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**From:** Hommel, Scott  
**Sent:** 2017-08-17T12:29:36-04:00  
**Importance:** Normal  
**Subject:** Fwd: DOI Look Ahead  
**Received:** 2017-08-17T12:30:26-04:00  
[DOI Cabinet 30 Day Report 8-14-17.docx](#)

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From: **Scott Hommel** <[scott\\_hommel@ios.doi.gov](mailto:scott_hommel@ios.doi.gov)>  
Date: Tue, Aug 15, 2017 at 6:29 PM  
Subject: DOI Look Ahead  
To: Cabinet Affairs <[CabinetAffairs@who.eop.gov](mailto:CabinetAffairs@who.eop.gov)>  
Cc: Staff Secretary <[staffsecretary@who.eop.gov](mailto:staffsecretary@who.eop.gov)>, (b)(5) DPP, .eop.gov

FYI

Scott

Scott C. Hommel  
Chief of Staff  
Department of the Interior

MEMORANDUM FOR THE WHITE HOUSE STAFF SECRETARY AND CABINET SECRETARY  
August 15, 2017

FROM: Scott Hommel, Chief of Staff, U.S. Department of the Interior

SUBJECT: Interior Department Weekly Update for the Week of August 14, 2017

**DOI 30-Day Policy Look Ahead**

**Presidential Initiatives and Awareness**

- 1. MONUMENT REVIEW:** We are preparing the report to comply with Executive Order 13792 of April 26, 2017 calling for a review of National Monuments. The Secretary has visited 5 states and met with countless stakeholders to conduct the review. The report will give general recommendations. Specific recommendations will be submitted separately as draft proposals for the President's consideration. The Secretary has briefed White House staff on preliminary recommendations.  
**Timing:** August 24, 2017  
**Contact:** Downey Magallanes, Acting Deputy Chief of Staff
- 2. CRITICAL MINERALS REPORT:** USGS will release a new report presenting resource and geologic information for 23 critical mineral commodities important to our national economy and national security, many of which are sourced entirely outside of the United States. This is the first update since the last assessment undertaken in 1973. The Department has proposed to the White House consideration of a draft Executive Order directing Interior to help coordinate the appropriate agencies to undertake a government-wide approach to facilitate the domestic mining and processing of critical minerals. Discussion on the contents of the E.O. is continuing. Interior is hosting a roundtable with mining executives on August 24 to discuss the issue.  
**Timing:** August 2017  
**Contact:** Dr. Andrea Travnicek, Acting Assistant Secretary for Water and Science
- 3. NPS FUNDING INITIATIVE:** On the 101st anniversary of the National Park System (August 25), the Secretary plans to announce an initiative to tackle the infrastructure maintenance backlog of \$12 billion at Smokey Mountains National Park and the Blue Ridge Parkway, which is managed by NPS. Interior has proposed legislative language to OMB that would use revenue generated to fund the park and refuge billion dollar maintenance backlog.  
**Timing:** August 25, 2017  
**Contact:** Todd Willens, Acting Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife, and Parks
- 4. NPS SENIOR PASS INCREASE:** The Department announced in July that beginning August 28, federal agencies would begin selling the new America the Beautiful Senior Pass, which allows lifetime access to certain federal lands. The new price for the Lifetime Senior Pass will be \$80, which is an increase from \$10. The annual senior pass will be \$20. This increase is mandated by the National Park Service Centennial Act, passed in December of 2016. Existing passes will be grandfathered.  
**Timing:** August 28, 2017

**Contact:** Todd Willens, Acting Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife, and Parks

5. **VENTING AND FLARING RULE:** BLM will publish a proposed rule to suspend or delay requirements from the “Waste Prevention, Production Subject to Royalties and Resources Conservation” (Venting and Flaring) for 18 months until July 17, 2018. BLM is currently reviewing the final rule and wants to avoid imposing temporary or permanent compliance costs on operators for requirements that may be rescinded or significantly revised in the near future. The rule was sent to OMB on August 15, 2017.

