR-A.

The Trump team withdrew an Obama administration legal opinion that backed the Interior Department's regional mitigation strategy limiting oil exploration in the petroleum reserve. That proposed strategy, released in September, would require oil companies and other resource developers to pay for the unavoidable impacts to subsistence uses they're likely to cause when operating in the NPR-A ([E&E Daily](#), Jan. 4).

Now BLM officials are suggesting the mitigation strategy may be totally overhauled to reflect the new team's policies.

Bidding war

For the short term, the recent Alaska oil discoveries could attract more industry interest in North Slope lands managed by BLM and the state. Most of the state properties just east of the ConocoPhillips and Armstrong well sites are already leased. But some slivers of open lands are still available for exploration.

In December, BLM and Alaska auctioned thousands of acres of unleased North Slope lands for oil and gas development. BLM received 92 bids, the most since the agency started offering annual lease sales in the NPR-A in 2011. In total, the agency sold 613,000 acres and raised \$18.8 million dollars.

A highlight of the auction was a bidding war between ConocoPhillips and Armstrong, which both sought some of the last available northeastern NPR-A lands. ConocoPhillips was the successful bidder, acquiring 594,972 acres of reserve leases, some of them with its partner Anadarko.

At the same time, a variety of bidders snapped up 599,880 acres of Alaska state lands on the North Slope and 33,460 acres in state coastal waters of the Beaufort Sea. The auction brought in \$17.8 million in winning bids.

If the Teshekpuk protected lands were open for leasing, however, oil companies would be likely to offer top dollar for the potentially petroleum-rich property.

Former state commissioner Myers predicted that more oil companies will begin taking a harder look at the North Slope as Armstrong's new Nanushuk drilling plan moves forward.

"That's the one that's going to have the biggest first impact," Myers said. "They're looking at more than 100,000 barrels per day. That would increase TAPS production by 20 percent. We're looking at a 2021 time frame for production, so that's not many years off."

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From: Keel, Benjamin
To: [Swift, Heather](#); [Megan Bloomgren](#)
Subject: Indian Media coverage of Secretary Zinke
Date: Friday, March 03, 2017 3:51:50 PM
Attachments: [4 Top Tribal Concerns As Zinke Takes Charge Of DOI.docx](#)

Meg and Heather,

I don't know if you receive this information from the AS_IA clip service so I'm forwarding a couple of articles from Indian Country Media that covered Secretary Zinke's first day.

Ben

New Interior Secretary Zinke confirms rumors of reorganization <<https://www.indianz.com/News/2017/03/03/new-interior-secretary-zinke-confirms-ru.asp>> (Indianz.com, Mar. 3, 2017)

Ryan Zinke Confirmed as Interior Secretary After Promising to Advocate for Tribes
<<https://indiancountrymedianetwork.com/news/politics/ryan-zinke-confirmed-interior-secretary-promising-advocate-tribes/>> (Indian Country Today, Mar. 2, 2017)

4 Top Tribal Concerns as Zinke Takes Charge of DOI – See Attachment (Law360, Mar. 3, 2017)

4 Top Tribal Concerns As Zinke Takes Charge Of DOI

Share us on: By [Andrew Westney](#)

Law360, New York (March 2, 2017, 4:32 PM EST) -- Former Montana Rep. Ryan Zinke brings a short yet solid record working with Indian Country to his role as the newly confirmed secretary of the interior, but attorneys for Native American tribes will be watching how the Republican tackles federal land management, budget restrictions, energy projects and other issues as the Trump administration moves forward. Here are four key areas to keep an eye on as Zinke takes the reins at the DOI.

Energy Development

The Trump administration's push for rapid energy infrastructure development may test Zinke's stated commitment to respecting tribal sovereignty and consulting with tribes over such projects, attorneys say.

At his [Jan. 17 confirmation hearing](#) before the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, Zinke called for the federal government to listen to tribes' concerns over infrastructure like the Dakota Access pipeline. That project has prompted sharp conflict and ongoing litigation between those seeking to protect the [Standing Rock Sioux Tribe's](#) water near its reservation and the [Energy Transfer Partners LP](#) unit looking to complete the pipeline.

While the Dakota Access pipeline turned into a political football between the Obama administration and the Trump administration, with President Donald Trump issuing a presidential memorandum in his first days in office meant to speed up review of the project, "it would be unfair for anyone to try to hold [Zinke] to the task of unscrambling that egg," according to [Holland & Knight LLP](#) partner Philip Baker-Shenk.

"Going forward, I think it's fair to ask about the next pipeline, the next proposal that implicates tribal rights and responsibilities: How will the Zinke Interior Department — to the extent it's involved in that — provide meaningful consultation?" he said.

The DOI has a divided role with respect to energy, as it's charged with both protecting

natural resources and encouraging their development, [Dorsey & Whitney LLP](#) partner Thaddeus Lightfoot said. That may put Zinke in a squeeze between listening to tribes on the one hand, and dealing with pressure from the administration on the other, he said.

"If the protection of tribal lands conflicts with the federal desire to conduct energy development, it's unclear where the [Department of the Interior](#) is going to land on that issue," Lightfoot said.

During his hearing, Zinke broke from earlier comments of Trump's by saying that he didn't believe climate change is a hoax, but he suggested that there is still a place for fossil fuel extraction on federal lands.

Leading up to his confirmation Wednesday, Zinke received strong support from tribal leaders in his home state of Montana, where he supported the [Crow Tribe's](#) coal production efforts, and said during his hearing that he would support coal mining as part of Trump's effort to end the Obama administration's so-called war on coal.

But nationwide, Zinke's support for an "all of the above" approach to energy development could benefit the diverse array of tribes who may be able to profit from not just oil, coal or gas, but from solar, wind, nuclear or water projects as well, Baker-Shenk said.

Environmental Regulation

Zinke will also have a role in implementing Trump's plans to roll back environmental regulations, but could prove to be a less extreme figure than others in the administration, attorneys say.

In nominating Zinke as interior secretary in December, Trump said the ex-[U.S. Navy SEAL](#) would help "repeal bad regulations and use our natural resources to create jobs and wealth for the American people."

Zinke has opposed Obama administration regulations and backed construction of the Keystone XL pipeline, saying during his confirmation hearing that he would support reversing the [Bureau of Land Management's](#) rules for venting and flaring methane on public and tribal lands.

But Lightfoot said that Zinke's attitude toward the DOI appears "very different and more positive" than that of new [U.S. Environmental Protection Agency](#) head Scott Pruitt toward his agency, which Pruitt consistently attacked during his six-year tenure as attorney general of Oklahoma.

Zinke could help shape specific environmental regulation through the DOI's advisory role to the EPA on tribal issues affected by the agency's environmental programs, such as whether a tribe can claim treatment-as-state status under the Clean Air Act, and he could influence the administration's overall policy as a Cabinet member, according to Brian Gunn, a principal in the Indian tribal governments group at [Powers Pyles Sutter & Verville PC](#).

Zinke is "generally seen as a moderate within Indian Country, and the fact that he has at least some record with tribes, I think, makes folks hopeful he can have a kind of moderating role [within the administration]," Gunn said.

Land Management

During his single full term as Montana's sole congressman, Zinke backed a strong role for the federal government in handling public lands, which could quickly put him at odds with Republican leaders in Congress over a controversial national monument that protects sacred tribal lands in Utah.

An avowed conservationist, Zinke said in an email to DOI staff Thursday that his first priority as DOI secretary is to address an estimated \$12.5 billion backlog of maintenance and repair work in the National Park System. Also on Thursday, in one of his first acts as secretary, Zinke issued two secretarial orders to expand access to public lands for hunting, fishing, camping and other recreational activities.

In the email, Zinke reaffirmed his commitment not to sell, transfer or privatize public land. At his confirmation hearing, Zinke had said that he was "absolutely against transfer or sale of public land." And while in Congress, he voted against legislation that would allow the selling off of public lands.

But congressional Republicans led by Natural Resources Committee Chairman Rob Bishop, R-Utah, have pushed for Trump to rescind former President Barack Obama's Dec. 28 designation of the 1.35-million-acre Bears Ears National Monument in southeastern Utah,

saying the move was "alien to the desires of the overwhelming majority of Utahns" and Native Americans in the area.

In a statement Wednesday following Zinke's confirmation as interior secretary, Rep. Raul Grijalva, D-Ariz., called for Zinke to stick by his prior opposition to "state-level efforts to seize millions of acres of federally owned public land" as Zinke is expected to visit Utah to discuss the Bears Ears monument soon.

If Bishop's bid to have Trump rescind the Bears Ears designation under the Antiquities Act fails, Zinke is likely to be publicly drawn into the fray, according to professor Alexander T. Skibine of the University of Utah College of Law.

"If Trump does not go for revoking this [designation] through an executive order, which it's not a given he can do, legally speaking, the Utah delegation will try to push hard to get this through Congress, and Zinke would have to testify," Skibine said.

Still, his new job could position Zinke to broker an agreement over the Bears Ears monument and other land disputes in a way that respects tribal interests and property rights while lessening federal control, according to Baker-Shenk.

Stricter Budget

Anticipated budget cuts by the Trump administration could force Zinke to figure out how to sustain tribal programs at the DOI's [Bureau of Indian Affairs](#) while keeping the BLM, the [National Park Service](#) and the department's many other agencies running smoothly.

Trump announced his intention to slash federal staffing on Jan. 23, prompting fears from tribal advocates that Indian programs on which many tribes rely, including those at the BIA, could take a heavy hit.

Now, the White House may cut 10 percent from the DOI's proposed 2018 budget, according to a report cited by Grijalva in Wednesday's statement, as part of an overall paring down of federal agencies.

The Trump administration's focus on trimming the government puts Zinke in the position of having to protect tribal programs from being trimmed or cut altogether, after such programs

generally received solid support from the Obama administration, according to Gunn.

"In the last eight years, tribes haven't really had to play defense on the budget so much and have been able to advocate for gains on certain programs," he said. "Zinke in his role [at the DOI] is in a good position to be able to protect or insulate Indian Country from some of those cuts and hopefully find those cuts elsewhere outside of Indian Affairs."

In his letter to the DOI on Thursday, Zinke stressed his commitment to Indian Country, saying "sovereignty needs to mean something."

"My commitment to the [Indian] territories and nations is not lip service," Zinke said in the letter.

--Editing by Christine Chun and Mark Lebetkin.

From: Williams, Timothy
To: [Tim Williams](#)
Subject: Fwd: Secretary Zinke Announces Proposed 73-Million Acre Oil and Natural Gas Lease Sale for Gulf of Mexico
Date: Monday, March 06, 2017 2:23:25 PM

Wanted to make sure you were aware of this.
Tim Williams



Date: March 6, 2017
Contact: Interior_Press@ios.doi.gov
Caryl Fagot, BOEM (504) 736-2590

Secretary Zinke Announces Proposed 73-Million Acre Oil and Natural Gas Lease Sale for Gulf of Mexico

All available areas in federal waters will be offered in first region-wide sale under new Five Year Program

WASHINGTON - U.S. Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke today announced that the Department will offer 73 million acres offshore Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida for oil and gas exploration and development. The proposed region-wide lease sale scheduled for August 16, 2017 would include all available unleased areas in federal waters of the Gulf of Mexico.

“Opening more federal lands and waters to oil and gas drilling is a pillar of President Trump’s plan to make the United States energy independent,” Secretary Zinke said. “The Gulf is a vital part of that strategy to spur economic opportunities for industry, states, and local communities, to create jobs and home-grown energy and to reduce our dependence on foreign oil.”

Proposed Lease Sale 249, scheduled to be livestreamed from New Orleans, will be the first offshore sale under the new Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program for 2017-2022 (Five Year Program). Under this new program, ten region-wide lease sales are scheduled for the Gulf, where the resource potential and industry interest are high, and oil and gas infrastructure is well established. Two Gulf lease sales will be held each year and include all available blocks in the combined Western, Central, and Eastern Gulf of Mexico Planning Areas.

The estimated amount of resources projected to be developed as a result of the proposed region-wide lease sale ranges from 0.211 to 1.118 billion barrels of oil and from 0.547 to

4.424 trillion cubic feet of gas. The sale could potentially result in 1.2 to 4.2 percent of the forecasted cumulative OCS oil and gas activity in the Gulf of Mexico. Most of the activity (up to 83% of future production) of the proposed lease sale is expected to occur in the Central Planning Area.

Lease Sale 249 will include about 13,725 unleased blocks, located from three to 230 miles offshore, in the Gulf's Western, Central, and Eastern planning areas in water depths ranging from nine to more than 11,115 feet (three to 3,400 meters). Excluded from the lease sale are blocks subject to the Congressional moratorium established by the [Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act of 2006](#); blocks that are adjacent to or beyond the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone in the area known as the northern portion of the Eastern Gap; and whole blocks and partial blocks within the current boundary of the Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary.

“To promote responsible domestic energy production, the proposed terms of this sale have been carefully developed through extensive environmental analysis, public comment, and consideration of the best scientific information available,” said Walter Cruickshank, the acting director of Interior's Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM). “This will ensure both orderly resource development and protection of the environment.”

The lease sale terms include stipulations to protect biologically sensitive resources, mitigate potential adverse effects on protected species, and avoid potential conflicts associated with oil and gas development in the region. BOEM's proposed economic terms include a range of incentives to encourage diligent development and ensure a fair return to taxpayers. The terms and conditions for Sale 249 in the Proposed Notice of Sale are not final. Different terms and conditions may be employed in the Final Notice of Sale, which will be published at least 30 days before the sale.

BOEM estimates that the U.S. Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) contains about 90 billion barrels of undiscovered technically recoverable oil and 327 trillion cubic feet of undiscovered technically recoverable gas. The Gulf of Mexico OCS, covering about 160 million acres, has technically recoverable resources of 48.46 billion barrels of oil and 141.76 trillion cubic feet of gas.

Production from all OCS leases provided 550 million barrels of oil and 1.25 trillion cubic feet of natural gas in FY2016, accounting for 72 percent of the oil and 27 percent of the natural gas produced on federal lands. Energy production and development of new projects on the U.S. OCS supported an estimated 492,000 direct, indirect, and induced jobs in FY2015 and generated \$5.1 billion in total revenue that was distributed to the Federal Treasury, state governments, Land and Water Conservation Fund, and Historic Preservation Fund.

