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US Department of the Interior News Briefing

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DOI In The News

Trump Ramping Up For Texas Trip As Flooding Ravages Houston.

Politico (8/28, McCaskill, Nelson) reports that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke "said Monday morning that the federal government's response to Harvey's devastating impact on Texas has been 'very much like a military operation,' praising the leadership of White House chief of staff John Kelly." Zinke "said Interior Department resources involved in storm response include emergency response teams from the U.S. Geological Survey, which have monitored flooding and sought to model how it will progress; and swift water rescue teams and assets from national parks and wildlife refuges."

Zinke said on Fox News' Fox & Friends (8/28) that "it's amazing to see the Cabinet under the Chief of Staff Gen. Kelly. This is very much like a military operation by the numbers, making sure the assets are surged forward, making sure we have communication with our assets and make sure all the secretaries are engaged."

Additional coverage was provided by Fox News (8/28), Fox News (8/28), and Newsmax (8/28, Fitzgerald).

US Interior Secretary Urges Mining Ban Near Yellowstone.

The AP (8/28, Brown) reports that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke "wants to speed up a proposal to block new gold mining claims on forested public lands in Montana near Yellowstone National Park and will also consider blocking other types of mining, agency officials said Monday." Interior spokeswoman Heather Swift "said Monday that Zinke wants to move forward as quickly as possible with a proposed 20-year withdrawal of future mining claims in the area north of the park, known as Paradise Valley." The review of "that withdrawal was scheduled to be completed by the U.S. Forest Service and Interior's Bureau of Land Management by November, 2018." Swift said, "He is fully in the corner of protecting the Paradise Valley and is putting forward Interior Department assets to support the U.S. Forest Service in that mission. Some places are too precious to mine...This is very much a final decision."

The Missoula Current (MT) (8/28, Kidston) reports that Sen. Jon Tester said in a statement Monday, "An administrative withdrawal would be a step in the right direction, but we have no guarantee that the current review will even recommend a withdrawal. And even the best-case scenario means a mine could threaten the doorstep to Yellowstone 20 years from now, sticking our kids with a fight they shouldn't have to fight."

Coverage by the AP was also picked up by the Washington Times (8/28, Brown), the Houston Chronicle (8/28, Brown, Press), the Minneapolis Star Tribune (8/26, Brown), the Idaho Statesman (8/28, Brown), Philly (PA) (8/28, Brown), the Washington Post (8/28, Matthew Brown |, Ap), the San Jose (CA) Mercury News (8/28, Brown), the San Gabriel Valley (CA) Tribune (8/28, Brown), ABC News (8/28, Brown), the Baytown (TX) Sun (8/28, Brown), the Belleville (IL) News-Democrat (8/28, Brown), the Coeur d'Alene (ID) Press (8/28, Brown), the Columbia Basin (WA) Herald (8/28, Brown), the Santa Cruz (CA) Sentinel (8/28, Brown), the Seattle Post-Intelligencer (8/28, Brown), the St. Joseph (MO) News-Press (8/28, Brown), the Portland (ME) Press Herald (8/28, Brown), the Albuquerque (NM) Journal (8/28, Brown), the Boston Herald (8/28, Brown), the Daily Mail (8/28, Brown), Fox Business (8/28, Brown), and KTAR-FM Glendale (AZ) Glendale, AZ (8/28, Brown).

Maine Monument Supporter 'Optimistic' After Chat With Zinke.

The AP (8/28, Sharp) reports that Lucas St. Clair , who led "the successful effort to get the federal government to protect land near Maine's tallest mountain says he's feeling optimistic after a telephone chat with Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke." After receiving a telephone briefing Monday from Zinke, St. Clair "came away from the conversation reassured that Zinke wants the Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument to be managed for conservation and recreation by the

National Park Service." St. Clair said, "I'm feeling very optimistic."

Coverage by the AP was also picked up by the Portland (ME) Press Herald (8/28, Sharp), ABC News (8/28, Sharp), the Daily Mail (8/28), the Houston Chronicle (8/28, Sharp, Press), the Minneapolis Star Tribune (8/26, Sharp), Philly (PA) (8/28, Sharp), the Washington Times (8/28, Sharp), the Washington Post (8/28, David Sharp |, Ap), the Idaho Statesman (8/28, Sharp), the Los Angeles Times (8/28, Sharp), the Richmond (VA) Times-Dispatch (8/28, Sharp), the Santa Cruz (CA) Sentinel (8/28, Sharp), the Westport (CT) News (8/28, Sharp), KTAR-FM Glendale (AZ) Glendale, AZ (8/28), and WTOP-FM Washington Washington (8/28).

Changes Coming To Nevada Monuments, Heller Confirms. The Las Vegas Review-Journal (8/28, Lochhead) reports that Sen. Dean Heller "said Monday that 'minor' changes are coming for two of Nevada's national monuments, Gold Butte and Basin and Range." Heller said he was notified "about the changes Friday during a phone call with Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke." Heller said, "There will be some adjustments to both of those monuments, but they will be minor. You're not going to see wholesale changes in those monuments."

The President Can Make Monuments – But He Can't Take Them Away. For the "Pundits" blog of The Hill (8/28, Molvar, Contributor), Erik Molvar, executive director of Western Watersheds Project, claims that Interior Secretary Zinke's recommend ation to the White House last week "that national monument lands protected by past presidents be removed from their protected status" is "apparently a scheme to make way for oil and gas drilling and other destructive land uses that threaten the sacred lands, fragile archaeological sites and scientific values for which these national monuments were designated." Molvar calls the move "a breathtaking overreach by an administration that clearly doesn't understand that a president's powers are limited by the Constitution." He notes that "legal scholars correctly point out that the 1906 Antiquities Act, adopted when Theodore Roosevelt was president, gives the White House power to create National Monuments — but only Congress can alter or rescind them." Molvar adds that "in addition to being unlawful, Zinke's recommendations plainly ignore the will of the majority."

Why Trump's Upcoming Decision On Federal Lands Matters. In commentary for the Daily Signal (8/28, Tubb), Katie Tubb, a policy analyst for the Thomas A. Roe Institute for Economic Policy Studies at The Heritage Foundation, claims that "reducing the size of a national monument or even rescinding its status does not open up the federal land to be overrun by oil interests or clear cut by the foresting industry." She notes that "federal lands are managed by a web of laws determining who can do what and when." Tubb suggests that "if Congress doesn't like what the Trump administration is doing, it ought to act to clarify" the Antiquities Act. She says that "at the very least, Congress ought to amend the law to give states more say in the matter." Tubb concludes that "shifting more control from Washington to those with direct knowledge of the land in question and a clear stake in the outcome of decisions would be a step in the right direction."

Our View: Bringing Balance To The Antiquities Act. The Salem (MA) News (8/28) editorializes that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke's "unwillingness to be transparent about his review and its results all but guarantees a legal quagmire." With regards to the Northeast Canyons and Seamounts Marine Monument, the paper says that "all sides are already threatening lawsuits, so no matter the outcome, the issue will likely not be settled for years." The paper argues that "if anything, the debate over Canyons and Seamounts shows the need for Congress to update the outdated Antiquities Act, which allows presidential administrations to designate and reshape national monuments with little or no oversight."

Who Deserves Praise And Criticism This Week In Utah? The editorial board of the Ogden (UT) Standard-Examiner (8/28) gives Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke mixed reviews for his recommendation on the Bears Ears National Monument. Zinke receives a "thumbs up" for "keeping Bears Ears' designation as a national monument." But he is also given a "thumbs down" for "not being more transparent about how Bears Ears and other monuments might change."

Under Obama, A Gold Mining Firm Was Fine With A Mojave Desert Monument. Under Trump, An About-face.

