

**To:** Scott Hommel[scott\_hommel@ios.doi.gov]  
**From:** Haugrud, Kevin  
**Sent:** 2017-02-02T13:59:33-05:00  
**Importance:** Normal  
**Subject:** Fwd: Weekly Report to the Secretary - 02-03-17  
**Received:** 2017-02-02T13:59:41-05:00  
DOIWeeklyReporttotheSecretary02-03-17.docx (1).docx

Scott: My apologies - I somehow forgot to include you on yesterday's email.

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **Haugrud, Kevin** <jack.haugrud@sol.doi.gov>  
**Date:** Wed, Feb 1, 2017 at 5:23 PM  
**Subject:** Fwd: Weekly Report to the Secretary - 02-03-17  
**To:** Daniel Jorjani <daniel\_jorjani@ios.doi.gov>, Douglas Domenech <douglas\_domenech@ios.doi.gov>, James Cason <james\_cason@ios.doi.gov>  
**Cc:** Edward Keable <edward.keable@sol.doi.gov>, Juliette Lillie <juliette\_lillie@ios.doi.gov>

Here's this week's report. Please let me know how widely you would like the weekly to be distributed to. Right now, only the recipients of this email (and Gareth and Marigrace) have the entire weekly.

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **Rees, Gareth** <gareth\_rees@ios.doi.gov>  
**Date:** Wed, Feb 1, 2017 at 4:30 PM  
**Subject:** Weekly Report to the Secretary - 02-03-17  
**To:** Kevin Haugrud <jack.haugrud@sol.doi.gov>  
**Cc:** "Caminiti, Mariagrazia" <Marigrace.Caminiti@sol.doi.gov>, Juliette Lillie <juliette\_lillie@ios.doi.gov>

Hi Jack

Please find attached the Weekly report to the Secretary. If you need me to make any edits, please let me know and if I need to send it out to anyone.

Thanks

--

Gareth C. Rees

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U.S. Department of the Interior

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**WEEKLY REPORT TO THE SECRETARY  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**

**February 3, 2017**

**Office of the Solicitor**

**Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel**

(b) (5) - ACP  
[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

(b) (5) - ACP [Redacted]

Week Ahead Announcements and Actions

**SIGNIFICANT LITIGATION DEADLINES FOR NEXT TWO WEEKS SEPARATELY REPORTED**

**NEW CASES:**

(b)(5) ACP [Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

(b)(5) ACP [Redacted text block]

**SIGNIFICANT DECISIONS:**

(b)(5) ACP [Redacted text block]

**OTHER LITIGATION MATTERS:**

(b)(5) ACP [Redacted text block]

(b)(5) ACP

[REDACTED]

**NON-LITIGATION MATTERS:**

(b) (5) - ACP

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

(b) (5) - ACP  
[Redacted text block containing approximately 8 lines of blacked-out content]

**30-60 Day Look-Ahead**

Significant Litigation Deadlines reported separately in the 100-day report.

## **Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks**

### **Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel**

No meetings, hearings, or travel scheduled for Maureen Foster or Virginia Johnson.

### **Week Ahead Announcements and Actions**

On February 1, National Mall and Memorial Parks will resume interpretative tours at the Old Post Office Tower. Tours were suspended in 2014 during the renovation to convert the Old Post Office building into Trump International Hotel.

In early February, the NPS anticipates the US Attorney's office in Anchorage, Alaska will release to the public federal search warrants pertaining to illegal guiding, hunting and other crimes alleged against an NPS hunting guide and concessioner, Urban Raho. Mr. Raho is a 97-year-old World War II veteran who came to Alaska in 1947; he has been a licensed hunting guide since 1950 and is well-known in Fairbanks and among the state's political leadership. The complex case investigation based in Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve was led by the NPS Investigative Services Branch. Local / regional media attention is expected.

FWS is proposing regulatory frameworks for the 2017-18 migratory game bird hunting season governing lengths, dates, and bag limits. Restrictions within the overall daily bag limit for most duck species will stay the same as those in the 2016-17 season except the daily bag limit for black ducks will increase from one to two birds in the Atlantic and Mississippi Flyways, and the daily bag limit for pintails will decrease from two birds to one bird nationwide. Each year, FWS works in partnership with states from the four Flyway Councils (Pacific, Central, Mississippi and Atlantic) to establish regulatory frameworks for hunting season lengths, dates, and bag limits. Beginning with the 2016-17 hunting seasons, the previous two-cycle regulatory practice was compressed into a single annual process. The Federal Register package is in the approval process.

### **30-60 Day Look-Ahead**

In early to mid-February, the NPS will jointly announce with the U.S. Maritime Administration the award of \$1,752,073 in National Maritime Heritage Grants for maritime preservation and education projects in 13 states and the District of Columbia. Grants may be used for a broad range of activities that promote understanding of the maritime heritage of the United States, such as curation and interpretation of maritime heritage collections, and preservation, rehabilitation, reconstruction or restoration of historic maritime properties.

On February 12 -16, the Friends Alliance (approximately 100 attendees) and the Public Lands Alliance (approximately 200 attendees) will be holding a joint-conference in Washington, D.C. The Friends Alliance is comprised of the 200+ nonprofit philanthropic organizations that support parks locally across the country. The Public Lands Alliance membership includes educational, cooperating and interpretive associations and partners. NPS staff will be participating in both conferences and Acting Director Reynolds will address the Friends Alliance on February 14.



Once cleared, the FWS will send to the *Federal Register* a notice of the U.S.-Russia Polar Bear Commission Determination on Annual Taking Limit for the Alaska-Chukotka Polar Bear Population to maintain the harvest limit adopted in 2010. The commission notified the Secretary of its determination on December 19, 2016; therefore, as required by the Marine Mammal Protection Act, the notice must publish no later than February 16. Target submission date to the *Federal Register* is February 13.

On or about February 15, Glacier National Park will update the public and stakeholders about boating restrictions for summer 2017. All park waters are currently closed to boating due to the detection of invasive mussels in Montana. The announcement could include a continued prohibition on motorized and hand propelled watercraft. The park's ability to safely allow any boats on NPS-managed waters this summer is tied to the availability of seasonal boat inspectors.

On or around February 24, the NPS will announce the award \$1,631,578 in Japanese American Confinement Sites grants to fund preservation, restoration, and education projects. The 14 projects in four states and the District of Columbia will be used to help preserve and interpret the World War II confinement sites of Japanese Americans.

When cleared, the FWS will send to the *Federal Register* a notice that it will be preparing an Environmental Impact Statement in conjunction with a proposed rule to revise the existing nonessential experimental population designation of red wolves in North Carolina. This notice announces the initiation of a public scoping process to identify issues and concerns, potential impacts, and possible alternatives to the proposed action. Controversial. Outreach is planned upon Reading Room publication.

In February or March, Cape Lookout National Seashore anticipates publishing a Final Rule for Off-Road Vehicle Use in the Federal Register. The park's Off-Road Vehicle Use Management Plan Record of Decision was signed on January 10.

## **U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE**

### **Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel**

**Rob Miller** (Chief, Branch of Facilities and Equipment Management), **Steve Suder** (National Coordinator Refuge Roads Program), **Dominic Maione** (Interior OCL), and **Devin Helfrich** (CLA) will meet with *Nicole Christus*, majority staff for the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee to discuss the Service's use of the Federal Lands Transportation Program and the Federal Lands Access Program. The meeting is scheduled for 10:00 a.m. in 2029 Rayburn House Office Building.

### **Week Ahead Announcements and Actions**

Streamlined ES reviews of transportation projects in Maine: On February 2, FWS, in partnership with the Maine Department of Transportation, Federal Highways Administration, and Corps of Engineers, will announce an agreement to streamline endangered species review of

transportation projects. The agreement will significantly speed up approval times and implement standards to reduce flood risk and improve aquatic connectivity for fish like endangered Atlantic salmon. Local outreach planned. R5

Western Glacier Stonefly and Meltwater Lednian Stonefly proposed critical habitat: Once cleared, FWS will send to the *Federal Register* a proposal to designate critical habitat for approximately 36 stream miles of occupied habitat and 3,100 acres of unoccupied habitat in Montana for the meltwater lednian stonefly and approximately 1.5 stream miles of occupied habitat and 204 acres of unoccupied habitat for the western glacier stonefly. FWS will also reopen the public comment period for the proposed listing of western glacier stonefly and meltwater lednian stonefly as threatened species. Target to the *Federal Register* is February 3. Outreach planned upon Reading Room publication. R6

Court decision on ESA listing: FWS received a court opinion from the U.S. District Court for the District of Colorado, dated October 25, 2016 (Rocky Mt Wild vs. Walsh lawsuit Civil Action No. 15-cv-0615-WJM); vacating the FWS withdrawal of a proposal to list the Graham's and White River beardtongues as threatened. The withdrawal was made possible largely because of measures contained in a conservation agreement by land management entities covering the range of the beardtongues. On January 23, 2017, FWS met with plaintiffs, intervenors, and other conservation agreement signatories. All parties agreed that the potential exists to revise the conservation agreement and that additional meetings will be necessary for further discussion. Next steps include a technical meeting to review plaintiff's proposed changes to Graham's and White River beardtongue conservation areas. R6

Rainbow trout stocking: On February 3, FWS will begin weekly stocking of rainbow trout immediately downstream of Willow Beach NFH in Arizona. This weekly stocking schedule will continue year round. FWS developed a Rainbow Trout Stocking Plan to meet tribal trust obligations and recreational sport fishing demands in Arizona. R2

Red wolf notice: Once cleared, FWS will send to the *Federal Register* a notice that the agency will prepare an Environmental Impact Statement in conjunction with a proposed rule to revise the existing nonessential experimental population designation of red wolves in North Carolina. This notice announces FWS' intention to revise the 10(j) rule and the initiation of a public scoping process to identify issues and concerns, potential impacts, and possible alternatives to the proposed action. Controversial. Target date for submitting to the *Federal Register* is February 6. Outreach planned upon Reading Room publication. R4

Marine Mammal stock assessment reports for polar bears: Once cleared, FWS will send to the *Federal Register* draft population assessment reports for the Southern Beaufort Sea and Chukchi-Bering seas populations of polar bear in Alaska, and open a 90-day public comment period. Target date for submitting to the *Federal Register* is February 10. Outreach planned. R7

## **TBD**

Migratory bird hunting season proposal: FWS is proposing regulatory frameworks for the 2017-18 migratory game bird hunting season governing lengths, dates, and bag limits. Restrictions

within the overall daily bag limit for most duck species will stay the same as those in the 2016-17 season except the daily bag limit for black ducks will increase from one to two birds in the Atlantic and Mississippi Flyways, and the daily bag limit for pintails will decrease from two birds to one bird nationwide. Each year, FWS works in partnership with states from the four Flyway Councils (Pacific, Central, Mississippi and Atlantic) to establish regulatory frameworks for hunting season lengths, dates, and bag limits. Beginning with the 2016-17 hunting seasons, the previous two-cycle regulatory practice was compressed into a single annual process. HQ