As of March 1, 2017, about 16.9 million acres on the U.S. OCS are under lease for oil and gas development (3,194 active leases) and 4.6 million of those acres (929 leases) are producing oil and natural gas. More than 97 percent of these leases are in the Gulf of Mexico; about 3 percent are on the OCS off California and Alaska.

The current Five Year Program [2012-2017] has one final Gulf lease sale scheduled on March 22, 2017 for Central Planning Area Sale 247. The 2012-2017 Five Year Program has offered about 73 million acres, netted more than \$3 billion in high bids for American taxpayers and awarded more than 2,000 leases.

All terms and conditions for Gulf of Mexico Region-wide Sale 249 are detailed in the

Proposed Notice of Sale (PNOS) information package, which is available at: <http://www.boem.gov/Sale-249/>. Copies of the PNOS maps can be requested from the Gulf of Mexico Region's Public Information Unit at 1201 Elmwood Park Boulevard, New Orleans, LA 70123, or at 800-200-GULF (4853).

The Notice of Availability of the PNOS will be available today for inspection in the Federal Register at: <http://www.archives.gov/federal-register/public-inspection/index.html> and will be published in the March 7, 2017 Federal Register.

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Department Of The Interior

External and Intergovernmental Affairs

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From: Williams, Timothy
To: [Tim Williams](#)
Subject: Fwd: Secretary Zinke Announces Proposed 73-Million Acre Oil and Natural Gas Lease Sale for Gulf of Mexico
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To: [Nathan Adams](#)
Subject: Fwd: FW: Secretary Zinke Announces Proposed 73-Million Acre Oil and Natural Gas Lease Sale for Gulf of Mexico
Date: Monday, March 06, 2017 3:57:36 PM

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Heather Swift
Department of the Interior
@DOIPressSec
Heather_Swift@ios.doi.gov | Interior_Press@ios.doi.gov

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Jeff Brady** <JBrady@npr.org>
Date: Mon, Mar 6, 2017 at 3:53 PM
Subject: FW: Secretary Zinke Announces Proposed 73-Million Acre Oil and Natural Gas Lease Sale for Gulf of Mexico
To: "Interior_Press@ios.doi.gov" <Interior_Press@ios.doi.gov>

Please add me to your press release email list.

[Jeff Brady](#) | NPR Correspondent | jbrady@npr.org | 202-513-3414 | [@jeffbradynpr](#)

From: U.S. Department of the Interior [mailto:interior_news@updates.interior.gov]
Sent: Monday, March 06, 2017 2:05 PM
To: Debbie Elliott
Subject: Secretary Zinke Announces Proposed 73-Million Acre Oil and Natural Gas Lease Sale for Gulf of Mexico



OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

**U.S. Department
of the Interior**

www.doi.gov

News Release

Date: March 6, 2017

Contact: Interior_Press@ios.doi.gov

Caryl Fagot, BOEM (504) 736-2590

Secretary Zinke Announces Proposed 73-Million Acre Oil and Natural Gas Lease Sale for Gulf of Mexico

All available areas in federal waters will be offered in first region-wide sale under new Five Year Program

WASHINGTON - U.S. Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke today announced that the Department will offer 73 million acres offshore Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida for oil and gas exploration and development. The proposed region-wide lease sale scheduled for August 16, 2017 would include all available unleased areas in federal waters of the Gulf of Mexico.

“Opening more federal lands and waters to oil and gas drilling is a pillar of President Trump’s plan to make the United States energy independent,” Secretary Zinke said. “The Gulf is a vital part of that strategy to spur economic opportunities for industry, states, and local communities, to create jobs and home-grown energy and to reduce our dependence on foreign oil.”

Proposed Lease Sale 249, scheduled to be livestreamed from New Orleans, will be the first offshore sale under the new Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program for 2017-2022 (Five Year Program). Under this new program, ten region-wide lease sales are scheduled for the Gulf, where the resource potential and industry interest are high, and oil and gas infrastructure is well established. Two Gulf lease sales will be held each year and include all available blocks in the combined Western, Central, and Eastern Gulf of Mexico Planning Areas.

The estimated amount of resources projected to be developed as a result of the proposed region-wide lease sale ranges from 0.211 to 1.118 billion barrels of oil and from 0.547 to 4.424 trillion cubic feet of gas. The sale could potentially result in 1.2 to 4.2 percent of the forecasted cumulative OCS oil and gas activity in the Gulf of Mexico. Most of the activity (up to 83% of future production) of the proposed lease sale is expected to occur in the Central Planning Area.

Lease Sale 249 will include about 13,725 unleased blocks, located from three to 230 miles offshore, in the Gulf’s Western, Central, and Eastern planning areas in water depths ranging from nine to more than 11,115 feet (three to 3,400 meters). Excluded from the lease sale are

blocks subject to the Congressional moratorium established by the [Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act of 2006](#); blocks that are adjacent to or beyond the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone in the area known as the northern portion of the Eastern Gap; and whole blocks and partial blocks within the current boundary of the Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary.

“To promote responsible domestic energy production, the proposed terms of this sale have been carefully developed through extensive environmental analysis, public comment, and consideration of the best scientific information available,” said Walter Cruickshank, the acting director of Interior’s Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM). “This will ensure both orderly resource development and protection of the environment.”

The lease sale terms include stipulations to protect biologically sensitive resources, mitigate potential adverse effects on protected species, and avoid potential conflicts associated with oil and gas development in the region. BOEM’s proposed economic terms include a range of incentives to encourage diligent development and ensure a fair return to taxpayers. The terms and conditions for Sale 249 in the Proposed Notice of Sale are not final. Different terms and conditions may be employed in the Final Notice of Sale, which will be published at least 30 days before the sale.

BOEM estimates that the U.S. Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) contains about 90 billion barrels of undiscovered technically recoverable oil and 327 trillion cubic feet of undiscovered technically recoverable gas. The Gulf of Mexico OCS, covering about 160 million acres, has technically recoverable resources of 48.46 billion barrels of oil and 141.76 trillion cubic feet of gas.

Production from all OCS leases provided 550 million barrels of oil and 1.25 trillion cubic feet of natural gas in FY2016, accounting for 72 percent of the oil and 27 percent of the natural gas produced on federal lands. Energy production and development of new projects on the U.S. OCS supported an estimated 492,000 direct, indirect, and induced jobs in FY2015 and generated \$5.1 billion in total revenue that was distributed to the Federal Treasury, state governments, Land and Water Conservation Fund, and Historic Preservation Fund.

As of March 1, 2017, about 16.9 million acres on the U.S. OCS are under lease for oil and gas development (3,194 active leases) and 4.6 million of those acres (929 leases) are producing oil and natural gas. More than 97 percent of these leases are in the Gulf of Mexico; about 3 percent are on the OCS off California and Alaska.

The current Five Year Program [2012-2017] has one final Gulf lease sale scheduled on March 22, 2017 for Central Planning Area Sale 247. The 2012-2017 Five Year Program has offered about 73 million acres, netted more than \$3 billion in high bids for American taxpayers and awarded more than 2,000 leases.

All terms and conditions for Gulf of Mexico Region-wide Sale 249 are detailed in the Proposed Notice of Sale (PNOS) information package, which is available at: <http://www.boem.gov/Sale-249/>. Copies of the PNOS maps can be requested from the Gulf of Mexico Region’s Public Information Unit at 1201 Elmwood Park Boulevard, New Orleans, LA 70123, or at 800-200-GULF (4853).

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From: Swift, Heather
To: [Nathan Adams](#)
Subject: Fwd: Secretary Zinke Announces Proposed 73-Million Acre Oil and Natural Gas Lease Sale for Gulf of Mexico
Date: Monday, March 06, 2017 4:00:01 PM

Can you please add to the press list?

-

Heather Swift
Department of the Interior
@DOIPressSec
Heather_Swift@ios.doi.gov | Interior_Press@ios.doi.gov

----- Forwarded message -----

From: <David.Shepardson@thomsonreuters.com>
Date: Mon, Mar 6, 2017 at 3:57 PM
Subject: RE: Secretary Zinke Announces Proposed 73-Million Acre Oil and Natural Gas Lease Sale for Gulf of Mexico
To: heather_swift@ios.doi.gov

Thanks can you add me to the Interior list?

David Shepardson
Correspondent

Thomson Reuters

Phone: +1 202 898 8324
Mobile: +1 202 579-6093

david.shepardson@thomsonreuters.com
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1333 H Street NW

Suite 410E Washington, DC 20005

www.twitter.com/davidshepardson

From: Swift, Heather [mailto:heather_swift@ios.doi.gov]

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Hey there - just wanted to highlight the POTUS statement today regarding Gulf energy jobs and the DOI announcement for 73 million offshore acres for lease. Both announcements are below. Happy to field any followups from the DOI side.

Best,

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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 6, 2017

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President Trump made a promise to bring back jobs to America. The spirit of optimism sweeping the country is already boosting job growth, and it is only the beginning.

“This is exactly the kind of investment, economic development and job creation that will help put Americans back to work,” the President said. “Many of the products that will be manufactured here in the United States by American workers will be exported to other countries, improving our balance of trade. This is a true American success story. In addition, the jobs created are paying on average \$100,000 per year.”

Darren W. Woods, chairman and chief executive officer of Exxon Mobil announced the company’s investment program during a keynote speech today to an oil and gas industry conference in Houston, Texas.

“Investments of this scale require a pro-growth approach and a stable regulatory environment and we appreciate the President’s commitment to both,” said Woods. “The energy industry has proven it can operate safely and responsibly. Private sector investment is enhanced by this Administration’s support for smart regulations that support growth while protecting the environment.”

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Heather Swift

Department of the Interior

@DOIPressSec

Heather_Swift@ios.doi.gov | Interior_Press@ios.doi.gov

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From: **U.S. Department of the Interior** <interior_news@updates.interior.gov>

Date: Mon, Mar 6, 2017 at 2:04 PM

Subject: Secretary Zinke Announces Proposed 73-Million Acre Oil and Natural Gas Lease Sale for Gulf of Mexico

To: heather_swift@ios.doi.gov

Date: March 6, 2017

Contact: Interior_Press@ios.doi.gov

Caryl Fagot, BOEM (504) 736-2590

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This email was sent to heather_swift@ios.doi.gov by: U.S. Department of the Interior · 1849 C Street, N.W. · Washington DC 20240 · 202-208-3100

||

From: Swift, Heather
Subject: Fwd: Secretary Zinke Announces Proposed 73-Million Acre Oil and Natural Gas Lease Sale for Gulf of Mexico
Date: Monday, March 06, 2017 4:03:34 PM

Hey there - just wanted to highlight the POTUS statement today regarding Gulf energy jobs and the DOI announcement for 73 million offshore acres for lease. Both announcements are below. Happy to field any followups from the DOI side.

Best,
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THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 6, 2017

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Heather Swift
Department of the Interior
@DOIPressSec
Heather_Swift@ios.doi.gov | Interior_Press@ios.doi.gov

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From: **U.S. Department of the Interior** <interior_news@updates.interior.gov>
Date: Mon, Mar 6, 2017 at 2:04 PM
Subject: Secretary Zinke Announces Proposed 73-Million Acre Oil and Natural Gas Lease Sale for Gulf of Mexico
To: heather_swift@ios.doi.gov



OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

**U.S. Department
of the Interior**

www.doi.gov
News Release

Date: March 6, 2017
Contact: Interior_Press@ios.doi.gov
Caryl Fagot, BOEM (504) 736-2590

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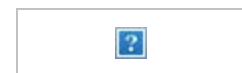
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From: Swift, Heather
To: [Frank Quimby](#); [Megan Bloomgren](#); [Gillette, Connie](#)
Subject: Fwd: Secretary Zinke Announces Proposed 73-Million Acre Oil and Natural Gas Lease Sale for Gulf of Mexico
Date: Monday, March 06, 2017 4:15:35 PM

Connie - is there any difference in this lease sale vs the planned sale under the Obama admin? I've read that in the past the Gulf was auctioned in sections but this one is in one shot. True/False?

Thank you!

-

Heather Swift
Department of the Interior
[@DOIPressSec](#)
Heather_Swift@ios.doi.gov | Interior_Press@ios.doi.gov

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Michael Bastasch** <mike@dailycallernewsfoundation.org>
Date: Mon, Mar 6, 2017 at 4:06 PM
Subject: Re: Secretary Zinke Announces Proposed 73-Million Acre Oil and Natural Gas Lease Sale for Gulf of Mexico
To: "Swift, Heather" <heather_swift@ios.doi.gov>

Hey Heather,

Is the lease sale announcement any different than what was already planned under the Obama administration?

On Mon, Mar 6, 2017 at 4:02 PM, Swift, Heather <heather_swift@ios.doi.gov> wrote:

Hey there - just wanted to highlight the POTUS statement today regarding Gulf energy jobs and the DOI announcement for 73 million offshore acres for lease. Both announcements are below. Happy to field any followups from the DOI side.

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Subject: Secretary Zinke Announces Proposed 73-Million Acre Oil and Natural Gas Lease Sale for Gulf of Mexico

To: heather_swift@ios.doi.gov



OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

**U.S. Department
of the Interior**

www.doi.gov
News Release

Date: March 6, 2017

Contact: Interior_Press@ios.doi.gov

Caryl Fagot, BOEM [\(504\) 736-2590](tel:(504)736-2590)

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The lease sale terms include stipulations to protect biologically sensitive resources, mitigate potential adverse effects on protected species, and avoid potential conflicts associated with oil and gas development in the region. BOEM's proposed economic terms include a range of incentives to encourage diligent development and ensure a fair return to taxpayers. The terms and conditions for Sale 249 in the Proposed Notice of Sale are not final. Different terms and conditions may be employed in the Final Notice of Sale, which will be published at least 30 days before the sale.

BOEM estimates that the U.S. Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) contains about 90 billion barrels of undiscovered technically recoverable oil and 327 trillion cubic feet of undiscovered technically recoverable gas. The Gulf of Mexico OCS, covering about 160 million acres, has technically recoverable resources of 48.46 billion barrels of oil and 141.76 trillion cubic feet of gas.

Production from all OCS leases provided 550 million barrels of oil and 1.25 trillion cubic feet of natural gas in FY2016, accounting for 72 percent of the oil and 27 percent of the natural gas produced on federal lands. Energy production and development of new projects on the U.S. OCS supported an estimated 492,000 direct, indirect, and induced jobs in FY2015 and generated \$5.1 billion in total revenue that was distributed to the Federal Treasury, state governments, Land and Water Conservation Fund, and Historic Preservation Fund.