The Los Angeles Times (8/28, Sahagun) reports that gold mining firm Newcastle Gold Ltd. has changeed its position on the creation of the Castle Mountains National Monument. The designation was "hailed as a compromise that served the goals of conservationists and the mining industry." So, conservationists said, "they were caught off guard to learn Newcastle's position shifted after the Trump administration moved to roll back federal protections on many of the monuments created by previous administrations." Newcastle and Rep. Paul Cook "have told Zinke the designation was made without adequate public outreach or input from the company." The company "recommended solution: Reduce the size of Castle Mountains National Monument by

50%."

Additional coverage was provided by the Los Angeles LAist (8/28, Peleg).

National Park Campgrounds Need Work. Is Zinke's Privatization Pitch The Answer?

Colorado Public Radio (8/28, Hood) reports that in the face of a $11.3 billion backlog in deferred maintenance at national parks, Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke "thinks private companies could provide campground upgrades." The Interior Department "doesn't have a formal proposal," but Zinke has "mentioned expansion of public-private partnerships for campground management multiple times, including a conference call with reporters and at a Recreational Vehicle Industry Association meeting." The proposal has the support of Derrick Crandall, counselor for the National Parks Hospitality Association and president of the American Recreation Coalition. He "explained that companies can provide much needed upgrades to park campgrounds while adding amenities like food stores, Wi-Fi, and tent rentals."

How A Mosquito-Borne Disease May Impact An Imperiled Idaho Species.

KBSC-FM Boise, ID (8/28, Barnhill) reports that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke has identified the West Nile Virus as a threat to the greater sage grouse. During his visit to Boise in June, Zinke "said he wanted to take the mosquito-borne disease into consideration as part of his sage grouse management strategy." In recommendations since that visit, Zinke "outlined changes to the previous administration's plan that's friendlier to mining and oil and gas companies."

Buttrey Discusses Long Quest For Pending Interior Job.

The Great Falls (MT) Tribune (8/28, Drake) reports that Montnana state Sen. Ed Buttrey is up for a job as an assistant secretary with the Interior Department. According to the article, "it was known toward the end of the 2017 legislative session that Buttrey was up for the job." Buttrey said he and Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke "have the same vision and that Zinke was looking for people who he could rely on, trust and make the department look great."

House Natural Resources Chairman Pledges To Retire After Next Term.

The Hill (8/28, Henry) reports that "House Natural Resources Committee Chairman Rob Bishop (R-UT) intends to retire after his next term in office, he told constituents last week." The Hill says that "at a town hall event in Layton, Utah, on Friday, Bishop said he won't run for reelection to the House in 2020, assuming he wins reelection next year to the House seat he's held since 2003." The Hill adds that "Bishop is in his second term as chairman of the Natural Resources Committee, a panel that gives him oversight of the Interior Department, energy and natural resources development, public lands policy, and Puerto Rico."

Additional coverage was provided by the AP (8/28).

Additional Coverage: Zinke's Daughter Slams Trump's "Inexcusable" Transgender Military Policy.

Additional coverage that Jennifer Detlefsen, the daughter of Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke, "slammed" President's Trump's "policy banning transgender people from serving in any capacity in the military" was provided by CNN (8/28, Klein) and E&E Publishing (8/28, Yachnin).

The Rush To Develop Oil And Gas We Don't Need.

In an op-ed for the New York Times (8/28, Lyons), Jim Lyons, a research scholar at Yale, criticizes President Trump for moving forward with oil and gas development on public lands. Lyons argues that Trump's "misguided move to increase production in a soft energy market is bad for government revenues, not necessary for national security and likely to damage natural resources that millions of Americans use and enjoy." Lyons suggests that "a better approach would be to develop an overall strategy to guide energy development to places where conflicts with water, wildlife and recreation are fewer."

Commentary: US And Utah Need To Stop Coddling Domestic Extremists.

In an op-ed for the Salt Lake (UT) Tribune (8/29, Summers), Ian Summers, a graduate research fellow in the University of Utah's Department of Communication and special advisor to Alliance for a Better Utah, draws attention to "a pattern of state and federal officials excusing extremist antigovernment rhetoric that fosters violent zealots against the public servants they are supposed to protect." Summers adds that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke "declined to speak up in defense of his employees when asked about the Bunkerville standoff." Summers warns that "the longer

Zinke stays silent on this form of domestic terrorism, the more likely a tragic attack will occur – at the expense of the men and women who serve under him."

Bureau Of Land Management

New Path Sought For High-Voltage Transmission Lines In Idaho.

The AP (8/28, Ridler) reports that "federal officials on Monday reopened public comments on proposed routes for two high-voltage transmission lines in southwestern Idaho intended to modernize the Pacific Northwest's energy grid." The Bureau of Land Management "announced it will take comments through Sept. 27 for two segments of the Gateway West project proposed by Idaho Power and Rocky Mountain Power." The BLM in January "approved routes for the two 500-kilovolt transmission lines on public land in Idaho's Gooding, Elmore, Owyhee, Cassia and Twin Falls counties." However, "legislation by Idaho Republican Rep. Mike Simpson signed into law in May by President Donald Trump mandates segments not connected to those routes."

Coverage by the AP was also picked up by the Sacramento (CA) Bee (8/28, Ridler), the Bristol (VA) Herald Courier (8/28, Ridler), the Washington Times (8/28, Ridler), the Houston Chronicle (8/28, Ridler, Press), and the Spokane (WA) Spokesman-Review (8/28, Ridler).

Person Who Caused Big Wyoming Wildfire Could Be Told To Pay.

The AP (8/28) reports that "the person who caused a wildfire that destroyed a home and threatened several others east of Yellowstone National Park could be ordered to pay millions to cover firefighting costs." Bureau of Land Management spokeswoman Sarah Beckwith said "the federal agency seeks to recoup the cost of wildfires caused by people." According to Beckwith, "the fire cost the BLM roughly $1.4 million and several agencies were involved in fighting the fire."

Additional coverage was provided by the Powell (WY) Tribune (8/28, Baker).

Bringing Pot To Burning Man? It's Still Illegal On US Land.

The AP (8/28) reports that "Nevada has legalized recreational marijuana, but it's still not OK for tens of thousands of Burning Man fans to light up this year." According to the article, "consumption is allowed only in private and even possession remains illegal on federal lands, including the stretch of Black Rock Desert managed by the U.S. Bureau of Land Management where the counter-culture festival began Sunday and continues through the weekend about 100 miles (161 kilometers) north of Reno." BLM officials "say a pot possession arrest can result in a year in jail and a $1,000 fine." However, "federal agents made no arrests for any crimes last year at Burning Man, or the year before."

Lawmakers Frustrated By BLM, Wyoming Gets EPA Grant For Leaky Petroleum Tanks Ruffatto Sentencing Delayed.

The Casper (WY) Star-Tribune (8/28, Richards) reports that "the Bureau of Land Management's consideration of viewshed impacts from Native American historic sites has some lawmakers and a number of oil and gas operators frustrated." The Select Federal Natural Resource Committee meets in Casper next week, "and the viewshed is on the agenda."

Throwing Away Years Of Public Cooperation In The Arctic Would Be A Mistake.

In an op-ed for the Juneau (AK) Empire (8/28), Debbie S. Miller opposes opening up more of the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska to drilling. According to Miller, "given the size of the Reserve, there is plenty of room to protect significant natural values and the subsistence interests of the Inupiat." She says that the BLM has "created a management plan that, while not perfect, has set aside five areas of exceptional wildlife and subsistence values while still allowing oil development to move forward in the Reserve."

Euthanizing Wild Horses Is Nice Way To Say Killing: Suzanne Roy.

In an op-ed for the Reno (NV) Gazette-Journal (8/28, Roy), Suzanne Roy, executive director of the American Wild Horse Campaign, criticizes "the Trump Administration's budget request to slaughter tens of thousands of healthy wild horses and burros." Instead of slaughter, Roy urges Congress to "look where the National Academy of Sciences directed the BLM to go: managing the wild horse population with fertility control." She argues that "there is still time for Congress to wise up, reject the inhumanity of mass slaughter, and call for publicly-supported, scientifically-

recommended, and long-term solutions for our wild horses."