### **30-60 Day Look-Ahead**

U.S.-Russia Polar Bear Commission Determination on Annual Taking Limit for the Alaska-Chukotka Polar Bear Population: Once cleared, FWS will send to the *Federal Register* a notice of the commission's determination to maintain the harvest limit adopted in 2010. The commission notified the Secretary of its determination on December 19, 2016; therefore, as required by the Marine Mammal Protection Act, the notice must publish no later than February 16. Target submission date to the *Federal Register* is February 13. Outreach planned. R7

Valle de Oro EA: In February, FWS anticipates making a draft Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Valle de Oro NWR in Albuquerque, N.M., available for public comment. Currently FWS is consulting with vested partners to develop the draft EA. As the urban refuge is in close proximity to the Kirtland Air Force Base's (KAFB) flight path, KAFB has concerns about potential bird strikes on aircraft. Of primary concern are proposed habitat restoration plans for seasonal wetlands. KAFB believes restored habitat may attract more large-bodied birds (geese, cranes and ducks) and increase collision risks. FWS intends to continue coordinating with the Federal Aviation Administration and KAFB throughout this process to minimize these concerns. Of interest to Senator Heinrich (D-NM) and Representative Michelle Lujan-Grisham (D-NM-1) and potentially to Senator Udall (D-NM). R2

Monarch overwintering numbers in Mexico: In mid-February, FWS will coordinate with Mexico and Canada to report newly collected overwintering numbers for the eastern population of the monarch butterfly. The Trinational Monarch Communications Working Group is developing an outreach plan. R3

WSFR funding to states: In mid-February, FWS will distribute to states, territories and District of Columbia \$1.1 billion in revenues generated by the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration and Dingell-Johnson Sport Fish Restoration acts. The funding, which supports critical state environmental conservation and recreation projects throughout the nation, is generated by excise taxes on firearms, ammunition, fishing equipment and motorboat fuels paid by the hunting, shooting, boating and angling industries. Outreach planned. HQ

Two Australian Parrots delisting: Once cleared, FWS will send to the *Federal Register* a final rule to delist two Australian parrot species (scarlet-chested parakeet and the turquoise parrot) due to recovery. Both parrots are native to Australia. Target to the *Federal Register* is February 17. Outreach planned. HQ

Bone Cave harvestman petition finding: Once cleared, FWS will send to the *Federal Register* a

revised 90-day finding on a petition to delist the Bone Cave harvestman (a cave invertebrate) found in Texas. In June 2015 FWS published a not-substantial 90-day finding on the petition to delist the Bone Cane harvestman. A disc of supplemental information submitted with the petition was overlooked and not considered in that finding. This revised finding results from a voluntary court-ordered remand and settlement agreement. Target to the *Federal Register* is February 28; the court-ordered date is March 31. Outreach planned. R2

Island Marble Butterfly proposed listing: Once cleared, FWS will send to the *Federal Register* a proposal to list the island marble butterfly as endangered. Target to the *Federal Register* is February 28. Outreach planned. R1

Black Pine Snake proposed critical habitat: Once cleared, FWS will send to the *Federal Register* a notice reopening the comment period on a proposed critical habitat designation for the black pine snake. FWS will also hold two public information meetings during the open comment period. The target date for publication is February 28. Outreach planned. R4

Silvio O. Conte Refuge final Comprehensive Conservation Plan: In the next 30-60 days, FWS will publish a notice in the *Federal Register* announcing the Record of Decision for the final CCP and Environmental Impact Statement for the Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge in Vermont. Local outreach planned. R5

Massasoit Refuge draft CCP: In the next 30-60 days, FWS will publish a Notice of Availability in the *Federal Register* to announce the release of Massasoit NWR, part of the Eastern Massachusetts Complex, draft Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Environmental Assessment for public comment. This action is not controversial. Local outreach planned. R5

Honeywell NRDAR case: In the next 30-60 days, DOI, DOJ and the State of New York expect to announce a settlement with Honeywell for the Onondaga Lake Natural Resource Damage Assessment and Restoration case. The trustees plan to release a draft restoration plan for a 30-day public comment period and hold a public meeting. Hazardous substances (primarily mercury) were discharged into the lake for decades by Honeywell and its predecessor companies, impacting fish and wildlife resources. Coordinated outreach planned. R5

Fever tick: In late February, FWS Southwest Regional Director Benjamin Tuggle is tentatively set to meet with Senator John Cornyn (R-TX) on the fever tick issue in South Texas. The fever tick is detrimental to the Texas cattle industry. It can be spread by cattle and deer but also potentially by an invasive exotic species (the nilgai, an Asian antelope). Currently the Laguna Atascosa NWR is under quarantine for the fever tick because the nilgai is present on the refuge. FWS is consulting with USDA on potential effects on ocelots, jaguarundis, and aplomado falcons from use of Ivermectin-laced corn in deer feeders to treat ticks on deer on private property. FWS continues to work with USDA to develop a biological opinion on the use of Ivermectin-laced corn. Local media interest is high. R2

Final rule to reclassify manatee: Once cleared, FWS will send to the *Federal Register* a final determination on a proposed rule that published January 8, 2016, to reclassify the West Indian

manatee from endangered to threatened under the Endangered Species Act. A notice of intent to sue was filed by the Pacific Legal Foundation January 9 for failure to finalize the proposal to reclassify the manatee from endangered to threatened. Target to the *Federal Register* is March 3. To avoid litigation, the rule should be delivered to the *Federal Register* by March 8. Outreach planned. R4

Proposed rule to delist the Deseret milkvetch: Once cleared, FWS will send to the *Federal Register* a proposal to delist the Deseret milkvetch, found in of Utah, due to recovery. Target to the *Federal Register* is March 3. Outreach planned. R6

Slickspot Peppergrass Revised Proposed Critical Habitat: Once cleared, FWS will send to the *Federal Register* a revision of the April 5, 2014, revised proposed critical habitat rule, as a result of new information available, and will request new information regarding population status, trends, or threats, and on additional areas that meet FWS criteria for critical habitat. Target to the *Federal Register* is March 10. Outreach planned. R1

Sonoyta Mud Turtle proposed critical habitat: Once cleared, FWS will send to the *Federal Register* a proposal to designate 12.28 acres as critical habitat for the Sonoyta mud turtle in Arizona. Target to the *Federal Register* is March 10. Outreach planned. R2

Final delisting of the Hualapai Mexican vole: Once cleared, FWS will send to the *Federal Register* a final rule to delist the Hualapai Mexican vole, located in Arizona, due to the fact that the original classification is no longer appropriate. Target to the *Federal Register* is March 15. Outreach planned. R2

Eastern cougar final delisting: Once cleared, FWS will send to the *Federal Register* a final rule to delist the eastern cougar (historically known to exist in southeastern Ontario, southern Quebec, and New Brunswick in Canada, and a region bounded from Maine to Michigan, Illinois, Kentucky, and South Carolina in the eastern United States) due to extinction. Target to the *Federal Register* is March 15. Outreach planned. R5

Two Lower Colorado River fishes final listing determination: Once cleared, FWS will send to the *Federal Register* a final listing determination on the Headwater Chub and Roundtail Chub, both native to Arizona and New Mexico. Target to the *Federal Register* is March 23. Outreach planned. R2

Southern Selkirk Mountains population of woodland caribou: Once cleared, FWS will send to the *Federal Register* a notice amending the current listing of the southern Selkirk Mountains population of woodland caribou to include the entire Southern Mountain Caribou population as a Distinct Population Segment (DPS). The revised DPS includes the currently listed southern Selkirk Mountains population of woodland caribou, which is a transboundary species between British Columbia, Canada, and northern Idaho and northeastern Washington. The revised DPS would remain listed as endangered under the ESA. Target to the *Federal Register* is March 30. Outreach planned. R1

Texas Hornshell proposed critical habitat: Once cleared, FWS will send to the *Federal Register* a proposal to designate 463 river miles of critical habitat for the Texas hornshell (a freshwater mussel) in New Mexico and Texas. Target to the *Federal Register* is March 31. Outreach planned. R2

Yellow Lance and Atlantic Pigtoe petition findings: Once cleared, FWS will send to the *Federal Register* a 12-month finding on the status of two freshwater mussel species, yellow lance, and Atlantic pigtoe. The species are located in North Carolina and Virginia. Target to the *Federal Register* is March 31. Outreach planned. R4

Florida Bristle Fern proposed critical habitat: Once cleared, FWS will send to the *Federal Register* a proposal to designate critical habitat for the Florida bristle fern in Florida. The proposed designation includes approximately 10,937 acres. Target to the *Federal Register* is March 31. Outreach planned. R4

Final conservation strategy on the monarch butterfly: In early March, FWS will release the conservation strategy on the monarch butterfly. The conservation strategy is separate from the ongoing species status assessment for the monarch, which will inform FWS' determination on whether to propose the monarch for listing under the ESA. The strategy includes target acreages for habitat needed to reverse the downward trend in monarch numbers for eastern and western populations. The strategy's preliminary estimate for suitable new or restored habitat needed to reverse the decline of monarchs is 29 million acres in the eastern population. It also defines monarch habitat, which includes overwintering habitat in Mexico and California. Outreach planned. R3

The following endangered species actions will be sent to the *Federal Register* once cleared (original target dates noted below). Most announcements will coincide with the dates each notice appears in the reading room:

- Western Glacier Stonefly and Meltwater Lednian Stonefly – Proposed Critical Habitat, February 3, R6
- Red Wolf revised 10(j) Rule Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking and Scoping Notice –February 6, R4
- Notice of availability of draft revised marine mammal stock assessment reports for two stocks of polar bears; request for comments, February 10, R7
- U.S.-Russia Polar Bear Commission Determination on Annual Taking Limit for the Alaska-Chukotka Polar Bear Population, February 17, R7
- 90-day Batched Petition Finding, February 17, HQ
- 2 Australian parrots delisting–February 17, HQ
- Bone Cave Harvestman – 90-day finding on petition to delist, February 28, R2
- Black Pine Snake – proposed Critical Habitat, February 28, R4
- Island Marble Butterfly – proposed listing, February 28, R1
- West Indian Manatee – Final determination on a proposed rule to downlist, March 8, R4
- Deseret Milkvetch – Proposed Delisting, March 3, R6
- Slickspot Peppergrass – Revised Proposed Critical Habitat, March 10, R1

- Sonoyta Mud Turtle – Proposed Critical Habitat, March 10, R2
- Hualapai Mexican Vole – Final Delisting, March 15, R2
- Eastern Cougar – Final Delisting, March 15, R5
- Lower Colorado River Fishes – Final listing determinations, March 23, R2
- Southern Selkirk Mountains Population of Woodland Caribou – Final Amendment to DPS Boundary, March 30, R1
- Texas Hornshell – Proposed Critical Habitat, March 31, R2
- Yellow Lance and Atlantic Pigtoe Freshwater Mussels – 12-month findings, March 31, R4
- Florida Bristle Fern – Proposed Critical Habitat, March 31, R4

## **National Park Service**

### **Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel**

On February 3, Acting Director Michael Reynolds will meet with House Oversight Committee staff to discuss the photographs shared via social media of the 2017 Presidential Inaugural.

