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### **1. Zinke says Colo. site might not change, defends tribal talks**

Jennifer Yachnin, E&E News reporter

Published: Tuesday, June 20, 2017

Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke said today that he is unlikely to propose any changes to the Canyons of the Ancients National Monument in Colorado as he completes work on a review of dozens of national monuments later this summer.

<http://bit.ly/2tqgcys>

### **2. Expect reorganization details in 60 days — Zinke**

Sam Mintz and Kellie Lunney, E&E News reporters

Published: Tuesday, June 20, 2017

The first steps of a planned reorganization of the Interior Department will start in about 60 days, Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke said at a U.S. Chamber of Commerce event today.

<http://bit.ly/2sNhnKl>

### **3. Zinke envisions cutting 4,000 full-time staff**

Kellie Lunney, E&E News reporter

Published: Tuesday, June 20, 2017

Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke indicated today that the department is looking at relocating more resources out West as part of a larger management reorganization.

<http://bit.ly/2swWoJN>

### **4. OMB mulls fracking rollback as Dems slam methane freeze**

Ellen M. Gilmer, E&E News reporter

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The Obama administration's primary effort to address impacts from hydraulic fracturing on public lands is officially on track to be scrapped.

<http://bit.ly/2tpidLf>

### **5. Can the world run on clean power? Scientists clash**

Umair Irfan, E&E News reporter

Published: Tuesday, June 20, 2017

Can we power the world with just wind, water and sunlight? Yes, scientists say.

<http://bit.ly/2svUCJ2>

### **6. Green group rallying support for national monuments**

Jennifer Yachnin, E&E News reporter

Published: Tuesday, June 20, 2017

The League of Conservation Voters today unveiled a new \$600,000 campaign to rally support for public lands, as the Trump administration conducts a review of dozens of national monuments for potential rescissions.

<http://bit.ly/2sPIS6P>

## **7. Industry ready to pounce if Bears Ears shrinks**

Published: Tuesday, June 20, 2017

The oil and gas industry hopes to tap hydrocarbon deposits under parts of Bears Ears National Monument that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke may recommend removing from monument status, according to Bureau of Land Management records.

<http://bit.ly/2tJZWlB>

## **8. EQT promises efficiencies in creating U.S.'s largest producer**

Jenny Mandel, E&E News reporter

Published: Tuesday, June 20, 2017

EQT Corp. yesterday announced plans to buy Rice Energy Inc. for \$8.2 billion, in a deal that highlights the transformation of the Marcellus Shale's industry as a company that once focused on local natural gas distribution cements its role as a dominant player in exploration and production.

<http://bit.ly/2rzB8Sb>

## **9. Truck crashes among the shale boom's worst impacts — report**

Mike Lee, E&E News reporter

Published: Tuesday, June 20, 2017

Texas needs to increase its funding for rural roads to offset the deaths and damage caused by the shale-drilling boom, and needs to do more research on the environmental and social effects of the drilling industry, according to a report from the state's top scientists.

<http://bit.ly/2rNdmGQ>

## **10. Investors plan treatment plant for Powder River Basin**

Published: Tuesday, June 20, 2017

A group of investors is planning to raise \$80 million for a coal treatment facility in the Powder River Basin, an investment they say would increase the value of local coal.

<http://bit.ly/2rN75eb>

**11. Jobs in Powder River Basin remain uncertain**

Published: Tuesday, June 20, 2017

It remains unclear whether rising oil prices will create more jobs in the Powder River Basin.

<http://bit.ly/2tK1uSj>

**12. Documents reveal Trump fossil fuel income**

Nick Bowlin, E&E News reporter

Published: Tuesday, June 20, 2017

President Trump has taken in tens of millions of dollars from various real estate holdings during his first months in the White House, according to financial disclosure documents submitted voluntarily on Friday to the Office of Government Ethics.

<http://bit.ly/2sSS61R>

**13. Bundys seek release, claim violation of right to swift trial**

Jennifer Yachnin, E&E News reporter

Published: Tuesday, June 20, 2017

Nevada rancher Cliven Bundy and eight co-defendants last week filed an emergency motion seeking their release from federal custody, arguing that their due process rights have been violated as they await trial over charges related to the 2014 armed standoff between ranchers and federal agents.

<http://bit.ly/2tphXvG>

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### 1. Zinke says Colo. site might not change, defends tribal talks

Jennifer Yachnin, E&E News reporter

Published: Tuesday, June 20, 2017

Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke said today that he is unlikely to propose any changes to the Canyons of the Ancients National Monument in Colorado as he completes work on a review of dozens of national monuments later this summer.

The revelation came during a Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee hearing today, when Colorado Sen. Cory Gardner (R) pressed Zinke to "protect this monument ... as it stands."

In response, Zinke said: "It's currently not on our priority review list."