Bureau Of Ocean Energy Management

Study: Seismic Blasting In Gulf Of Mexico Hurts Dolphins, Whales.

The Tampa Bay (FL) Times (8/28, Pittman) reports, "For the past six months, a battle has raged over a proposal to allow oil and gas companies to perform seismic testing to search for deposits of petroleum off the nation's Atlantic coast." The federal government issued 22 permits for seismic tests in the Gulf of Mexico last year, and has so far issued 11 this year. A federal environmental impact study released this month "says the blasts of sound used to detect the presence of oil and gas have likely been harming whales and dolphins" in the Gulf of Mexico. But "an industry spokesman contended that there's no evidence that any marine life has ever been harmed by its seismic testing." API's Erik Milito said, "The oil and natural gas industry has been operating safely and successfully in the Gulf of Mexico for decades without injuries to marine life."

Carney Launches Effort To Explore Offshore Wind In Delaware.

The Wilmington (DE) News Journal (8/28, Goss) reports that "Delaware this week took its first major step toward encouraging the development of an offshore wind farm in nearly a decade." Gov. John Carney on Monday "signed an executive order to create a 'working group' that will examine the potential costs and benefits of generating electricity from such a project." According to the article, "one of the first questions the 17-member working group will need to answer is how to avoid the missteps that caused the undoing of Delaware's previous attempt to foster an offshore wind project under Carney's predecessor, former Gov. Jack Markell."

Also reporting are North American Windpower (8/28, Lillian).

Bureau Of Reclamation

Boat Ramp To Close After Labor Day Weekend.

The Twin Falls (ID) Times-News (8/29) reports that "American Falls Reservoir's west-side boat ramp construction will resume after Labor Day weekend, the Bureau of Reclamation announced." According to the article, "the ramp will close to the public, including all boater and angler traffic, beginning Sept. 5 and will re-open in mid-October following construction." Upper Snake Field Office manager Ryan Newman said in a release, "Our contractors have a small window of opportunity to access a portion of the ramp. The goal is to remove and replace up to 150 feet of the ramp before the water rises in mid-October."

Bureau Of Safety And Environmental Enforcement

More Rain And Rescues As Harvey Lashes Texas For Another Day.

The New York Times (8/28) reports Tropical Storm Harvey continues to unleash rain and flooding in Houston, leading the city's mayor Sylvester Turner to defend his decision not to evacuate. Turner said an evacuation order would have been chaotic and put more people's lives in danger.

A second New York Times (8/28, Dougherty) reports the storm is likely to be one of the nation's costliest disasters, with tens of billions in economic activity and property damage lost in an area crucial for the energy, chemical and shipping industries. Economists say the region will recover quickly and continue growing, but the storm is forcing businesses to focus on damage assessment and rebuilding. Brett Ryan, senior US economist at Deutsche Bank, said, "Since the Port Arthur refining complex is the largest in the U.S. and the second largest in the world, this will no doubt impact gasoline and chemicals prices." The storm forced eight refineries in Texas to shut down, sparking concern for increases in gasoline prices. The Wall Street Journal (8/28, Zumbrun) reports the financial toll will largely depend on the extend of flooding in upcoming days. While refiners outside the region may be able to offset some of the negative effects, Gulf Coast producers still have to evaluate whether the plants and ports sustained major damage from the flood before restarting operations. Moody's expects the biggest damage will be to insurers and property owners, with an estimated $30-40 billion in damage from the storm. The Los Angeles Times (8/28, Masunaga) reports major ports in Corpus Christi and Houston are closed to vessel traffic, which is expected to delay imports and exports of crude and refined products,

according to S&P Global Platts. Beacon Economics economist Robert Kleinhenz said there is a "good chance" of a "slight but measurable impact" on the US GDP this quarter because of the storm. USA Today (8/28, Davidson, Bomey) reports the region is responsible for about 2.4 percent of the US' economy, with a projected gross output of $441 billion this year. It is a top three center for oil refineries, and is the largest concentration of chemical production. It also contains the second busiest shipping port and two of the country's busiest airports. Kevin Simmons, an economics professor at Austin College, writes in the Dallas Morning News (8/28, Simmons) that Harvey could break a record for financial damage by a storm.

Refiner Stocks Rise As Harvey Disrupts Fuel Production. The Wall Street Journal (8/28, Sider) reports shares of refiners rallied Monday as investors look to benefit from the plants that are still online and producing. Harvey has knocked out more than 2 million bpd in refining capacity, causing gasoline and diesel prices to spike on concerns that supplies will tighten. However, the reduced demand from refiners has also depressed oil prices. USA Today (8/28, Bomey) reports that long term damage will be limited, but short term outages at refineries are causing gasoline price spikes. The national average was $2.36 on Monday, up 4 cents from a week ago and 15.4 cents year-over-year, according to AAA. GasBuddy.com petroleum analyst Patrick DeHaan expects retail increases of 10-25 cents in the Gulf Coast, 10-25 cents in the upper Midwest, 10-20 cents in the Northeast, 5-15 cents in the Plains and 5-15 cents in the Rockies and West. DeHaan said, "I think the worst of the impact is going to start trickling down to the retail level in the next couple of days. ... The storm is going to be dumping rain for days yet, so we don't necessarily have a full comprehension of the amount of damage that's taking place." The Miami Herald (8/28, Neal) reports DeHaan said, "The impact could linger for several weeks or longer, depending on how long it takes Texas refiners to return to normal operations. In addition, the situation could worsen should more shutdowns or outages happen in the coming week as Harvey continues to drop feet of rain on already flooded Texas." Reuters (8/28, Seba) reports US fuel prices surged on Monday as two more Gulf Coast refiners cut output and considered reducing a third, leaving more than 13 percent of the nation's refining capacity offline. Marathon's Galveston Bay refinery cut production by half, while Lyondell Basell Industries' Houston refinery also reduced output by 50 percent to conserve supply. Motiva Enterprises is also considering shutting in its Port Arthur refinery because of high water and plant grounds and running with only essential personnel. Gasoline for immediate delivery in the Gulf Coast hit five-year highs, while US gasoline futures jumped as much as 7 percent. Robert Rapier writes a contributing piece for Forbes (8/28, Rapier) saying that the US will have a considerable draw on gasoline inventories this week, and for the foreseeable future. The extent of the draws will depend on the damage to the facilities and infrastructure. Rapier expects offshore production to resume quickly, but Eagle Ford operations to take longer to resume.

Reuters (8/28, Scheyder) reports BP said its offshore oil platforms in the US Gulf of Mexico and its Texas City chemical plant are still online despite Tropical Storm Harvey. BP decided to close its US headquarters in Houston and is asking its 5,000 employees to work remotely. The office will only reopen once conditions approve, according to spokesman Jason Ryan.

Fox Business (8/28, Rocco) reports some oil production in the Gulf of Mexico started to return on Monday as companies recover from Hurricane Harvey. About 18.9 percent of the Gulf's 1.75 million bpd capacity was still offline, down from Sunday's estimate of 22 percent, according to the BSEE. The agency said 98 platforms remain evacuated, while seven resumed operations. Natural gas production also improved from 25.7 percent offline to 18.1 percent.

Gaurav Sharma writes a contributing piece for Forbes (8/28, Sharma) reports that the storm could move towards Louisiana and cause widespread damage at their refining facilities. In total, "The shutdowns include ExxonMobil Baytown (560,500 bpd), and Valero (293,000 bpd), Citgo (157,500 bpd), Flint Hills (296,470 bpd), Magellan (50,000 bpd), Buckeye (50,000 bpd) – all in Corpus Christi. Shell Deer Park (340,000 bpd), Pasadena (112,229 bpd), Phillips66 Sweeny (247,000 bpd) and Valero Three Rivers (89,000 bpd) facilities have also been temporarily closed."