### **Week Ahead Announcements and Actions**

In early February, the NPS anticipates the US Attorney's office in Anchorage, Alaska will release to the public federal search warrants pertaining to illegal guiding, hunting and other crimes alleged against an NPS hunting guide and concessioner, Urban Rahoi. Mr. Rahoi is a 97-year-old World War II veteran who came to Alaska in 1947; he has been a licensed hunting guide since 1950 and is well-known in Fairbanks and among the state's political leadership. The complex case investigation based in Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve was led by the NPS Investigative Services Branch. Local / regional media attention is expected.

On January 30, Cumberland Island National Seashore begins the 30 day implementation of a fire management maintenance project, weather permitting. This prescribed burn will be conducted at the two acre debris pile on the south end of the island known locally as Raccoon Key.

On January 26, a Regional Anti-Poaching Section Chief from a South African national park will visit Lake Mead National Recreation Area to learn about park resources and non-lethal tactics used by law enforcement rangers.

From January 30 through February 2, public scoping meetings will be held on the Blue Mountain Region Bike and Pedestrian Transportation Plan. Planning partners include federal agencies, tribes, cities, counties, health departments, transportation and resource agencies, and many other stakeholders spanning Columbia and Walla Walla counties (Washington) and northeastern Umatilla County (Oregon). Public outreach meetings will be held in Dayton, WA (Jan 30), Walla Walla, WA (Jan 31), Milton-Freewater, OR (Feb 1), and Burbank, WA (Feb 2).

On February 1, the National Mall and Memorial Parks will resume interpretative tours at the Old Post Office Tower. Tours were suspended in 2014 during the renovation to convert the Old Post Office building into Trump International Hotel.

On February 2 and 3, the National Park Service will be holding informational meetings to update the public on planning projects at Pullman National Monument. The site plan and Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Pullman Factory Site is being developed in partnership with the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency. The EA will be released for a 30-day public review and comment following these meetings.

On February 2 and 9, the NPS Southeast Region will host public meetings in Atlanta as part of the special resource study the NPS is conducting on the historic former West Hunter Street Baptist Church, located at 775 Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive, where 1960s-era civil rights activity occurred. The study, which was authorized by Congress in 2014, will evaluate the site's potential for addition to the National Park System as well as other options for preservation and interpretation of the resource.

On February 3, Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area is partnering with Zoo Atlanta to plant the Dwarf Sumac (*Rhus michauxii*) - one of the most endangered plants in Georgia – at the park. The plant is both Federally Endangered and State Endangered. It is also a High Priority Species in the State Wildlife Action Plan.

The week of February 6, NPS anticipates publication of a New Yorker Magazine featuring Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area's mountain lion research program. Additional media coverage is anticipated within the next 1-2 weeks, including a Los Angeles Times feature on a week in the life of P-22, the Griffith Park mountain lion. The BBC is also publishing a story in the next few weeks about a depredation permit that was issued for P-45.

On February 6 and 7, the U.S. Mint and the NPS will be hosting America the Beautiful coin launch events to celebrate Iowa's quarter featuring Effigy Mounds National Monument. A coin collector's forum will be hosted at the park Visitor Center from 5:30 pm to 6:30 pm.

On February 7 and 8, San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park will host San Francisco-area public meetings on a project to improve accessibility on the museum ship *Balclutha*. Possibilities include a new gangway, lifts to multiple decks, audio descriptive tours and tactile models.

### **30-60 Day Look-Ahead**

In February or March, Cape Lookout National Seashore anticipates publishing a Final Rule for Off-Road Vehicle Use in the Federal Register. The park's Off-Road Vehicle Use Management Plan Record of Decision was signed on January 10.

In February or early March, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) will publish *Adapting to Climate Change; Guidance for Protected Area Managers and Planners*. Two National Park Service staff served on the team of four editors contributed to this multi-author IUCN guide that examines ecosystem based approaches to achieving climate adaptation, and offers current best practices that managers and planners can use to respond to climate change in protected areas.



On February 11, Jimmy Carter National Historic Site's non-profit partner group will host a visit by Clyde C. Tuggle, Senior VP, Chief Public Affairs and Communications Officer, and Kirk Glaze, Director Community Partnerships of The Coca Cola Company on Saturday. The visit is a result of ongoing fundraising efforts by the park's nonprofit partner.

On February 12 - 15, trail advocates will gather in Washington, DC for their annual Hike the Hill event organized by the American Hiking Society and the Partnership for the National Trails System.

On February 12 -16, the Friends Alliance (approx. 100 attendees) and the Public Lands Alliance (approx. 200 attendees) will be holding a joint-conference in Washington, D.C. The Friends Alliance is comprised of the 200+ nonprofit philanthropic organizations that support parks locally across the country. The Public Lands Alliance membership includes educational, cooperating and interpretive associations and partners. NPS staff will be participating in both conferences and Acting Director Reynolds will address the Friends Alliance on February 14.

On February 13 and 14, Grand Canyon National Park will hold public meetings in Flagstaff, AZ regarding planning for the park's communication infrastructure. The communication infrastructure plan will guide decision making and management of cellular telephone and internet communications infrastructure for the foreseeable future. Half hour time slots will be available for current right-of-way holders and past applicants to present infrastructure needs to the plan's developers.

On February 14, Kaloko-Honokōhau National Historical Park staff will appear before the Hawaii's Commission on Water Resource Management (CWRM) to discuss its petition to designate the Keauhou aquifer as a Water Management Area. The park filed the petition over three years ago to protect freshwater resources that provide habitat to threatened and endangered species. The Commission has twice voted to continue the process but has not yet made a final decision. The Congressional delegation is very interested in the issue and the topic is the subject of local media attention.

On or about February 15, Glacier National Park anticipates easing current watercraft restrictions to allow non-motorized watercraft with inspections only on NPS-managed waters for summer 2017. All park waters are currently closed to boating due to the detection of invasive mussels in Montana. The announcement could include a continued prohibition on private motorized watercraft. The park's ability to safely allow any boats on NPS-managed waters this summer is tied to the availability of seasonal boat inspectors.

On February 19, St. Croix National Scenic Riverway will grant an extension until September 1, 2017 for 15 property owners to remove personal property and improvements (i.e. boat docks and ramps, sheds, gardens, and fire rings) from and across federal land. NPS acquired the waterfront property in 1992 and the following year began purchasing scenic easements from willing landowners; however, nine landowners refused to sell their scenic easements. In 1996, the court extended exclusive waterfront access rights to the nine property owners until 2002, followed by

non-exclusive access rights until February 18, 2017.

In early March, the National Park Service and U.S. Forest Service Learning Review Board will release the Strawberry Fire Fatality and Safety Review Report. The Strawberry Fire was started by lightning strike and burned 4,700+ acres in Great Basin National Park in August of 2016. The Fatality and Safety Review Report is scheduled for review on February 15 by the Board.

In early February 2017, escrow is set to close on 96 tracts of vacant land, totaling 3,065 acres, at Mojave National Preserve. A Land and Water Conservation Fund appropriation in FY 2015 is being used to purchase the land from the Mojave Desert Land Trust. The proceeds of the sale will be used by the Trust to acquire additional conservation lands within the Preserve.

On or about February 20, 2017, the National Park Service will take the elevators out of service at Carlsbad Caverns National Park. This is a scheduled elevator safety inspection and will take about seven days to complete. During this period visitors may still access the cavern by hiking in and out of the Natural Entrance on a self-guided tour.

On or about February 21, Glacier Bay National Park will hold a preliminary meeting with State of Alaska fisheries biologists and the State employees focused on ANILCA compliance to explore a cooperative fisheries management plan. The meeting is in line with the legislative requirement (PL-105-277 Sec. 123) to develop a plan focused on avoiding future conflict.

On February 23, the NPS will host an opening event for the Selma Interpretive Center with the community. The Selma Interpretive Center has been expanded to include two additional floors and new exhibits. Congresswoman Sewell and Mayor Darrio Melton will attend.

The week of February 23, San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park will meet with local congressional staffers in California to brief them on the Municipal Pier project and legislative updates for the park. He will also be meeting with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Headquarters staff on the Municipal Pier project.

On February 23, Golden Gate National Recreation Area will open the new Presidio Visitor Center in partnership with the Presidio Trust and Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy. Rep. Nancy Pelosi has tentatively accepted an invitation from the Presidio Trust to speak at the ribbon-cutting that morning.

On February 23, unless otherwise extended, Golden Gate National Recreation Area expects a Record of Decision to be signed for Alcatraz Ferry Embarkation. The Final EIS preferred alternative for long-term ferry embarkation to Alcatraz Island is Pier 31 1/2, and the Port of San Francisco is a cooperating agency for the EIS.

On February 23, Galápagos and Joshua Tree National Parks will enter into a sister park agreement. In addition to similar resource issues related to tortoises and desert ecosystems, the two parks deal with similar resource preservation and capacity issues. Local and national conservation groups will be on hand for the ceremony, as well as, staff from Representatives Cook and Ruiz's offices.

On February 26, the NPS will host a special open house for the Carter G. Woodson Home. The event is open to the public, but limited to 200 people. The program will be held at the Seton Elementary School with a reception at Shiloh Baptist Church. Throughout the reception, brief tours of the home will be available to groups of 10 people.

On or about February 27, the National Park Service will announce a Prospectus for concession operations opportunity at Carlsbad Caverns National Park. The current concession operation is located in the Visitor Center and underground in the cavern, which includes food services and a gift shop. The concession contract will be awarded for a 10-year period starting January 1, 2018.

On February 28, the National Park Service will participate in the annual meeting of the Garden Club of America (GCA). The GCA and the NPS recently signed an MOU to work together on conservation and education programs. Discussions at the meeting will include background on the history of cooperation between GCA and the NPS, the recent MOU, the importance of volunteer efforts such as GCA's Partners for Plants program, and projects that illustrate progress on addressing invasive species or assist with habitat restoration.

On March 4 and 5, the NPS will participate in annual commemorations for "Bloody Sunday" – the 196X march led by Rep John Lewis when protesters were attacked by law enforcement. Events are scheduled at the Selma Interpretive Center and Brown Chapel AME Church in Selma, and at the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery. Previous events included marches across the Edmund Pettus Bridge. Approximately 100 - 175 members of Congress have been invited to attend.