Last month, Gardner and Rep. Scott Tipton (R-Colo.) sent a letter to Zinke urging him to refrain from recommending any changes to the 175,000-acre site in southwestern Colorado (*E&E Daily*, May 24).

President Trump issued an executive order in late April instructing Zinke to review monuments created since 1996, with a focus on those that include more than 100,000 acres.

Earlier this month, Zinke submitted his interim report, which included a recommendation for Bears Ears National Monument in Utah to be significantly reduced from its current 1.35-million-acre size.

He is slated to submit a final report with additional recommendations for other sites on Aug. 24.

Gardner praised Zinke for indicating he would not call for changes to the Colorado site, adding: "I hope eventually you'll clear up the fact that it's going to remain as is."

In an exchange with Nevada Sen. Catherine Cortez Masto (D), Zinke also revealed that he has additional travel planned to view Gold Butte National Monument in the Silver State as early as next month.

Zinke said he also plans to travel to Oregon and New Mexico during that period. Although there are monuments in both states currently under review, Interior declined to confirm the purpose of Zinke's travel there.

Cortez Masto urged Zinke to consider the "economic benefits and widespread support" for the Gold Butte monument when he visits her state.

Zinke responded that he is attempting to take many aspects into consideration.

"The way that I've looked at the monuments: One is does it follow the law? Is it settled? Is the community happy with it?" he said.

#### Pushback over tribal views

Minnesota Sen. Al Franken (D) criticized Zinke over his recommendation to sharply reduce the Bears Ears monument, however, arguing that the secretary has mischaracterized the support of Native American groups for the changes.

"When it comes to the Department of the Interior's status review of the Bears Ears National Monument, you said that tribes are 'very happy' with your recommendation to reduce the boundaries of the monument, but this isn't really the case," Franken said.

The Democratic lawmaker repeatedly pointed to criticism leveled by the Bears Ears Inter-Tribal Coalition — which represents the Hopi, Navajo, Ute, Ute Mountain Ute and Zuni tribes and urges the creation of the monument — that characterized the decision as a "slap in the face."

"That doesn't sound very happy to me," Franken added.

Zinke defended his remarks, saying that Franken had failed to distinguish between members of the Utah Navajo and Arizona Navajo tribes.

"The monument itself is split on whether tribes agree. I talked to them all," Zinke said, pointing in particular to his discussions with San Juan County Commissioner Rebecca Benally, who opposes the Bears Ears designation and is a member of the Navajo tribe.

Zinke went on to say that what the tribal leaders "really want is co-management, above all is co-management."

In his interim report, Zinke asked for Congress to take up legislation that would ensure tribal co-management of the smaller national monument, as well as designations for national recreation or conservation areas.

N.M. push

New Mexico's Democratic lawmakers also appealed to Zinke today to preserve a pair of sites in their state that are included in the review: the Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks and Rio Grande del Norte national monuments.

In a letter, Sens. Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and Reps. Ben Ray Luján and Michelle Lujan Grisham pointed to "overwhelming support" for the "irreplaceable national monuments."

"Rescinding or shrinking to New Mexico's national monuments will cause irrevocable harm to our treasured places, would jeopardize the objects and special values that are protected through the Antiquities Act, and impact positive economic growth in local communities," the lawmakers wrote.

The letter also touched on the expected Bears Ears monument reductions and urged Zinke to reverse his initial assessment before finalizing his recommendations in August.

"In your final report, you have an opportunity to change course and restore cooperation, respect, and trust with the sovereign tribes of the Bears Ears InterTribal Coalition and all of Indian Country by preserving the existing boundaries of all these important national monuments," the letter said.

<http://bit.ly/2tqgcys>

## **2. Expect reorganization details in 60 days      Zinke**

Sam Mintz and Kellie Lunney, E&E News reporters

Published: Tuesday, June 20, 2017

The first steps of a planned reorganization of the Interior Department will start in about 60 days, Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke said at a U.S. Chamber of Commerce event today.

Zinke said the agency is about to enter "probably the greatest reorganization in the history of the Department of Interior," moving toward a new system with 13 "joint management areas" that he has detailed in recent weeks (*Greenwire*, June 16).

"You'll see the first blush of it coming out in about 60 days or so. The president is supportive of it, he's been very supportive of it, and we're going to go forward and reorganize," Zinke said.

That timeline matches up with the notification rules related to reassignments for career senior executives; Zinke's plan reportedly involves reassignments for dozens of them.

Agencies have to give senior executives at least 15 days' notice if they are being reassigned to another Senior Executive Service job within the same agency and their commuting area; for reassignments outside their geographic commuting area, agencies must give those affected at least 60 days' notice.

The Senior Executives Association, which advocates for the government's roughly 7,000 career senior executives, is putting together information outlining how reassignments work for senior executives within the statute.

"In sum, by accepting a career appointment into the Senior Executive Service, you agreed to be subject to involuntary reassignments," the SEA document reads in part. "Thus, SES reassignments are not subject to agency grievance procedures, and refusal to accept the reassignment is a legal basis for removal from federal service."