**Timing:** August 2017

**Contact:** Vincent DeVito, Counselor to the Secretary for Energy Policy

### **Reports to Congress and Congressional Testimony**

1. **HILL NOTIFICATIONS FOR UPCOMING REPROGRAMMING REQUEST:** Pending OMB approval, the Department intends to notify the relevant authorizing and appropriating Committees (Senate Energy and Natural Resources, House Natural Resources, Senate Interior Appropriations Subcommittee, House Interior Appropriations Subcommittee) about the reorganization and realignment of the Office of the Special Trustee for American Indians (OST). DOI's Program Management and Budget office and OMB are currently coordinating to secure approval. Notification to the Hill will entail formal letters and briefings for Committee staff, which OCL will coordinate.  
**Timing:** September 2017  
**Contact:** Amanda Kaster, Policy Adviser, Congressional Affairs
2. **SENIOR FWS OFFICIAL TO TESTIFY BEFORE THE SENATE HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE:** Gary Frazer (Assistant Director for Ecological Services, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service) will testify before the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations regarding implementation of FAST-41. This provision was part of the FAST Act, which passed December 2015. The intent of the legislation is to coordinate the review process for infrastructure projects between all of the involved government agencies. This hearing is intended to highlight the reform and remind the Administration that this review process already exists as we seek to expedite/streamline the environmental review process. This hearing was previously scheduled for July 26, 2017 but was postponed and has now rescheduled.  
**Timing:** 10 am, September 7, 2017  
**Contact:** Micah Chambers, Deputy Director, Congressional Affairs
3. **DOI NOMINEES IN PROGRESS:** Mr. Bernhardt was confirmed by the Senate on July 24, 2017 with a bipartisan vote of 53-43. Five Democrats voted in favor along with all Republicans. Four Republicans missed the vote. Brenda Burman (BOR), Susan Combs (A/S PMB) and Doug Domenech (A/S Insular Areas) had their confirmation on Thursday the 20<sup>th</sup> before the Senate Energy and Natural Resources committee and they were passed out of committee August 3, 2017. Joe Balash (Assistant Secretary, Land & Minerals) was officially nominated and is set to appear before the Committee for his nomination hearing on September 7, 2017. Ryan Nelson (Solicitor) was officially nominated Wednesday August, 2nd. His committee paperwork has been

submitted and we are working with Committee to have him included in the hearing on the 7<sup>th</sup> with Mr. Balash.

### **Other/Awareness Only**

1. **CNN ANTIETAM NATIONAL BATTLEFILED STORY:** CNN will be at Antietam National Battlefield to film a features story about the battle, the upcoming 150th anniversary of Antietam National Cemetery on September 17, and projects that will be completed using President Trump's first quarter salary with additional funds from the National Park Foundation, Civil War Trust, and Save Historic Antietam Foundation.  
**Timing:** August 24, 2017  
**Contact:** Todd Willens, Acting Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife, and Parks
  
2. **SECRETARY ZINKE INVITED TO THE EVERGLADES BY BIPARTISAN FLORIDA CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION:** Sen. Rubio led a letter to Sec. Zinke inviting him to tour the Everglades as soon as possible. No policy position touted within the letter, other than the importance of the Everglades to Florida. No date has been confirmed, but the Secretary has made it a priority. He would like to discuss the issue with Sen. Rubio over the phone in the immediate future before any trip is scheduled.  
**Timing:** TBD, Early November or December dates have been proposed  
**Contact:** Micah Chambers, Deputy Director, Congressional Affairs
  