As of March 1, 2017, about 16.9 million acres on the U.S. OCS are under lease for oil and gas development (3,194 active leases) and 4.6 million of those acres (929 leases) are producing oil and natural gas. More than 97 percent of these leases are in the Gulf of Mexico; about 3 percent are on the OCS off California and Alaska.

The current Five Year Program [2012-2017] has one final Gulf lease sale scheduled on March 22, 2017 for Central Planning Area Sale 247. The 2012-2017 Five Year Program has offered about 73 million acres, netted more than \$3 billion in high bids for American taxpayers and awarded more than 2,000 leases.

All terms and conditions for Gulf of Mexico Region-wide Sale 249 are detailed in the Proposed Notice of Sale (PNOS) information package, which is available at: <http://www.boem.gov/Sale-249/>. Copies of the PNOS maps can be requested from the Gulf of Mexico Region's Public Information Unit at 1201 Elmwood Park Boulevard, New Orleans, LA 70123, or at 800-200-GULF (4853).

The Notice of Availability of the PNOS will be available today for inspection in the Federal Register at: <http://www.archives.gov/federal-register/public-inspection/index.html> and will be published in the March 7, 2017 Federal Register.

#



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--

Michael Bastasch
Daily Caller News Foundation



From: Swift, Heather
To: [Frank Quimby](#); [Megan Bloomgren](#); [Gillette, Connie](#)
Subject: Fwd: Secretary Zinke Announces Proposed 73-Million Acre Oil and Natural Gas Lease Sale for Gulf of Mexico
Date: Monday, March 06, 2017 4:15:38 PM

Connie - is there any difference in this lease sale vs the planned sale under the Obama admin?
I've read that in the past the Gulf was auctioned in sections but this one is in one shot.

True/False?

Thank you!

-

Heather Swift
Department of the Interior
@DOIPressSec
Heather_Swift@ios.doi.gov | Interior_Press@ios.doi.gov

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Michael Bastasch** <mike@dailycallernewsfoundation.org>
Date: Mon, Mar 6, 2017 at 4:06 PM
Subject: Re: Secretary Zinke Announces Proposed 73-Million Acre Oil and Natural Gas Lease Sale for Gulf of Mexico
To: "Swift, Heather" <heather_swift@ios.doi.gov>

Hey Heather,

Is the lease sale announcement any different than what was already planned under the Obama administration?

On Mon, Mar 6, 2017 at 4:02 PM, Swift, Heather <heather_swift@ios.doi.gov> wrote:

Hey there - just wanted to highlight the POTUS statement today regarding Gulf energy jobs and the DOI announcement for 73 million offshore acres for lease. Both announcements are below. Happy to field any followups from the DOI side.

Best,
Heather @ Interior

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 6, 2017

President Trump Congratulates Exxon Mobil for Job-Creating Investment Program

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- President Donald J. Trump today congratulated Exxon Mobil Corporation on its ambitious \$20 billion investment program that is creating more than 45,000 construction and manufacturing jobs in the United States Gulf Coast region.

President Trump made a promise to bring back jobs to America. The spirit of optimism sweeping the country is already boosting job growth, and it is only the beginning.

"This is exactly the kind of investment, economic development and job creation that will help put Americans back to work," the President said. "Many of the products that will be manufactured here in the United States by American workers will be exported to other countries, improving our balance of trade. This is a true American success story. In addition, the jobs created are paying on average \$100,000 per year."

Darren W. Woods, chairman and chief executive officer of Exxon Mobil announced the company's investment program during a keynote speech today to an oil and gas industry conference in Houston, Texas.

"Investments of this scale require a pro-growth approach and a stable regulatory environment and we appreciate the President's commitment to both," said Woods. "The energy industry has proven it can operate safely and responsibly. Private sector investment is enhanced by this Administration's support for smart regulations that support growth while protecting the environment."

Exxon Mobil is strategically investing in new refining and chemical-manufacturing projects in the United States Gulf Coast region to expand its manufacturing and export capacity. The company's Growing the Gulf program consists of 11 major chemical, refining, lubricant and liquefied natural gas projects at proposed new and existing facilities along the Texas and Louisiana coasts. Investments began in 2013 and are expected to continue through at least 2022.

Exxon Mobil's projects, once completed and operating at mature levels, are expected to have far-reaching and long-lasting benefits. Projects planned or under way are expected to create more than 35,000 construction jobs and more than 12,000 full-time jobs. These are full-time manufacturing jobs that are mostly high-skilled and high-paying, and have annual salaries ranging from \$75,000 to \$125,000. These jobs will have a multiplier effect, creating many more jobs in the community that service these new investments.

###

-

Heather Swift
Department of the Interior
@DOIPressSec

Heather_Swift@ios.doi.gov | Interior_Press@ios.doi.gov

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **U.S. Department of the Interior** <interior_news@updates.interior.gov>

Date: Mon, Mar 6, 2017 at 2:04 PM

Subject: Secretary Zinke Announces Proposed 73-Million Acre Oil and Natural Gas Lease Sale for Gulf of Mexico

To: heather_swift@ios.doi.gov



OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

**U.S. Department
of the Interior**

www.doi.gov
News Release

Date: March 6, 2017

Contact: Interior_Press@ios.doi.gov

Caryl Fagot, BOEM [\(504\) 736-2590](tel:(504)736-2590)

Secretary Zinke Announces Proposed 73-Million Acre Oil and Natural Gas Lease Sale for Gulf of Mexico

All available areas in federal waters will be offered in first region-wide sale under new Five Year Program

WASHINGTON - U.S. Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke today announced that the Department will offer 73 million acres offshore Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida for oil and gas exploration and development. The proposed region-wide lease sale scheduled for August 16, 2017 would include all available unleased areas in federal waters of the Gulf of Mexico.

“Opening more federal lands and waters to oil and gas drilling is a pillar of President Trump’s plan to make the United States energy independent,” Secretary Zinke said. “The Gulf is a vital part of that strategy to spur economic opportunities for industry, states, and local communities, to create jobs and home-grown energy and to reduce our dependence on foreign oil.”

Proposed Lease Sale 249, scheduled to be livestreamed from New Orleans, will be the first offshore sale under the new Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program for 2017-2022 (Five Year Program). Under this new program, ten region-wide lease sales are scheduled for the Gulf, where the resource potential and industry interest are high, and oil and gas infrastructure is well established. Two Gulf lease sales will be held each year and include all available blocks in the combined Western, Central, and Eastern Gulf of Mexico

Planning Areas.

The estimated amount of resources projected to be developed as a result of the proposed region-wide lease sale ranges from 0.211 to 1.118 billion barrels of oil and from 0.547 to 4.424 trillion cubic feet of gas. The sale could potentially result in 1.2 to 4.2 percent of the forecasted cumulative OCS oil and gas activity in the Gulf of Mexico. Most of the activity (up to 83% of future production) of the proposed lease sale is expected to occur in the Central Planning Area.

Lease Sale 249 will include about 13,725 unleased blocks, located from three to 230 miles offshore, in the Gulf's Western, Central, and Eastern planning areas in water depths ranging from nine to more than 11,115 feet (three to 3,400 meters). Excluded from the lease sale are blocks subject to the Congressional moratorium established by the [Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act of 2006](#); blocks that are adjacent to or beyond the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone in the area known as the northern portion of the Eastern Gap; and whole blocks and partial blocks within the current boundary of the Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary.

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Michael Bastasch
Daily Caller News Foundation



From: Guiden, Nancy
To: [Caroline Boulton](#)
Subject: Fwd: National Summit on Infrastructure and the Environment
Date: Monday, March 06, 2017 5:18:55 PM
Attachments: [Infrastructure Summit 2017 v3.pdf](#)

For you.

Vr,

Nancy Guiden
U.S. Department of the Interior

Immediate Office of the Secretary
Washington, DC 20240
202-208-6087

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Selzer, Lawrence <lzelzer@conservationfund.org>
Date: Mon, Mar 6, 2017 at 4:39 PM
Subject: National Summit on Infrastructure and the Environment
To: "timothy_williams@ios.doi.gov" <timothy_williams@ios.doi.gov>, "nancy_guiden@ios.doi.gov" <nancy_guiden@ios.doi.gov>
Cc: "valerie_v_smith@ios.doi.gov" <valerie_v_smith@ios.doi.gov>, "Cannon, Holly" <hcannon@conservationfund.org>

Timothy and Nancy, it was great to meet you if only briefly at the reception in the Secretary's office. I am following up with an attached one-pager on the National Summit on Infrastructure and the Environment that I mentioned during our conversation. This invitation-only Summit, to be held in Washington, D.C. on June 20th, 2017, will focus on how to streamline the permitting process to ensure that high quality infrastructure projects move through the process faster and that if there are important natural and/or cultural resources affected, that appropriate conservation and/or economic development outcomes result as well. With the President clearly focused on roughly \$1 trillion in infrastructure investments, we believe the time is right to focus on these permitting issues so that critical projects can be implemented in a timely and cost-effective manner.

The participants largely will come from industry, government agencies involved in the permitting process, tribes and conservation organizations that are solution-oriented. We have reached out to several industry associations and they are excited and have agreed to help sponsor the Summit. These include the American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO), the Edison Electric Institute, the American Petroleum Institute, The American Gas Association, The Solar Energy Association and the Interstate Natural Gas Association. We are in discussions with the U. S Chamber of Commerce and we believe they too will help sponsor the Summit.

We hope that Secretary Zinke will make opening remarks at the Summit the morning of June 20th, helping to set the

tone and direction for the Summit and all the participants. And we also hope that if Agency Directors are in place (USFWS, BLM, NPS) that they too will play a prominent role in the Summit.

I hope we can visit soon to discuss this further. Thank you, Larry

Larry Selzer

President

The Conservation Fund

The National Summit on Infrastructure and the Environment

June 19 – 20, 2017

F Street Conference Center | 20 F Street, NW | Washington, DC

Promoting an infrastructure expansion plan in support of energy independence, investments in transportation, clean water, and modernization and reinforcement of the electric grid is a priority of the new Administration.

With this policy comes a push for \$1 trillion in infrastructure spending along with a goal to make America energy independent, while also conserving natural habitats, reserves and resources

The President's vision for infrastructure expansion and energy independence in a way that also conserves our natural resources can be achieved if business, government and conservation leaders work together. Improvements can be made in the environmental permitting process for new construction. Our natural resources can be conserved and enhanced through smarter and more efficient processes. Now is the time to act to start achieving these results.

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Leaders from infrastructure developers representing the natural gas, oil, electric, solar, wind, transportation and related industries will share their experiences, including challenges faced and recommendations for change. Federal and state agency decision makers, including representatives from the U.S. Department of the Interior, the Corps of Engineers, and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, will provide their perspectives on streamlining the environmental review and approval process. Senior conservation leaders will share advice from actual experiences, using case studies and interactive tools.

Others participating in the Summit will include regulators with permitting authority, industry personnel with responsibility for infrastructure project direction and management, and key partners providing project assistance. Participation in the Summit is by invitation only and limited to a select 200 participants.

The Summit is hosted by The Conservation Fund and is supported by a coalition of infrastructure innovators. It is being held in the shadow of the Capitol at the F Street Conference Center in Washington, DC. The Summit will begin with a rooftop networking reception on the evening of June 19, with a full day of discussion on June 20 and closing reception.



For more information, please contact:

Heather Richards

703-203-0060 or hrichards@conservationfund.org

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From: Williams, Timothy
To: [Valerie Smith](#)
Subject: Fwd: National Summit on Infrastructure and the Environment
Date: Friday, March 10, 2017 11:54:18 AM
Attachments: [Infrastructure Summit 2017 v3.pdf](#)

Please print in color.

Tim

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From: Selzer, Lawrence <lzelzer@conservationfund.org>
Date: Mon, Mar 6, 2017 at 4:39 PM
Subject: National Summit on Infrastructure and the Environment
To: "timothy_williams@ios.doi.gov" <timothy_williams@ios.doi.gov>, "nancy_guiden@ios.doi.gov" <nancy_guiden@ios.doi.gov>
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President

The Conservation Fund

--

Department Of The Interior
External and Intergovernmental Affairs
Timothy Williams
timothy_williams@ios.doi.gov
Office: (202) 208-6015
Cell: (202) 706-4982

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F Street Conference Center | 20 F Street, NW | Washington, DC

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For more information, please contact:

Heather Richards

703-203-0060 or hrichards@conservationfund.org

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From: Williams, Timothy
To: [Scheduling SIO](#)
Subject: Fwd: Formal Request for Participation, West Slope Colorado Oil & Gas Association
Date: Friday, March 10, 2017 12:45:01 PM
Attachments: [Letter to Secretary Zinke.pdf](#)

----- Forwarded message -----

From: David Ludlam <d.ludlam@wscoga.org>
Date: Fri, Mar 10, 2017 at 10:58 AM
Subject: Formal Request for Participation, West Slope Colorado Oil & Gas Association
To: "Williams, Timothy" <timothy_williams@ios.doi.gov>

Timothy

Per our conversation I wonder if you might advance this letter to Secretary Zinke? A number of folks from our association plan to be in D.C. later this spring and would be eager to discuss in more detail should Secretary Zinke have a few moments on his calendar.

Thanks and best

David

Department Of The Interior
External and Intergovernmental Affairs
Timothy Williams
timothy_williams@ios.doi.gov
Office: (202) 208-6015
Cell: (202) 706-4982

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Department Of The Interior
External and Intergovernmental Affairs

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Phone 970.733.2198
www.WSCOGA.org

March 10, 2017

Honorable Secretary Ryan Zinke
Department of the Interior
C/O Timothy Williams
External and Intergovernmental Affairs

RE: Presidential Executive Order on *Enforcing the Regulatory Reform Agenda*

Dear Secretary Zinke,

In 2016 the U.S. Geological Survey made one of the most significant announcements in the agency's history, revealing that Western Colorado harbors one of North America's largest natural gas resources. The Mancos Shale contains up to 100 trillion cubic feet of untapped natural gas. This is in addition to over 100 trillion cubic feet of natural gas in the Mesa Verde formation that is currently being developed.

The USGS announcement resulted in numerous inquiries and visits from around the globe inquiring how Western Colorado's energy might be made available internationally and here in the United States. In early 2017 President Trump met with and presumably discussed natural gas and other trade potential with Japan's Prime Minister - an encouraging development.