On March 6, Golden Gate National Recreation Area will begin a repair project of the Crissy Field Promenade, one of the most highly-trafficked trails in the State of California. The \$5 million project will close sections of the waterfront trail in phases over six months. This project uses both federal and non-federal philanthropic matching funds.

On March 7, the NPS and the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) will participate in an event celebrating the renewal of the NPS-BSA official partnership near the Boy Scout Memorial within President's Park on the Ellipse. Acting Director Reynolds and BSA Chief Scout Executive Michael Surbaugh will give remarks in addition to a presentation from a group of scouts. Invitations are anticipated for the incoming Secretary of the Interior and members of Congress.

On March 9, Visit Philadelphia will hold a media lunch in Philadelphia that will cover the opening of the Museum of the American Revolution and other topics related to Philadelphia's Historic District. Both Independence National Historical Park and Valley Forge National Historical Park have been invited to attend and speak.

On March 10, the NPS and partners will hold the grand opening of the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Visitor Center in Church Creek, MD. The event will be public and open to media. The Maryland Congressional Delegation, leaders in the African American community, Department of the Interior leadership and many partners will be invited.

On March 10, NPS will host a celebration in anticipation of the donation of a collection of historic Maggie Walker papers. The event will be sponsored by the donor and several partners to honor the work of the volunteers who have been preparing the collection under the direction of the NPS.

In March 2017, the NPS anticipates starting a pilot reservation program for backcountry camping permits for a percentage of the campsites in some of the most popular areas of the North Cascades National Park Service Complex. The permit reservation system, which was proposed in the 2012 Ross Lake General Management Plan, is in response to increased visitation and visitor requests for a reservation system. A cost recovery application fee of \$20 will be charged for the permit reservation application. Public engagement on the reservation system was conducted as part of the GMP planning process.

On April 19 to 21, San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park will host the Council of American Maritime Museums (CAMM) annual conference. CAMM is an organization of 88 institutions across the United States working toward the preservation and interpretation of North America's maritime heritage.

## **ASSISTANT SECRETARY–INDIAN AFFAIRS AND THE BUREAUS OF INDIAN AFFAIRS AND INDIAN EDUCATION**

### **Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel**

Nothing to report.

### **Week Ahead Announcements and Actions**

Indian Affairs is preparing to make selections for the 2017 Indian Affairs Student Leadership Summer Institute. Launched in summer 2016, the 10 week paid internship placed 17 Native undergraduate and graduate students in leadership offices across Indian Affairs. The program's mission is to engage and support the next generation of Native leaders in the federal government through an introduction to the government-to-government relationship between tribal nations and the United States. Indian Affairs received more than 60 applications for summer 2017. Hiring of the interns is currently on hold during the hiring freeze.

AS-IA and BIA Director relayed message to Sen. Hoeven, Fri. Jan. 27, regarding DAPL issue in North Dakota and the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe. BIA did increase law enforcement on-reservation to approximately forty (40) BIA law enforcement officers. BIA law enforcement will look into setting up checkpoints on ND State Route on-reservation for limited or no access to protest camp at the request of the leadership of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe. BIA law enforcement will not be going off-reservation in Morton County or at the Army Corp site. BIA law enforcement and BIA Director are in daily communications with State and local law enforcement, along with the North Dakota Governor and Lt. Governor.

On February 6-9, the United South and Eastern Tribes (USET) and the USET Sovereignty Protection Fund Impact Week Meeting will take place in Arlington, VA.

### **30-60 Day Look-Ahead**

On February 13-16, the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) will hold its 2017 Executive Council Winter Session in Washington, DC.

On February 15, the National Indian Education Association will hold their annual legislative summit in Washington, DC.

On February 16, 2017, the Tribal Interior Budget Council (TIBC) meeting will be held in Washington, DC 20036. TIBC provides a forum and process for tribes and federal officials to work together in developing annual budget requests for Indian programs in the Department of the Interior.

The Bureau's National Tiwahe Coordinator (NTC) will host a conference call with all Tiwahe tribes to discuss the upcoming Tiwahe conference. The conference is tentatively set to take place in Tucson, AZ at the Pascua Yaqui Reservation, one of the Tiwahe Initiative sites, on Feb. 28 –

March 2. The NTC will confirm agenda items and, once the date is finalized, extend invitations to federal partners from the Indian Health Service (IHS), Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF), and Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration (SAMHSA). The NTC will also coordinate with partners from New Zealand's Te Whanau O Waipareira Trust to confirm John Tamihere, Chief Executive Officer for the Te Whanau O Waipareira Trust, as keynote speaker for the conference.

February 17, 2017 is the deadline for nominations and comments on proposed tribal nominees to the Bureau of Indian Education's Accountability Negotiated Rulemaking Committee under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), per the Federal Register notice dated 1/18/17.

On February 23, 2017, the Interior Department will hold the first of seven tribal consultation sessions on its advanced notice of proposed rulemaking (ANPRM) to solicit oral and written comments on whether to propose an administrative rule that would comprehensively update 25 CFR Part 140 (Licensed Indian Traders), 8:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. PST, Seattle area, WA [*location TBA*], per the Federal Register notice dated 12/9/16.

On March 21-24, the Midwest Alliance of Sovereign Tribes (MAST) Impact Week Meeting will be held in Washington, DC.

The Bureau's Climate Change Program will work with the American Indian Higher Education Consortium, Conservation Legacy, and the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) to place approximately 34 VISTA volunteers in 34 tribal communities and organizations to work on climate resilience topics.

**BIE Leasing and Fundraising (25 CFR 48):** This final rule would implement authority for the Director of BIE to enter into agreements with third parties to lease the land or facilities of a Bureau-operated school in exchange for funding that benefits the school. The comment period on this proposed rule ended August 22; the Office of Regulatory Affairs and Collaborative Action (RACA) is continuing to work with Solicitors Office (SOL) and BIE on the necessary Privacy Act documentation in preparation for publication of the final rule.

**Appraisals and Valuations Regulation (CFR part TBD):** This rule establishes minimum qualifications for appraisers of Indian trust property, as required by the Indian Trust Asset Reform Act of 2016 (ITARA). The comment period on the proposed rule ended on November 21, 2016. RACA continues to host workgroup sessions to review the comments and prepare the final rule.

**Indian Electric Power Utilities (25 CFR 175):** This proposed rule would not make any substantive changes to the regulations, but would revise the regulations to be in plain language. The regulations affect only a limited number of Tribes because there are only three BIA electric power utilities: Colorado River (serving the Colorado River Indian Tribes Reservation), Mission Valley Power (serving the Salish & Kootenai Tribes, Flathead Indian Reservation), and San Carlos Irrigation Project (serving Gila River Indian Community). The proposed rule is awaiting AS-IA signature.

**Indian Trader Regulations (25 CFR 140):** This rule would comprehensively update Part 140 to modernize the implementation of the Indian Trader statutes consistent with the Federal policies of Tribal self-determination and self-governance. The advance notice of proposed rulemaking to solicit comments on potential regulatory revisions and announcing consultation for February and March 2017 was published on Friday, December 9. A notice with details on the venues for Tribal consultations is in surname and should be ready for Federal Register publication in the coming weeks.

**School Facilities Design Handbook Updates (25 CFR 36):** The IA Office of Facilities Property and Safety Management (OFPSM) will be conducting four consultation sessions to obtain comments on the revision of the “School Facilities Design Handbook,” dated March 30, 2007, which has been incorporated by reference into 25 CFR 36. This proposed rule would update the incorporation by reference and allow for the 120-day comment period. The handbook updates are highly technical as they merely bring design standards to current industry standards. A proposed rule to incorporate the new Handbook version by reference is in surname. The Federal Register document also announces four Tribal consultation on the Handbook updates to be held across the country.

**Revisions to Leasing of Osage Lands for Oil & Gas Mining (25 CFR 226):** BIA published a final rule in 2015 that it voluntarily withdrew pending completion of a Regulatory Impact Analysis as a result of litigation. BIA is currently undertaking a Regulatory Impact Analysis at this time in anticipation of proposing revisions to this regulation. A Tribal consultation was held October 27 in Oklahoma regarding whether to revise the regulations; BIA will work on an initial draft of the regulations for distribution to the Osage Nation.

**Potential Revisions to Probate Regulations (25 CFR 15, 25 CFR 40):** BIA and SOL identified some discrete revisions to probate regulations that may help streamline processes. Consultation on these revisions were completed in August. The comment period ended on January 4, 2017. BIA and SOL are examining whether a proposed rule is appropriate.

**WIIN Act – Dam Safety; Announcement of consultation locations and public webinar for dam safety provisions of WIIN Act (statutory requirement):** The Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation (WIIN) Act became law on December 16, 2016. The law requires Tribal consultation within 60 days of passage, outreach to landowners, and reports to Congress by April 14, 2017. The consultation and webinar will discuss programmatic goals to address the deferred maintenance needs of Indian dams and funding prioritization criteria for distributing funds from the High-Hazard Indian Dam Safety Deferred Maintenance Fund and the Low-Hazard Indian Dam Safety Deferred Maintenance Fund. There is also a Dear Tribal Leader letter in the package for distribution. The first consultation will be held February 6, 2017, in Billings, MT, followed by sessions on February 8, in Albuquerque, NM, and February 10, in Portland, OR, and teleconferences the following week.

**WIIN Act - Irrigation; Announcement of consultation locations for irrigation provisions of WIIN Act (statutory requirement):** The Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation

(WIIN) Act became law on December 16, 2016. The law requires Tribal consultation within 60 days of passage and reports to Congress by April 14, 2017. The consultation will discuss programmatic goals to address the deferred maintenance needs and water storage needs of certain Indian irrigation projects and funding prioritization criteria for distributing funds from the Indian Irrigation Fund. The following Indian Irrigation Projects meet the Act's eligibility requirements: Blackfeet, Colorado River, Crow, Duck Valley, Flathead, Ft Belknap, Ft Hall, Ft Peck, Navajo Indian Irrigation Project (NIIP), Pine River, Pyramid Lake, San Carlos Irrigation Project (SCIP)-IW, SCIP-JW, Uintah, Walker River, Wapato, and Wind River. Note: There is no Federal Register notice for this action—only a Dear Tribal Leader letter that is directed specifically to the handful of affected Tribes. These consultations are being held in conjunction with the consultations on dam safety. The first consultation will be held February 6, 2017, in Billings, MT, followed by sessions on February 8, in Albuquerque, NM, and February 10, in Portland, OR, and teleconferences the following week.

