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## **WEEK AHEAD August 23 thru August 31, 2017**

### **Announcements/Releases/Events**

#### **U.S. Department of the Interior**

##### *Secretarial-level Announcements/Events/Interviews*

- **August 24:** Secretary Zinke sent his draft report to President Trump. The report included his findings and recommendations on national monuments that were under review as a result of the April 26, 2017 executive order. You can find the press release and summary [here](#).
- **August 25:** Secretary Zinke is traveling to Tennessee and North Carolina to visit Great Smoky Mountains National Park and the Blue Ridge Parkway. The stops will commemorate the 101st anniversary of the founding of the National Park Service. The Secretary will speak to Park employees and hold separate press engagements at both parks. You can find the release about the 101<sup>st</sup> birthday of the National Parks [here](#).
- **August 25:** Office of the Secretary will issue a release announcing a proclamation declaring the month of August National Shooting Sports Month at the Department of the Interior.

*The Secretary has no public events next week*

#### **National Park Service**

- **August 23:** Golden Gate National Recreation Area is expected to make a decision on a First Amendment permit request from the group Patriot Prayer for an estimated 300 participants on Crissy Field. There is strong public and media interest. Congressional and local

officials oppose the event.

- **August 23: Local NPS Release:** Denali National Park and Preserve will release a draft Long Range Transportation Plan for 30 days of public review and comment. The plan, developed over a three-year period, documents baseline conditions, examines funding options, and will help inform project priority setting. The plan focuses on the 90-mile-long park road and its importance to the visitor experience and resource protection, as well as its uses by concessionaire and in-holder buses, and private and administrative vehicles.
- **August 24:** CNN will be at Antietam National Battlefield to film a feature story about the battle, the upcoming 150th anniversary of Antietam National Cemetery on September 17, and projects that will be completed using President Trump's first quarter salary with additional funds from the National Park Foundation, Civil War Trust, and Save Historic Antietam Foundation.
- **August 25:** Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz (FL-23) and members of her staff are scheduled to tour Biscayne National Park and participate in a park briefing with the park superintendent.
- **August 26:** Congresswoman Jackie Speier will visit Rosie the Riveter/WWII Home Front National Historic Park in recognition of Women's Equality Day. She will be travelling with two buses of constituents and plans to invite the press, though there will be no formal press conference.
- **August 27 (tent.):** Senator Catherine Cortez Masto will visit Great Basin National Park to meet with the superintendent and tour the park. Among topics likely to be discussed are annual visitation, cave and karst management, water resources, dark night skies, wildland fire, and capital improvement and conservation projects funded under the Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act.
- **August 28 (tent.):** USGS Joint National Release: USGS will issue a release regarding a joint study with Forest Service, Michigan Tech, Boise State Univ., and others looking at increases in wildfire-caused erosion and its impact on water supply and quality in the West.
- **August 29:** The Great Smoky Mountains National Park Chimney Tops 2 Fire Review Report is scheduled for public release. The release will be announced at a press conference hosted at the park.

- **August 31:** Senator Tim Kaine (D-VA) will visit Manassas National Battlefield Park for a park tour and visit to an adjacent property that was recently acquired in part through an American Battlefield Protection Program grant to the Civil War Trust. Sen. Kaine may invite a limited number of media to join him on his visit. He will be guided by park superintendent Brandon Bies and other park staff.

### **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service**

- **August 29 (tent.): National FWS Release:** FWS to release results of 2016 Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife Associated Survey Preliminary Report. A snapshot of the results show that Hunter numbers are down (not statistically significant), angler numbers are up (not statistically significant), and wildlife watching numbers have increased greatly especially for people watching wildlife in their own backyards.
- **August 29:** FWS will host the inaugural Cooperating Agencies meeting for the National Bison Range Comprehensive Conservation Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (CCP/EIS). The meeting will include representatives from the Salish & Kootenai Tribes, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Lake County and Sanders County. On **August 30**, FWS will host a third public scoping meeting in Missoula. Outreach in the form of a news release has gone out to alert people to the public scoping meeting.

### **Bureau of Land Management**

- **August 22-24:** BLM-UT has been invited to attend the National Wild Horse and Burro Management Summit in Salt Lake City, hosted by the State of Utah. The Summit will begin with a field tour of the Onaqui Herd Management Area followed by a tour of the BLM's Delta Wild Horse and Burro Facility coordinated by Utah Wild Horse and Burro Program Lead, Gus Warr. Registration is by invitation only.
- **August 22 – 27:** BLM will attend the annual National Off-Highway Vehicle Conservation Council (NOHVCC) conference in New Hampshire in conjunction with The International Off-Highway Vehicle Administrators Association (INOHVAA) Conference. The BLM has been asked to present during both the INOHVAA and NOHVCC events.

