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**From:** elinor\_renner@ios.doi.gov  
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[DOI Cabinet 30 Day Report 9-5-17.docx](#)

Please see attached.

MEMORANDUM FOR THE WHITE HOUSE STAFF SECRETARY AND CABINET SECRETARY  
September 5, 2017

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

SUBJECT: Interior Department Weekly Update for the Week of September 5, 2017

**DOI 30-Day Policy Look Ahead**

**Presidential Initiatives and Awareness**

1. **MONUMENT REVIEW:** We prepared the report to comply with Executive Order 13792 of April 26, 2017, calling for a review of National Monuments. The Secretary visited 5 states and met with countless stakeholders to conduct the review. The report gives 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 and advised the White House Chief of Staff on the Department's rollout plan.  
**Timing:** Ongoing  
**Contact:** Downey Magallanes, Acting Deputy Chief of Staff
2. **NATIONAL PARK AND WILDLIFE REFUGES FUNDING INITIATIVE:** August 25<sup>th</sup> was the 101<sup>st</sup> birthday of the National Park Service. The Secretary has submitted a funding initiative to OMB to create a maintenance account to address the \$11.5 billion in backlog maintenance. Addressing the backlog is critical to the park experience of over 300 million people every year. Secretary Zinke announced his commitment to the parks recently and has requested POTUS involvement in the weeks after the event to announce a funding/restore our parks initiative.  
**Timing:** Ongoing  
**Contact:** Todd Willens, Acting Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife, and Parks
3. **HURRICANE HARVEY RESPONSE:** The Bureau of Reclamation continues to monitor Choke Canyon Dam and Reservoir (Nueces River Project, TX) and drainage basin; based on current forecast and conditions, the Choke Canyon Dam Emergency Action Plan (EAP) has not been activated. USGS activities for the hurricane response include: Nineteen personnel, thirteen of them collecting high water marks along the coastal areas, providing team coordination and data entry support, and four are planning for the expanding field work. Four sections of high water marks have been flagged and 1 section of high water marks has been surveyed. Eighteen personnel from the Texas Water Science Center are in the field making discharge measurements, taking water quality samples and performing gage repairs.  
**Timing:** Ongoing  
**Contact:** Scott Hommel, Chief of Staff
4. **HURRICANE IRMA EXPECTED TO IMPACT DOI ASSETS:** As of Monday morning, Hurricane Irma is a Category 5 (major) storm heading for the US Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, and Florida. DOI Leadership is in contact with all of the front-line leaders currently in the path of

the storm. Evacuation/park closures are already underway. Virgin Islands has closed one of four sites, San Juan NHS in Puerto Rico is already closed.

**Timing:** September 7-11, 2017

**Contact:** Scott Hommel, Chief of Staff

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:** Early September 2017

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

6. **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. The EO has been submitted to the Staff Secretary and the Department is holding the release of the study to be issued in conjunction with the EO.

**Timing:** Early September 2017

**Contact:** Jim Cason, Associate Deputy Secretary

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

1. **DOI RECEIVED TWO PERTINENT MINORITY OVERSIGHT REQUESTS:** The Department received two requests from Minority members. One is from the House, the other from the Senate. The House letter from five Maryland Democrats requests the Secretary to remove the statue of Gen. Lee from Antietam National Battlefield. The Secretary recently visited Antietam to announce NPS Battlefield grants where he made comments specific to the statue. Three Democrat Senators (Carper, Heitkamp, and Udall) sent an oversight letter to Secretary Zinke requesting information on the Secretary’s decision to reassign SES staffers, how it aligns with Congressional intent, and whether or not tribes were consulted.

**Timing:** August 2017

**Contact:** Micah Chambers, Deputy Director, 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:** September 7, 2017

**Contact:** Micah Chambers, Deputy Director, Congressional Affairs

3. **UPCOMING SCIA HEARING:** The Senate Committee on Indian Affairs is set to host a hearing to discuss progress made in implementing recommendations related to Indian Programs as identified in the 2017 GAO High Risk List Report. This is a follow up from the May 2017 hearing on the same subject. The Department will discuss completed and pending recommendations regarding improvements to the Indian Energy Development and the Bureau of Indian Education. Witness(es) for the hearing remain pending.

**Timing:** September 13, 2017

**Contact:** Amanda Kaster, Policy Adviser, Congressional Affairs

4. **FIVE YEAR HILL PLAN:** BOEM OCA, in coordination with Kate Juelis, has scheduled a Hill staff briefing titled *Development of the Five Year Offshore Oil and Gas Leading Program* for September 18<sup>th</sup>. Topics will include the steps required for program development and the related NEPA analysis. BOEM presenters will represent our Office of Strategic Resources and our Office of Environmental Programs. Invitees will include Member staff for our authorizing and appropriations committees as well as Member staff for those coastal states/districts without membership on the committees. Slide presentations are being reviewed by BOEM leadership. The invitation memo is being drafted for BOEM and OCL review. Per OCL, briefing may be rescheduled.

