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Good to go. No edits

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On Tue, Jul 25, 2017 at 2:01 PM, Webster, Sarah <swebster@blm.gov> wrote:

CALIFORNIA

Thunderstorms spark concerns over lightning-caused fires, flash flooding

Reno Gazette-Journal, July 24 Scattered thunderstorms in Northern Nevada are creating concerns over lightning-caused fires and possible flash flooding, according to the National Weather Service. On Monday, fire crews with the Nevada Bureau of Land Management responded to at least 17 brush fires that sparked from lightning. Mostly of those fires ignited in areas north and east of Susanville near the California and Nevada state line, according to BLM spokesman Jeff Fontana. "The biggest fire this afternoon was about 90 acres near Shaffer Mountain, but we have a line around that fire," Fontana said early Monday evening.

Fire Danger Sparks Target Shooting Ban

KNCO, July 24

For the first time in at least decades, the Bureau of Land Management has closed off target shooting on all public lands in 15 Mother Lode Field Office counties, including Nevada County. Acting Field Manager Jim Eicher says the ban will likely not be lifted before the end of the wildfire season, which prompted the action.

California crews hold wildfire in check, let more residents go home

Reuters, July 23

California authorities battling a massive wildfire near Yosemite National Park lifted

evacuation orders on Sunday for more residents but said firefighters may need almost two more weeks to fully contain the blaze. The Detwiler Fire was 45 percent contained, a slight improvement from Saturday, after burning 76,250 acres (30,857 hectares) and more than 130 structures, including 63 homes, since it broke out on Monday, the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (Cal Fire) said.

At Berryessa National Monument, Wildflowers and Rebirth

The New York Times, travel editorial, July 25

This week, we visit three national monuments (more than two dozen are under review by the Trump administration and could be made smaller and opened to logging and mining): Berryessa Snow Mountain in California (below), Gold Butte in Nevada and Bears Ears in Utah. The sideways dawn light as it winks across the vineyards from the east: It was the first thing I noticed as I pulled off a California freeway.

New California Gold Rush Sparked by Wet Weather, Leaky Dam

The Weather Channel, July 24

...Furthermore, the Bureau of Land Management, which owns much of the land surrounding the spillway, told SF Gate that aspiring miners should take pause before heading out with a pan in their hand and visions of riches on their minds. "The river channels affected by the flooding were extensively mined during the late 19th and 20th centuries, and having high flood waters would not expose additional gold," a BLM spokesperson told SF Gate in an email. Professional miner Mike Abernathy definitively disagrees. "There's good gold in that gravel," he told SF Gate.

Federal agent's loaded gun, left unsecured in a car, killed Kate Steinle

48hills, opinion, July 21

Kate Steinle was killed two years ago in San Francisco after a gun stolen from a car was discharged on Pier 14, a popular tourist attraction. Homeless immigrant Juan Francisco Lopez Sanchez handled a discarded bundle that contained the firearm, resulting in the unintentional shooting. A single bullet ricocheted off the ground, travelling 100 feet before striking Steinle. The SIG Sauer handgun, which a court found had been left loaded and unsecured in a backpack under the seat of a vehicle parked in downtown San Francisco, was stolen during an auto break-in. It belonged to a Bureau of Land Management employee.

Kate Steinle Murder Trial Possibly Getting Postponed

Sfist, July 24

The defendant in the murder case of Kathryn Steinle, who was fatally shot two years ago on Pier 14, made an appearance in court Friday, and as the Mercury News

reports, his attorneys asserted his right to a speedy trial despite some initial delays. Juan Francisco Lopez-Sanchez is due back in court this Friday, but a couple of factors may be slowing the legal process for the time being. First, per the Examiner, Assistant District Attorney Diana Garcia told the court that she has a conflicting trial and is hoping for a postponement in this case. Secondly, the defense is hoping to get a federal agent to serve as a witness, and the government is insisting on further documentation to justify the testimony.

NATIONAL

Senate approves nominee for No. 2 at Interior

Associated Press, July 24

The Latest on the controversy and the Senate vote on the Trump administration's nominee for the No. 2 position at the Interior Department (all times local): 6:40 p.m. The Senate has approved David Bernhardt, a lawyer/lobbyist from Colorado, as deputy Interior secretary, second in command to Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke. The Senate confirmed Bernhardt's nomination by President Donald Trump Monday, 53 - 43.

Congressional committee votes to allow destruction of wild horses

The Durango Herald, July 24

A Congressional committee vote on Tuesday amounts to a death warrant for the mustangs and wild burros that roam America's range land, an advocate for the animals said. The House Appropriations Committee voted to reverse a ban on destroying healthy wild horses and burros that was contained in a spending bill signed into law by President Trump in early May. "Let's be clear: House Appropriations Committee members just signed a death warrant for America's mustangs and it will lead to the wholesale destruction of these irreplaceable national treasures," said Suzanne Roy, director of the American Wild Horse Campaign in a news release.