Much of Western Colorado's natural gas resource, however, remains under a federal regulatory regime that curtails development. With upwards of 70% of all lands in Western Colorado managed by federal agencies, much of the area's natural gas potential will not be manifested under the current regulatory processes. For Americans to realize the economic and societal benefits of producing the Mancos Shale, *significant* leasing and permitting reforms are critical.

Energy development on public lands will not attract investment capital without these reforms. The fact that an authorization for significant development on public lands typically requires upwards of ten years (whereas in many states permits can be acquired in weeks) is simply prohibitive to investment. This model forecloses on public lands participating in North America's Energy Revolution. If the Bureau of Land Management and United States Forest Service process are not reformed, the President's goal of funding national infrastructure by increasing energy production on federal lands will not be realized.



Given our deep experience and insight into the challenges of public lands development in Western Colorado, and given our unwavering support for the President's Energy plan, we formally request our association be considered for a role in the Department of Interior's regulatory task force created by the February Presidential Executive Order regarding the *enforcement of regulatory reform*.

From leasing and NEPA reform, to wholesale restructuring and revision of how federal minerals are developed, our association members have hundreds of years of collective experience in producing natural gas from federal lands in the Rocky Mountain Region. We can offer this knowledge to your reform task force. Our companies can work by your side creating a new regulatory structure that will allow for emergence of western Rockies' shale gas for our country, our allies overseas and our domestic manufacturers for a century to come.

Our association also respectfully requests that the regulatory reform officers (as described by the Executive Order) be comprised of individuals familiar with the litany of challenges and opportunities facing current lessees and energy operators seeking to produce minerals owned by the American taxpayer.

The West Slope Colorado Oil & Gas Association stands at your service to help drive the President's goal. We commit to specific and substantive input for your consideration in the months ahead.

With eagerness,



David Ludlam
Executive Director
West Slope Colorado Oil & Gas Association
Piceance Basin, Western Colorado



From: Williams, Timothy
To: [Scheduling SIO](#)
Subject: Fwd: National Summit on Infrastructure and the Environment
Date: Friday, March 10, 2017 12:49:18 PM
Attachments: [Infrastructure Summit 2017 v3.pdf](#)

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Selzer, Lawrence <lzelzer@conservationfund.org>
Date: Mon, Mar 6, 2017 at 4:39 PM
Subject: National Summit on Infrastructure and the Environment
To: "timothy_williams@ios.doi.gov" <timothy_williams@ios.doi.gov>, "nancy_guiden@ios.doi.gov" <nancy_guiden@ios.doi.gov>
Cc: "valerie_v_smith@ios.doi.gov" <valerie_v_smith@ios.doi.gov>, "Cannon, Holly" <hcannon@conservationfund.org>

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President

The Conservation Fund

--

Department Of The Interior
External and Intergovernmental Affairs
Timothy Williams
timothy_williams@ios.doi.gov
Office: (202) 208-6015
Cell: (202) 706-4982

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For more information, please contact:

Heather Richards

703-203-0060 or hrichards@conservationfund.org

THE
CONSERVATION FUND

From: Daniel Jorjani
To: scott_hommel@ios.doi.gov; micah_chambers@ios.doi.gov; megan_bloomgren@ios.doi.gov; douglas_domenech@ios.doi.gov
Subject: Fwd: Wyoming filing
Date: Wednesday, March 15, 2017 9:30:51 PM
Attachments: [ATT00001.htm](#)
[APPELLATE-#351446-v1-Fracking_Filing_Wyoming_v_BLM_to_abate_appeal_3_15_17.PDF](#)

FYI from Jack -

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Kevin Haugrud <jack.haugrud@sol.doi.gov>
Date: March 15, 2017 at 9:15:42 PM EDT
To: Daniel Jorjani <daniel_jorjani@ios.doi.gov>, Downey Magallanes <downey_magallanes@ios.doi.gov>, Richard Cardinale <richard_cardinale@ios.doi.gov>, Katharine Macgregor <katharine_macgregor@ios.doi.gov>, Michael Nedd <mnedd@blm.gov>
Cc: Karen Hawbecker <karen_hawbecker@sol.doi.gov>, Richard McNeer <richard.mcneer@sol.doi.gov>
Subject: Fwd: Wyoming filing

Here is what DOJ filed tonight in the hydraulic fracturing litigation.

Nos. 16-8068, 16-8069

IN THE UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS
FOR THE TENTH CIRCUIT

STATE OF WYOMING; STATE OF COLORADO; INDEPENDENT
PETROLEUM ASSOCIATION; and WESTERN ENERGY ALLIANCE,

Petitioners-Appellees

and

STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA; STATE OF UTAH; and UTE INDIAN TRIBE,

Intervenors-Appellees

v.

RYAN ZINKE; KRISTIN BAIL; U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR; and
U.S. BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT,

Respondents-Appellants

and

SIERRA CLUB; EARTH WORKS; WESTERN RESOURCE ADVOCATES;
WILDERNESS SOCIETY; CONSERVATION COLORADO EDUCATION
FUND; and SOUTHERN UTAH WILDERNESS ALLIANCE,

Intervenors-Appellants

ON APPEAL FROM THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE
DISTRICT OF WYOMING, NOS. 15-CV-41/43 (HON. SCOTT W. SKAVDAHL)

**FEDERAL APPELLANTS' MOTION TO CONTINUE ARGUMENT AND
HOLD CASE IN ABEYANCE PENDING ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION**

On March 9, 2017, this Court ordered BLM to confirm whether its position in these appeals has changed due to the recent change of Administration. For the reasons stated below, BLM respectfully requests this Court to continue the oral argument and hold these appeals in abeyance pending a new rulemaking by BLM. *See*

Fed. R. App. P. 2, 27. Petitioners-Appellees do not oppose this motion. The Citizen Group Intervenors-Appellants oppose this motion. For the following reasons, good cause exists to grant the motion:

1. On March 26, 2015, BLM published a rule governing hydraulic fracturing on federal and Indian lands. “Oil and Gas; Hydraulic Fracturing on Federal and Indian Lands,” 80 Fed. Reg. 16,128 (Mar. 26, 2015) (“2015 Final Rule”).

Petitioners challenged the 2015 Final Rule in the district court, and the district court set the rule aside. As a result, the 2015 Final Rule is not currently in effect. BLM and the Citizen Group Intervenors appealed to this Court, which ordered briefing and scheduled oral argument for March 22, 2017.

2. As the Court is aware, a new Administration took office on January 20, 2017, and a new Secretary of the Interior was sworn in on March 1, 2017.

3. Consistent with the President’s January 30, 2017, Executive Order on *Reducing Regulation and Controlling Regulatory Costs*, the Department of the Interior has been reviewing existing regulations to determine whether revisions or rescissions are appropriate to streamline the regulatory process and eliminate duplicative regulations. As part of this process, the Department has begun reviewing the 2015 Final Rule (and all guidance issued pursuant thereto) for consistency with the policies and priorities of the new Administration. This initial review has revealed that the 2015 Final Rule does not reflect those policies and priorities. Accordingly, the Department through the BLM has begun the process to prepare a notice of proposed rulemaking for

publication in the Federal Register to rescind the 2015 Rule. The Department intends to publish that notice as soon as it and any necessary supporting documents are completed, and to conduct the rulemaking expeditiously and in compliance with applicable law. The BLM expects to issue the notice within 90 days of the date of filing of this motion. *See* Declar. of Richard Cardinale (attached).

4. To conserve the Court's and the parties' resources, and in light of the proposed rulemaking process outlined above, BLM respectfully requests that the Court continue the oral argument and hold these appeals in abeyance pending the outcome of the proposed rulemaking process. *Am. Petroleum Inst. v. EPA*, 683 F.3d 382, 389 (D.C. Cir. 2012) (explaining that the Court may "hold the case in abeyance pending resolution of [a] proposed rulemaking, subject to regular reports from [the agency] on its status").

5. BLM proposes to file a status report 90 days from the date of the Court's order abating these appeals.

Respectfully submitted,

JEFFREY WOOD

Acting Assistant Attorney General

s/ Nicholas A. DiMascio

NICHOLAS A. DIMASCIO

Attorney, Appellate Section

U.S. Department of Justice

Environment and Natural Res. Div.

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Denver, CO 80202

(303) 844-1384

MARCH 15, 2017

90-5-1-4-20425

**CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE WITH
FEDERAL RULE OF APPELLATE PROCEDURE 32(A)**

I hereby certify that this motion complies with the requirements of Fed. R. App. P. 32(a)(5) and (6) because it has been prepared in 14-point Garamond, a proportionally spaced font.

I further certify that this motion complies with the type-volume limitation of Fed. R. App. P. 27(d)(2)(A) because it contains 475 words, excluding the parts of the brief exempted under Rule 32(f), according to the count of Microsoft Word.

s/ Nicholas A. DiMascio

NICHOLAS A. DIMASCIO

IN THE UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS
FOR THE TENTH CIRCUIT

STATE OF WYOMING, et al.,)	
)	
Petitioners-Appellees)	
)	
v.)	Nos. 16-8068, 16-8069
)	
RYAN ZINKE, Secretary of the Interior, et al.,)	
)	
Respondents-Appellants.)	

DECLARATION OF RICHARD CARDINALE

1. My name is Richard T. Cardinale. I am over 21 years of age and am fully competent and duly authorized to make this declaration. The facts contained in this declaration are based on my personal knowledge, and are true and correct.

2. I have been employed by the U.S. Department of Interior (Department) for over 19 years, the last 10.5 years as chief of staff to the Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management. I am presently Acting Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management at Departmental headquarters (Udall Building) located at 1849 C St, N.W., Washington, DC 20240. As Acting Assistant Secretary, I oversee the policies and activities of the Bureau of Land Management and three other bureaus within the Department.

3. I am familiar with BLM's statutory authorities, its oil and gas operating regulations, and its processes and procedures. I am familiar with the final hydraulic fracturing rule, which was signed by the Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management, and published on March 26, 2015. 80 Fed. Reg. 16128 (2015) [2015 Rule]. I am also familiar with the substantive issues

raised in the litigation concerning the 2015 Rule in the United States District Court for the District of Wyoming, and in this Court.

4. I also understand the current Administration's policies and priorities concerning the regulation of hydraulic fracturing on Federal and Indian lands. Pursuant to the President's January 30, 2017, Executive Order on *Reducing Regulation and Controlling Regulatory Costs*, the Department has been reviewing existing regulations to determine whether changes are appropriate to streamline the regulatory process and eliminate duplicative regulations. As part of that process, the Department is reviewing the 2015 Rule (and all guidance issued to implement that rule) for consistency with the policies and priorities of the new Administration. The initial review has revealed that the 2015 Rule does not reflect those policies and priorities.

5. Accordingly, the Department, through the BLM, is preparing a notice of proposed rulemaking for publication in the Federal Register to rescind the 2015 Rule. The Department intends to publish that notice as soon as it and any necessary supporting documents are completed, and to conduct the rulemaking expeditiously and in compliance with applicable law. The BLM expects to issue the notice within 90 days.

I submit this Declaration under penalty of perjury.



Richard T. Cardinale

Date: March 15, 2017

CERTIFICATE OF DIGITAL SUBMISSION

I hereby certify that with respect to the foregoing documents:

- (1) all required privacy redactions have been made;
- (2) if required to file additional hard copies, that the ECF submission is an exact copy of those documents;
- (3) the digital submissions have been scanned for viruses with the most recent version of a commercial virus scanning program, Microsoft Forefront Client Security, and according to the program are free of viruses.

s/ Nicholas A. DiMascio
NICHOLAS A. DIMASCIO

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that on March 15, 2017, I electronically filed the foregoing documents with the Clerk of the Court for the United States Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit using the appellate CM/ECF system.

The participants in the case are registered CM/ECF users and service will be accomplished by the appellate CM/ECF system.

s/ Nicholas A. DiMascio

NICHOLAS A. DIMASCIO

From: Daniel Jorjani
To: scott_hommel@ios.doi.gov; douglas_domenech@ios.doi.gov
Subject: Fwd: Citizen Groups" opposition
Date: Thursday, March 16, 2017 6:55:42 AM
Attachments: [ATT00001.htm](#)
[16-8068_Documents.pdf](#)

FYI

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Kevin Haugrud <jack.haugrud@sol.doi.gov>
Date: March 16, 2017 at 6:54:09 AM EDT
To: Daniel Jorjani <daniel_jorjani@ios.doi.gov>, Downey Magallanes <downey_magallanes@ios.doi.gov>, James Schindler <james_schindler@ios.doi.gov>, Katharine Macgregor <katharine_macgregor@ios.doi.gov>, Richard Cardinale <richard_cardinale@ios.doi.gov>, Michael Nedd <mnedd@blm.gov>
Cc: Richard McNeer <richard.mcneer@sol.doi.gov>, Karen Hawbecker <KAREN.HAWBECKER@sol.doi.gov>
Subject: Fw: Citizen Groups' opposition

FYI.

Original Message
From: DiMascio, Nicholas (ENRD) <Nicholas.DiMascio@usdoj.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, March 15, 2017 11:10 PM
To: Mergen, Andy (ENRD); richard.mcneer@sol.doi.gov; jack.haugrud@sol.doi.gov; KAREN.HAWBECKER@sol.doi.gov
Subject: Citizen Groups' opposition

The Citizen Groups filed the attached opposition to our motion.

Nos. 16-8068, 16-8069

**UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS
FOR THE TENTH CIRCUIT**

STATE OF WYOMING, *et al.*,
Petitioner-Appellees,

v.

RYAN ZINKE, Secretary, United States Department of the Interior, *et al.*,
Respondent-Appellants,

SIERRA CLUB, *et al.*,
Intervenor-Respondent-Appellants.

On Appeal from the United States District Court for the District of Wyoming
Civil Action No. 2:15-CV-00043-SWS
The Honorable Scott W. Skavdahl

**INTERVENOR-RESPONDENT-APPELLANTS' PRELIMINARY
RESPONSE IN OPPOSITION TO FEDERAL APPELLANTS' MOTION TO
CONTINUE ARGUMENT AND HOLD CASE IN ABEYANCE**

After seven years of rulemaking and litigation, Respondents-Appellants Ryan Zinke et al. (collectively, BLM) have now moved to continue the March 22 oral argument, and to hold this appeal in abeyance indefinitely while the agency begins the process of rescinding its hydraulic fracturing rule, 80 Fed. Reg. 16,128 (Mar. 26, 2015) (the Rule). The Court should deny BLM's request because the issue in this appeal – whether BLM lacks legal authority to regulate hydraulic fracturing on public lands – will be just as central to BLM's new process as it is to evaluating the 2015 Rule. Any decision by BLM to rescind the Rule will

necessarily be informed by whether it has legal authority to manage oil and gas development on public lands. The agency's reversal of position does not eliminate the need for appellate review here.