**Update to O&M Formula for School Facilities:** The current allocation formula for O&M funding was implemented in 1990 and relies upon very granular, up-to-date and accurate inventory for each site, but many sites have not had resources to update their data. This update would instead rely on accepted industry standard benchmarks to allocate O&M funds across all sites and buildings based on actual functional use and program needs. The IA Office of Facilities Property and Safety Management (OFPSM) will be conducting four consultation sessions to obtain comments on the new O&M Formula in conjunction with consultations on the School Facilities Design Handbook revisions. A Federal Register notice announcing the consultation is in surname.

## **OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL TRUSTEE FOR AMERICAN INDIANS (OST)**

### **Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel**

- Who: Deputy Special Trustee-Field Operations (DST-FO), Jim James
- What: University of Arizona Tribal Will Writing Conference
- When: January 30-31, 2017
- Where: Tucson, AZ
- Press: Closed
- Topic: The DST-FO is attending the American Indian Probate Reform Act training and will launch some will writing guidance that will eventually be distributed to the field. DST-FO will also collaborate with University staff regarding the potential for will writing clinics for the remainder of this fiscal year.
  
- Who: Acting Deputy Special Trustee-Trust Services (DST-TS), Robert Winter
- What: DOI Financial Statements Guidance Team
- When: January 30-February 2, 2017
- Where: Boulder City, NV
- Press: Closed
- Topic: The DST-TS will be attending the annual workshop to discuss DOI best practices, 2017 updates and upcoming audit changes.



- Who: Regional Trust Administrator (RTA), Timothy Lake
- What: OST Field Operations Strategic Planning Meeting
- When: January 31-February 2, 2017
- Where: Albuquerque, NM
- Press: Closed
- Topic: The Great Plains/Alaska Region RTA will travel to Albuquerque, NM to participate in the Field Operations Senior Managers Strategic Planning Meeting.
  
- Who: Deputy Special Trustee-Field Operations (DST-FO), Jim James
- What: United South & Eastern Tribes (USET) Impact Week
- When: February 6-8, 2017
- Where: Arlington, VA
- Press: Closed
- Topic: The DST-FO will be attending the USET Sovereignty Protection Fund Impact Week meetings. Discussions throughout the week will include economic development, BIA budget formulation, and tribal youth initiatives. Representatives from several agencies will be providing presentations.

#### **Week Ahead Announcements - Presidential and Department/Agency Priorities**

OST continues to communicate with both Gila River and San Carlos Tribes and other federal officials to discuss the next steps in the tribes' trust withdrawal request. OST notified both tribes by letter of the additional information needed in order to continue the processing of their respective withdrawal requests pursuant to the American Indian Trust Fund Management Reform Act of 1994.

#### **30-60 Day Look-Ahead**

Nothing to report.

## **ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR LAND AND MINERALS MANAGEMENT**

### **Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel**

On February 3, BLM Acting Director Kristin Bail will travel to Utah to meet with BLM-UT State Director Ed Roberson and BLM staff at the Canyon Country District Office. She will return to DC on February 6.

On February 6 – 10, BLM Acting Deputy Director Jerry Perez travel to the BLM's National Training Center in Phoenix to participate in BLM's Pathways Program. The program provides opportunities for employees with 18 months tenure or less to learn about the BLM's mission, values, priorities, and evolving culture; become more familiar with BLM's Multiple Use and Sustained Yield mission; gain a sense of place in the organization; and expand their understanding of public resources stewardship.

OSMRE Acting Director Glenda Owens will be in Washington, DC attending regularly scheduled meetings.

BSEE Acting Director Margaret Schneider will be in Washington, DC attending regularly scheduled meetings.

### **Week Ahead Announcements and Actions**

On January 20, the BLM issued a Notice of Temporary Suspension of the Tule Wind project currently under construction in San Diego County, CA in connection with six events of noncompliance during construction. On January 25, the project proponent, Avangrid Renewables, requested permission to resume construction activities. On February 1, Avangrid is expected to submit a plan of action in response to the issues discussed on the calls. If the BLM accepts Avangrid's plan, the Temporary Suspension will be lifted and construction may resume. The BLM is hopeful that the suspension will be lifted by February 3.

Upon review and approval by the Department, the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSMRE) plans to provide a report to Congress on the results of the Abandoned Mine Land Economic Revitalization (AMLER) Pilot Projects. OSMRE made \$30 million available each to KY, PA and WV to use for pilot projects designed to help develop local economies while also reclaiming abandoned mine lands. Congress provided the AMLER Pilot Project funding and required the development of information to help inform future policy decisions.

Upon review and approval by the Department, BOEM plans to publish a *Federal Register* Notice announcing three revised Supplemental Official Block Diagrams along with the two associated revised Official Protraction Diagrams that reflect the lateral boundaries through state waters that divide the Commonwealth of Virginia from North Carolina and Maryland.

On February 1 - 3, the Public Lands Council's (PLC) and National Cattlemen's Beef Association's (NCBA) Federal Lands Committee meeting will take place in Nashville, TN. Karen Kelleher, Acting Assistant Director for Resources and Planning, Joe Tague, Division Chief -Forests, Rangeland, Riparian & Plant Conservation, Tim Murphy, BLM-ID State Director and June Shoemaker, BLM-ID Deputy State Director, will speak at the meeting.

On February 2 - 3, the BLM-AK Resource Advisory Council (RAC) will meet in Fairbanks. Agenda items include a report from the RAC's placer mining subcommittee with recommendations on revegetation. RAC members also will present reports on public land order withdrawals, re-vegetation, the National Petroleum Reserve, the BLM Planning rule, and receive general updates from the BLM-AK State Director.

On February 3 - 11, the 2017 King of the Hammers Ultra Race will be held at the Johnson Valley Off Highway Vehicle (OHV) Area in San Bernardino County, CA. This event, authorized under a BLM special recreation permit, draws thousands of participants and spectators and has received national and international attention for its unique OHV and rock crawling competitions.

During the week of February 6, OSMRE's Western Region intends to release for public review and comment a determination of NEPA adequacy and unsigned finding of no significant impact for the Twentymile Coal Company's Foidel Creek Mine, CO, prior to making a recommendation on the mining plan modification. This mine has approximately 300 employees. Continued operation of the Foidel Creek Mine is of importance to the local and regional community.

On February 7, BLM-WY will hold an in-person Oil and Gas lease sale, offering 283 parcels totaling 184,784.25 acres located in Campbell, Carbon, Converse, Crook, Fremont, Johnson, Natrona, Niobrara, Sheridan, and Weston counties. Forty-one of the parcels are located within sage-grouse priority habitat management areas (PHMA) and the remaining parcels are within sage-grouse general habitat management areas (GHMA). Three protests have been received. The Powder River Basin Resource Council asserts that some parcels or portions of parcels are located within the Fortification Creek Planning Area, and they assert the EA fails to address potential impacts to the Fortification Creek area, including the Fortification Creek elk herd. WildEarth Guardians has concerns that the BLM has failed to adequately disclose potential greenhouse gas emissions and analyze climate change. Davis Graham & Stubbs, LLP is protesting a single parcel due to concerns related to unleased lands within communitization agreements.

On February 7, BOEM plans to hold a second workshop to discuss the evaluation criteria for third-party guarantees in New Orleans, LA. The workshop follows 113 letters that were sent to interest holders in sole liability properties on December 30, 2016, notifying them of the requirement to provide additional security. On January 6, 2017, BOEM announced that it will extend the timeline for implementation of other aspects of the Financial Assurance Notice to Lessees (NTL) issued in July 2016 by six months. In the interim, BOEM plans to implement an interactive process to gather additional input from all interested parties. The Bureau has posted the evaluation criteria on its website and held a workshop in Houston, TX on January 31.

On February 7, BLM-WY will hold an in-person Oil and Gas lease sale, offering 283 parcels

totaling 184,784.25 acres located in Campbell, Carbon, Converse, Crook, Fremont, Johnson, Natrona, Niobrara, Sheridan, and Weston Counties. Forty-one of the parcels are located within greater sage-grouse Priority Habitat Management Area (PHMA) and the remaining parcels are within Greater sage-grouse General Habitat Management Area (GHMA). Three protests have been received. The BLM is working to respond to the protests.

On February 8, a hearing will take place in DC Federal District Court to consider a Motion for Preliminary Injunction filed last month by commercial fisheries-related entities following BOEM's sixth commercial offshore wind lease sale. The Plaintiffs challenged the decision to lease the New York Wind Energy Area and seek injunctive relief to prevent BOEM from executing the lease. The Plaintiffs agreed to drop their Temporary Restraining Order in exchange for BOEM agreeing to give the court at least 14-days' notice prior to executing the lease.

On or about February 8, BLM-UT was scheduled begin helicopter gather operations in the Cedar Mountain HMA to gather 700 wild horses, remove 300, treat 150 with fertility control and release treated mares with remaining stallions back to the HMA. However, the gather has been postponed indefinitely. The interest group Friends of Animals filed suit requesting a restraining order preventing the start of the gather. The complaint alleges violations of the NEPA and the Wild Horse and Burro Act. Briefs are being prepared for court filing.

On February 21, the public comment period will end for the scoping period for a natural gas development proposal located approximately 12 miles north of Paonia, CO. Gunnison Energy, LLC's North Fork Mancos Master Development Plan proposal is adjacent to the BLM Bull Mountain Master Development Plan and includes drilling up to 35 horizontal wells from four new well pads and one existing well pad over the next three years. Three new well pads would be on National Forest System lands and one on private land. The existing pad is on private land drilling into Federal minerals. The BLM is currently considering several requests to extend this scoping period.

In February, the BLM-UT Moab FO will release for public review an Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Needles and Anticline Overlook (Canyon Rims) Road Improvement Project to improve public access and safety. The area is near the Bears Ears National Monument.

In February, the BLM-CO Uncompahgre Field Office and the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forests will announce a public scoping on a natural gas development proposal about 12 miles north of Paonia, CO.

### **30-60 Day Look-Ahead**

Majority Staff of the House Natural Resources Committee requested a meeting with the BLM to discuss infrastructure project priorities. A date and BLM participation have not yet been determined.

On February 13, BLM-AK leadership and project staff will meet with ConocoPhillips Alaska, Inc. (CPAI) to provide an update on permitting for the Greater Mooses Tooth 2 (GMT2) project.

GMT2 is a development project within the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska (NPR-A). BLM-AK received an application for permit to drill for GMT2 on August 25, 2015. The GMT2 project would be a continuation of the development within the Federal Oil and Gas Greater Mooses Tooth Unit (GMTU). The proposed project would include a 14-acre pad and up to 48 wells. CPAI would like to begin construction of GMT2 during the winter of 2018-2019.

During the week of February 13, BOEM and the State of California tentatively plan to hold a meeting with tribes along the Central Coast of California regarding offshore wind development. This is part of an effort by BOEM and the State to hold a series of regional outreach meetings. Additional stakeholder outreach being organized by BOEM and the California Energy Commission (CEC) will consist of monthly stakeholder sub-teams to coordinate outreach related to data collection and science, fishing, and coastal communities. BOEM also plans to attend a public meeting conducted by the CEC with the San Luis Obispo Council of Governments in March 2017.