Senior executives, however, can appeal a reassignment, if they believe it was the result of discrimination or a prohibited personnel practice.

Jason Briefel, SEA's executive director, said the organization is still trying to get a firm count of how many executives are affected, but he said the group believed "up to a quarter of Interior executives got either relocation or reassignment notices."

<http://bit.ly/2sNhnKI>

### **3. Zinke envisions cutting 4,000 full-time staff**

Kellie Lunney, E&E News reporter

Published: Tuesday, June 20, 2017

Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke indicated today that the department is looking at relocating more resources out West as part of a larger management reorganization.

"We're looking at appropriately moving assets where they should be," and that's where the "preponderance of land is," Zinke told the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee during a hearing on the administration's proposed fiscal 2018 budget. He noted that most of the acreage managed by the Bureau of Land Management is out West.

"We're going to push the assets where the land is," said Zinke, adding that he'll need Congress' help to carry out certain aspects of the reorganization, though he did not elaborate.

"The way we are organized currently is, we're all different bureaus reporting to different regions," Zinke said. "We're not very good at joint operations," he added. He gave an example of a river with both trout and salmon, meaning different agencies inside and outside of Interior could have jurisdiction.

Sen. Cory Gardner (R-Colo.) and Rep. Scott Tipton (R-Colo.) have introduced legislation that would shift BLM's headquarters from Washington to one of 12 Western states.

Zinke, who fielded a range of questions today about programs facing cuts under President Trump's fiscal 2018 budget request for Interior, said he's continuing to freeze hiring in Washington and Denver, "prioritizing filling field positions rather than office positions." The secretary said he wanted to "shore up and expand" the front lines of employees at national parks and is looking at returning scientists at the U.S. Geological Survey to the field.

In his submitted testimony, Zinke said the proposed budget envisions a reduction of about 4,000 full-time department staff from 2017 levels.

"To accomplish this, the department will rely on a combination of attrition, reassignments, and separation incentives," he said. "Actual attrition rates and acceptance of separation incentives will determine the need for further action to reduce staffing."

Last week, *The Washington Post* reported that Zinke had notified dozens of career officials — members of the Senior Executive Service — that they will be reassigned at the end of this month (*Greenwire*, June 16).

Agencies have the authority to reassign senior executives, though many of them haven't used that authority liberally over the years. The Obama administration proposed making the governmentwide SES more mobile and reassigning them more frequently to different jobs and geographic regions.

Zinke said Interior has "good people" but is really "heavy on the bureaucracy," especially in Washington.



Senators, like their House counterparts who questioned Zinke earlier this month, outlined concerns about the department's \$11.7 billion budget request and its proposed cuts affecting a host of programs, including the Land and Water Conservation Fund, the payments in lieu of taxes program, offshore revenue-sharing, and American Indian health and education — not to mention programs specific to lawmakers' districts.

Sen. Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska), Energy and Natural Resources chairwoman, said the panel will review "all of the cuts this budget proposes very carefully" and that she doesn't "expect many of them to become reality." For example, recommendations to end offshore revenue-sharing for Gulf Coast states is a proposal she doesn't see "going anywhere."

The Alaskan, who praised the budget proposal for supporting oil and gas drilling in a portion of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, said she believed the budget's positives outweigh the negatives. "For every item that many of us will not be able to support, there is another that we can. And I haven't been able to make that statement for quite some time."

Several senators of both parties asked about the department's review of 27 national monuments, since many of those sites are in committee members' states.

Sen. Maria Cantwell (D-Wash.), the panel's ranking member, pressed Zinke on the department's move to pump the brakes on the BLM methane rule (*see related story*). Congress defeated a resolution in May that would have overturned the Obama-era rule. Cantwell asked if Zinke was going to "drag his feet" in implementing the rule and flout the 1946 Administrative Procedure Act.

The Interior secretary reiterated that he believed "flaring is a waste" and that the department was looking at ways to incentivize the capture of methane as well as assessing how to implement the rule.

"I don't drag my feet," Zinke said, sighing a bit. "I don't operate that way. As far as the law goes, I support the law; that's my obligation to do so."

<http://bit.ly/2swWoJN>

#### **4. OMB mulls fracking rollback as Dems slam methane freeze**

*Ellen M. Gilmer*, E&E News reporter

Published: Tuesday, June 20, 2017

The Obama administration's primary effort to address impacts from hydraulic fracturing on public lands is officially on track to be scrapped.

The White House Office of Management and Budget is reviewing a plan to rescind the previous administration's fracking rule. OMB's website indicates that the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs received the proposal from the Interior Department's Bureau of Land Management on Friday.

The fracking rule rollback has been in the works for months, since Trump administration lawyers notified a federal court in March that it would seek revision or elimination.