- **August 23:** BLM national program lead for national monuments Tim Fisher and Deputy Division Chief for Recreation and Visitor Services Jeffrey McCusker will attend a presentation by an International Visitor Leadership Program on Conservation areas and Recreation. The presentation will be held at the Main Interior Building and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will also attend.
- **August 24:** BLM-MT staff will attend a meeting hosted by the Executive Vice President of the North Dakota Petroleum Council in Miles City, MT, to discuss Federal ownership/leases on resurvey of the Missouri River, overlapping Communitization Agreements, and Application for Permit to Drill streamlining.
- **August 27 – September 4:** The Burning Man event will take place at the Black Rock Desert in northern NV. The event, which is expected to draw up to 70,000 people, is the largest Special Recreation Permit managed by BLM.
- **August 28:** The 30-day public comment period for the Egan and Johnson Basin Restoration Project Preliminary EA closes. The goal of the project is to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire and improve Greater sage-grouse habitat through manual and mechanical pinion-juniper tree-thinning, invasive plant treatments, and prescribed fire use.
- **August 28 - September 1: Local BLM Release:** 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.
- **August 28:** BLM-WY High Plains District Office will meet with the Northern Arapaho council to consult about the Converse County Environmental Impact Statement, Crossbow Environmental Impact Statement and the Newcastle Field Office Resource Management Plan. This consultation is part of an ongoing, proactive dialogue between the BLM and the tribes represented in the High Plains District.
- **August 29:** Representatives of the BLM, United States Forest Service, and other land management agencies will brief Sen. Crapo (R-ID) in his Coeur d'Alene office at his request on public land management issues, including forestry, fuels, fire and recreation.

- **August 29 – 30:** BLM-CO Gunnison Field Office will host a tribal consultation meeting for the Rocky Mountain District.
- **August 30:** BLM-MT North Dakota Field Office staff will attend a Natural Resource Committee Meeting with the Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara Nation in Newtown, ND. The event is a regularly scheduled meeting that is held in the Tribal Business Council Chambers.
- **August 31: Local BLM Release:** BLM-UT will post a Notice of Competitive Lease Sale, environmental assessment, and unsigned Finding of No Significant Impact, for parcels to be offered in the December 2017 Quarterly Lease Sale. Seventy-five parcels totaling 94,040 acres in the Vernal and Price Field Offices will be proposed for sale. Several parcels have been controversial due to their proximity to Dinosaur National Monument, two have been deferred.

### **Bureau of Reclamation**

- **August 30: National BOR Release:** The Bureau of Reclamation will announce two projects selected to commence Basin Studies; the Rio Grande Basin Study in New Mexico and the Eloy and Maricopa-Stanfield Basin Study in Arizona. Reclamation will provide \$1,178,000 in funding and the non-Federal partners will provide \$1,197,000. Basin Studies are collaborative studies, cost-shared with non-Federal partners, which help ensure sustainable water supplies by identifying strategies to address imbalances in water supply and demand.

### **Bureau of Ocean Energy Management**

- **August 20-24:** American Fisheries Society Conference, Tampa. Deena Hansen, Jennifer Bucatari, Jessica Mallindine from MMP, and Brian Hooker from OREP are hosting a booth on BOEM's fisheries studies, and will be interacting with stakeholders. OPA provided updated fact sheets.
- **August 22:** Ad-Hoc Offshore Drilling Committee of the South Carolina House of Representatives, meeting in Columbia, SC. Staff from GOMR and Sterling will attend to give an overview of BOEM processes, regulations, leasing, seismic permitting, drilling and the new National Program.

- **August 22-24: Information Transfer Meeting in New Orleans.** In a series of presentations and meetings, scientists will discuss information in support of the BOEM Gulf of Mexico Outer Continental Shelf oil and natural gas, renewable energy and marine minerals programs. Open to the public.
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#### **Bureau of Safety and Energy Enforcement**

- **August 23: BSEE National News Brief:** BSEE will issue a read-out covering the Director's participation at Deepwater Technology Symposium.

Russell Newell  
Deputy Director of Communications  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
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