Bloomberg News (8/28, Spalding, Carroll) reports Harvey has drifted back into the Gulf of Mexico, where it is gaining strength before coming ashore again. It is expected to hit the Texas-Louisiana border.

Harvey's Lessons For America's Stretched Energy Infrastructure. The Wall Street Journal (8/28, Jakab) reports Hurricane Harvey is providing an important reminder that the infrastructure that processes and delivers oil is vital for the US' energy security. The US imports 25 percent less oil than a decade ago and exports over a million bpd. The US also relies on fewer facilities, that are now run closer to their physical limits. The storm in the Gulf Coast, where many refineries are concentrated, also affects the pipeline infrastructure that delivers product to customers. The Colonial Pipeline carries over 2.5 million bpd, about half the refined product used along the entire

east coast. In Breakingviews, Reuters (8/28, Laughlin) says that the storm exposes the flaws in making the US a dominant fuel exporter by promoting coal and opening federal lands for oil drilling. Instead, "Tackling climate change and hardening energy infrastructure should take priority over Trump's pet projects." While oil and gas supplies are plentiful, the resources are little good if the necessary infrastructure is not working.

Fish And Wildlife Service

9th Circuit Rules Against Endangered Status For Sonoran Desert Bald Eagles.

The Arizona Daily Star (8/28, Fischer) reports that the 9th US Circuit Court of Appeals "rebuffed a bid to have the Sonoran Desert area bald eagle listed as endangered, saying, in essence, that if they all are eradicated it wouldn't make a real difference to eagle populations as a whole." The appeals court "agreed Monday with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service that while the eagles are different than others, they are not 'ecologically or biologically significant.'" According to the article, "with bald eagles as a whole no longer endangered, the judges said there was no justification for providing that status for this group alone, even if they disappear from the Southwest."

Additional coverage was provided by the Arizona Daily Sun (8/28, Fischer) and Law360 (8/28, Phillis).

Business Leaders Want Mexican Wolves In Grand Canyon Area.

The AP (8/29) reports that "more than 60 business leaders have urged the federal government to release endangered Mexican gray wolves into the Grand Canyon area in northern Arizona and eastern Utah." The business leaders are "submitting their request in a joint letter to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service." They claim "the wolf-recovery efforts will have economic and environmental benefits."

Additional coverage was provided by the Arizona Republic (8/28, Devoid).

Feds Will Help With Wetlands Restoration At Bailey Point.

The Elk River (MN) Star News (8/28) reports that the US Fish and Wildlife Service is "going to help with wetland restoration at Bailey Point Nature Preserve in Elk River." The Elk River City Council agreed "to enter into a contract with the service Monday night." Under the contract, the federal government will "pay $2,500 to restore an acre of wetland and 15 acres of prairie and oak savanna in the park." The project will "provide habitat for migratory birds and native pollinators, like bees, and give the city technical expertise, while the city agreed to hire the contract that does the work."

Refuge Occupier Jason Blomgren Sentenced To Probation.

The AP (8/28, Dubois) reports that "a federal judge sentenced a North Carolina man on Monday to two years on probation for his role in last year's takeover of a national wildlife refuge in Oregon." US District Judge Robert Jones also "ordered Jason Blomgren to pay $3,000 restitution." Blomgren is also "required to participate in mental health treatment."

This 'Endangered Species' Story Was Government-Sponsored Fake News.

In commentary for the Daily Signal (8/28, Gordon), Rob Gordon, a senior research fellow at The Heritage Foundation criticizes the federal government for its decision to delist the Johnston's frankenia. According to Gordon, "the species did not recover – it never was endangered in the first place." Gordon also claims that it took the Fish and Wildlife Service "decades to correct this mistake, and when it finally did, it was dishonest."

National Park Service

Homestead To Welcome Visitor Aiming To See Every National Park.

The Beatrice (NE) Daily Sun (8/28) reports that Homestead National Monument of America will be "welcoming Mikah Meyer to the park on Monday, Sept. 4, 2017, from 1-2 p.m. at the Education Center." Meyer is "on a mission to set a world record for national park trips." Meyer will "discuss his epic quest to be the youngest person to stamp his national park passport book in all 417 units of the National Park System."

Additional Coverage: Bottled Water Is Back In Our National Parks.

Additional coverage that the ban on the sale of bottled water in national parks has been overturned was provided by Plastics Today (8/28, Goldsberry).

Growing Maintenance Backlog Hurting Our National Parks.

In an op-ed for the Helena (MT) Independent Record (8/28, Beck), Tom Beck, a former legislator from Deer Lodge, writes that the deferred maintenance backlogs at national parks is "a big problem" for the National Park Service, "as it can't keep up with the roughly $11.3 billion in maintenance repairs that are needed system-wide." Beck warns that "the maintenance backlog means that tourism in Montana could take a hit." Furthermore, he says that "the more we defer park maintenance needs, the more expensive they can become." Beck supports the National Park Service Legacy Act, "bipartisan congressional legislation that would provide a fiscally sustainable path forward to address deferred maintenance problems in our national parks."

Cash-strapped Park Service Eyes Help From 'Friends'.

The Johnstown (PA) Tribune-Democrat (8/29) editorializes that "because federal dollars for national parks are limited, and more than 400 other national historic sites are cash-strapped as well, rangers at the Johnstown Flood National Memorial started looking elsewhere for funds to help pay for improvements." The rangers "want to adopt a program that has been successful at other national park sites across the country." The rangers "hope to establish a Friends of the Johnstown Flood National Memorial group." The paper encourages "anyone interested in preserving the region's rich heritage and history to lend a hand."

Office Of Insular Affairs

North Korea Fires Unidentified Projectile, US Says.

The Los Angeles Times (8/28, Stiles) reports North Korea on Tuesday launched a missile that "apparently traveled hundreds of miles over Sea of Japan and Hokkaido, an island prefecture in northern Japan," according to Army Col. Rob Manning, a Pentagon spokesman. Manning said military officials are evaluating the launch and will report their findings later. ABC World News Tonight (8/28, story 7, 1:10, Llamas) called the ballistic missile launch "another serious escalation," and noted "President Trump has threatened to confront new signs of aggression from North Korea with, quote, 'fire and fury.' No response yet from the White House to today's launch." NBC Nightly News (8/28, story 8, 0:30, Holt) said the early Tuesday morning launch "was the first time a North Korean projectile crossed over Japan in nearly a decade" and "the second launch from the North in four days. Defiant moves in the face of President Trump's threats of fire and fury."

The New York Times (8/28, Sang-Hun, Sanger) similarly calls the move "a direct challenge to President Trump," and notes the launch came shortly after Secretary of State Tillerson said he was "pleased to see that the regime in Pyongyang has certainly demonstrated some level of restraint that we have not seen in the past." While the missile's flight "landed harmlessly in the sea," the propaganda value "was considerable," as public television programs "were interrupted with a rare warning screen announcing the missile's flight over the country," bullet train lines halted operations, and the government used "unusually dire terms" to discuss the incident. Said Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, "A missile passing over Japan is an unprecedented, grave and serious threat," Bloomberg News (8/28, Nonomiya, Sharp, Keatinge) reports, adding that Abe demanded an emergency United Nations Security Council meeting. Abe told reporters "that he agreed with Trump to increase pressure on North Korea following a 40-minute phone call on Tuesday morning," and also "urged China and Russia to join in taking action against Kim Jong Un's regime."

The Wall Street Journal (8/28, Cheng, Landers) reports the Anderson Air Force Base in Guam announced US authorities detected the launch "in real time," but determined the missile did not pose a threat to the island. Meanwhile, according to a statement from Seoul's Blue House, National Security Adviser McMaster and his counterpart from Seoul, Chung Eui-yong discussed an expanded deployment of "strategic assets," which the Journal says may include nuclear weapons, aircraft carriers, or stealth bombers, to South Korea.

Top National News

Trump To Visit Texas As Rain Continues To Fall And Relief Efforts Continue.