The rule — which was designed to govern well construction, wastewater management and chemical disclosure for fracked wells on public and tribal lands — has been mired in litigation since its March 2015 unveiling and has never taken effect.

A Wyoming district court struck it down in a sweeping decision last summer that found the federal government has no authority to regulate fracking.

The Obama administration promptly appealed, and the 10th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals was due to consider the case this year.

The Trump administration has maintained that the federal government does have authority over fracking but has backed away from the appeal, citing plans to rethink the rule (*Energywire*, May 8). Interior has already fallen behind a rulemaking timeline it outlined in court filings last month. Justice Department lawyers representing the agency said a proposed rulemaking would appear in the *Federal Register* by June 13. No such notice has been published (*Energywire*, June 15).

Western Energy Alliance President Kathleen Sgamma, whose group challenged the rule in court, said the proposal's arrival at OMB is "an important step," and her group is "glad to see that rulemaking progressing."

Earthjustice attorney Mike Freeman, who has been defending the rule, said the latest move is "just another case of the Trump administration sacrificing our public health and the environment to pad the industry's bottom line."

While the OMB entry is classified as a proposed "rescission" of the fracking rule, agency lawyers have noted in court filings that BLM will consider revisions as part of that process.

BLM did not immediately respond to requests today for more information about the rollback plans. A spokeswoman said last week she did not know a time frame for the rulemaking process.

The administration is due to file a brief with the 10th Circuit today to argue for freezing litigation over the rule while the reconsideration process moves forward.

#### Methane rule

Democrats on Capitol Hill, meanwhile, are setting their sights on another Interior rule sidelined by the new administration.

In a **letter** this week to Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke, Democratic Sens. Maria Cantwell of Washington and Tom Udall of New Mexico criticized the agency's decision to freeze major provisions of an Obama-era rule to cut methane emissions from oil and gas development on public and tribal lands.

The delay applies to parts of the Methane And Waste Prevention Rule that takes effect in January 2018 and comes at the urging of several industry groups that consider the rule costly and duplicative. Separate efforts to kill the standards using the Congressional Review Act failed last month.

In last week's announcement, Interior cited Administrative Procedure Act authority that allows agencies to postpone challenged rules pending judicial review. But critics say the agency is stretching that authority far beyond the APA's intent.

Cantwell and Udall noted that the APA provision, Section 705, allows agencies to postpone the *effective date* of regulations being litigated. They say that does not extend to rules that are already in effect. The first phase of Interior's methane rule kicked in five months ago, and the next phase begins next year.

"This claim equates the 'effective date' of a rule as a whole with a 'compliance date' by which an industry must comply with individual requirements established by the rule," the letter says.

"The effect of this claim is to allow the Department, according to its whim, to suspend properly promulgated regulations with no public notice and comment nor any legal reasoning beyond an unsubstantiated claim that 'justice requires' suspension of a rule that has already gone into effect."

Cantwell sent a similar **letter** to Zinke in March challenging Interior's use of the APA provision to stall compliance requirements for the agency's valuation rule for calculating royalties on fossil fuels produced on federal lands.

Environmental groups are already suing over the delay of the valuation rule and have signaled plans to sue over the methane rule freeze (*Energywire*, June 15).

The rollbacks are part of a broader effort by the Trump administration to prioritize domestic energy production and unwind Obama-era environmental regulations.

<http://bit.ly/2tpidLf>

## 5. Can the world run on clean power? Scientists clash

Umair Irfan, E&E News reporter

Published: Tuesday, June 20, 2017

Can we power the world with just wind, water and sunlight?

Yes, scientists say.

Should we?

That's the more contentious question.

There are many ways to fight climate change, but the one that seems to get the most attention and generate the most controversy is the idea of shifting toward 100 percent renewable energy.

From Hollywood actors like Leonardo DiCaprio to lawmakers on Capitol Hill like Sens. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.), Jeff Merkley (D-Ore.) and Ed Markey (D-Mass.), many have endorsed the prospect of switching to a solely renewable-energy-based economy.

However, some researchers don't think this is the best way to address climbing temperatures, and their disagreements are aired in the pages of a prestigious scientific journal.

In a new **report** published yesterday in the journal *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 21 scientists took a sledgehammer to the groundwork for moving the world to solely hydroelectric, wind and solar energy.

Lead author Christopher Clack, a former electricity grid researcher at the University of Colorado, Boulder, and at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, explained that the new study undermines research by Stanford University professor Mark Jacobson. He was referring specifically to a 2015 **paper** that modeled a renewable energy scenario in the United States where no "natural gas, biofuels, nuclear power, or stationary batteries are needed."

Jacobson has been studying how the United States and the rest of the world can switch to renewables. He co-founded the Solutions Project, an advocacy group that makes a policy case for this transition (*Climatewire*, June 2, 2016).