**Timing:** September 18, 2018

**Contact:** Micah Chambers, Deputy Director, Congressional Affairs

5. **UPCOMING SENR HEARING:** The Senate Energy and Natural Resources Subcommittee on National Parks will hold a hearing on Encouraging the Next Generation to Visit National Parks. The hearing has been officially noticed, and Lena McDowall, Deputy Director for Management and Administration, will be testifying. Committee is still debating whether or not to invite a Department witness.

**Timing:** September 27, 2017

**Contact:** Micah Chambers, Deputy Director, Congressional Affairs

6. **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

7. **DOI NOMINEES IN PROGRESS:** Brenda Burman (BOR), Susan Combs (A/S PMB) and Doug Domenech (A/S Insular Areas) 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 Committee is including him in the hearing on the 7<sup>th</sup> with Mr. Balash.

### **Other/Awareness Only**

1. **HUNTING AND FISHING AWARENESS:** On September 5<sup>th</sup>, FWS will release preliminary results of the 2016 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife-Associated Recreation. The survey, conducted every five years since 1955 in partnership with state wildlife agencies and the Census Bureau, surveyed more than 7,000 households nationwide on participation related to hunting, angling, wildlife watching and other wildlife-associated recreational pursuits. A final, more detailed national report will be issued in January 2018. The report found that while most recreation activities are up, hunting is down.  
**Timing:** September 5, 2017  
**Contact:** Todd Willens, Acting Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife, and Parks
2. **DANEROS URANIUM MINE DECISION:** BLM-UT's Monticello Field Office intends to issue a decision approving a modification to the plan of operations for the Daneros Uranium Mine in San Juan County. The proposed modification could increase ore production from 100,000 tons over seven years, to 500,000 tons over 20 years, and could generate up to 40 jobs. The mine is located just outside the current boundary of the Bears Ears National Monument and may be controversial with several conservation groups based on location and groundwater concerns near the processing facility, White Mesa Mill.  
**Timing:** August 28 – End of August  
**Contact:** Kate MacGregor, Acting Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals
3. **COORDINATED LONG-TERM OPERATION OF THE CENTRAL VALLEY PROJECT (CVP) AND THE CALIFORNIA STATE WATER PROJECT (SWP):** Reclamation will announce a Notice of Intent (NOI) and Public Meetings for Reinitiation of Consultation under the ESA of the Coordinated Long-Term Operation of the Central Valley Project and the California State Water Project, based on new information regarding multiple years of drought and low populations of listed species. It is anticipated this joint NEPA and Endangered Species Act process will take three to five years to complete. This will dictate the operations of the CVP and SWP. In mid-September, pending Department approval, Reclamation will announce through a Federal Register publication the NOI and Public Meetings to be held in October.  
**Timing:** Mid-September 2017  
**Contact:** Dr. Andrea Travnicek, Acting Assistant Secretary for Water and Science
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:** September 1, 2017

**Contact:** Lori Mashburn, White House Liaison

5. **CNN ANTIETAM NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD 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<sup>th</sup>, 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:** September 17, 2017

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

6. **ONSHORE OIL AND GAS PERMITTING ON FEDERAL LAND:** Throughout September, the Bureau of Land Management will hold online oil and gas lease sales.

- Colorado. On September 7<sup>th</sup>, BLM-CO will hold an online oil and gas lease sale for 10 parcels totaling 1,227 acres in Cheyenne, Baca, Kiowa, Yuma, Morgan, and Weld Counties, CO.
- New Mexico. On September 7<sup>th</sup>, BLM-NM will hold an online oil and gas lease sale for 62 parcels totaling 15,731 acres in Eddy, Chaves, Quay, Curry, Roosevelt, and Lea Counties, NM.
- Nevada. On September 12<sup>th</sup>, BLM-NV will hold an online oil and gas lease sale for three parcels totaling 3,680 acres in Nye County, NV.
- Utah. On September 12<sup>th</sup>, BLM-UT will hold an online oil and gas lease sale for 15 parcels totaling 4,438 acres in Juab County, UT.

**Timing:** Throughout September

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

7. **JOHN HENRY MINING PLAN:** On September 14, OSMRE plans to publish a Notice of Availability (NOA) in a local newspaper for the John Henry Mine Mining Plan Modification draft Environmental Assessment (EA) and unsigned Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). Pacific Coast Coal Company's John Henry Mine is a surface mine located in King County, WA that has been inactive since 1999.