President Trump addressed Tropical Storm Harvey and the continuing rains in Texas on Monday, vowing long-term federal recovery assistance. The President and First Lady plan to visit Texas Tuesday, and may return to the region again this weekend. Coverage portrays the response as running smoothly so far, but with much remaining to be seen amid ongoing rains and a massive number of displaced people. The Dallas Morning News (8/28, Gillman) reports under the headline "Trump's Texas Flood Tour Will Project Compassion, High-Level Engagement" that the White House has tried to project an image of Trump as "an engaged consoler in chief," but the Washington Post (8/28, Parker) says the visit "is not without its own possible political peril, especially because rain may still be falling when he heads to Texas."

The story dominated the network newscasts, which devoted more than 46 minutes of combined coverage to Harvey. On the CBS Evening News (8/28, story 7, 0:30, O'Donnell), Anthony Mason reported, "President Trump will fly to the disaster zone tomorrow, and possibly again next weekend. No decision has been announced on which towns the President will visit." NBC Nightly News (8/28, story 5, 0:40, Holt) reported, "President Trump is preparing to head here to the storm zone tomorrow to monitor this situation on the ground. This natural disaster [is] a major test for how his Administration will respond." On ABC World News Tonight (8/28, story 6, 1:50, Llamas), Jonathan Karl reported, "The President was upbeat about recovery efforts, saying the Texas governor is doing a fantastic job, calling his FEMA administrator 'outstanding in so many ways,' and predicting a swift recovery."

USA Today (8/28, Korte) reports that Trump said Monday "that he may visit the Gulf Coast two or three times this week – with stops in Texas and possibly Louisiana – to survey the damage caused by Hurricane Harvey." During remarks at the White House after his meeting with President Sauli Niinistö of Finland, the President "expressed amazement at the magnitude of the disaster but promised a swift and long-term federal government response." Trump said, "I've heard the words 'epic,' I've heard 'historic.' That's what it is. It's like Texas. It's really like Texas, if you think about it. But it is a historic amount of water." Politico (8/28, McCaskill, Nelson) reports that the President and First Lady are "expected to sidestep Houston" on Tuesday "so as not to interrupt evacuations and emergency responses to the devastating flooding in that area."

The New York Times (8/28, Davis, Thrush) reports that Trump "pledged the federal government's full support to residents of Texas and Louisiana...saying that 'we are 100 percent with you' and promising quick delivery of a multibillion-dollar aid package." Trump said, "Recovery will be a long and difficult road, and the federal government stands ready, willing and able to support that effort." The Los Angeles Times (8/28) reports that Trump "cautioned that the extent of the disaster is still unknown."

The New York Post (8/28, Fredericks) reports that Trump "also praised people who were going out of their way to help out their fellow citizens." The President said, "Tragic times such as these bring out the best in America's character. Strength, charity and resilience are those characters. We see neighbor helping neighbor, friend helping friend and stranger helping stranger." The Washington Times (8/28, Boyer) reports that he said "the nation is hoping for 'strength and courage' for those affected by epic flooding and other storm damage, with much of the rainfall still coming."

Politico (8/28, Nussbaum) says the President "has deployed his knack for marketing as Hurricane Harvey has ravaged Texas, calling the storm 'epic,' 'historic' and the 'biggest ever.' ... But Trump's showmanship is about to collide with the devastation on the ground as he heads to Texas on Tuesday, and while natural disasters usually call for a certain presidential demeanor, Trump's response so far has been distinctly his own." Politico writes that "even while he has pledged quick financial assistance from the federal government, he has appeared unable to stop himself from marveling at the strength and size of the storm."

Energy Secretary Perry said on Fox News' Fox & Friends (8/28), "The President's really engaged in this. ... This President is as engaged in a personal way as any president that I had the privilege to work with. He wants to come to Texas." He "wants to be around some people, let them know that the federal government is a partner in this. We recognize, we respect the state's role in this effort that they're leading this, we're assisting them. We're leaning forward as far as we can in this. But the President is very, very engaged, he knows exactly what's going on."

Perry later said on Fox News' Hannity (8/28), "The President has put a Cabinet together that is really focused on this. The President has been leaning into this disaster from before it ever started, clearly giving the authority to the state of Texas to move and move quickly. So I feel confident that both the state and the federal government."

Interior Secretary Zinke said on Fox News' Fox & Friends (8/28) that "it's amazing to see the Cabinet under the Chief of Staff Gen. Kelly. This is very much like a military operation by the numbers, making sure the assets are surged forward, making sure we have communication with our assets and make sure all the secretaries are engaged."

Bill Kristol was asked on CNN's The Lead (8/28) about the Trump Administration's response. Kristol said, "It's hard to tell, obviously, and we'll know much more later. I do think we want to remember that John Kelly, the very capable chief of staff, was secretary of homeland security. ... So John Kelly knows more about this than the typical White House chief of staff and he was a four-star Marine general and is probably pretty good at getting things organized and happening on time."

Some analyses look at the political ramifications of how the President handles the storm. The AP (8/28, Pace) writes, "George W. Bush never recovered from his flyover of Hurricane Katrina's devastation. Barack Obama got a bipartisan boost late in his re-election campaign for his handling of Superstorm Sandy." Now Trump "confronts the political risks and potential gains that come with leading the federal government's response to a deadly and destructive natural disaster." The White House "has sought to paint Trump as eagerly engaged in the initial response," and the President's "advisers are well-aware that the hurricane poses a significant test for the White House, which has largely been mired in crises of its own making during Trump's first seven months in office."

The Washington Post (8/28, Debonis, Paletta) says the storm "will pose an immediate test for the White House and Congress, pressing policymakers to approve billions of dollars in recovery funds even though they haven't agreed on much else this year." Harvey "poses President Trump's first test in emergency assistance, potentially revealing whether he can overcome Congress's deep divisions over spending and the budget to prioritize aid. It will also test whether Trump can suspend his adversarial governing style and even postpone his own agenda...to assemble a major – and costly – package that could be directed to law enforcement, emergency relief, schools, infrastructure, hospitals, food banks and several other entities."

USA Today (8/28) says in an editorial, "Everything President Trump needs to know about how not to handle Hurricane Harvey's devastation in Texas, he can learn" from handling of Katrina. "Key lessons: No flyovers. No amateurs running the Federal Emergency Management Agency. No premature compliments for disaster relief efforts. And definitely nothing like 'Brownie, you're doing a heck of a job.' ... Trump will ultimately be judged by his leadership, his empathy and the strength of his administration's efforts to support state, local and private relief efforts."

The President did not tweet during the day on Monday, but retweeted four items – just one of them, from Texas Gov. Greg Abbott, about the storm. Bloomberg News (8/28, Epstein, Jacobs) also reports on the President's Monday remarks.

Pence Says Adequate Funding Exists To Address Crisis. Roll Call (8/28, Bennett) reports that Vice President Pence said Monday that the federal government "has adequate funding on hand to deal with the historic flooding and damage done by Hurricane Harvey, possibly looking to tamp down concerns that Congress could get into a spending fight over the cost of the storm's aftermath." Pence said, "We truly believe that we have the reserves to address the financial burden of this crisis."

Pence told KHOU-TV Houston (8/28, Lewis), "We actually anticipate that as many as a half a million people in Texas will be eligible for and applying for financial disaster assistance, and we remain very confident that with the reserves and with the support in the Congress, we'll have the resources that we need. But right now, as you know very well, the focus now is on rescue, on getting people out of harm's way. ... The President and I could not be more grateful for the efforts of state and local officials in Texas. But it's so important that Texans continue to do what people have been doing, and that is listening to local emergency management officials and making sure that they and their families stay safe."

Pence said on KTRH-AM Houston (8/28), "I think that the what you're going to see is that the national government, and we anticipate the Congress, are going to make the resources of available to see Texas through the rescue operation, through the recovery. But there is simply no question when you look at...the magnitude of the flooding that's taken place in the fourth largest city in the United States that we anticipate it will be years coming back but Houston and Texas are strong. ... We know we will be there to rebuild and the American people are with you."