3. **SECRETARY ZINKE HAS BEEN INVITED BY SENATOR CASSIDY TO VISIT LOUISIANA AND THE GULF STATES:** Official invite was received July 28, 2017 from Senator Cassidy's staff for the Secretary to tour the Gulf States and personally see the offshore oil industry, restoring the coast and the benefits of GOMESA. This is in reaction to the FY18 Budget proposal to eliminate state revenue sharing for the Gulf States. Secretary Zinke had two exchanges on this topic during his House and Senate budget hearings with Sen. Cassidy and Rep. Graves. In addition, he hosted members of the Louisiana and Texas delegations to discuss GOMESA, and they reiterated the issue and reaffirmed their invite to the Secretary.  
**Timing:** Fall 2017  
**Contact:** Micah Chambers, Deputy Director, Congressional Affairs
  
4. **DOI POSTPONES ADVISORY BOARD MEETINGS.** The Department is continuing to review the charter and charge of the more than 200 boards, committees, and advisory panels to ensure they are structured to receive maximum public input and comply with the Federal Advisory Committee Act. The Department spends more than \$10 million to facilitate these boards and many are not meeting their charter obligations, are not meeting regularly, and have little turnover or numerous unfilled positions. Meetings have been postponed until September 2017 following the Department's review unless justified on a case-by-case basis.  
**Timing:** May-September 2017  
**Contact:** Lori Mashburn, White House Liaison

### **Other Significant Rulemakings and Actions**

1. **PHOENIX MINE DEIS:** BLM this week announced the draft EIS for Newmont Mining's expansion of the Phoenix Mine, which is a gold and copper mine in Nevada. The public comment period will last 45 days. The Nevada Governor's office has been following this action closely as Newmont cautioned it might have to lay off 500 workers as a result of the delay. The proposal would extend the life of the Phoenix Mine from 2040 to 2063, and expand the mine boundary from 8,228 acres to 18,839 acres.  
**Timing:** August 18, 2017  
**Contact:** Kathy Benedetto, BLM
  
2. **REVOCATION OF DIRECTOR'S ORDER #100:** Director's Order #100 was developed as an internal guidance document for NPS employees to shape resource stewardship in the 21st century and was put in place at the very end of the last Administration. As Secretary Zinke leads a new, comprehensive initiative to identify Departmental priorities and to reorganize the agency for the next 100 years, Director's Order #100 has become obsolete.  
**Timing:** August 18, 2017  
**Contact:** Todd Willens, Acting Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife, and Parks
  
3. **RESCINDING WATER BOTTLE BAN AT NATIONAL PARK SITES.** The Department of Interior is overturning Policy Memorandum 11-03 "Water Bottle Ban." The ban removed the healthiest beverage choice at a variety of parks while leaving sugary drinks available through concessionaires, as well as limited hydration options for recreationalists and hikers resulting in possible impacts to visitor safety. Currently, 23 of the 417 National Park Sites had implemented the policy.  
**Timing:** August 18, 2017  
**Contact:** Todd Willens, Acting Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife, and Parks
  
6. **IMPORTS OF AFRICAN ELEPHANT TROPHIES FROM ZIMBABWE:** The Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) plans to publish in the *Federal Register* a change to the permitting status for imports of African elephant trophies from Zimbabwe. After receiving information from Zimbabwe on a number of substantial improvements to their management program and elephant conservation efforts, FWS has determined that taking of African elephant trophy animals in Zimbabwe on or after January 21, 2016 (the date that Zimbabwe's new management plan was officially adopted) through 2017 would enhance the survival of African elephants, and import permits can be issued for these trophies.  
**Timing:** August 2017  
**Contact:** Todd Willens, Acting Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife, and Parks
  
4. **GATEWAY WEST TRANSMISSION LINE:** BLM plans to issue a Notice of Intent for an Environmental Assessment to propose an alternate route for the Gateway West Transmission Line in Idaho. The line's current route cuts through neighborhoods and populated areas in order to avoid a National Conservation Area. The FY2017 funding bill included legislation rerouting the line away from the current controversial route.  
**Timing:** August 2017

**Contact:** Kathy Benedetto, BLM

5. **OFFSHORE OIL LEASE SALE:** On August 16, BOEM will hold Gulf of Mexico Lease Sale 249, the first scheduled lease sale under the 2017-2022 Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Oil & Gas Program and the first region-wide sale held on the OCS. Juan Carlos Zepeda Molina, the President Commissioner of Mexico's National Hydrocarbons Commission, will attend the lease sale with a delegation of Mexican government leadership and staff that work on offshore energy issues.