On February 13 – 17, the National Native Seed Conference is being held in Washington, D.C. This bi-annual conference connects research, industry, land management and restoration professionals and provides opportunities to develop relationships and share information about collection, research and development, production, and use of native plant materials. This year's conference is focused on implementing the National Seed Strategy, which is part of a comprehensive, science-based strategy to address the threat of wildfire across the west. Twelve Federal agencies, including BLM, are engaged in development of this strategy. Several staff from the BLM's Plant Conservation Division will make presentations.

On February 13 – 25, the Mineral Resources Report of the Sagebrush Focal Areas in ID, MT, NV, OR, UT, and WY will be available. BLM received 600 copies of the report from the USGS, and plans to distribute the report at eight public meetings in February. Public meetings will be held for the proposed SFA Withdrawal EIS at 8 locations: Malta, MT; Salt Lake City, UT; Rock Springs, WY; Idaho Falls, ID; Reno, NV; Lake View, OR; Elko, NV, and Boise, ID from 2/13-2/16 and 2/21-2/24.

In mid-February, the final National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA) Report on BSEE's organization is expected. NAPA conducted an assessment of BSEE's organization, strategic direction, policy and process, infrastructure, systems, and technology. NAPA has already submitted to BSEE the draft Detailed Report and Findings and Recommendations and Roadmap Implementation. A communication strategy is being developed and BSEE is preparing to brief on the report.

On February 15, BLM-OR/WA will hold the Blue Mule Timber Sale, which will make available 5,500 MBF of thinning harvest on 324 acres. The BLM will also hold the Quarry 5 Timber Sale, which will make available 7,358 MBF of regeneration and thinning harvest on 283 acres. On February 17, BLM-OR/WA will hold the Six One Timber Sale, which will make available 68 acres of regeneration harvest and one acre of right-of-way clearing. This project is expected to be controversial as it is a regeneration harvest.

On February 17, Ocean Energy Safety Institute (OESI), in conjunction with BSEE, will hold a public forum in Houston, TX to discuss recently completed BSEE research projects. The Technology Assessment Program Forum will highlight issues related to offshore research and best industry practices, with opportunities for questions from industry, government, and the public.

On February 20, BLM-UT State Director Ed Roberson is tentatively scheduled to meet with Sen. Hatch in Washington, D.C. This will be a general meeting, with no specific topics, at the request of the Senator.

On February 23, staff from the office of Rep. Doug LaMalfa (R-CA) will meet with the BLM, U.S. Forest Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to discuss efforts to combat illegal marijuana cultivation on public lands. This meeting follows a request from Rep. LaMalfa for detailed budget information about illegal marijuana eradication, enforcement and environmental cleanup on public lands.

On February 25 – March 1, the National Association of Counties (NACo) Annual Legislative Conference will be held in Washington D.C. More than 2,000 elected and appointed county officials attend the conference, which will focus on Federal policy issues that impact counties and local residents. County attendees participate in educational sessions and meet with Federal officials and members and staff to discuss county perspectives on Federal policies that matter to local communities. Individual counties also request individual meetings with officials throughout DOI. Cynthia Moses-Nedd, Acting Division Chief, BLM Intergovernmental and External Affairs, will attend the meeting.

Beginning the week of February 26, the BLM-ID Challis Field Office plans to capture up to 150 wild horses through bait trapping and remove up to 50 within the Challis Herd Management Area (HMA) to reach the Appropriate Management Level (AML) of 185-253. The current population estimate is 285. The gather is expected to be completed by mid-April.

By February 28, the BLM-UT Price Field Office will release for public review an EA analyzing a recreation management plan for the Joe's Valley Bouldering Area. The Joe's Valley Extensive Resource Management Area (ERMA) encompasses 24,930 acres located in north-central Emery County, Utah). Over one million people live within driving distance of Joe's Valley, and the area receives many visitors.

In late February, BLM-NV plans to issue the final Dixie Meadows Geothermal Project Environmental Assessment (EA) and Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). The project area consists of approximately 22,021 acres of public land. The project proponent (Ormat) seeks approval to drill several types of wells (temperature gradient wells, test observation wells, and production wells) at up to 20 specific locations.

In late February, OSMRE's Western Region plans to forward a Mining Plan Decision Document to OSMRE Headquarters for Canyon Fuel Company's Skyline Mine, Flat Canyon Lease Modification for review and submission to the Acting ASLM for signature. Skyline is an

underground longwall mining complex located in Carbon County, UT. Canyon Fuels employs 320 people, producing 3 to 4.5 million tons of coal per year at the Skyline Mine.

On March 1, BOEM plans tentatively to sign a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) authorizing the use of Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) sand for the Mississippi Coastal Improvements Program Comprehensive Barrier Island Restoration Project (MsCIP) in the Gulf of Mexico. BOEM was a cooperating agency during the preparation of the 2009 Programmatic EIS and the 2016 Supplemental EIS. BOEM independently reviewed the SEIS and found that it adequately evaluates the environmental effects of the proposed action.

On March 9, BLM-CO will hold an on-line oil and gas lease sale, offering 16,449.68 acres in the Archuleta, Dolores, Montezuma, and San Miguel counties (SW Colorado).

On March 14, BLM-NV will hold an on-line oil and gas lease sale. BLM-NV will offer 67 parcels totaling almost 116,000 acres in the Elko District.

On March 16, BOEM will hold a commercial wind lease sale offshore NC. Nine companies have qualified to participate in the auction. The lease sale area is 24 nautical miles (nm) offshore Kitty Hawk, NC and extends 25.7 nm in a southeasterly direction. BOEM announced the publication of the Final Sale Notice on January 17; a mock auction will be held on March 14.

On or before March 17, Congress may respond to a proposed donation of private land to a BLM wilderness area in NM. On January 17, then-ASLM Janice M. Schneider signed letters notifying Senate and House leadership that DOI intends to accept a gift of approximately 3,590 acres from The Wilderness Land Trust and add those acres to the adjacent Sabinoso Wilderness, consistent with Section 6 of the Wilderness Act.

On March 22, BOEM will hold Lease Sale 247 for the Central Planning Area (CPA) in the Gulf of Mexico (GOM) in New Orleans, LA via livestream. CPA Lease Sale 247 will make 9,118 blocks in the GOM available for leasing; approximately 48.53 million acres.

On March 21-23, the BSEE National Inspector's Meeting will be held in Lafayette, LA. This is an annual meeting of all BSEE inspectors from three regions. Training and other items of interest are discussed. BSEE Director opens the 3-day meeting with a presentation to the inspectors.

On March 23, BLM-Eastern States Office (ESO) and UT will hold an on-line oil and gas lease sale. BLM-ESO will offer 1,186.06 acres in Monroe County (within the Wayne National Forest) and BLM-UT will offer 4,174.46 acres in San Juan County.

In March, the BLM plans to issue the Boardman to Hemingway Record of Decision (ROD). The Biological Opinion (BO), which is being drafted by the National Marine Fisheries Service, is a necessary precursor to the ROD. The BO is targeted for completion on February 28. Oregon Plan amendments are being handled concurrently and that decision will be issued simultaneously with the ROD for the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Approval to issue a grant.

## **ASSISTANT SECRETARY POLICY, MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET**

### **Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel**

- Who: Office of Wildland Fire (OWF), Director Bryan Rice
- What: Thermal Imaging Summit, keynote address
- When: February 1, 2017
- Where: Chantilly, VA
- Press: Closed
- Topic: Director Rice's remarks will cover wildland fire decision support capabilities and deficiencies.
  
- Who: Office of Wildland Fire (OWF) Director Bryan Rice
- What: International Liaison Committee Meeting
- When: February 1-2, 2017
- Where: Washington, DC
- Press: Closed
- Topic: Participants will discuss issues relating to the 7th International Wildland Fire Conference, set for Brazil during 2019.
  
- Who: Director, Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance; Regional Environmental Officer-Anchorage, Office of Environmental Compliance
- What: Alaska Forum on the Environment
- When: February 6, 2017
- Where: Anchorage, AK
- Press: Open
- Topic: Agenda includes sessions on energy, sustainability, oil spill prevention and response, contaminated sites, mining, rural and tribal issues, and fish, wildlife, and habitat.
  
- Who: Office of Wildland Fire (OWF) Director Bryan Rice
- What: Joint Fire Science Program Review Board Meeting
- When: February 6-9, 2017
- Where: Boise, Idaho
- Press: Closed
- Topic: The Program Board will review proposed Joint Fire Science Program research project proposals.
  
- Who: Border Coordinator Jon Andrew
- What: Good Neighbor Board (a Federal Advisory Committee Act Board) Meeting
- When: February 8-10, 2017
- Where: San Diego, California
- Press: Closed
- Topic: The meeting will begin work on a report dealing with border security and the



environment.

- Who: Office of Policy Analysis staff
- What: The United Southeast and Eastern Tribes Sovereignty Protection Fund Impact Week Meeting
- When: February 6, 2017
- Where: Crystal City, VA
- Press: Closed
- Topic: Natural Resources Committee
  
- Who: Regional Environmental Officer-Boston, Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance; FWS; NPS and USGS
- What: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Fire Island Inlet to Montauk Point, NY, Beach Erosion/Hurricane Protection Project meeting.
- When: February 7, 2017
- Where: Boston, MA
- Press: Closed
- Topic: Strategy for moving forward on the 82-mile project for the protection of the south shore of Long Island.
  
- Who: Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance staff
- What: Federal Mining Dialogue/Abandoned Mines and Watershed Workgroup meeting.
- When: February 9, 2017
- Where: Washington, DC
- Press: Closed
- Topic: Watershed strategy in addressing abandoned hard rock mines on federal lands.
  
- Who: Office of Policy Analysis staff
- What: DOI Tribal Liaison meeting
- When: February 9, 2017
- Where: Washington, DC
- Press: Closed
- Topic: Native American policy/economic issues
  
- Who: Office of Policy Analysis staff
- What: National Congress of American Indians Executive Council Winter Session
- When: February 13-17, 2017
- Where: Washington DC
- Press: Closed
- Topic: Recent policy developments; tribal sovereignty

### **Week Ahead Announcements and Actions**

**GAO Entrance Conferences: Coal Mine Bonding (Job Code 101326).** GAO is conducting a second part of a prior review that concluded with a report issued on January 17, 2017, entitled,

*Financial Assurances for Reclamation: Federal Regulations and Policies for Selected Mining and Energy Development Activities* (GAO-17-207R). This review continues at the request of Senator Cantwell, Ranking Member, Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources; Senator Durbin; Representative Grijalva, Ranking Member of the House Committee on Natural Resources; Representative Lowenthal, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources; Representative Dingell, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations; and Representative Cartwright. The focus is on the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement's (OSMRE) role in implementing and overseeing the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act's (SMCRA) requirements related to financial assurances. GAO will review: (1) the amount and type of financial assurances held for surface coal mines, and how the amount held compares to the estimated costs of reclaiming those mines; (2) the extent to which the Federal government or an authorized state agency has called upon a financial assurance to reclaim a surface coal mine (under Title V of SMCRA) and whether the financial assurances provided by operators were sufficient to cover reclamation costs; (3) whether OSMRE manages and oversees financial assurances for coal mine reclamation; and (4) the challenges the Federal government and authorized state agencies face in managing financial assurances for coal mine reclamation. The entrance was held with OSMRE staff on January 26.