Pence said on KTSA-AM San Antonio (8/28) that "when the rain comes down and beats against the house and the flood waters rise and the wind blows, states are in the lead and your local first responders and local emergency managers but the federal government has a vital role in providing support and from even before landfall, President Trump directed the full resources of

the Federal government to support the people of Texas and as of this morning the people of Louisiana in the midst of this storm. As I speak to you we have some eight thousand federal officials working through FEMA on the ground in Texas and Louisiana. We have but dozens of fixed wing and helicopter aircraft with the Coast Guard that are supporting National Guard efforts."

Pence said on the Rush Limbaugh Show (8/28), "I think the American people can be very proud of the effort the Gov. Abbott in Texas and local first responded are making and I am very proud of the strong leadership President Trump has provided for our entire Administration." Pence added that "once the floodwaters subside, then the real work of recovery will be begin in earnest and we're going be making sure that that upwards to a half a million Americans that may be eligible for disaster assistance know that that we are with them, we support them and we'll see Houston and southeast Texas all the way through this crisis."

Pence was also interviewed on KSEV-AM and KTRK-TV.

Lawmakers Hope To Avoid Fight Over Disaster Aid. USA Today (8/28, King, Jackson) reports that officials are hoping "to avoid the political squall over disaster aid that followed Superstorm Sandy in 2012. ... Lawmakers from New York and New Jersey took to Twitter to make clear they were ready to support disaster aid for the battered Gulf Coast, even though many of their colleagues from that region opposed the aid package approved after Sandy struck the Northeast nearly five years ago." However, "some conservatives are warning Congress not to fill a relief bill with pork-barrel spending." House Freedom Caucus Chairman Rep. Mark Meadows (R-NC) said, "Sadly and far too often, relief packages become a vehicle for all kinds of special interest and pet projects that have nothing to do with the devastation. Narrowly focused relief packages would get conservative support."

The New York Times (8/28, Kaplan, Martin) says that "the prospect of a disaster aid package is also reviving raw emotions from after Hurricane Sandy, when Northeastern Republicans found themselves pitted against conservative colleagues from other regions – including most of the Texas delegation – who objected to the roughly $50 billion relief package," and it "will add another pressing issue to an already tense fiscal showdown that faces Congress as lawmakers return next week from a monthlong recess." Politico (8/28, Scholtes, Wright) reports under the headline "Hurricane Aid Adds To GOP's Dreadful September" that Senate Majority Leader McConnell and House Speaker Ryan "already face a daunting September, with deadlines looming to avoid a government shutdown and debt default," and "now they'll likely have to add a multibillion-dollar aid package" to the mix.

Politico (8/28, Cheney) reports that Sen. Ted Cruz and other Texas Republicans are now being "accused of hypocrisy on Harvey aid." Gov. Chris Christie, referring to Sandy, told reporters Monday, "The congressional members in Texas are hypocrites, and I said back in 2012 they'd be proven to be hypocrites. It was just a matter of time. We were the disaster that was the longest in waiting in terms of federal aid, and I hope that's not what happens to the folks in Texas." Other northeastern Republicans "also vented their frustration at how Texas Republicans handled Sandy aid – even as they said they wouldn't repeat history in return."

Several Texas lawmakers of both parties weighed in on the storm response. Rep. Al Green (D-TX) said on CNN's Situation Room (8/28), "I think that we have to prepare ourselves for a circumstance similar to what we had with Katrina. ... We will have a long-term recovery process, and it's going to require funding from the government. Only the Federal government can step in with the resources necessary to take care of the people after this horrific event. My hope is that we will be amenable to working together, I think we will, and making sure we provide the resources for the recovery that will be long term."

Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee (D-TX) was asked on CNN's Situation Room (8/28) if she is confident Congress will pass an aid package for Texas. Jackson Lee said, "This is a statement about America and whether we will build infrastructure and housing and we'll restore people's lives. I believe the Speaker and certainly my Democratic leadership that has called me already to move an aid package, I think the real question is if the President of the United States has to be part of that leadership with a commitment not to shut this government down."

Rep. Pete Sessions (R-TX) said on MSNBC's Morning Joe (8/28), "Congress is going to have to deal with this appropriately as we have had to do over the last 20 years of big floods and tornadoes. I would offer some bit of advice to the Administration...and to the United States Senate. They need to finish 100 percent of the confirmations. They need to finish doing their work rather than the games that have been going on. We need real live people who will be accountable and responsible for what happens for several years from the Administration across the board, and I encourage the Administration to finish off its business."

AP Analysis: FEMA's Long Brings Experience To Handling Of Storm. The AP (8/28, Kellman) writes that FEMA Administrator Brock Long, "a veteran of disaster management in government and the private sector," is "facing a new scale of problems to solve in the historic devastation of the nation's fourth-largest city. And if the past is any indication, political storms could loom on the horizon." Long said Monday, "We have not seen an event like this. You could not draw this forecast up." Harvey "is far from Long's first time managing disaster response, but it's shaping up to be one of the nation's most devastating storms."

The Texas Tribune (8/28, Livingston) reports that Long was in Corpus Christi and San Antonio on Monday. Long said on Fox News Special Report (8/28), "I was with Gov. Abbott in Corpus Christi today. ... It was good because we were able to sit down with the Mayor and some county judges there to reconfirm any gaps that there may be. I also put eyes on commodities that were moving forward." Long added, "Unfortunately, this is going to call for urban planning, city officials, different things to rethink the way we redesign Houston after this. We already asking for a new normal."

The New York Times (8/28, Sullivan) reports that FEMA "is calling on Americans to help with the response to Hurricane Harvey through financial donations or by assisting with search and rescue efforts." Acting DHS Secretary Elaine Duke said, "People need help, and we are working to provide it. Harvey is still a dangerous and historic storm."

The Houston Chronicle (8/28, Osborne, Diaz) reports that for now, FEMA "remains focused on assisting local authorities in rescue efforts and distributing emergency supplies. ... For an agency that many still remember for its struggles to manage Hurricane Katrina in 2005, the bigger test will come in managing the rebuilding efforts, experts say. But so far, the agency is winning early praise."

FEMA: 30,000 Expected To Need Shelter In Texas. USA Today (8/28, Jervis, Bacon) reports that "more than 5,500" Texans sought refuge in Houston's convention center and other shelters Monday "as local, state and federal officials warned that the human crisis in southeast Texas was just beginning." Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner said he expects the number of people seeking shelter "to rise sharply by Tuesday," and Long "said more than 30,000 people ultimately could need shelter." Said Long, "The sheltering mission is going to be a very heavy lift." The New York Times (8/28, Healy) reports that most of those seeking refuge in shelters "have few clothes, no cars or way home, and are living in a haze of uncertainty, searching for answers from home as to what – and who – survived."

The CBS Evening News (8/28, story 2, 3:00, O'Donnell) reported, "FEMA estimates 30,000 evacuees would need shelter within a couple of days. More of Houston's flood survivors left rooftops in a basket today: 20 Coast Guard helicopters have plucked more than 300 Harvey victims to safety. But officials admit there aren't enough helicopters, boats, or high water vehicles to reach everyone. Emergency systems were overwhelmed. By this morning, 75,000 people had called 911, desperate for help." ABC World News Tonight (8/28, story 3, 2:10, Llamas) spoke with some of the evacuees. ABC World News Tonight (8/28, story 8, 1:50, Llamas) also spoke with some evacuated families whose homes were destroyed.

Michael Brown: Harvey "Worse Than Katrina" In Several Ways. The Houston Chronicle (8/28, Hlavaty) reports that ex-FEMA Director Michael Brown said in a Monday interview "that the devastation Houston is suffering from Hurricane Harvey was worse in his eyes than what was seen during Katrina." Brown said, "There are several factors that make it worse than Katrina. For one there is the scope of the flooding. ... Also, the amount of damages will continue to grow. There will be mold and structural damages adding up. ... This will be easily the most expensive natural disaster in American history."