Moreover, the abeyance requested by BLM would unfairly prejudice Intervenor-Respondent-Appellants the Sierra Club, et al. (collectively, the Citizen Groups), by indefinitely shielding from appellate review the district court's far-reaching ruling stripping the agency of its well-established authority. An indefinite abeyance also would allow BLM to effectively rescind the Rule without the notice-and-comment rulemaking and reasoned decision-making required under the Administrative Procedure Act (APA), 5 U.S.C. § 551 et seq.

In addition, the requested abeyance will harm the public interest by allowing thousands of new oil and gas wells to be drilled indefinitely under outdated 30-year-old standards that fail to adequately protect public health and the environment.

Alternatively, if the Court does vacate the March 22 oral argument, any postponement in this appeal should be strictly limited to minimize the prejudice to the Citizen Groups and public interest. Oral argument should be continued only until the May 2017 calendar, and the parties directed in the meantime to submit supplemental memoranda fully addressing the issues presented by BLM's motion. These include not only: (a) whether this appeal should be held in abeyance, but

also, (b) if this appeal is stayed, what the status of the Rule should be during BLM's new rulemaking effort, and (c) what the status of the district court's order should be during that process.

BACKGROUND

Every year, thousands of oil and gas wells are drilled and completed on federal and Indian lands. 80 Fed. Reg. at 16,130. Today, approximately 90% of those wells are hydraulically fractured. Id. at 16,131. BLM, however, manages oil and gas production under regulations that were last updated more than thirty years ago. Id. The agency's current regulations were issued in the early 1980s, "long before the latest hydraulic fracturing technologies were developed or became widely used." Id.

BLM recognized that updated regulations and "additional regulatory effort and oversight" were needed to address these technological developments, prevent groundwater contamination from faulty well construction, and protect the public. See id. at 16,128, 16,131. The agency undertook an extensive, nearly five-year-long rulemaking effort in which it heard from industry, states, tribes, experts, other federal agencies and more than one million public commenters. Citizen Groups' Op. Br. 5 (Aug. 12, 2016). This input extensively documented the need for updated well construction standards, better waste management requirements, and improved BLM oversight. Id. at 5–9.

On March 26, 2015, BLM published the Rule. It was immediately challenged by the Petitioner-Appellees, who moved for a preliminary injunction preventing it from taking effect. Appellants' App. 30–32. On June 24, 2015, the district court issued an order “postponing” the effective date of the Rule, which it later followed on September 30, 2015 with a nationwide preliminary injunction. Appellees' App. 3217–18, 3350–51. This injunction made the unprecedented legal ruling that BLM lacks the legal authority to regulate hydraulic fracturing on public lands. Id. at 3214–17. The injunction effectively denied BLM the tools it determined were necessary to adequately manage the 90% of oil and gas wells on public lands that are hydraulically fractured.

Even prior to BLM's motion today, the industry trade associations and states challenging the Rule (collectively, Petitioner-Appellees) had gone to great lengths to delay appellate review of the district court's ruling. BLM and the Citizen Groups appealed the 2015 preliminary injunction order, see Citizen Groups' Op. Br. 10 (Aug. 12, 2016), but Petitioner-Appellees slowed those appellate proceedings by filing a meritless motion to dismiss the preliminary injunction

appeal, and by opposing a request to expedite the appeal.¹ These efforts prevented the injunction appeal from being heard during this Court's May 2016 calendar.²

At the same time, Petitioner-Appellees successfully opposed the Citizen Groups' request to stay district court proceedings pending the injunction appeal, and similar requests by BLM to expedite appellate review of the central issues in the case. Ex. B at 12–13. Remarkably, Petitioner-Appellees even opposed a request for the district court to enter judgment in Petitioner-Appellees' favor, which would have quickly moved the entire case to this court. Ex. A at 3; Ex. B at 11–13. As a result, merits briefing proceeded simultaneously in the district court and in the preliminary injunction appeal.

Briefing in the injunction appeal was completed on June 20, 2016.³ On the very next day, June 21, 2016, the district court entered a final merits decision setting aside the Rule on the ground that it was outside of BLM's legal authority.

¹ See Intervenor-Resp't-Appellants' Reply in Supp. of Appellants' Joint Mot. to Expedite Argument at 1–4, Wyoming v. Sierra Club, Nos. 15-8126 & 15-8134 (10th Cir. Feb. 24, 2016) (Attached as Exhibit A); Intervenor-Resp't-Appellants' Resp. in Opp'n to Mot. to Dismiss at 2–3, Wyoming v. Sierra Club, Nos. 15-8126 & 15-8134 (10th Cir. Feb. 19, 2016) (Attached as Exhibit B).

² See Order at 2, Wyoming v. Sierra Club, Nos. 15-8126 & 15-8134 (10th Cir. Feb. 24, 2016) (denying Appellants' motion to expedite appeal, and Petitioner-Appellees' motion to dismiss); Order at 1–2, Wyoming v. Sierra Club, Nos. 15-8126 & 15-8134 (10th Cir. Mar. 10, 2016) (resetting opening brief deadline from February 16, 2016 to March 21, 2016).

³ See Intervenor-Resp't-Appellants' Reply Br., Wyoming v. Sierra Club, Nos. 15-8126 & 15-8134 (10th Cir. June 20, 2016).

Appellants' App. 320–21. This Court subsequently dismissed the preliminary injunction appeals as moot and ordered the district court to vacate the preliminary injunction.⁴

Within a week after it was issued, both BLM and the Citizen Groups appealed the district court's final order on June 24, and June 27, 2016, respectively. Appellants' App. 324–27. Briefing in this appeal was completed in October 2016, and oral argument scheduled on the January 2017 calendar. However, this Court sua sponte vacated the January argument and rescheduled it for the March 2017 calendar. That postponement gave the new presidential administration two months after taking office to evaluate its position in this appeal.

Prior to the March 9 direction from this Court, BLM gave absolutely no indication that it was unprepared to defend its Rule at the March 22 argument. But now, after defending the Rule for two years in the district and appeals courts, BLM has informed the Court that it plans to rescind the Rule. The agency, however, offers no date for when that rescission might be completed.

ARGUMENT

This Court's rules strongly disfavor postponing oral argument. "Only in extraordinary circumstances will an argument be postponed." 10th Cir. R.

⁴ Order at 3–4, Wyoming v. Sierra Club, Nos. 15-8126 & 15-8134 (10th Cir. July 13, 2016), 2016 WL 3853806, at *1.

34.1(A)(3). “Where a movant seeks relief that would delay court proceedings by other litigants he must make a strong showing of necessity.” Commodity Futures Trading Comm’n v. Chilcott Portfolio Mgmt., Inc., 713 F.2d 1477, 1484 (10th Cir. 1983) (Chilcott).

Moreover, when a party seeks an order staying a proceeding the Court should consider whether the stay “will substantially injure the other parties interested in the proceeding; and . . . where the public interest lies.” Nken v. Holder, 556 U.S. 418, 428, 434 (2009) (quotation omitted); see also Am. Petroleum Inst. v. Envtl. Prot. Agency, 683 F.3d 382, 387 (D.C. Cir. 2012) (considering “hardship to the parties” in deciding whether to hold case in abeyance). The party seeking a stay “must make out a clear case of hardship or inequity in being required to go forward, if there is even a fair possibility that the stay for which he prays will work damage to some one else.” Chilcott, 713 F.2d at 1484 (quotation omitted).

BLM’s request falls well short of meeting the heavy burden for delaying oral argument and holding this appeal in abeyance.

I. BLM Has Not Met The Requirements For Postponing Oral Argument.

BLM does not even suggest that a postponement of the March 22 argument is necessary. To the contrary, the agency apparently was prepared to go ahead

with the argument as scheduled: BLM only filed its motion after the Court asked for confirmation of the agency's position in this appeal.⁵

Moreover, proceeding with oral argument and resolution of this appeal is important even in light of BLM's decision to launch a process to repeal the Rule. The issue before the Court—BLM's authority to regulate oil and gas development on public lands—is just as relevant for that new effort as it is in defending the Rule. Whether BLM has this authority is a purely legal question that will inevitably affect whatever new decision the agency makes. The Court should proceed with oral argument and this appeal in order to resolve the uncertainty created by the district court's unprecedented decision.

II. The Requested Abeyance Will Prejudice The Citizens Groups And Is Contrary To The Public Interest.

BLM's request for abeyance will prejudice the Citizen Groups and harm the public interest. It will shield from appellate review the district court's far-reaching ruling that BLM lacks legal authority to regulate well construction, waste management, and other activities on 90% of the oil and gas wells drilled on public lands—a decision that has impacts reaching well beyond the Rule itself. At the

⁵ Moreover, BLM's request is untimely under this Court's rules. "Except in an emergency, a motion to postpone must be made more than 20 days before the scheduled argument date." 10th Cir. R. 34.1(A)(3); accord Fed. R. App. P. 34(b) ("A motion to postpone the argument . . . must be filed reasonably in advance of the hearing date."). BLM seeks postponement only seven days before the scheduled argument—without claiming that any emergency exists.

same time, an abeyance would allow BLM to achieve what the APA prohibits: an indefinite stay of the Rule without notice-and-comment rulemaking or a reasoned explanation.

First, the abeyance will unfairly prejudice the Citizen Groups by preventing them from pursuing their appeal of the district court's ruling. Independent of BLM, the Citizen Groups filed their own appeal in June 2016. While that appeal has been consolidated with the federal government's appeal, the Citizen Groups' right to proceed should not be held captive to BLM's new position. "An intervenor, whether by right or by permission, normally has the right to appeal an adverse final judgment by a trial court." Stringfellow v. Concerned Neighbors in Action, 480 U.S. 370, 375–76 (1987); see also Barnes v. Harris, 783 F.3d 1185, 1191 (10th Cir. 2015) ("[W]hen a party intervenes, it becomes a full participant in the lawsuit and is treated just as if it were an original party." (quoting Alvarado v. J.C. Penney Co., 997 F.2d 803, 805 (10th Cir. 1993)); Coal. of Ariz./N.M. Ctys. for Stable Econ. Growth v. Dep't of Interior, 100 F.3d 837, 844 (10th Cir. 1996) (an "intervenor becomes no less a party than others").

BLM apparently proposes to leave the district court's decision setting aside the Rule in effect while the agency undertakes a new rulemaking effort. But it is hardly unprecedented for an intervenor to continue defending a law on appeal even when a federal agency no longer chooses to do so. See, e.g., United States v.

Windsor, 133 S. Ct. 2675, 2689 (2013) (Defense of Marriage Act); Wyoming v. U.S. Dep't of Agric., 414 F.3d 1207, 1211 (10th Cir. 2005) (Forest Service Roadless Rule); Kootenai Tribe of Idaho v. Veneman, 313 F.3d 1094, 1107 (9th Cir. 2002) (same), abrogated on other grounds by Wilderness Soc'y v. U.S. Forest Serv., 630 F.3d 1173 (9th Cir. 2011).

Moreover, shielding the district court's ruling from appellate review could have far-reaching impacts to the Citizen Groups and public interest that extend well beyond just this Rule. For example, much of the court's reasoning—such as its view that BLM lacks authority under the Mineral Leasing Act to issue rules protecting groundwater on public lands—would invalidate BLM's existing regulations. Citizen Groups' Op. Br. 23, 28 (Aug. 12, 2016). Similarly, the district court's view that the Federal Land Policy and Management Act, 43 U.S.C. § 1701 et seq., is just a “planning statute” that does not allow the agency to adopt comprehensive rules and regulations, may have far-reaching impacts that extend to numerous other activities on public lands such as grazing, wildlife management and surface water protections. Citizen Groups' Op. Br. 43–45 (Aug. 12, 2016).

Second, BLM cannot make the Rule disappear merely by deciding that it wants to rescind it. Notice-and-comment rulemaking will be required before rescinding the regulation, a point the agency acknowledges. Mexichem Specialty Resins, Inc. v. Env'tl. Prot. Agency, 787 F.3d 544, 557 (D.C. Cir. 2015); Nat'l

Parks Conservation Ass'n v. Salazar, 660 F. Supp. 2d 3, 5 (D.D.C. 2009). That process takes time. Nearly five years elapsed between November 2010, when BLM began work on the Rule and March 2015, when the Rule was finalized. 80 Fed. Reg. at 16,128.

Because it shields the district court's ruling from appellate review and potential reversal, BLM's requested abeyance would effect an indefinite stay of the Rule despite the fact that no notice-and-comment rulemaking process has been completed to rescind it. Notably, BLM offers no date by which it expects to finalize a decision rescinding the Rule, and its notice-and-comment process is likely to take multiple years. BLM's motion asks for three months just to publish a notice of the proposed rulemaking. This is not a case where the agency has been at work on a new rule for years at the time oral argument is scheduled. See Wyoming, 414 F.3d at 1211 (appeal mooted when Forest Service finalized new rule four years after new administration took office).

Third, the requested abeyance will harm the public interest by allowing numerous oil and gas wells to be drilled under outdated and inadequate standards while BLM reconsiders its new Rule. If the notice-and-comment process takes two more years, BLM's own estimate indicates that 5,600–7,600 new wells will be completed during that time. See 80 Fed. Reg. at 16,130 (2,800–3,800 wells hydraulically fractured per year). And if BLM rescinds the Rule without replacing

it with new standards, see *Cardinale Decl.* ¶ 5 (Mar. 15, 2017) (BLM preparing notice of proposed rulemaking “to rescind the 2015 Rule” with no mention of replacement), many thousands of additional wells would continue to be drilled based on the same inadequate 1980s regulations.

Those thousands of wells will pose an unnecessary risk to federal lands and to members of the public who live, work, or recreate nearby. And when they do cause groundwater contamination or other accidents, those wells will result in substantial unnecessary costs to remediate—if they can be cleaned up at all. BLM must undertake a reasoned process, and allow notice-and-comment, before abandoning its updated standards.