**GAO Exit Conference/Pending Reports: Safety Accountability of Bureau of Indian Education Schools (Job Code 100894).** Per request made by the Chair and Ranking Member, House Committee on Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies, GAO reviewed: (1) the Bureau of Indian Affairs' (BIA) system for evaluating and managing the performance of its regional safety personnel; and (2) the extent to which BIA holds its regional office personnel accountable for the results of Indian Affairs' safety and health program for Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) schools. The exit was held with the staff of the Department's Office of Health and Safety, Indian Affairs and the Bureau of Indian Education on January 24. GAO plans to issue the draft report for agency comments in early April.

**Wildland Fire Coordination (Job Code 100357):** Per request from Congressman Peter DeFazio, Ranking Member Raul Grijalva of the House Committee on Natural Resources, and Ranking Member Alan Lowenthal of the Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources, House Committee on Natural Resources, GAO examined the collaboration on wildland fire management activities between Federal land management agencies with wildland fire responsibilities and non-Federal agencies, including tribal, state, and local entities. The exit was held with the staff of Indian Affairs, BLM, NPS, FWS and the Department's Office of Wildland Fire on January 25. GAO plans to issue the draft report for agency comments to both the Forest Service and the Department with a potential recommendation in early March.

**Recent Final GAO Reports: Endangered Species Act: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's American Burying Beetle Conservation Efforts (GAO-17-154).** Per response to Chairman Lankford, Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, Subcommittee on Regulatory Affairs and Federal Management, GAO examined the potential adverse impacts of construction and other projects on the American Burying Beetle (ABB) and its habitat. The ABB is a large scavenger insect which is listed as endangered under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). GAO recommends that FWS establish a timetable with milestones for modifying

Regulatory in-lieu fee and Bank Information Tracking System (RIBITS) to incorporate FWS' in-lieu fee program information. GAO issued the final report with one recommendation to the FWS on January 23. The Department's 60-day letter addressing the recommendation is due to GAO by March 31.

**New Office of Inspector General (OIG) Audits: 2017-EAU-017: Verification Review for U.S. Department of the Interior's Underground Injection Control Activities (CR-EV-MOA-0006-2012).** The Office of Inspector General (OIG) is starting a review to verify the implementation of 10 recommendations issued in the March 2014 evaluation report. On April 15, 2014, the OIG referred these recommendations for tracking of implementation to the Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management and Budget (PMB). The OIG will review the available documentation and follow up with Office of Insular Affairs, Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, Bureau of Reclamation and Fish and Wildlife Service for any additional supporting information needed. An entrance conference is not required on a verification review.

**Dakota Access Pipeline and Keystone Pipelines:** Office of Law Enforcement and Security (OLES) is working closely with Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and other stakeholders to prepare for anticipated demonstrations on Federal lands, as a result of recent Administration's decision regarding the Dakota Access Pipeline and Keystone Pipelines. Demonstrators remain encamped at Standing Rock in North Dakota and additional participants are expected.

**U.S.-Australia Wildfire Cooperation:** On January 31, 2017, the Department sent out a news release highlighting the renewed cooperative wildland fire management partnership with Australia, an important international arrangement that provides mutual assistance for wildland fire preparedness, suppression, and post-fire recovery.

**Suspension and Debarment Actions:** On January 17, 2017, the Department debarred Timothy Warren Rosette, Shad James Huston, K&N Consulting LLC, and TMP Services, LLC. These actions are part of a number taken which follow out of the Chippewa Cree Tribe Rocky Boy Reservation, Montana, investigations and prosecutions. Rosette is debarred based on his guilty pleas to conspiracy to embezzle tribal funds; acceptance of a bribe as a tribal government official, and income tax evasion. Huston is debarred based his conviction for failure to file currency transaction reports; bribery/offering of a bribe to an official of an Indian tribal government; and False Claims Act conspiracy. K&N Consulting LLC, and TMP Services, LLC are debarred as affiliates of Huston.

**Year 2017 Small Business Accomplishments to Date:** As of January 24, 2017, the Department has awarded 56.80% of its contract award dollars to small businesses. The Department-wide small business goal, which was negotiated with the Small Business Administration (SBA), is 53.5%. The Department awarded 23.71% of its contract award dollars to small disadvantaged businesses and 16.42% of its contract award dollars to women-owned small businesses, exceeding the statutory goal of 5% for each. The Department awarded 3.05% of its contract award dollars to historically underutilized business zone small businesses and 2.73% of its contract award dollars to service-disabled veteran-owned small businesses. The statutory goal is

3% for each of these categories.

**Washington, D.C., Maryland, and Virginia Metropolitan Area (DMV) Long-Term Space Management Strategy Working Group.** The Working Group met on January 24, 2017, to conduct a final review and approve the DMV Phase I Long-Term Space Management Plan for the Stewart Lee Udall Main Interior Building, South Interior Building, and the John Wesley Powell Building in Reston, Virginia, for signature by DOI senior leadership. The DMV Working Group is developing a phased long-term space management strategic plan for the Washington, DC, metropolitan area to reduce DOI's footprint of office and warehouse space by transitioning from commercially-leased space into modern, efficient, quality, federally-owned space.

### **30-60 Day Look-Ahead**

**ONRR Civil Penalties.** Office of Natural Resources Revenue (ONRR) also anticipates issuing a civil penalty of about \$45,120.00 to KC Resources, Inc. (KC). ONRR investigated KC's failure to resolve missing production reports and found 32 violations on multiple Federal leases and agreements for production months of August 2015 through May 2016. ONRR issued a Notice of Noncompliance (NONC) to KC detailing the outstanding reports and provided a 30-day cure period to correct the violations. KC failed to comply during the cure period. Since KC is a very small company with a prior violation of the same type, ONRR computed the civil penalty assessment using the escalated rates of \$5 per day, per violation for the first 40 days and \$10 per day, per violation thereafter.

**Internal Control and Audit Follow-up.** The Department has an annual goal of closing 85% of corrective actions scheduled for closure to address issues raised in OIG and GAO engagements. As of January 26, 2017, the Department has closed 15 percent of open audit recommendations scheduled for closure in FY 2017.

**Agency Priority (Performance) Goals.** OMB has requested agencies to update [www.performance.gov](http://www.performance.gov) with status of achieving their FY 2016-2017 goals through the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of FY 2017 by February 10, 2017.

**DOI National Preparedness Report.** In March of 2017, the DOI National Preparedness Report (NPR) will be shared with the President. The Office of Emergency Management (OEM) coordinated a department-wide review of the draft NPR on January 28 with the expectation of receiving the final draft for review in late February from the National Security Council Disaster Resilience Group.

**ESRI Federal Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Conference, February 13-14, 2017.** The ESRI Federal Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Conference will be held in Washington, D.C., with DOI attendees to include Office of Wildland Fire (OWF) and others.

**U.S. Coral Reef Task Force Meeting, February 21-23, 2017.** Staff from the DOI Office of Policy Analysis (PPA) and the NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Program are coordinating the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force (USCRTF) biannual meeting at the Main Interior Building in

Washington, DC, with a public Business Meeting to be held on February 23. Office of Policy Analysis (PPA) Deputy Director and Acting USCRTF Co-chair Shawn Buckner will co-chair the meeting along with his to-be-named counterpart at NOAA. The focus of the meeting is on key benefits of coral reefs, including the role of coral reefs in reducing coastal hazards. This meeting is not open to the press.

**National Invasive Species Awareness Week, February 22-March 3, 2017.** The NISC Secretariat will be participating in National Invasive Species Awareness Week (NISAW). The NISC Secretariat will provide an informational booth and event speakers during the Congressional Fair on March 1. The event is public and may be covered by the press.

**Inland Oil Spill Training Course, Laughlin, NV, February 27-March 3, 2017.** The REOs from Albuquerque and San Francisco will participate in the subject course as instructors and subject matter experts. This training is part of the Inland Oil Spill Preparedness Program (IOSPP) lead by OEPC and the Office of Restoration and Damage Assessment (ORDA), which is designed to improve the Department's ability to protect DOI lands and the nation's natural resources from inland oil spills. Attendees are Federal, state, and local government employees and tribal members. This is one of several courses done as part of this program with more projects being prepared, with past courses having received positive press coverage. Press statements have been released for past events and so may receive some news coverage.

**Arctic Council's Senior Arctic Officials (SAO), Meeting March 7-9, 2017.** The last SAO meeting of the U.S. Chairmanship of the Arctic Council will take place in Juneau, Alaska. Several U.S. Chairmanship deliverables will be put forth for approval, including the Arctic Resilience Action Framework. This meeting is not open to the press.

**Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) 36th Board Meeting, March 8-9, 2017.** Director Gould and members of ONRR's leadership team will travel to attend the EITI Board Meeting in Bogota, Columbia, on March 8-9, 2017. Report-outs of the Board Finance, Validation, and Governance and Oversight Committees are of particular interest to all Implementing Countries for this meeting. USEITI also expects feedback on the USEITI 2017 Work Plan, the Beneficial Ownership Roadmap, and the USEITI Request to Extend Partial Adapted Implementation for USEITI Subnational Revenues.

**DOI Economics Conference, April 5-7, 2017.** This conference, organized by the Office of Policy Analysis (PPA), is an opportunity for the Interior economics community to convene on current issues of interest, collaborate across bureaus, identify key economics research challenges that are important to DOI's programs and activities, and build community. This meeting is not open to the press.

**National Adaptation Forum, May 9-11, 2017.** The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and the Office of Policy Analysis (PPA) staff will showcase the BIA Tribal Climate Resilience Program across the 12 regions at the National Adaptation Forum. This meeting is not open to the press.