**Timing:** August 16, 2017

**Contact:** Kate MacGregor, Acting Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals

6. **CAPE WIND.** In early September, BOEM plans to publish the Record of Decision for the Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) for the Cape Wind Project. The Final SEIS will supplement the 2009 Final EIS and is being prepared pursuant to a remand order from the D.C. Circuit Court.

**Timing:** Early September

**Contact:** James Schindler, Special Assistant Bureau of Ocean Energy Management

7. **NAVAJO GENERATING STATION.** On July 2, the Navajo government approved a two-year lease extension for continuing operation of the Navajo Generating Station through 2019. The Department's Bureau of Reclamation is a part owner of the power generated by the plant and thus the Administration has a role in the ultimate decision associated with the plant. Interior is helping to identify a possible future owner to keep the plant generating power indefinitely, since the current owners will exit the plant at the end of 2019. On July 19, Navajo representatives met with the Bureau of Reclamation and requested another stakeholder meeting. A multiple stakeholder meeting is being discussed for August. On July 28, Peabody Energy and Lazard (investment banking) met with representatives from DOI to discuss potential of investors. Initial discussions sound positive and Lazard hopes to have initial bid proposals by mid-September.

**Timing:** August/September 2017

**Contact:** Dr. Andrea Travnicek, Acting Assistant Secretary for Water and Science

### **Release of High-Profile Grants**

1. **STATE WILDLIFE GRANT PROGRAM:** FWS will announce it has apportioned \$50 million to state fish and wildlife agencies for developing and implementing programs that benefit wildlife and their habitats. The funding is provided through the FWS's State Wildlife Grants (SWG) program and is distributed through an apportionment formula in accordance with appropriations. FWS will issue a press release in each applicable state announcing the awarding of the grants on Tuesday, August 15.

**Timing:** August 15, 2017

**Contact:** Todd Willens, Acting Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife, and Parks

2. **NATIONAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION GRANTS:** On August 17, the NPS will announce \$21 million in grants from the Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) to States and Territories. Grants will be awarded to 59 State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPOs), based on

the amounts available under Consolidated Appropriations Act 115-31. NPS will also announce \$4.5 million in grants from the Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) to Indian Tribes. Grants will be awarded to 169 Tribal Historic Preservation Offices (THPOs), based on the amounts available under Consolidated Appropriations Act PL115-31.

**Timing:** August 17, 2017

**Contact:** Todd Willens, Acting Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife, and Parks

3. **CENTENNIAL CHALLENGE PROJECTS:** The NPS will announce the award of \$18 million in Centennial Challenge projects. Many of the projects accomplish deferred maintenance projects, and all represent public-private partnerships, since each project requires a minimum 50/50 match with non-Federal funds.

**Timing:** August 2017

**Contact:** Todd Willens, Acting Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife, and Parks

4. **NORTH AMERICAN WETLANDS CONSERVATION ACT (NAWCA) GRANTS:** The FWS will announce the Migratory Bird Conservation Commission (MBCC), chaired by Secretary Zinke, that will approve funding for the first round of FY 2018 NAWCA grants, as well as land acquisitions and lease agreements for national wildlife refuges using Migratory Bird Conservation Fund money. The MBCC will also hear a report on NAWCA small grants, which were approved by the North American Wetlands Conservation Council earlier this year.

**Timing:** September 6, 2017

**Contact:** Todd Willens, Acting Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife, and Parks

### **Key Events for Upcoming 30-Days**

August 16-August 18

**Deputy Secretary Bernhardt** will be traveling to Billings Montana to give a speech at a reclaimed gold mine site to tout the important work undertaken, the donation of the company's water rights to a conservation group, and the conversion of the land to an elk migration corridor.