The prejudice to Citizen Groups and the public interest would be especially inequitable given the lengthy delays that have already occurred in this case. It has now been nearly two years since the district court blocked the Rule from taking effect. During that time, the parties have fully briefed two separate appeals seeking review of the district court’s holding that BLM lacks legal authority to promulgate the Rule. And thousands of wells have been drilled and completed under outdated standards. The Court should not postpone appellate review yet again. See *Chilcott*, 713 F.2d at 1484 (“The right to proceed in court should not be denied except under the most extreme circumstances” (quotation omitted)).

III. Any Delay In This Appeal Should Be Limited And For The Purposes Of Fully Briefing BLM's Abeyance Motion.

Alternatively, if the Court does vacate the March 22 oral argument, any postponement in this appeal should be strictly limited to minimize the prejudice to the Citizen Groups and public interest. Oral argument should be continued only until the May 2017 calendar, and the parties directed in the meantime to submit supplemental memoranda fully addressing the issues presented by BLM's motion. These include not only: (a) whether this appeal should be held in abeyance, but also, (b) if this appeal is stayed, what the status of the Rule should be during BLM's new rulemaking effort, and (c) what the status of the district court's order should be during that process.

CONCLUSION

The Citizen Groups respectfully request that the Court deny BLM's motion to continue oral argument and hold this appeal in abeyance. The appeal should be argued on March 22 as scheduled.

Alternatively, if the Court does vacate the March 22 oral argument, any postponement in this appeal should be strictly limited to minimize the prejudice to the Citizen Groups and public interest. Oral argument should be continued only until the May 2017 calendar, and the parties directed in the meantime to submit supplemental memoranda fully addressing the issues presented by BLM's motion.

Dated: March 15, 2017

s/Michael S. Freeman
Michael S. Freeman
Joel Minor
Earthjustice
633 17th Street, Suite 1600
Denver, CO 80202
(303) 623-9466 (phone)
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mfreeman@earthjustice.org
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*Attorneys for Intervenor-Respondent-
Appellants Sierra Club, et al.*

CERTIFICATE OF DIGITAL SUBMISSION

I hereby certify that with respect to the foregoing:

(1) all required privacy redactions have been made per 10th Cir. R. 25.5;

(2) if required to file additional hard copies, that the ECF submission is an exact copy of those documents;

(3) the digital submissions have been scanned for viruses with the most recent version of a commercial virus scanning program, Kaspersky Endpoint Security 10, Version 10.2.5.3201 (mr2.mr3), dated March 15, 2017, and according to the program are free of viruses.

s/Michael S. Freeman

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that on March 15, 2017 I electronically filed the foregoing **INTERVENOR-RESPONDENT-APPELLANTS' PRELIMINARY RESPONSE IN OPPOSITION TO FEDERAL DEFENDANTS' MOTION TO CONTINUE ARGUMENT AND HOLD CASE IN ABEYANCE** using the court's CM/ECF system which will send notification of such filing to the following:

Nicholas A. DiMascio - nicholas.dimascio@usdoj.gov
Frederick Richard Yarger – fred.yarger@state.co.us
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s/ Michael Freeman

EXHIBIT A

Nos. 15-8126, 15-8134

**UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS
FOR THE TENTH CIRCUIT**

STATE OF WYOMING, *et al.*,
Petitioner-Appellees,

v.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, *et al.*,
Respondent-Appellants,

SIERRA CLUB, EARTHWORKS, WESTERN RESOURCE ADVOCATES,
CONSERVATION COLORADO EDUCATION FUND, THE WILDERNESS
SOCIETY, and SOUTHERN UTAH WILDERNESS ALLIANCE.
Intervenor-Respondent-Appellants.

On Appeal from the United States District Court for the District of Wyoming
Civil Action Nos. 2:15-CV-00041-SWS, 2:15-CV-00043-SWS
The Honorable Scott W. Skavdahl

**INTERVENOR-RESPONDENT-APPELLANTS' REPLY IN SUPPORT OF
APPELLANTS' JOINT MOTION TO EXPEDITE ARGUMENT AND
CONSIDERATION OF PRELIMINARY-INJUNCTION APPEAL**

Respondent-Intervenor-Appellants Sierra Club, et al. (the Citizen Groups)
and Respondent-Appellants Bureau of Land Management, et al. (BLM) have asked
this Court for very reasonable relief given the important issues presented in this
case: that this appeal be scheduled on the May oral argument calendar and be given
expedited consideration. By ruling that BLM lacks legal authority to regulate
hydraulic fracturing, the district court preliminary injunction order at issue in this
appeal has created major uncertainty over the agency's ability to manage oil and

gas development on more than 750 million acres of public and Indian lands. Appellants' Joint Mot. to Expedite 5–6 (Feb. 8, 2016). Moreover, that preliminary injunction requires BLM to continue operating under 30-year-old regulations. As a result, with every passing month hundreds of new oil and gas wells are completed on public lands using outdated and inadequate standards. Citizen Groups' Resp. to Mot. to Dismiss 3–4 (Feb. 19, 2016). BLM and the Citizen Groups have not asked for the extraordinary relief of staying the injunction order, and thus need not establish the requirements for a stay. But the far-reaching nationwide impact of the preliminary injunction order constitutes good cause for this Court to give expedited attention to this appeal. Mot. to Expedite 5–6.

Petitioner-Appellees Western Energy Alliance and Independent Petroleum Association of America (collectively, the Industry Parties), along with Petitioner-Appellees Wyoming, Colorado, North Dakota, Utah (the States), and the Ute Tribe, have responded to the motion to expedite with a level of opposition that is very telling. Shortly after BLM and the Citizen Groups filed their motion to expedite, the Industry Parties responded by asking for the unprecedented (and unjustified) dismissal of the appeal on the theory that it might become moot later this year. See Industry Parties' Mot. to Dismiss 6–11 (Feb. 10, 2016). That

motion to dismiss, while meritless, had the effect of at least temporarily staying the briefing schedule in this appeal. See 10th Cir. R. 27.3(C).

Then the Industry Parties, the States, and the Ute Tribe responded to Appellants' seven-page motion to expedite with twenty pages of opposition briefs along with a 268-page exhibit. Notably, the Industry Parties, the States, and the Ute Tribe have not argued that they would suffer prejudice from putting this appeal on the May argument calendar. Nor have they disputed that a prompt ruling from this Court would provide controlling guidance that narrows the issues remaining for the district court to decide, and could even dispose of the entire case. Citizen Groups' Resp. to Mot. to Dismiss 8.

Instead, their staunch opposition to an early hearing in this Court reflects a tactical effort by the Industry Parties and the States to avoid appellate review of the preliminary injunction order, and thus ensure that the new BLM regulation does not take effect while they draw out proceedings in the district court. That same litigation strategy motivated the States and Industry Parties to oppose earlier proposals by BLM and the Citizen Groups to enter final judgment in their favor—even though such a judgment would have awarded the Industry Parties and States all the relief they could possibly obtain in this case. Citizen Groups' Resp. to Mot. to Dismiss 11–14.

That strategy may serve the litigation goals of the Industry Parties and the States. But it undercuts the public interest in responsible management of energy development on public lands and puts at risk the water, land, and other resources protected by BLM's new regulation. The strategy of the States and Industry Parties also would waste judicial and party resources. This Court should expedite this appeal.

The request by BLM and the Citizen Groups to expedite this appeal should be GRANTED.

Date: February 24, 2016



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CERTIFICATE OF DIGITAL SUBMISSION

I hereby certify that with respect to the foregoing:

- (1) all required privacy redactions have been made per 10th Cir. R. 25.5;
- (2) if required to file additional hard copies, that the ECF submission is an exact copy of those documents;
- (3) the digital submissions have been scanned for viruses with the most recent version of a commercial virus scanning program, Kaspersky Endpoint Security 10, Version 10.2.4.674 (mr2), dated February 24, 2016, and according to the program are free of viruses.

s/Michael S. Freeman

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that on February 24, 2016 I electronically filed the foregoing **INTERVENOR-RESPONDENT-APPELLANTS' REPLY IN SUPPORT OF APPELLANTS' JOINT MOTION TO EXPEDITE ARGUMENT AND CONSIDERATION OF PRELIMINARY-INJUNCTION APPEAL** using the court's CM/ECF system which will send notification of such filing to the following:

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EXHIBIT B

Nos. 15-8126, 15-8134

**UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS
FOR THE TENTH CIRCUIT**

STATE OF WYOMING, *et al.*,
Petitioner-Appellees,

v.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, *et al.*,
Respondent-Appellants,

SIERRA CLUB, EARTHWORKS, WESTERN RESOURCE ADVOCATES,
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On Appeal from the United States District Court for the District of Wyoming
Civil Action Nos. 2:15-CV-00041-SWS, 2:15-CV-00043-SWS
The Honorable Scott W. Skavdahl

**INTERVENOR-RESPONDENT-APPELLANTS'
RESPONSE IN OPPOSITION TO MOTION TO DISMISS
OR FOR A STAY**

CORPORATE DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Pursuant to Federal Rule of Appellate Procedure 26.1, the Respondent-Intervenor-Appellants Sierra Club, Earthworks, Western Resource Advocates, Conservation Colorado Education Fund, The Wilderness Society, and Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance have no parent companies, subsidiaries, or affiliates that have issued shares to the public.

INTRODUCTION

The Motion to Dismiss filed by Petitioner-Appellees Western Energy Alliance and Independent Petroleum Association of America (collectively, the Industry Parties) should be denied because it rests on several false premises. First, this appeal is plainly not moot: the regulation at issue (the Rule) was promulgated last year by Respondent-Appellant Bureau of Land Management (BLM) but has been blocked from taking effect by the preliminary injunction entered by the district court in this case. This Court can grant BLM and Respondent-Intervenor-Appellants Sierra Club, et al. (the Citizen Groups) effective relief by reversing the district court and lifting the injunction so that the Rule can take effect. Nor is this appeal on the verge of becoming moot. Despite the Industry Parties' speculation, it is not at all clear if or when the district court will enter a final judgment that might supplant the preliminary injunction order now on appeal.

This Court also should deny the Industry Parties' alternative request for a stay. A stay would unfairly prejudice BLM and the Citizen Groups by effectively denying their statutory right to obtain interlocutory review of the preliminary injunction order. A stay would be especially inequitable because the current situation—with parallel proceedings likely in the district and appellate courts—is of the Industry Parties' own making. The Industry Parties successfully opposed several proposals by BLM and the Citizen Groups in the district court to coordinate

the injunction appeal and district court proceedings. The Industry Parties should not now be allowed to use the parallel proceedings they insisted on as an excuse to prevent BLM and the Citizen Groups from seeking timely review in this Court.

BACKGROUND

On March 26, 2015, BLM published the Rule, which addresses hydraulic fracturing of oil and gas wells on federal and Indian lands. 80 Fed. Reg. 16,128 (Mar. 26, 2015). The Rule, which was the product of years of public engagement, scientific study, and technical development, updates BLM regulations that had been issued in the 1980s. *Id.* at 16,131. The existing regulations predated modern hydraulic fracturing technology, and BLM (along with other experts) recognized that the thirty-year-old regulations were inadequate to address a variety of environmental risks presented by current practices. *Id.* at 16,128–29. BLM determined that that changes were needed to manage the new technologies and the much larger and more intensive operations used on federal lands today. *Id.* at 16,128, 16,188–89; *see* Appellants’ Joint Mot. to Expedite 3 (Feb. 8, 2016).

The updated Rule requires oil and gas operators on federal and Indian lands to obtain BLM approval before beginning fracturing operations; to follow modern design and testing standards to ensure wellbore integrity and protect usable aquifers; to properly manage waste fluids that flow back to the surface in

order to avoid spills; and to disclose chemicals used in the fracturing process. 80 Fed. Reg. at 16,129–30, 16,217–22.

The Industry Parties, along with the States of Colorado, Wyoming, Utah and North Dakota (collectively the States) and the Ute Tribe, immediately challenged the Rule in district court and sought an injunction against its enforcement. See, e.g., Industry Parties’ Mot. for Prelim. Inj. (May 15, 2015) (Case No. 2:15-cv-00041-SWS, ECF No. 11).¹ On September 30, 2015, the district court granted those motions and entered a nationwide injunction against the Rule (the Injunction Order). Order on Mots. For Prelim. Inj. 53–54 (Sept. 30, 2015) (ECF No. 130). The district court’s 54-page order concluded that the Industry Parties and the States were likely to succeed on the merits because BLM lacks the legal authority to regulate hydraulic fracturing on public lands. Id. at 8–22. The court also held that there was no “rational justification” for BLM to update its 30-year-old regulations. Id. at 23. This appeal seeks review of the district court’s Injunction Order.

The Injunction Order is having tangible adverse impacts in a variety of ways. BLM updated its rules so that they adequately address a number of resource risks posed by modern hydraulic fracturing, including groundwater contamination, interference with other wells, leakage of fracturing chemicals, and surface spills of

¹ The district court proceedings involved two consolidated cases, No. 2:15-cv-00041-SWS and No. 2:15-cv-00043-SWS. Unless otherwise noted, all citations to district court filings are to the docket for lead case, No. 15-cv-00043-SWS.

waste fluids.² The Injunction Order robs BLM of the tools it has determined are necessary to protect public lands and resources. As a result, hundreds of oil and gas wells are being completed each month using outdated and inadequate federal standards. See 80 Fed. Reg. at 16,130 (estimating that Rule will impact 2,800–3,800 hydraulic fracturing operations on federal and Indian lands annually).

Moreover, the district court’s legal ruling that BLM lacks authority to issue the Rule has far-reaching ramifications. Fully 90% of the oil and gas wells drilled on federal and Indian lands today are hydraulically fractured. Id. at 16,131. The district court’s holding that BLM lacks the legal authority to address that practice prevents BLM from adequately managing oil and gas development on public lands. By doing so, the Injunction Order impairs BLM’s ability to fulfill its statutory mandate to ensure the proper conduct of oil and gas operations on the 756 million acres of federal and Indian lands that it manages. Mot. to Expedite 6; accord 80 Fed. Reg. at 16,129.

The appeal of the Injunction Order does not automatically halt proceedings in the district court. United States v. Madrid, 633 F.3d 1222, 1226–27 (10th Cir. 2011); Garcia v. Burlington N. R.R. Co., 818 F.2d 713, 721 (10th Cir. 1987). BLM and the Citizen Groups, however, proposed several steps to ensure that district court and appellate proceedings would take place in an efficient manner

² See 80 Fed. Reg. at 16,128–31, 16,148–49, 16,152–54, 16,160–64, 16,180, 16,181–82, 16,188–89, 16,193–95, 16,203–04.

without requiring parallel proceedings or unnecessary duplication. See infra pp. 11–12. The Industry Parties and the States successfully opposed all these proposals, insisting that they were “entitled” to pursue further district court litigation without waiting on this Court. See infra pp. 12–13.