The Government Is Considering Euthanizing Thousands Of Horses Roaming Free In The West

BuzzFeed, July 24

The horses, known as mustangs, descend from animals used by ranchers, the US cavalry, and even Spanish explorers who traversed the West hundreds of years ago. According to the Bureau of Land Management, the government agency in charge of taking care of the wild animals, a record 73,000 horses and burros roam the range. Another 46,015 horses and burros (the vast majority are horses) are rounded up in dozens of government holding facilities.

Trump's Interior Dept To Chop Months Off How Long It Takes To Get An Oil Drilling

Permit

The Daily Caller, July 24

The Department of Interior plans on cutting wait times for oil and natural gas drilling permits on public lands to just 30 days, according to a senior agency official. "We do want to shrink it down to 30 days and to make all the processes as short as possible, but at the same time, making sure our environmental stewardship is not breached, all of which is completely doable," Vincent DeVito, energy policy adviser to Interior Sec. Ryan Zinke, told Politico on Monday.

Trump administration seeks to repeal Obama fracking rule

The Hill, July 24

The Trump administration is proposing to completely repeal Obama-era standards governing hydraulic fracturing on federal land. The proposal from the Interior Department's Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is due to be published Tuesday in the Federal Register. The landmark 2015 regulation set standards in areas such as disclosure of fracking chemicals and integrity of well casing.

We deserve to know Supervisor Debbie Arnold's position on Carrizo Plain

The Tribune, July 23

The public comment period for the Department of the Interior's review of certain national monuments, ordered by President Donald Trump, has closed. More than 1.4 million comments were received including more than 50,000 comments on the Carrizo Plain National Monument. The public response has been overwhelmingly in favor of protecting these national treasures.

Trump jokingly threatens to fire Price if health vote fails

ABC News, July 25

...Trump said that 10 members of his Cabinet were Scouts, including Vice President Mike Pence. The president introduced to the stage Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke, a former Scout who dressed in uniform, and also brought out Energy Secretary Rick Perry and Price.

Senate Democrats Call For An Investigation Of Climate Scientist Whistleblower Complaint.

The Washington Post, July 24

... "eight Democrats on the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee asked the Interior Department's deputy inspector general on Monday to investigate Secretary Ryan Zinke's decision to reassign roughly 50 senior career officials last

month, on the grounds that it could constitute an ‘abuse of authority.’” In the letter to Interior deputy IG Mary Kendall, which was “signed by all but three of the panel’s Democrats, the senators note that one of the reassigned Senior Executive Service officials – Joel Clement, the department’s top climate change official – has alleged he was punished for his work on the issue.” The senators wrote, “Any suggestion that the Department is reassigning SES employees to force them to resign, silence their voices, or to punish them for the conscientious performance of their public duties is extremely troubling and calls for the closest examination.”

Marathon markup to tackle 21 land, renewable energy bills

EE News, July 24

The House Natural Resources Committee will begin consideration of 21 bills tomorrow, including bipartisan legislation to promote renewable energy development on public lands and a measure that would develop a central database for federal land properties. Members will gather to give opening statements tomorrow before reconvening to consider amendments and vote on the measures Wednesday. The "Public Land Renewable Energy Development Act of 2017" (H.R. 825) requires the Interior Department to identify "priority areas" for wind and geothermal power development on federal lands...H.R. 3279, from Rep. Paul Cook (R-Calif.), to amend the 1920 Mineral Leasing Act to ensure that extraction of helium from gas produced under a federal mineral lease shall maintain the lease as if the helium were oil and gas...H.R. 1491, from Rep. Doug LaMalfa (R-Calif.), to reaffirm the action of the Interior secretary to take land into trust for the benefit of the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Mission Indians. See *PDF for full story*.

Industry lawyers track Trump admin's evolving policy changes

ENERGYWIRE, July 24

As the Trump administration works to bolster domestic energy production, legal and regulatory certainty for the oil and gas industry remains out of reach for now. That's a recurring message here at the annual Rocky Mountain Mineral Law Institute, where nearly 900 lawyers from industry, academia and the public sector have gathered to unpack a year of legal developments in their field and work to navigate changes on the horizon. Industry lawyers are antsy for broad reforms promised by Trump officials, including expedited environmental reviews and permitting, but their current focus is on deregulatory efforts moving forward in federal agencies and courts. See *PDF for full story*.

Famed for lawsuits, enviro group morphs into advocacy

EE News, July 25

One of the Interior Department's most frequent sparring partners in court has now added congressional lobbying to its arsenal. In a filing that foreshadows Capitol Hill fights to come, the Center for Biological Diversity has registered the organization as

a lobbying entity. Until now, the group has been known for filing myriad lawsuits over the Endangered Species Act and related issues. "The level of threats has grown exponentially with [President] Trump, so we had to ramp up our congressional work a lot," Brett Hartl, the organization's government affairs director, said in an email today. *See PDF for full story.*

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