"I was actually very excited when that paper came out," said Clack, who is now CEO of Vibrant Clean Energy LLC, a firm that does modeling for high renewable energy levels on the power grid. "I was excited to see what they had done."

The seminal 2015 paper simulated how the United States could run entirely on wind, water and sunlight by 2050, powering not only the electrical grid but the whole transportation system, all heating needs and the entire range of industrial demand.

The electricity sector is only 20 percent of the United States' total energy use and a fraction of its greenhouse gas footprint, so Jacobson's study describes an aggressive decarbonization across the whole economy.

Jacobson and his co-authors modeled energy demand, power sources and climate variables and concluded that the United States could reliably power itself using only wind, water and solar energy at an affordable price.

Clack, however, found flaws in Jacobson's study and mustered 20 other co-authors in formulating his response.

"The one that I found most painful is the claim that they don't increase hydroelectric power at all in their model," said Clack.

Don't publish that paper

The 2015 paper shows a maximum output from U.S. hydroelectric plants of 145.26 gigawatts, about 50 percent more than the installed capacity today. However, the model shows hydroelectric output exceeding 1,300 GW, nearly an order of magnitude above the projected maximum output.

Clack said this is a significant modeling error that throws off conclusions about the affordability and feasibility of switching to solely renewable energy.

Another issue Clack and his collaborators found was that Jacobson's study didn't adequately account for the transmission infrastructure needed to route power from intermittent renewable energy resources across the United States from windy and sunny regions to the still and shady.

In his own study last year, Clack found that the United States could decarbonize its electricity system by 80 percent below 1990 levels, drawing on renewables and high-voltage direct-current transmission (*Climatewire*, Jan. 26, 2016). However, this only modeled the electricity system and not the entire economy.

The new report also criticizes "implausible assumptions" about new energy technologies. Strategies like underground thermal energy storage, concentrating solar power and hydrogen-powered aircraft are used in Jacobson's study, but Clack said these technologies are in their infancy today. And betting on cost and performance improvements to anchor projections extrapolates too much from too little, he argues.

The overall conclusion is that Jacobson and his co-authors make extraordinary claims but do not provide the evidence to back them up.

The authors wrote that Jacobson's 2015 paper "can, at best, be described as a poorly executed exploration of an interesting hypothesis."

"It should not have been published, in our opinion," Clack said.

In a response letter, Jacobson and his team defended their findings and criticized their critics, writing that "Clack et al.'s analysis is riddled with errors and has no impact on Jacobson et al.'s conclusions."

"There's not a single factually correct statement in their whole paper," Jacobson said. "This is basically put together by nuclear advocates and fossil fuel advocates."

The hydropower numbers, Jacobson explained, are not the result of a modeling error, but an assumption baked into the analysis.

"For the study, we assumed that the discharge rate of hydro would be increased as needed by adding turbines + generators + transformers in the hydro stations thereby increasing the discharge rate," Jacobson wrote in an email to Clack last year.

That suggests Jacobson's assessment holds the number of hydropower plants steady but increases their peak output. He acknowledged that this fact was obscured in the paper but said that these assumptions were laid out in the computer model used in the study.

"I did neglect to clarify that we increased the number of generators/turbines for each hydro plant (without increasing the dam capacity) and neglected to include the additional cost for turbines/generators," Jacobson wrote to Clack, adding that the costs were minor.

#### Insults and exaggerations

Jacobson said he is open to debating the premises of his paper but bristled at the suggestion that his conclusion is founded on a mistake.

"To say that's a bad assumption, I would be OK with that," he said. "They are saying that it's a modeling error, when it was very clear that it was an assumption by us."

Jacobson noted that there are already commercial concentrating solar power installations, and nations like Denmark already use a form of underground thermal energy storage. He also said several startup companies are developing aircraft powered by batteries and hydrogen fuel cells.

He described Clack's paper as an agenda-driven polemic that doesn't introduce any new science, as peer-reviewed papers are often required to do. Jacobson added that Clack wants attention for his own work, noting that Clack tweeted to DiCaprio after the actor sent out a tweet citing Jacobson's work.

"It's not a scientific paper, it's a letter to the editor," Jacobson said of the new study.

This academic pugilism is unusual, observers say, but the fight over whether 100 percent renewable energy is feasible has drawn a high profile and could have real-world consequences.

"No, it's not common," said David Keith, a physics professor at Harvard University who was not involved in either study. "It's happened here because Jacobson has been outspoken. He's been able to get a lot of attention."

Keith said that he's skeptical of Jacobson's oeuvre on energy modeling. "Jacobson just exaggerates, not just on this, but most topics," he said.

However, Keith counseled humility about making projections about the future. He noted that the price of solar energy is declining so fast that it has forced modelers back to the drawing board to reformulate low-carbon scenarios to use less nuclear power and carbon capture and storage.

"Folks like me were wrong about being as skeptical as we were 10 years ago," Keith said.