### **Travel by Secretary**

August 5-August 20

**Secretary Zinke** on personal leave until August 20

**Bcc:** james\_cason@ios.doi.gov[james\_cason@ios.doi.gov]  
**From:** Hinson, Alex  
**Sent:** 2017-09-06T10:11:41-04:00  
**Importance:** Normal  
**Subject:** DOI Daily Report  
**Received:** 2017-09-06T10:11:46-04:00

## **INTERIOR DAILY COMMUNICATIONS REPORT**

### **Top Stories**

#### **Wall Street Journal: Interior Secretary Zinke Connects With Local Communities in Protected Lands**

*“On a dirt road high on a mountain near here, the secretary of Interior unfolded his 6-foot-2-inch frame out of a dusty black Suburban one morning recently and started shaking hands with a group of ranchers in cowboy hats. “The president has made it clear—I work for you,” Ryan Zinke told the ranchers, who had gathered to tell him their grazing operations would be hurt by a recent expansion of Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument. The appearance by a top federal official was well received. “No one has come out here before,” said rancher Jeremy Kennedy. “We finally have a voice.””*

#### **Washington Post-Blog: The Post’s bizarre story on President Trump and a statue of Robert E. Lee at Antietam**

*“As the story makes clear, none of the money donated by Trump will go to the statue. Nor did Trump steer the money to the house-near-the-statue; that was the decision of NPS. Though a Maryland congressman called for removal of the statue after the Charlottesville clashes, the question remains: Why speak of the Robert E. Lee statue and Trump’s donation in the same breath? As far as we can tell, there are no protesters raising the issue, for quite good reasons. Impetus for clumping them together appears to reside exclusively within the newspaper.”*

#### **NPR: Western Wildfires Endanger Beloved Sites At National Parks**

*“Wildfires burning in the Western U.S. are threatening some of America's most treasured national parks – and in some areas, the damage has already been done. Last week in Montana, a 20-square-mile blaze burned the historic Sperry Chalet, a hotel and dining room built in 1914 and only reachable by trail.”*

### **TALKING POINTS**

- Secretary Zinke recently visited Montana with Secretary Sonny Perdue of the Department of Agriculture to view the wildfires in the West.
- The Secretary has urged more proactive forest management to prevent fires from occurring in the first place.
- Secretary Zinke statement on the matter: "The issue at hand is how do we put the firefighters out of business by looking at preparation first, and make sure we have healthy forests, and make sure we reduce the fuel load so we don't have these catastrophic events year after year after year."

#### **Los Alamos Daily Post: Zinke Appoints Members to Royalty Policy Committee**

*“U.S. Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke has announced the appointment of 20 primary and 18 alternate members to the Department of the Interior’s Royalty Policy Committee that will serve a critical role in advising the Secretary on policy and strategies to improve management of the multi-billion dollar, federal and American Indian mineral revenue program.”*

### **TALKING POINTS**

- Secretary Zinke’s statement: “Working closely with the Committee, we will come up with solutions for modernizing the management of public and American Indian assets, while building greater trust and transparency in how we value our nation's public mineral resources. It's important that the taxpayers and tribes get the full and fair value of traditional and renewable energy produced on public lands and offshore areas.”
- For the first time ever, the RPC includes a representative from the renewable energy sector.
- The Committee’s first meeting is October 4th.
- Vincent DeVito’s, Chairman of the Committee, statement: "On behalf of the Secretary, I am committed to aligning this Committee with our continuing drive toward making the Department a better business partner and delivering better results for American taxpayers.”

