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AN E&E NEWS PUBLICATION

NATIONAL MONUMENTS

Zinke recommends no changes to Idaho, Wash. sites

Jennifer Yachnin, E&E News reporter

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Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke today said the federal assessment of Craters of the Moon National Monument in Idaho has ended. Carol Jacobs Carre/Flickr

Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke announced today that a pair of national monuments in Idaho and Washington are no longer included in his review of the boundaries of dozens of monuments nationwide, and that he will not recommend any changes to those two sites.

Zinke revealed in a statement that he will exclude the Craters of the Moon National Monument and Preserve in Idaho and the Hanford Reach National Monument in Washington state from an ongoing assessment of 27 sites that was mandated by President Trump in late April.

"When the President and I began the monument review process we absolutely realized that not all monuments are the same and that not all monuments would require modifications," Zinke said. "Today I'm announcing that the Craters of the Moon and Hanford Reach National Monuments review process has concluded and I am recommending no changes be made to the monuments."

Trump issued an executive order in April directing a review of all national monuments

created since 1996 that encompass more than 100,000 acres, or those that the secretary deemed did not include sufficient public input.

A final report on the review is due Aug. 24.

In an interim report released last month, Zinke recommended significant reductions to Bears Ears National Monument in southeastern Utah, although he did not provide specifics for which sections of the 1.35-million-acre site could be eliminated.

In hearings on Capitol Hill last month, Zinke also indicated that another monument, the Canyon of the Ancients in Colorado, would likely be spared from any changes, but he did not mention that site in today's announcement.

Washington Democratic Sens. Patty Murray and Maria Cantwell praised Zinke's decision not to amend their state's monument, noting it was created after significant collaboration with local communities.

"I commend everyone who made their voice heard during this process. Because of you, the Trump administration is getting the message loud and clear that families in our state and around the country are ready to fight back against ill-conceived efforts to roll back protections for our prized public lands," Murray said.

Earlier this year, Washington state Attorney General Bob Ferguson (D) threatened to sue the Trump administration if it tried to alter the monument, asserting that the president does not have the authority to do so under the Antiquities Act of 1906.

"In short, the President and the Secretary of the Interior lack the legal authority to revoke or reduce a National Monument designation," Ferguson wrote in April ([Greenwire](#), May 12).

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