Having created the current situation by insisting on parallel proceedings in the district and appellate courts, the Industry Parties now ask this Court to deny BLM and the Citizen Groups their right to prompt interlocutory review of the Injunction Order. This request should be denied.

The Citizen Groups are prepared to file their Opening Brief immediately when the Court reinstates the briefing schedule in this appeal.

DISCUSSION

I. THE MOTION TO DISMISS SHOULD BE DENIED BECAUSE THIS APPEAL IS NOT MOOT

It is black-letter law that a case only becomes moot where a court can grant no further relief to the party seeking a remedy. Rio Grande Silvery Minnow v. Bureau of Reclamation, 601 F.3d 1096, 1109 (10th Cir. 2010). Here, this Court obviously can provide relief to BLM and the Citizen Groups by reversing the district court’s preliminary injunction order and allowing the Rule to take effect. Any claim that this appeal is moot would be meritless.³

³ The Motion to Dismiss should also be denied as untimely. Motions to dismiss an appeal for mootness must be filed within fourteen days of the notice of appeal,

The Industry Parties appear to concede that this appeal is not presently moot. Instead, the main thrust of their argument is that the appeal should be dismissed because it might possibly become moot at some point in the coming months. We are not aware of any case law supporting dismissal based on such a future mootness theory, and the Industry Parties have not cited any.

Moreover, the Industry Parties' future mootness theory involves nothing more than hopeful speculation. Their motion predicts that merits briefing in the district court supposedly will be complete by the end of April, shortly before the May Tenth Circuit oral argument date requested by BLM and the Citizen Groups. Mot. to Dismiss 8–9; Mot. to Expedite 4, 7. The Industry Parties then conclude that the merits will be “presented to the district court two weeks before the

absent a showing of good cause. 10th Cir. R. 27.3(A)(1)(a)-(b), (A)(3)(a). The Industry Parties filed their motion to dismiss 75 days after the Citizen Groups' November 27, 2015 notice of appeal. The Industry Parties claim that they “could not bring this issue before the Court” until they had decided against pursuing further litigation in the district court over the administrative record. Mot. to Dismiss 10 n.6. They have known for months, however, about the overlapping proceedings. See Pet'rs' Resp. in Opp'n to Resp't-Intervenors' Mot. 8 (Nov. 30, 2015) (ECF No. 154) (Industry Parties' prediction that “[g]iven the normal timetable of appellate proceedings,” a Tenth Circuit decision is unlikely before the district court rules on the merits).

A more plausible explanation for the timing of the motion to dismiss involves the Feb. 8, 2016 motion by BLM and the Citizen Groups to expedite this appeal. Shortly after the request to expedite was filed, the Industry Parties responded by moving to dismiss or stay the appeal. The Citizen Groups respectfully submit that this does not qualify as good cause for the untimely motion to dismiss. See United States v. Clayton, 416 F.3d 1236, 1238 (10th Cir. 2005) (explaining that the deadline “prevents the tactical use of a motion to delay briefing”).

propriety of the preliminary injunction is presented to this Court. No matter how the district court resolves the merits, this appeal will become moot.” Mot. to Dismiss 7.

This argument suffers several flaws. First the Industry Parties are incorrect in stating that the “parties have a briefing schedule in place” setting the dates it lists for district court briefing. Id. at 1. They merely describe the presumptive briefing times contemplated under the District of Wyoming local rules. See id. at 5–6; D. Wyo. Civ. R. 83.6(c). The parties have not agreed to such a briefing schedule, and there has been no court order setting dates for merits briefing. Much of the district court briefing to date, in fact, has modified the presumptive deadlines in recognition of the complexity of the case and number of parties involved.⁴ It is not clear at this stage when merits briefing in the district court will be completed.⁵

Moreover, the Industry Parties are skipping a step: they mistakenly equate the completion of district court briefing with entry of final judgment. Even after briefing finishes, the district court still has to actually issue a ruling on the merits,

⁴ See, e.g., Order Granting in Part Resp’ts’ Consent Mot. to Extend Deadline (May 21, 2015) (Case No. 41, ECF No. 16); Order Granting Joint Mot. to Extend Deadline (Sept. 2, 2015) (ECF No. 115); Order Granting Joint Mot. to Extend Deadlines (Oct. 16, 2015) (ECF No. 134); Order Granting Joint Mot. to Modify Br. Schedule (Jan. 11, 2016) (ECF No. 182).

⁵ The Industry Parties incorrectly state that the district court has “den[ied] any further extensions to the briefing schedule.” Mot. to Dismiss 9. The order cited addressed motions to complete the administrative record—not merits briefing. ECF No. 182 at 2.

and then a final judgment. Moreover, the court may schedule oral argument prior to ruling on the merits. While the Industry Parties assume a district court ruling will come quickly, there is no guarantee of that.

Should this Court expedite this appeal and schedule a May oral argument, the district court will have an incentive to wait on the forthcoming appellate ruling. If this Court affirms the district court's Injunction Order (especially the holding that BLM lacks legal authority to issue the Rule), that affirmance may dispose of the entire case and make any further decisions by the district court unnecessary. Even if this Court's ruling does not dispose of the entire case, its rulings on legal authority and other issues will provide controlling precedent and narrow the issues for the district court to resolve on remand. With this appeal on an expedited track, the district court may choose to conserve its resources by waiting for this Court's ruling before issuing a merits decision in the case.

Even if the district court does press ahead with a merits decision before the Tenth Circuit rules, further proceedings on an appropriate remedy will likely be required before entry of final judgment. Assuming the district court rules against BLM (as it did in the Injunction Order), various remedy options exist. These include a remand without vacating the Rule, enjoining only certain parts of the Rule, or enjoining it only in certain states. Remedy proceedings will take additional time and make it even less likely that this appeal will become moot.

In short, the Industry Parties offer nothing more than speculation that the district court will issue a final judgment before this Court rules on the Injunction Order. Particularly if this Court grants the Motion to Expedite and hears argument in May, a ruling from this Court likely will precede final judgment in the district court.

But even if the district court manages to issue a final judgment before this Court rules, efforts to proceed with this appeal will not have been wasted. In that circumstance, the Court need not start from scratch with a new appeal. Instead, it can consolidate the pending injunction appeal with an appeal from the final judgment, and order supplemental briefing from the parties on any new issues presented by the district court's merits ruling.⁶ See, e.g., Kiowa Indian Tribe of Okla. v. Hoover, 150 F.3d 1163, 1168 (10th Cir. 1998); Dex Media W., Inc. v. City of Seattle, 696 F.3d 952, 955–56 (9th Cir. 2012). Such an approach will allow BLM and the Citizen Groups to pursue timely appellate review without a risk of wasting judicial resources.

This Court should not deny BLM and the Citizen Groups their right to pursue interlocutory review of the district court's far-reaching Injunction Order

⁶ The core of the appeal is likely to remain the same even after final judgment in the district court. In particular, this Court will almost certainly be reviewing the district court's legal ruling that BLM lacks legal authority to regulate hydraulic fracturing on public lands.

based on the Industry Parties' speculation about how quickly the district court may rule. The Motion to Dismiss should be denied.

II. A STAY OF THIS APPEAL WOULD UNFAIRLY PREJUDICE BLM AND THE CITIZEN GROUPS

The Industry Parties' alternative request to stay this appeal should also be denied because it would unfairly prejudice BLM and the Citizen Groups by denying their right to seek timely interlocutory review of the Injunction Order. Parties have a statutory right to take an immediate appeal from preliminary injunction orders. 28 U.S.C. § 1292(a)(1). Staying an interlocutory appeal until entry of final judgment would nullify that right. Tellingly, the Industry Parties fail to cite a single case granting such a stay.

Section 1292(a)(1) was enacted because Congress recognized that injunctions can have "serious, perhaps irreparable, consequence[s]" for the parties affected. Hatten-Gonzales v. Hyde, 579 F.3d 1159, 1165 (10th Cir. 2009) (quotation omitted). The Injunction Order has such an impact here. The district court has required BLM to continue using inadequate and outdated regulations for approval of oil and gas wells. Moreover, given that 90% of all wells are hydraulically fractured, the district court's unprecedented ruling that BLM lacks authority to even regulate that activity creates major issues for the agency's ability to manage oil and gas development on more than 750 million acres of federal and Indian lands.

Nor is this a case where the injunction merely maintains the status quo: the Injunction Order allows the Industry Parties' members to continue drilling new wells under the outdated rules. Nationwide, hundreds of wells each month are being completed based on inadequate standards from the 1980s. See supra pp. 3-4. Any accidents or groundwater contamination resulting from continued use of the old standards will likely prove costly and difficult or impossible to remediate.

On the other side of the scale, the Industry Parties do not assert that they will suffer any prejudice absent a stay: their request is based solely on speculation about conserving judicial resources. These arguments fail to support a stay, just as they are not grounds for dismissal. See supra pp. 5-10.

Moreover, the Industry Parties' purported concern for conserving resources rings hollow in light of their earlier opposition to proposals that would have avoided unnecessary parallel proceedings in the trial and appellate courts. Following entry of the Injunction Order, BLM and the Citizen Groups made several efforts to coordinate district court and appellate proceedings to avoid unnecessary duplication. For example, they proposed entry of final judgment in the Industry Parties' and States' favor that would set aside the Rule based on the findings in the district court's Injunction Order. Mem. in Supp. of Resp't-Intervenors' Mot. for Final J. (Nov. 16, 2015) (ECF No. 143.1). Such a final judgment would have awarded the Industry Parties and the States all the relief they

can possibly obtain in this case without requiring the parties to waste resources on unnecessary further litigation. Id. at 3–6. That final judgment would have been immediately appealable.

Alternatively, the Citizen Groups proposed to stay proceedings in the district court pending resolution of this appeal. Id. at 6. The proposed stay would have left the Injunction Order in effect to avoid any prejudice to the Industry Parties or the States. Id. at 9. Similarly, BLM proposed expedited briefing and an appeal on the legal question of its authority to issue the Rule. Fed. Resp'ts' Mot. to Bifurcate & Expedite (Nov. 30, 2015) (ECF No. 155).

Because they left the Injunction Order in effect, any of these proposals would have provided prompt and efficient appellate review of the issues in that order while avoiding prejudice to the Industry Parties and the States. The Industry Parties and the States, however, opposed all these options. They claimed that before final judgment was entered in their favor, they needed to continue trial court litigation to develop further evidence and additional arguments. ECF No. 154 at 6–7. The States anticipated not only reviewing the administrative record but also pursuing “a course of discovery,” and even holding a trial on the merits. State Pet'rs' Joint Resp. in Opp. to Resp't-Intervenors' Mot. for Final J. 1, 7 (Nov. 30, 2015) (ECF No. 153). The Industry Parties and the States also opposed the alternative option of staying district court proceedings by arguing that they “are

entitled to[] proceed expeditiously with this case” in the district court, ECF No. 154 at 7, and claiming their right to proceed should be limited in only “extreme circumstances,” ECF No. 153 at 8; see also Resp. in Opp. to Resp’ts’ Mot. to Bifurcate & Expedite (Dec. 11, 2015) (ECF No. 167).

Tellingly, the Industry Parties and the States did not assert any particular harm that they would have suffered as a result of a stay or entry of final judgment in their favor. See ECF No. 153 at 7–9; ECF No. 154 at 7–10; ECF No. 167 at 11; State Pet’rs’ Joint Resp. in Opp. to Fed. Resp’ts’ Mot. to Bifurcate & Expedite 5–6 (Dec. 10, 2015) (ECF No. 163). Nonetheless, in light of this opposition, the district court denied BLM’s and the Citizen Groups’ requests. Order Denying Mot. for Final J. 6 (Dec. 17, 2015) (ECF No. 172); Order Denying Mot. to Bifurcate & Expedite 3 (Dec. 29, 2015) (ECF No. 177). Thus, the Industry Parties themselves have created the current situation by unnecessarily insisting on proceeding in the district court while this appeal is pending.⁷

⁷ The Industry Parties unfairly and inaccurately attempt to shift blame to BLM for the parallel proceedings, asserting that district court proceedings would have been completed by now if BLM had lodged the administrative record more quickly than it did. Mot. to Dismiss 2–3. This theory ignores the sheer volume of materials involved in a national rulemaking of this scope. The initially-lodged administrative record in this case ran almost 550,000 pages. Joint Mot. to Extend Deadline 4 (Sept. 2, 2015) (ECF No. 114). To address objections from the States and Industry Parties, BLM then supplemented the record with more than 333,000 additional pages of materials. Certification of the Corrected Admin. R. 2 (Jan. 19, 2016) (ECF No. 184-1). The States and Industry Parties themselves have obtained several extensions of time, both to review these voluminous documents and for

In this Court, the Industry Parties have lost their earlier concern for the right “to[] proceed expeditiously with this case.” ECF No. 154 at 7. They would deny that right to BLM and the Citizen Groups. They also apparently no longer view “extreme circumstances” as a prerequisite for a stay. ECF No. 167. But BLM and the Citizen Groups are entitled to pursue an appellate remedy in this Court, and it should not be deferred based on speculation about the course of proceedings

negotiations with BLM over the record. See, e.g., ECF No. 114; Joint Mot. to Extend Deadline (Oct. 16, 2015) (ECF No. 133).

Moreover, the Industry Parties disregard the impact of their own litigation tactics in the district court. They claim BLM should have lodged the voluminous record by June 24, 2015—a presumptive date listed in the local rules and regularly extended in large or complex cases—just ninety days after the first complaint was filed in the case. But the parties challenging the Rule made meeting such a deadline wholly unrealistic. In the weeks leading up to June 24, the Industry Parties, States and Ute Tribe filed no fewer than four separate motions for preliminary injunction against the Rule, each of which required extensive briefing by BLM. Case No. 00041 ECF No. 11; Wyo. & Colo. Mot. for Prelim. Inj. (May 29, 2015) (ECF No. 32); N.D. Mot. for Prelim. Inj. (June 8, 2015) (ECF No. 52); Ute Tribe Mot. for Prelim. Inj. (June 22, 2015) (ECF No. 89). And on June 23 (one day before the Industry Parties assert the record should have been lodged), a day-long injunction hearing was held. See Mins. of June 23, 2015 Proceedings (ECF No. 96). All told, BLM was required to deal with dozens of often lengthy filings in the weeks before and after the June 23 injunction hearing. See Case No. 41 ECF Nos. 11–20; ECF Nos. 30–113 (nearly 100 docket entries from filing of first preliminary injunction motion until filing of administrative record on August 27).