### **U.S. News and World Report: Is Conservation Better Than Coal for the Rural West?**

*“On Aug. 24, Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke delivered to President Donald Trump his recommended changes after a four-month review of the status of 27 national monuments. In ordering the review, Trump claimed that his predecessors overreached their authority to designate federally protected land under the Antiquities Act, and Zinke would review whether any designations led to “loss of jobs, reduced wages and reduced public access.””*

#### **TALKING POINTS**

- Secretary Zinke’s statement:
  - “No President should use the authority under the Antiquities Act to restrict public access, prevent hunting and fishing, burden private land, or eliminate traditional land uses, unless such action is needed to protect the object. The recommendations I sent to the president on national monuments will maintain federal ownership of all federal land and protect the land under federal environmental regulations, and also provide a much-needed change for the local communities who border and rely on these lands for hunting and fishing, economic development, traditional uses, and recreation.”
- DOI statement:
  - “The Secretary's draft report has been sent to the White House. The Secretary's summary has been released to the press. Please contact the White House with any questions about any action on the report.”
- White House statement:
  - "President Trump has received Secretary Zinke's draft report for the Antiquities Act, and is currently reviewing his recommendations to determine the best path forward for the American people."
- The Antiquities Act calls for the President to designate the “smallest area compatible with proper care and management of the objects to be protected.” Despite this clear directive “smallest area” has become the exception and not the rule.
- In an effort to make the process transparent and give people a voice in the process, the Secretary announced on May 5, 2017 the opening up of a formal comment period for the review. This is the first time ever that a formal comment period was open on [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov) for National Monuments designated under the Antiquities Act.

- Since May, Secretary Zinke has visited eight national monument sites in six states. He's held dozens of meetings with Tribal, local, and state government officials, local stakeholders, and advocates from conservation, agriculture, tourism, and historic preservation organizations. The Secretary meets with people and organizations who represent all sides of the issues.
- Many of the most controversial national monuments were designated or expanded in the waning days of the previous administration after partisan efforts to designate the land stalled in Congress. This is a clear violation of the will of the people and an overuse of executive power.

#### Fact and Fiction of the Monument Review

- Myth: No president has shrunk a monument.
- Fact: Monuments have been shrunk at least ten times under presidents on both sides of the aisle. Some examples include President John F. Kennedy removing 2,882 acres from Bandelier National Monument, Presidents Taft, Wilson, Coolidge reducing Mount Olympus National Monument (President Wilson halved it), and President Eisenhower reducing Great Sand Dunes National Monument in Colorado.
- Myth: The monument review will sell/transfer public lands to states.
- Fact: This is not true. Under the Antiquities Act, the monuments are designated on already federal land. Therefore, if any monument is rescinded or shrunk, the land would remain federally owned and be managed by one or more land management agencies, including the Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the National Park Service.
- Myth: The monument review will close/sell/transfer National Parks.
- Fact: No National Parks are under review, and the Secretary has continually committed he is against the sale/transfer/privatization of public lands, especially National Parks. While some of the monuments are managed by the National Park Service - much like historic sites, national recreation areas, and national seashores are - none of them are National Parks.

#### **Fox News-Opinion: Interior Secretary Zinke gets it. He knows that America's hunters and anglers are the backbone of successful fish and wildlife management**

*“Since the advent of modern fish and wildlife conservation, sportsmen have played a key role in funding conservation efforts at the national, state, and local levels. The reasoning for this is simple, and can be credited to America’s original conservationist, Theodore Roosevelt, an avid hunter, fisherman and NRA Life Member. President Roosevelt recognized that our natural resources need to be responsibly utilized. To that end, he championed wildlife management based on scientific principles, an approach that serves as the foundation of our entire system.”*

#### **TALKING POINTS**

- Secretary Zinke is building a sportsmen's conservation legacy second only to Teddy Roosevelt.
- The Shooting Sports Industry makes significant economic contributions, including the creation of an estimated 30,000 jobs, within the last 3 years.
- In March, Secretary Zinke reversed the Obama Administration’s ban on lead ammo and tackle in a major win for sportsmen, so that hunting and fishing won’t be sports only for the elite.

- Secretary Zinke announced an advisory committee on public-private partnerships on public land during President Trump's "Made in America" Week to expand opportunities for sportsmen.

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Alex Hinson

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Department of the Interior  
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