Regarding Jacobson's analysis, Keith said that deep decarbonization of the economy is a laudable goal, but relying solely on renewables while ruling out other options would make the transition unnecessarily difficult.

"Unless you have a religious reason to do it, it doesn't make sense," Keith said.

His own studies show that it is possible to dramatically increase renewable energy if the grid includes some dispatchable power, whether that's natural gas with carbon capture or nuclear power (*Climatewire*, Sept. 8, 2015).

However, beyond a certain threshold, increasing renewable energy leads to diminishing returns and other hurdles crop up, like land limitations for wind turbines or the environmental footprint of making solar panels.

Common goal: Stop warming

Joe Romm, who led the Department of Energy's renewable energy division under President Clinton and is a fellow at the liberal Center for American Progress, said he's surprised that Clack and his team spent so much effort rebutting Jacobson's 2015 paper.

"I wouldn't have spent all this time trying to debunk it," he said. "Clean energy solutions are changing so fast in real time that most people's understanding of what's happening, if they're paying attention, is out of date within two years."

In an era when the United States is backing out of international climate commitments and the heads of DOE and U.S. EPA both say that carbon dioxide is not the primary driver behind climate change, is this debate among scientists even worth having?

On this point, everyone involved agreed that it's necessary to slug this out.

"It's important to examine these kinds of things because there is going to be a lot of movement at the state level and the city level," Clack said.

Jacobson noted that California has already set a target to power itself by 100 percent renewable energy by 2045, and there are matching proposals at the national level, so these ideas may start to be manifested. "There's a Senate bill for 100 percent clean renewable energy," he said. "There are two bills in the House."

Meanwhile, Romm said it would be worthwhile for the researchers on both sides of the fence to establish a set of common facts that would lay the foundation for further debates. "I would love to get all of these people in a room for two days to brainstorm this problem," he said.

Keith added that arguments and criticism among scientists on these issues are not likely to be resolved by a single solution, nor should they be. "I think the day that scientists present a united front is the day they stop being scientists," he said. "This mostly isn't about science; it's about economics."

But the researchers all said that keeping dangerous warming in check requires cutting humanity's greenhouse gas emissions to zero by midcentury.

"All the authors on our paper and all the authors of Jacobson's paper have the same goal: We want a low-carbon economy as quickly as possible," Clack said.

<http://bit.ly/2svUCJ2>

## **6. Green group rallying support for national monuments**

Jennifer Yachnin, E&E News reporter

Published: Tuesday, June 20, 2017

The League of Conservation Voters today unveiled a new \$600,000 campaign to rally support for public lands, as the Trump administration conducts a review of dozens of national monuments for potential rescissions.

The environmental group's new "Our Lands Our Vote" campaign will aim in part to submit 250,000 comments to the Interior Department ahead of the July 10 deadline for public remarks.

"These lands — and the natural and cultural heritage they hold — belong to all of us and generations to come," LCV President Gene Karpinski said in a statement. "This campaign will mobilize the public to hold Trump and members of Congress accountable for putting corporate polluter interests ahead of people."

Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke is set to submit a report to President Trump by Aug. 24 with recommendations for reductions, revocations or changes to land management plans for monuments from Maine to California, as well as for marine monuments in the Atlantic and Pacific oceans.

In an interim report earlier this month, Zinke called for unspecified reductions to the 1.35-million-acre Bears Ears National Monument in southeast Utah. He said the administration should also ask lawmakers to establish co-management of the site with tribal nations and use legislation to protect portions of the monument as national recreation or conservation areas (*E&E News PM*, June 12).

The LCV campaign will also include digital content highlighting various monuments and will purchase online advertising, as well as contacting lawmakers directly. In addition, the campaign will urge Congress not to amend the Antiquities Act of 1906, the law that allows presidents to designate federal lands as monuments to protect areas of historic, cultural or scientific value.

"This administration has picked the wrong fight with the American people," Arizona Rep. Raúl Grijalva, the top Democrat on the House Natural Resources Committee, said in a statement. "Secretary Zinke and the White House keep forgetting the 'public' in our public lands. The longer they treat our national monuments as problems to be solved rather than the popular successes they are, the more resistance they'll face."

<http://bit.ly/2sPIS6P>

## 7. Industry ready to pounce if Bears Ears shrinks

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The oil and gas industry hopes to tap hydrocarbon deposits under parts of Bears Ears National Monument that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke may recommend removing from monument status, according to Bureau of Land Management records.

Some of the parcels that are currently part of the 1.3-million-acre monument could be leased for drilling. Since 2013, energy companies have asked BLM to lease more than 100,00 acres for oil and gas development within or near the public lands that were designated as a monument by President Obama late last year.

The 88 requested parcels are clustered along the eastern fringes of the land.

"Opening this area for more oil and gas drilling and fracking is going to harm the reasons this monument was established," said Randi Spivak, public lands director for the Center for Biological Diversity. "This is a clear and present danger. It's not theoretical, and the only thing staying in the way is monument status."