### **Rules and Regulations for Publication in 2017**

**(Update) OMB CN 1012-0005: 30 CFR Parts 1202, 1204, and 1206, Federal Oil and Gas Valuation.** To comply with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA), the Office of Natural Resources Revenue (ONRR) is notifying the public, via a 30-day *Federal Register* notice, that we will submit to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) an Information Collection Request (ICR) for a renewal approval of paperwork requirements in ONRR's regulations under title 30, *Code of Federal Regulations* (CFR), parts 1202, 1204, and 1206. This ICR pertains to (1) Federal oil and gas valuation regulations, which include transportation and processing regulatory allowance limits; and (2) accounting and auditing relief for marginal properties. Also, there is one form (ONRR-4393 [*Request to Exceed Regulatory Allowance Limitation*]) associated with this information collection. To ensure industry's continuing ability to claim and support Federal oil and gas transportation and processing deductions and ONRR's continuing ability to verify those deductions, ONRR prepared and industry commented on a proposed information collection renewal. As a matter of routine business, spurred by the existing information collection's January 31, 2017 expiration date, and not as a part of any new rulemaking, ONRR sent the final OMB-approved renewal notice to the *Federal Register* earlier this month for publication before month's end. With the change in Administrations, all DOI agencies were instructed to recall any documents at the *Federal Register* awaiting publication so that the new Administration's officials may review the planned publications. ONRR recalled the above-described information collection renewal notice as requested. ONRR submitted the renewal notice to DOI's Executive Secretariat with a new request for approval for publication so that ONRR can continue its routine business and industry can justify their deductions. ONRR received notice on January 27th that the Department approved the publication. OMB uploaded the ICR to ROCIS, and ONRR will send out the notice on January 31.

## ASSISTANT SECRETARY - WATER & SCIENCE

### Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel

**Kerry Rae** - From February 1 to 10, Acting Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary Kerry Rae will be in Washington, DC, and participating in routine internal briefings, and transition-related meetings.

**Scott Cameron** - From February 1 to 10, Special Assistant to the Secretary Scott Cameron will be in Washington, DC, and participating in routine internal briefings, and transition-related meetings.

### Week Ahead Announcements and Actions

Ongoing hazard response: Bogoslof volcano, in the Aleutian Island chain, is in an active eruption sequence that began on December 12, 2016. Until recently, eruptive activity had been dominated by a series of short-duration explosive events. However recent explosive ash emissions have produced an ash cloud to about 25,000 ft. The ash cloud was transported southeast over Unalaska Island resulting in a trace amount of ash fallout in Unalaska/Dutch Harbor. Based on historical eruptions, we can expect similar activity to continue for weeks or more. The volcano is not actively monitored, but USGS scientists are using remote sensing technologies to provide data informing NOAA ash advisories for air traffic safety.

On January 27, a hearing was held before United States District Court, Northern District of California, San Francisco Division regarding the matter of the *Hoopa Valley Tribe and Yurok vs. Reclamation/National Marine Fisheries Service* lawsuits. At the conclusion of the hearing, the judge stated that an order will be issued in the next two weeks requiring Reclamation, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and National Marine Fisheries Service to coordinate and identify how to increase releases to the Klamath River to address salmonid disease issues without impacting suckers in the Upper Klamath Basin, within 30 days of receipt of the order. Media interest is expected.

On February 2, Reclamation will launch the Estimating Reservoir Water Storage Capacity prize competition that seeks new methods to indirectly and cost effectively estimate storage capacity and/or sedimentation volume of reservoirs managed by Reclamation and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The prize purse for this competition is \$50,000.

On February 3, Reclamation and the California Department of Water Resources expect to release a public draft Initial Study/Environmental Assessment for the Fremont Weir Adult Fish Passage Modification Project for public comment. The project is a requirement of the 2009 National Marine Fisheries Service Biological Opinion and is being pursued as part of California Eco Restore to improve adult fish passage in the Yolo Bypass. Media interest is possible.

On or about February 6, the Klamath Basin Area Office is scheduled to provide expert testimony in Washington, D.C. in the matter of *Klamath Irrigation District vs. Bureau of Reclamation*

(2001 Takings Lawsuit).

On February 6, W&S will meet with FWS Annapolis office to discuss how various FWS offices/programs can bring additional resources to the Urban Waters Federal Partnership Anacostia location, specifically for the 11th Street bridge project. This is an effort by the city to transform an old bridge into a "NYC highline-type" park replete with greenspace, green infrastructure, water quality monitoring, canoe and kayak launches and an environmental education center.

During the week of February 6, USGS will announce a new scientific approach that can provide regional assessments of land recovery following oil and gas drilling activities. This USGS study focuses on oil and gas well pad sites, where vegetation and soil are removed to level an area for drilling and extraction, and examines the longevity and recovery patterns after the well pads are plugged and abandoned in order to help resource managers make informed decisions for future development. Significant differences found in well pad recovery among land ownership groups suggest there is a role of land management in promoting or hampering pad recovery. The results may assist land managers in deciding what areas might be best utilized for energy development while also having a minimal impact on the environment. The paper will be published in *Science of the Total Environment* and a news release is planned.

On February 7, USGS will announce a new USGS Circular titled, "Restoration Handbook for Sagebrush Steppe Ecosystems with Emphasis on Greater Sage-Grouse Habitat—Part 3. Site Level Restoration Decisions." Part 3 of the handbook introduces habitat managers and restoration practitioners to a site-specific restoration decision tool to assist them in selecting sites and matching techniques to meet project objectives and improve the potential for restoration success. Part 1 of the handbook, published October 26, 2015, introduced basic concepts about sagebrush ecosystems, landscape ecology and restoration science. Part 2, published December 7, 2015, helps guide selection of potential sites for restoration from a landscape perspective. Part three helps guide restoration decisions at a selected site.

### **30-60 Day Look-Ahead**

On or before February 15, Reclamation's Mid-Pacific Region is contractually bound to announce whether Reclamation anticipates a "critical" water year in 2017 based on in-flows to Shasta Reservoir. A positive "critical year" designation would trigger the shortage provisions of senior water rights contractors and refuges served by the Central Valley Project. Fortunately, it is *not* looking likely that there will be a "critical year" designation in 2017.

On February 15-16, a meeting of the Glen Canyon Dam Adaptive Management Work Group federal advisory committee is planned in Tempe, AZ. Major topics will include the Long-Term Experimental and Management Plan Record of Decision and implementation; current basin hydrology, operations, and the 2018 hydrograph; progress in revitalizing the Science Advisors Program; science results from the USGS Grand Canyon Monitoring and Research Center; and progress on the Fiscal Year 2018-20 Budget and Work Plan.



In Mid-February, Reclamation's Albuquerque Area Office expects to announce the award of a Design/Build contract on the Pojoaque Basin Regional Water System. The contract for the project, which is part of the Aamodt Indian Water Rights Settlement, will be between \$75 and \$100 million. Reclamation plans to issue a press release on the contract award.

In February, Reclamation plans to release a new WaterSMART Water Marketing funding opportunity for collaborative planning efforts that use water marketing to proactively address water supply shortages and increase water management flexibility. Reclamation will provide funding on a 50/50 cost-shared basis.

In the coming weeks, Reclamation and Sites Project Authority anticipate releasing a press release recognizing Sites Project Authority as the new partner for the North-of-the-Delta Offstream Storage (NODOS) Investigation. The press release will also announce Sites Project Authority's Notice of Preparation and upcoming scoping meetings to be conducted in February. Reclamation issued a 2013 Progress Report, but will not issue a new Notice of Intent, and will be present at the scoping meetings to inform the public of Reclamation's role in the NODOS Investigation. Media interest is anticipated.

In the coming weeks, a USGS-authored paper will be released about the potential release of mercury into the environment from thawing permafrost. The embargoed paper will be published in the journal *Nature*, and a news release is planned. *Nature* may also issue a news release.

In the coming weeks, USGS will announce a new paper examining the effects of the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill on marine invertebrate animals in sediments near deep sea corals in the Gulf of Mexico. The results show a complex pattern of changes consistent with known biological effects of exposure to oil. The study is the first to look at the effects of Deepwater Horizon oil in sediments at multiple sites near deep coral reefs. The paper will be published in *Marine Ecology Progress Series* and a news release is planned.

In the coming weeks, USGS will announce a new Scientific Investigation Report which explores drought frequency and intensity in the U.S. over the past half century. Responding to concerns that climate change will lead to deeper or longer droughts, and perceptions of worsening droughts in the western U.S., scientists compared streamgage data from 1951-1982 with data from the same gages in 1983-2014. Changes in drought frequency, duration or severity were identified in 4 of 9 ecoregions. Parts of the Southeastern U.S., Texas and California had more frequent droughts from the 1980s onward, while the Central Plains and the Northeast had less frequent droughts. A news release is planned.

On March 23, a meeting of the Federal Geographic Data Committee Steering Committee is planned at Main Interior.

## **OFFICE OF INSULAR AFFAIRS**

### **Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel**

On Thursday February 2, Acting AS-IN Nikolao Pula, OIA Director of Policy Basil Ottley, and Treasury officials will meet with Virgin Islands Delegate to the House of Representatives Stacy Plaskett to discuss the Government of the Virgin Islands' financial crisis that could lead to the imposition of PROMESA-like legislation now applicable to Puerto Rico.

### **Week Ahead Announcements and Actions**

Nothing to report.

### **30-60 Day Look-Ahead**

#### **Wednesday, February 22, 2017**

The Secretary of the Interior and Assistant to the President for Intergovernmental Affairs, as co-chairs (or designee), will convene the annual public meeting of the Interagency Group Insular Areas. The main subjects to be discussed are: (1) the territories' long-term debt issues, and (2) health care issues. When the co-chairs are not present, the AS-IN normally assumes the duties of chair.

#### **Wednesday, March 8 through Tuesday, March 14, 2017**

AS-IN Nikolao Pula will travel to Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands for the dedication of the \$25 million Puerto Rico dump closure and replacement park, financed with OIA funds; and for meetings with Governor Ralph Torres as follow-up to the Covenant Section 902 Consultations.

#### **Tuesday, March 28 through Friday, March 31, 2017**

AS-IN Nikolao Pula will travel to San Francisco (tentative venue) for four semi-annual meetings with representatives of the Federated States of Micronesia and the Republic of the Marshall Islands:

- Joint Economic Management Committee (JEMCO), which analyzes and considers the spending of Compact of Free Association funds in the Federated States of Micronesia - 1½ days.
- Joint Economic Management and Financial Accountability Committee (JEMFAC), which analyzes and considers the spending of Compact of Free Association funds in the Marshall Islands – 1½ days.
- Trust Fund Committee, which makes investment decisions for the Trust Fund for the People of the Federated States of Micronesia. The Trust Fund has an approximate valuation of \$410 million.
- Trust Fund Committee, which makes investment decisions for the Trust Fund for the People of the Marshall Islands. The Trust Fund has an approximate valuation of \$260 million.

**Friday, March 31, 2017**

The Secretary or other significant official is expected to be present in the United States Virgin Islands for the centennial celebration of the transfer of the Virgin Islands from Denmark to the United States.