**Timing:** September 14, 2017

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

8. **ROSEBUD MINE ADDITION:** In mid-September, OSMRE anticipates publishing an NOA of a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for Western Energy Company's Rosebud Mine proposed Permit Area F. The proposed permit area, which is located near Colstrip, MT, would add 6,746 acres to the 25,576-acre surface coal mine. The mine currently employs 400 people and produces 12.3 million tons per year.

**Timing:** Mid-September 2017

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

9. **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:** Possibly November  
**Contact:** Micah Chambers, Deputy Director, Congressional Affairs

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

1. **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:** September 2017  
**Contact:** Todd Willens, Acting Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife, and Parks
2. **MINUTE 323 – U.S./MEXICO COOPERATION ON THE COLORADO RIVER:** The Colorado River is shared among seven states in the U.S., and is also shared between the U.S. and Mexico. The Colorado is experiencing an extended period of historic drought since 2000 and a Drought Contingency Plan is being developed amongst states. Negotiations have been underway for a 9-year agreement with Mexico to provide operation certainty regarding deliveries to Mexico, referred to as "Minute 323," to include reductions and water savings at specific Lake Mead elevations, investment to conserve Colorado River water supplies, and enhancement of environmental and riparian resources. The U.S. State Department is proceeding with their clearance process so that DOI can proceed with review and clearance of the domestic agreements, to finalize and adopt the domestic agreements that are necessary to implement Minute 323 by the end of September 2017.  
**Timing:** September 2017  
**Contact:** Dr. Andrea Travnicek, Acting Assistant Secretary for Water and Science
3. **NAVAJO GENERATING STATION:** On July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 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<sup>th</sup>, Navajo representatives met with the Bureau of Reclamation and requested another stakeholder meeting.

A multiple stakeholder meeting is being discussed for September. On July 28<sup>th</sup>, 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. Meetings have been scheduled for September 6<sup>th</sup> in DC and a follow up meeting September 21<sup>st</sup> in Flagstaff, AZ.

**Timing:** September 2017

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

4. **CAPE WIND PROJECT RECORD OF DECISION:** On September 15<sup>th</sup>, BOEM plans to publish the Record of Decision for the Final Supplemental EIS for the Cape Wind Project, which will supplement the 2009 Final EIS and is being prepared pursuant to a remand order from the D.C. Circuit Court.

**Timing:** September 15, 2017

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

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

1. **URBAN PARTNERSHIP GRANTS:** National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) in cooperation with US Fish & Wildlife, will award over \$2 million in grants under their Five Star and Urban Waters Restoration Program. The grants fund multiple federal initiatives, including new and existing Urban Wildlife Refuge Partnerships and Urban Bird Treaty cities. NFWF will make its initial announcement and FWS will follow the next day.  
**Timing:** September 2017  
**Contact:** Todd Willens, Acting Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife, and Parks
2. **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:** September 2017  
**Contact:** Todd Willens, Acting Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife, and Parks
3. **LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND (LWCF):** The State Assistance Apportionment Certificate, which allocates \$94,309,439 to the States, Territories and the District of Columbia for the acquisition and development of “close to home” park and outdoor recreational opportunities, will be announced. This is an annual event traditionally announced by the Secretary of the Interior. The final report will show detailed funding for projects identified by the states and supported by local communities. All US States and Territories received funds from LWCF in 2016  
**Timing:** Week of September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2017  
**Contact:** Todd Willens, Acting Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife, and Parks
4. **NORTH AMERICAN WETLANDS CONSERVATION ACT (NAWCA) GRANTS:** National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) in cooperation with US Fish & Wildlife, will



award over \$2 million in grants under their Five Star and Urban Waters Restoration Program. The grants fund multiple federal initiatives, including new and existing Urban Wildlife Refuge Partnerships and Urban Bird Treaty cities. NFWF will make its initial announcement and FWS will follow the next day.

**Timing:** September 6, 2017

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

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

#### **Travel by Secretary**

September 9-10	<b>Secretary Zinke</b> will travel to Maryland to attend the Cabinet Meeting at Camp David.
September 10	<b>Secretary Zinke</b> will travel to Pennsylvania to visit the Flight 93 National Memorial.
September 11-13	<b>Secretary Zinke</b> will travel to New York to attend Ground Zero ceremony and visit the Statue of Liberty.
September 20-21	<b>Secretary Zinke</b> will travel to Missouri to attend the Johnny Morris Wonders of Wildlife Museum Celebration.
September 21-23	<b>Secretary Zinke</b> will travel to Texas to attend the National Rifle Association's Women's Leadership Forum Summit.
September 27-29	<b>Secretary Zinke</b> will travel to Pennsylvania and New Jersey to visit Valley Forge National Battlefield, Independence National Historic Park, and the Gateway National Recreation Area.
October 2-10	<b>Secretary Zinke</b> will travel to South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida to tour DOI properties and visit the Everglades per the invitation of the Florida senators.