A BLM spokeswoman said that if the monument's boundaries are contracted, the agency would "carefully consider all nominated parcels to determine if they are appropriate for leasing and continue to conduct an environmental review before offering any leases for potential oil and gas development."

The region is home to the Navajo, Ute and Puebloan tribes, who consider the lands sacred.

"These lands are worth more than the minerals beneath them," said Natalie Landreth, an attorney with the Native American Rights Fund. "The only correct decision is to keep Bears Ears as is" (Brian Maffly, *Salt Lake Tribune*, June 17). — SM

<http://bit.ly/2tJZWlb>

## 8. EQT promises efficiencies in creating U.S.'s largest producer

Jenny Mandel, E&E News reporter

Published: Tuesday, June 20, 2017

EQT Corp. yesterday announced plans to buy Rice Energy Inc. for \$8.2 billion, in a deal that highlights the transformation of the Marcellus Shale's industry as a company that once focused on local natural gas distribution cements its role as a dominant player in exploration and production.

Pittsburgh-based EQT said the deal, in which it will pay \$6.7 billion in cash and \$1.5 billion to cover Canonsburg, Pa.-based Rice's debt, will make it the largest natural gas producer in the U.S. The combined company would have a total sales volume of 3.6 billion cubic feet equivalent per day.

"This transaction brings together two of the top Marcellus and Utica producers to form a natural gas operating position that will be unmatched in the industry," EQT President and CEO Steve Schlotterbeck said in a statement on the deal.

Schlotterbeck stressed the synergy between the two companies' assets in describing how it would add value to EQT. "Rice has built an outstanding company with an acreage footprint that is largely contiguous to our existing acreage," he said, noting that the combination would allow EQT to drill longer underground wells and put more wells on a single drilling pad, providing higher production per site. The company expects to be able to drill wells that reach 50 percent farther laterally from the well pad in certain Pennsylvania counties once the deal closes.

Those kinds of efficiency improvements are important for producers as the Mid-Atlantic industry faces intense competition and prices that have stayed low, largely below \$3 per million British thermal units, over the past few years.

EQT describes itself as an industry leader in "environmental conscientiousness" and said the combination of two companies that are among the country's "largest, lowest-cost, and most responsible natural gas producers creates an unparalleled leader in shale gas development that will benefit the environment and our shareholders for many decades to come."

The transfer of Rice's pipeline assets also holds promise for EQT as the Appalachian region's takeaway infrastructure gradually catches up with potential production and prepares to serve new natural gas export facilities being built in Maryland, Georgia and along the Gulf Coast.

Several new pipelines being proposed to boost regional takeaway capacity have attracted strong opposition from environmentalists and local groups (*Energywire*, March 28).

<http://bit.ly/2rzB8Sb>

## **9. Truck crashes among the shale boom's worst impacts      report**

*Mike Lee*, E&E News reporter

Published: Tuesday, June 20, 2017

Texas needs to increase its funding for rural roads to offset the deaths and damage caused by the shale-drilling boom, and needs to do more research on the environmental and social effects of the drilling industry, according to a report from the state's top scientists.

The Academy of Medicine, Engineering and Science of Texas spent more than a year reviewing the existing scientific literature on the impacts of the yearslong boom in shale drilling. While drilling has boosted the state's economy, its impact isn't widely understood, in part because of a lack of data, the report said.

The academy is made up of the Texas-based members of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine, and all of the state's Nobel Prize laureates. The report was written by 19 researchers from



universities, corporations and a nonprofit group. It was funded in part by the Cynthia and George Mitchell Foundation, which was established by one of the pioneers of shale drilling.

The **report** also looked at the industry's impact on the number of earthquakes in the state, air quality, water quality, land issues such as fragmentation of wildlife habitat and social impacts such as the uneven distribution of wealth.

Shale drilling has helped revive the Texas oil and gas industry, and has led to drilling booms in North Dakota, Pennsylvania, Colorado and other states. Unlike conventional oil formations, which can often be accessed with a handful of wells, shale fields require a constant cycle of drilling and hydraulic fracturing to maintain production.

Each shale well can require 988 to 1,708 loaded truck trips over its life cycle, making the wear on roads one of the broadest and most visible impacts of the boom (*Energywire*, Jan. 20, 2015).

"The traffic safety issue is one of the most pressing concerns we found," said John Barton, a researcher at Texas A&M University.

Between 2010 and 2013, there were 183 fatal crashes involving trucks or other commercial vehicles in West Texas' Permian Basin oil field. That's nearly double the number, 94 crashes, from the previous four-year period, the report said. There were similar, though smaller, increases in traffic deaths in South Texas' Eagle Ford Shale.