Despite that activity, the Industry Parties opposed BLM’s request for a more reasonable schedule to lodge the record. The Industry Parties even required the agency to file a contested emergency motion to adjust the filing date for the administrative record. Resp’ts’ Mot. for an Enlargement of Time 2 (June 2, 2015) (ECF No. 62); Resp. in Opp. to Fed. Resp’ts’ Mot. for an Enlargement of Time (June 15, 2015) (ECF No. 71). Having kept BLM occupied for months with motion practice and numerous other procedural filings, the Industry Parties cannot also complain that the agency did not lodge the administrative record sooner.

below. Indeed, the case for proceeding with this appeal is far stronger than the Industry Parties' argument for doing so in the district court. All the proposals by BLM and the Citizen Groups would have left the Rule enjoined during a district court stay, or set aside following a final judgment. Thus, the Industry Parties would have suffered no prejudice from delaying further district court proceedings. In contrast, the Industry Parties' motion asks this Court to effectively extend the life of the preliminary injunction and thus exacerbate the harm it is causing to BLM, the Citizen Groups and the public. Such an outcome would unfairly prejudice Appellants.

CONCLUSION

The Industry Parties' Motion to Dismiss or for a Stay should be DENIED. The request by BLM and the Citizen Groups to expedite this appeal should be GRANTED.

Date: February 19, 2016



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CERTIFICATE OF DIGITAL SUBMISSION

I hereby certify that with respect to the foregoing:

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- (2) if required to file additional hard copies, that the ECF submission is an exact copy of those documents;
- (3) the digital submissions have been scanned for viruses with the most recent version of a commercial virus scanning program, Kaspersky Endpoint Security 10, Version 10.2.4.674 (mr2), dated February 19, 2016, and according to the program are free of viruses.

s/Michael S. Freeman

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that on February 19, 2016 I electronically filed the foregoing **INTERVENOR-RESPONDENT-APPELLANTS' RESPONSE IN OPPOSITION TO MOTION TO DISMISS OR FOR A STAY** using the court's CM/ECF system which will send notification of such filing to the following:

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s/ Michael Freeman

From: Schindler, James
To: [Katharine Macgregor](mailto:Katharine.Macgregor@boem.gov)
Cc: [Cruickshank, Walter](mailto:Cruickshank.Walter@boem.gov)
Subject: Fwd: BOEM Bulletin Clips and Other News on Thursday, March 16, 2017
Date: Thursday, March 16, 2017 3:59:45 PM

Kate, this should answer your Eni questions:

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Gillette, Connie** <connie.gillette@boem.gov>

Date: Thu, Mar 16, 2017 at 12:10 PM

Subject: Re: BOEM Bulletin Clips and Other News on Thursday, March 16, 2017

To: BOEM Web Team <boemwebteam@boem.gov>, Deputy Michael Celata <michael.celata@boem.gov>, Emily Lindow <emily.lindow@boem.gov>, James Bennett <james.bennett@boem.gov>, James Kendall <james.kendall@boem.gov>, Lee Benner <lee.benner@boem.gov>, Lee Tilton <edward.tilton@boem.gov>, Rebecca Green <rebecca.green@boem.gov>, Sharon Warren <sharon.warren@boem.gov>, Walter Cruickshank <walter.cruickshank@boem.gov>, "Houser, Beth" <beth.houser@boem.gov>, David Diamond <david.diamond@boem.gov>, David Johnston <david.johnston@boem.gov>, Jennifer Ewald <jennifer.ewald@boem.gov>, "Lewandowski, Jill" <jill.lewandowski@boem.gov>, Keely Hite <keely.hite@boem.gov>, Kelly Hammerle <kelly.hammerle@boem.gov>, "Santini, Kylie" <kylie.santini@boem.gov>, Mitchell Hoskins <mitchell.hoskins@boem.gov>, William Brown <william.brown@boem.gov>, Davie Nguyen <davie.nguyen@boem.gov>, Deanna Meyer-Pietruszka <deanna.meyer-pietruszka@boem.gov>, Joan Barminski <joan.barminski@boem.gov>, Renee Orr <renee.orr@boem.gov>, Frank Quimby <frank_quimby@ios.doi.gov>, Samuel Cable <samuel.cable@boem.gov>, Stephen Boutwell <stephen.boutwell@boem.gov>, Melanie Hunter <melanie.hunter@boem.gov>, "Stork, Allison" <allison.stork@boem.gov>, Geoffrey Wikel <geoffrey.wikel@boem.gov>, Anna Atkinson <anna.atkinson@boem.gov>, "Kaller, Agatha-Marie (Arie)" <arie.kaller@boem.gov>, Rodney Cluck <rodney.cluck@boem.gov>, Pedro Meléndez-arreaga <pedro.melendez-arrea@sol.doi.gov>, "Desselles, Richard" <richard.desselles@boem.gov>, Susan Cason <Susan.Cason@sol.doi.gov>, Eric Turner <eric.turner@boem.gov>, "Ezell, Troy" <troy.ezell@boem.gov>, "Kaplowitz, Joshua" <joshua.kaplowitz@sol.doi.gov>, BOEM-OPA-All <boemopaall@boem.gov>, Colleen Finnegan <colleen.finnegan@boem.gov>, James Schindler <james_schindler@ios.doi.gov>, "Ritchie, Alexandra" <alexandra.ritchie@boem.gov>

Additional Clip:

[Trump Weighing Eni Bid to Drill in Arctic Waters After Obama Ban](#)

Bloomberg

Jennifer A Dlouhy

Bloomberg March 16, 2017

The Interior Department is weighing Eni SpA's request to explore for oil in waters north of Alaska, giving the Trump administration a chance to reverse course from former President Barack Obama's attempt to curtail Arctic drilling.

Eni's exploration well would be in an area it previously leased from the federal government, and so it isn't covered by the executive order Obama issued in December to block the sale of

new drilling rights within huge swaths of the Chukchi and Beaufort seas. As the Trump administration considers ways it could reverse Obama's directive, approving this plan could encourage more oil companies to consider Arctic exploration.

Although some oil companies have abandoned plans to launch expensive quests for crude off Alaska's coast, recent discoveries have fanned interest in waters near the shoreline that can be drilled at a lower cost.

The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management is conducting an initial, 15-day review of the broad drilling blueprint filed by Italy's Eni, which is aiming to sink a well in the federal waters of the Beaufort Sea before its leases expire at the end of the year.

If the bureau deems Eni's broad exploration blueprint complete, it would publish the document online and subject it to public comment while scrutinizing the plan's details in a 30-day review.

"By the end of the 30-day period BOEM will either approve the exploration plan, require modifications to the exploration plan or disapprove the exploration plan," bureau spokeswoman Connie Gillette said in an email. Before it could launch operations on its proposed Nikaitchuq North well, Eni also would have to win a drilling permit from the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement and secure other government approvals.

Eni already uses a man-made gravel island to extract oil from leases in state waters hugging Alaska's coast. Under its plan, the company would use that same site -- known as Spy Island -- as a launching pad for extended-reach drilling that would target a potential oil reservoir in nearby federal waters.

Eni, the lead operator on the project, owns 40 percent of the 13 leases set to be affected by the plan. Its partners are Royal Dutch Shell Plc, which also has a 40 percent share, and Spain's Repsol SA, which claims the remaining 20 percent.

In an emailed statement, Eni said it was planning to begin drilling by the end of the year. Eni could cite its proposed oil exploration in trying to convince federal regulators to issue a "suspension of operations" that would effectively extend its leases there.

In February, the safety bureau approved Eni's bid to consolidate 13 of its federal leases in a single unit -- a decision that could make it easier to prolong the life of all of them if drilling began in any one of those tracts.

Still, U.S. law is designed to push oil companies to diligently develop their holdings -- and it sets a relatively high bar for granting time-outs. Eni's targeted leases have already been suspended before -- some for roughly four years. Federal law does not give the Interior Department authority to issue blanket extensions and requires companies to lay out a specific plan for developing leased acreage in order to get more time.

Environmental Opposition

"Eni and the federal government must be cautious and responsible," said Michael LeVine, Pacific senior counsel for the conservation group Oceana, which closely monitors Arctic development. "The leases Eni owns have sat dormant for more than a decade and have already

had their expiration dates extended in the past. There is no compelling reason to extend the leases again or to rush to grant last minute approvals."

Under Obama, the Interior Department rejected bids by Shell and ConocoPhillips to extend the life of other Arctic leases. Shell initially appealed the decision but later dropped the effort after a challenge from environmentalists.

Environmentalists argue the risks of Arctic drilling are too high -- potentially imperiling the seals, whales and walrus that live in the region as well as the Alaska Natives who live off those resources. Government auditors have warned that icy conditions, dark days and sparse infrastructure could make it impossible to adequately sop up a spill in the region.

27 Billion Barrels

Obama cut Arctic tracts from a five-year leasing plan issued last year, and issued a sweeping order that withdrew almost all U.S. Arctic waters from future sales. Neither action affects existing leases, such as that held by Eni. Trump is weighing how to reverse both of Obama's moves, according to Alaska Senator Lisa Murkowski.

The U.S. Arctic is estimated to hold 27 billion barrels of oil and 132 trillion cubic feet of natural gas, but energy companies have struggled to tap resources buried below the remote, icy waters at the top of the globe. Shell spent more than seven years and roughly \$8 billion trying to find a large stash of crude in the Chukchi Sea, but it abandoned that quest in 2015 after a series of embarrassing mishaps and a test well yielded disappointing results.

A different scenario is playing out closer to the coast, where recent discoveries -- and the prospect of far lower development costs -- may be luring oil companies. Caelus Energy Corp. claimed to have found at least 2 billion barrels of recoverable oil far beneath northwestern Alaska's Smith Bay in 2016. And Repsol just announced a 1.2 billion-barrel discovery on Alaska's North Slope.

Connie Gillette
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On Thu, Mar 16, 2017 at 7:15 AM, Gillette, Connie <connie.gillette@boem.gov> wrote:

FYSA:

Interior's Budget Could Be Cut By 12 Percent.

The [Washington Post](#) (3/16, Fears) reports that "the Interior Department's budget would be slashed by nearly \$2 billion compared with last year's budget, according to a proposed spending plan from the Trump White House." According to the article, "a proposed 12 percent decrease to \$11.6 billion would cause pain in the offices that purchase public lands." The article notes "that part of Interior would lose \$120 million in funding under the proposal."

Additional coverage of the possible impact of budget cuts to Interior agencies was provided by the [Washington \(DC\) Post](#) (3/16, Soffen, Lu), [USA Today](#) (3/16, Korte), the [Alaska Dispatch News](#) (3/15, Fears), and the [Colorado Independent](#) (3/15, Turner).

Grijalva Raises Concerns About Budget Cuts To Interior. The [Washington Examiner](#) (3/15, Siciliano) reports that Rep. Raul Grijalva of Arizona, the top Democrat on the House Natural Resources Committee, is "raising alarms over reports that President Trump will propose drastic cuts to the Interior Department's budget, which he warned would shutter such renowned national parks as Yosemite, Yellowstone and the Grand Canyon." Grijalva "said the reported 10 percent cut at the agency would have wide-ranging, disastrous effects for many of the bureaus under Interior's control, including the National Park Service and early warning systems meant to protect cities and states from natural disasters." he said Wednesday, "Closing national parks, hobbling critical federal agencies and blinding ourselves to natural disasters is beyond reckless. This president is trying to run the federal budget like it's a first grade math problem. Instead of trying to comprehend the complexities of a budget for a country this size, he just wants to subtract 10 percent and go to lunch early."

Republicans Must Disentangle Climate Funding To Cut It.

[Bloomberg Politics](#) (3/15, Flavelle) reports that because former President Obama "sought to integrate climate programs into everything the federal government did," climate programs will be difficult for the Trump administration to disentangle. The Congressional Research Service in 2013 estimated total federal spending on climate programs among 18 agencies cost \$77 billion from fiscal 2008 through 2013 alone. The Obama administration didn't always include "climate" in program names and in some cases expanded existing programs to include climate change. Marc Morano, a former Republican staffer for the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee said, "In order to dismantle the climate establishment, agencies and programs throughout the federal government need to be targeted."

Renewable Energy:

Interior Set To Auction North Carolina Offshore Wind Rights.

[ClimateWire](#) (3/15) reports this week the Interior Department will auction its first offshore wind energy deal under the Trump administration. The auction covers development rights to 122,400 acres of the Atlantic Ocean near North Carolina's Outer Banks called the Kitty Hawk Wind Energy Area and opens at \$2 an acre. Randall Luthi, president of the National Ocean Industries Association, said President Trump's "ambitious economic and job-growth agenda would undoubtedly be strengthened by a robust all-of-the-above energy approach, which would include a strong U.S. offshore wind program." BOEM leased 79,000-acre parcel off New York to Statoil for \$535 per acre, but "it remains unclear whether the Kitty Hawk site ... will draw similarly strong interest" as coal, gas and nuclear power remain cost-competitive in the Carolinas and renewables account for a small share of the power mix.

Additional coverage was provided by [Public News Service](#) (3/16).

News Not in the Clips:

Hammer time at Kitty Hawk

reNews

1.5GW North Carolina offshore wind auction kicks off tomorrow

Bidding kicks off tomorrow morning in the 1.5GW North Carolina offshore wind auction.

Nine suitors qualified to compete for the Kitty Hawk lease although Northland Power, Shell

and Apex Clean Energy have quit the race.

Avangrid, Enbridge, PNE Wind and Statoil are eligible, but refused to comment if they will take part.

Wind Future told reNEWS it plans to bid and WPD did not comment.

The auction will follow the ascending round format that saw Statoil secure the 1GW New York lease area for \$42.5m last year.

The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management sets the price in each round.

The 49,000-hectare Kitty Hawk site starts about 45km off the coast.

North Carolina's waters have the strongest offshore wind potential using traditional technology on the US east coast, according to federal studies.

However, the state does not have a definitive offshore wind policy and the route to market remains uncertain.

Recently elected Democrat governor Roy Cooper has said he will "return to pursuing renewable energy", but has yet to detail his plans.



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