Coast Guard Playing "Major Role" In Search And Rescue Operations. The CBS Evening News (8/28, story 10, 1:40, O'Donnell) reported that the US Coast Guard is playing "a major role in search and rescue operations" in Texas with 150 Guard members "flown in from all over the country and more are on the way." In addition, "15 to 20 aircraft are up in the air at any given time."

Army Corps Of Engineers Releasing Water From Reservoirs To Prevent Additional Flooding. The CBS Evening News (8/28, story 4, 2:20, O'Donnell) reported that the Army Corps of Engineers has begun releasing water from two reservoirs to prevent additional flooding in downtown Houston, "but that ended up sending flood waters pouring into some neighborhoods." ABC World News Tonight (8/28, story 2, 1:35, Llamas) likewise reported that the Corps "released some of water, hoping the keep it under control, but tens of thousands of homes are under threat because of it." ABC's Clayton Sandell reported that residents of Houston's Fleetwood neighborhood were "caught off-guard by rising floods overnight, supercharged when officials say

they were forced to release water from the nearby Addicks and Barker Reservoirs."

Filing Insurance Claims After Friday Could Cost Texans Due To New Law. The Texas Tribune (8/28, Rocha) reports that a new Texas law intended "to crack down on frivolous insurance lawsuits" is set to take effect on Friday. The measure "also reduces the penalty interest rate insurance companies face for late payments if the policyholder files a lawsuit," so for those affected by Harvey, "waiting to submit a claim past Friday could cost them big."

Gulf Coast Property Damage Could Reach $40 Billion. The Wall Street Journal (8/28, Zumbrun) reports that the Texas Gulf Coast is expected to suffer tens of billions of dollars in property damage. Reuters (8/28) reports, "Wall Street analysts estimated insured losses of up to $20 billion, making Harvey one of the costliest storms in history for US insurers." USA Today (8/28, Davidson, Bomey) reports that Moody's Analytics "estimates the storm will result in $30 billion to $40 billion in property damage and about $7 billion in lost economic output." The region "plays an outsize role in the US economy. Its projected gross output of $441 billion this year represents about 2.4% of the nation's economy," and it is "among the top three hubs for oil refineries."

The Wall Street Journal (8/28, Page, Baskin) additionally reports that freight companies are working to reroute cargo and set up alternate supply lines in the wake of the storm.

Trump Stands By Threat To Shut Down Government Over Border Wall.

During a White House press conference with Finnish President Sauli Niinisto on Monday, President Trump stood by his threat to shut down the government if congressional Democrats block funds for a wall along the US-Mexico border. The Washington Times (8/28, Miller) reports that Trump "said he hoped a shutdown wouldn't be necessary." Politico (8/28, Conway) quotes Trump as saying, "I hope that's not necessary. If it's necessary, we'll have to see, but I hope it's not necessary."

CNN senior congressional reporter Manu Raju said on CNN's Situation Room (8/28), "I can tell you, almost certainly...funding for the wall will not get approved in the United States Senate. The Democrats are almost universally opposed to this. A lot of Republicans opposed to it so what does the President do? A lot of Republicans think he will back down, but if he doesn't, then we can have a stand-off, but we'll see. He may be forced to back down given the situation in Texas."

Trump Insists Mexico Will Pay For The Wall. Reuters (8/28) says Trump "also said Mexico may pay for the wall by reimbursement. Mexico has adamantly said it will not pay for the wall." Said Trump, "One way or the other Mexico is going to pay for the wall." USA Today (8/28, Estepa) reports that the comment came after Mexico's foreign ministry released a statement Sunday saying, "As the Mexican government has always stated, our country will not pay, under any circumstances, for a wall or physical barrier built on U.S. territory along the Mexican border. ... This statement is not part of a Mexican negotiating strategy, but rather a principle of national sovereignty and dignity."

Trump To Promote Tax Reform In Missouri Wednesday.

The St. Louis Post-Dispatch (8/28, Raasch) reports that the White House announced Monday that President Trump will speak Wednesday at the Loren Cook Company in Springfield, Missouri. During a speech "aimed at promoting tax reform," Trump "is expected to exhort Congress to move forward on cutting tax rates and simplifying the tax code, a top campaign promise of the president's when he was elected in 2016." The Dispatch adds that Trump will make the speech "at the company of a major Republican campaign donor." According to Federal records, "since 2008, someone identified as Loren Cook or Loren Cook II and affiliated with the company has given more than $24,000, individually, to GOP candidates, including Trump, who got $2,800, according to the Center for Responsive Politics."

EPA Watchdog To Investigate Pruitt's Travel.

The Hill (8/28, Cama) reports the Environmental Protection Agency's Office of the Inspector General "is launching a probe into Administrator Scott Pruitt's 'frequent' travel to his home state of Oklahoma." Officials with the office "notified agency leadership about the audit Monday, weeks after an environmental group said Pruitt was in Oklahoma or en route there for nearly half of his first three months in office, often using taxpayer funds." According to the notification "auditors will examine the EPA's 'adherence to policies, procedures and oversight controls' related to Pruitt's travel." E&E Publishing (8/28) reports the auditors wrote, "This assignment is being initiated based on congressional requests and a hotline complaint, all of which expressed

concerns about administrator Pruitt's travel — primarily his frequent travel to and from his home state of Oklahoma at taxpayer expense."

The Oklahoman (8/28, Wingerter) reports the IG's office "has three objectives for its investigation: determining 'the frequency, cost and extent' of Pruitt's travel to Oklahoma; determining whether EPA travel rules were followed by Pruitt and his staff; and determining whether existing EPA travel policies 'are sufficiently designed to prevent fraud, waste and abuse.'"

Editorial Wrap-Up

New York Times.

"As Harvey Rains Down Devastation, Houston Stands Together." A New York Times (8/28) editorial says that "there are lessons to be learned, as there always are after disasters like this. Some of those lessons — like how unchecked urban sprawl and paving over of wetlands and prairies have increased the risk posed by floods in Houston and other cities — were evident long before Harvey and ought to become more urgent in the storm's wake." The Times argues that "when calamity strikes, this country always seems to be looking in the rearview mirror, lamenting its failure to heed long-ago warnings."

"'The President Speaks For Himself.'" A New York Times (8/29, Board) editorial quotes Secretary of State Tillerson, who on Sunday said President Trump "speaks for himself," and laments, "That disturbing truth was nowhere more evident than in Mr. Trump's pardon, late Friday night, of the former Arizona sheriff Joe Arpaio, which he issued, in his cowardly way, as the nation was riveted to the impending landfall of Hurricane Harvey." The Times argues that the move coincides with "Trump's broader attitude toward law enforcement," and concludes in saying the President's "distorted understanding of justice is cleaving the nation between the majority who support the principles of American democracy and those who support only him."

Washington Post.

"Harvey's Heroes – The Inspiring Response To A Terrible Storm." A Washington Post (8/28) editorial says that in "all the misfortune and misery of this storm, one positive note stands out: the stories of how first responders, neighbors, strangers and just plain folks threw their all into the rescue effort." The storm, it says, "will also raise questions that deserve answers after such a disaster. One of the most consequential is to what degree superstorms are being made even more frequent and ferocious by global climate change." Superstorms like Harvey, Sandy and Katrina "may be remembered as the wake-up calls of our age," and "they must be heeded."

"The Arpaio Pardon Displays Trumps Disdain For The Rule Of Law." In an editorial, the Washington Post (8/28) says that the pardon of former Sheriff Joe Arpaio "is not only a mark of Mr. Trump's inclination to inflame rather than bind up the nation's wounds. It is also a warning of his lack of respect for the independence of the courts and of law enforcement in a country governed by the rule of law – a worrying characteristic in a president facing an ongoing special counsel investigation. But Mr. Trump should take the outraged response to Mr. Arpaio's pardon from across the political spectrum as a warning, too: a sign of the resistance he will encounter if he chooses to issue further pardons, particularly in the Russia affair, on the basis of political concerns rather than those of justice."

"The Purple Line Rises From The Dead." In an editorial, the Washington Post (8/28) writes that despite an initial "rolling battery of existential threats," the DC Metro's Purple Line is now much closer to realization, as highlighted by a groundbreaking ceremony on Monday attended by Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan and Transportation Secretary Chao. The Post argues that, should the Purple Line move on past current considering in a federal appeals court, its construction "would be a striking success story, a rare example of broad cooperation across party lines, and among federal, state and local government partners in coordination with the private sector."

Wall Street Journal.

"Our Political Central Bankers." In an editorial, the Wall Street Journal (8/28) writes that Federal Reserve officials demonstrated a markedly political tone during their recent Jackson Hole retreat by speaking out in defense of post-2008 financial crisis regulation. The Journal argues that the Fed holds tightly, and foolishly, to the notion that its current regulatory regime can prevent the next crisis while overlooking the costs of intervention, and the Journal concludes that the Federal Reserve needs a less political leader when Janet Yellen's term expires in February.

"Behind The Bedlam In Berkeley." In an editorial, the Wall Street Journal (8/28) writes that politically charged street fights prompted by Antifa activists that resulted in 13 arrested in Berkeley on Sunday highlight an increasingly violent element among the radical left that has received far less media coverage and criticism than has the far right violence in Charlottesville. The Journal argues that the mainstream left must denounce Antifa as the right should denounce white nationalists.

"Labour's Brexit Pains." In an editorial, the Wall Street Journal (8/28) writes that the recent proposal by Britain's Labour Party to support a so-called soft Brexit under which Britain would remain within the single market and customs union after March 2019 has demonstrated that the Labour Party is beginning to reconcile the competing tensions in its ranks and present a potentially effective opposition to Theresa May's government. The Journal warns that Britain's Conservatives should take the proposal as a warning that they should craft a Brexit that offers greater free trade and economic reform.

Big Picture

Headlines From Today's Front Pages.

Wall Street Journal:
Harvey To Hit Flooded Houston Again
Freight Companies Scramble To Reroute Goods In Wake Of Harvey
North Korea Launches Ballistic Missile Over Japan
Gilead Bets $11 Billion On New Cancer Therapy

New York Times:
Texas Governor Warns Of A Long, Slow Recovery
Coffee And Cots As Houston Houses Thousands In A Convention Center
Houston's Hospitals Treat Storm Victims And Become Victims Themselves
Trump Associate Boasted That Moscow Business Deal 'Will Get Donald Elected'
North Korea Fires Missile Over Japan
Uber's CEO Pick, Dara Khosrowshahi, Steps Into Brighter Spotlight

Washington Post:
How NAFTA Changed Mexico
N. Korean Missile Flies Over Japan
Top Trump Aide Sought Russia Help On Project
At Least 9 Dead Amid Harvey's Havoc
Rescue Officials Say There Was No Way To Plan For Deluge's Ferocity
Thousands Pile Into Makeshift Shelters Set Up Across Texas

Financial Times:
Insurers And Energy Companies Count The Cost Of Harvey
UK Hopes Dashed For Swift Japan Trade Talks
Kenyans Risk 4 Years In Jail For Selling Or Using Plastic Bags
Washington Times:
Trump Reverses Obama, Reinstates Program Sending Military Surplus To Local Police
Democrats Hype Up Leftist Base, Remain Silent After Violent Antifa Attack In Berkeley
Trump, Lawmakers Promise Tens Of Billions Of Federal Dollars For Harvey Recovery
Dreamer Applications Dwindle As Trump Considers Renewal Of Illegal Immigrant Amnesty Program
Iraq's Next Tough Moves: Finishing Off Islamic State And Establishing Political Stability

Story Lineup From Last Night's Network News:
ABC: Hurricane Harvey; Hurricane Harvey-Reservoir Release; Hurricane Harvey-Evacuees; Hurricane Harvey-Medical Crisis; Hurricane Harvey-Forecast; Hurricane Harvey-White House; North Korea-Missile Test; Hurricane Harvey-Home Wrecks; Tropical Storm-East Coast; Hurricane Harvey-Gasoline Price; Hurricane Harvey-Volunteers.
CBS: Hurricane Harvey; Hurricane Harvey-Evacuees; Hurricane Harvey-Volunteers; Hurricane Harvey-Reservoir Release; Hurricane Harvey-Forecast; Hurricane Harvey-San Antonio Shelters; Hurricane Harvey-White House; Russia Meddling Investigation-Trump Business Ties; North Korea-

Missile Test; Hurricane Harvey-Coast Guard.
NBC: Hurricane Harvey; Hurricane Harvey-Evacuees; Hurricane Harvey-Mandatory Evacuation Order; Hurricane Harvey-Forecast; Hurricane Harvey-White House; Trump-Sheriff Arpaio Pardon; Russia Meddling Investigation-Trump; North Korea-Missile Test; Hurricane Harvey-Gasoline Price; Amazon-Whole Foods Merger; Hurricane Harvey-Volunteers.

Network TV At A Glance:
Hurricane Harvey – 40 minutes, 50 seconds
Russia Meddling Investigation-Trump – 3 minutes, 10 seconds
Hurricane Harvey-White House – 3 minutes
North Korea-Missile Test – 2 minutes, 40 seconds
Hurricane Harvey-Gasoline Price – 2 minutes, 10 seconds

Story Lineup From This Morning's Radio News Broadcasts:
ABC: Hurricane Harvey; Hurricane Harvey-White House; New Mexico-Library Shooting; North Korea-Missile Test.
CBS: Hurricane Harvey; Hurricane Harvey-FEMA Budget; Hurricane Harvey-White House; North Korea-Missile Test; New Mexico-Library Shooting; Wall Street News.
FOX: Hurricane Harvey; Hurricane Harvey-White House; North Korea-Missile Test; New Mexico-Library Shooting.
NPR: Hurricane Harvey; Hurricane Harvey-White House; Russia Meddling Investigation-Trump Business Ties; Chicago Police Violence Trial; Wall Street News.

Washington Schedule

Today's Events In Washington.

White House:
PRESIDENT TRUMP — Speaks with Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong of Singapore by telephone; receive a briefing on Hurricane Harvey relief efforts with local leadership and relief organizations; participate in a tour of the Emergency Operations Center; receive a briefing on Hurricane Harvey with State leadership.
VICE PRESIDENT PENCE — Has lunch with Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue.
US Senate: 2:30 PM Senate convenes for pro forma session
On recess until 5 September.
US House: 11:30 AM House Committee on Education and the Workforce Ranking Member Bobby Scott tours the EHS Abrasives plant in Norfolk, VA Location: 3306 Peterson St, Norfolk, VA Norfolk http://edworkforce.house.gov/
12:00 PM House of Representatives convenes for pro forma session
On recess until 5 September.
Other: Congressional Budget Office releases report on 'Options for changing the federal retirement system for civilian workers' Location: TBD www.cbo.gov/ https://twitter.com/USCBO

Last Laughs

Late Night Political Humor.

Trevor Noah: "Obviously the situation in Texas is still unfolding, so I urge you, please send the people of Texas your thoughts and your prayers. But first send them money. ... Because it goes money, then thoughts, then prayers."

Trevor Noah: "Paul Ryan has never really [stood] up to Trump. Paul Ryan stands up to Trump the same way you stand up to a waiter at a restaurant. You're all confident when he's not there, like, 'This food is horrible.' 'What's that?' 'Oh no, everything's great, thank you.'"

Trevor Noah: "You know, for a guy who's not racist, Donald Trump sure has a lot of racist friends. He's like the straight guy at the gym that all the gay guys hit on."

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