The truck traffic also causes between \$1.5 billion and \$2 billion a year in damage to rural and secondary roads, which in turn costs the trucking industry \$1.5 billion to \$3.5 billion a year in equipment damage and lost time, according to the report.

The report concluded that local communities need better information on future oil and gas development so they can plan for the increase in traffic. At the state level, Texas needs "reliable, stable funding" for transportation.

The Texas Legislature called elections in 2014 and 2015 that led to increases in road funding, but there's still a significant gap (*Energywire*, Nov. 4, 2015).

"For the most part, the unmet needs continue to exceed the availability of the existing funds," the report said.

<http://bit.ly/2rNdmGQ>

## **10. Investors plan treatment plant for Powder River Basin**

Published: Tuesday, June 20, 2017

A group of investors is planning to raise \$80 million for a coal treatment facility in the Powder River Basin, an investment they say would increase the value of local coal.

The developers of Clean Coal Technologies say they have perfected a method to treat and dry coal so that it burns hotter and increases in value. The proposed Wyoming facility would be the first commercial plant with the company's technology, which was tested at a site in Oklahoma.

"This is a U.S.-designed, -engineered and -tested technology and we are very pleased to see it deployed here in the U.S., where we will continue to work with Wyoming on additional agreements and locations," said Clean Coal Technologies Chief Operating Officer Aiden Neary.

Wyoming New Energy Corp. signed an agreement with investment bank Piper Jaffray to raise \$80 million in debt financing to build the plant.

Coal from Wyoming is some of the cheapest in the country, but it burns cooler than coal from places like Appalachia (Heather Richards, *Billings Gazette*, June 20). — **SM**

<http://bit.ly/2rN75eb>

## **11. Jobs in Powder River Basin remain uncertain**

Published: Tuesday, June 20, 2017

It remains unclear whether rising oil prices will create more jobs in the Powder River Basin.

As the West Texas Intermediate price of crude hovered around \$50 a barrel for much of the first quarter, operators in the Powder River Basin planned for more rigs.

And in April, the number of oil and gas jobs in Wyoming experienced a year-over-year increase for the first time since January 2015.

But for the workers in the region who depend on oil and gas production for their livelihoods, a job is still far from guaranteed, as some operators are replacing manpower with improved technology.

"I think it comes down to what technologies and production choices are made by the specific firms in the Powder River Basin," Rob Godby, director of the Center for Energy Economics and Public Policy at the University of Wyoming, said in an email. "It could be the case that labor saving technologies are employed more widely" (Heather Richards, *Casper [Wyo.] Star-Tribune*, June 17). — **MJ**

<http://bit.ly/2tK1uSj>

## **12. Documents reveal Trump fossil fuel income**

Nick Bowlin, E&E News reporter

Published: Tuesday, June 20, 2017

President Trump has taken in tens of millions of dollars from various real estate holdings during his first months in the White House, according to financial disclosure documents submitted voluntarily on Friday to the Office of Government Ethics.

The filings also show earnings from fossil fuel companies, many of which stand to benefit from the new administration's regulatory rollbacks.

The 98-page document, which covers January 2016 to this spring, offers the most detailed picture to date of the president's finances and income. Trump has broken precedent by refusing to release his tax returns, which would provide more detailed information.

The filings show the president has retained most assets when compared with a previous financial filing, a May 2016 Federal Election Commission report, but has shed stocks and securities holdings — including shares in Energy Transfer Partners LP, the company behind the Dakota Access pipeline.

Trump reported at least \$1.4 billion in assets and claimed nearly \$600 million in income from January 2016 through April 15. The president listed at least \$315 million in liabilities. Those figures are similar to previous FEC filings.

Since January, Trump's business assets reside in a trust managed by his sons and Trump Organization executive Allan Weisselberg. Trump is the beneficiary of the trust and can draw money from it at any time, according to a *Washington Post* report.

The financial disclosure documents shows the president has resigned from more than 500 business positions, many on Jan. 19, the day before his inauguration.

Properties that Trump has frequented as president saw an income boost. The filings show \$37 million in income from Mar-a-Lago, the Florida resort dubbed the "Winter White House." That's up from \$29 million in the 2016 FEC filings and \$15 million in the 2015 version.

Earnings from his golf resort in Bedminster, N.J., which he visited for the first time in May, were similar to previous years. The income listed is gross revenue and does not account for expenses.

Trump's financial ties have generated conflict-of-interest claims. Dozens of lawsuits accuse the president of breaking anti-corruption law and violating the constitutional clause that bans foreign gifts and payments. Administration lawyers deny the president has broken any laws.

#### Energy income

While Trump no longer has his stocks and securities, the filings list extensive income and assets in the form of dividends, capital gains and interest.

That includes money from holdings in several prominent energy and natural resource companies, including Exxon Mobil Corp., Chevron Corp., BHP Billiton Ltd., Royal Dutch Shell PLC, Kinder Morgan Inc. and Halliburton Co.

In all, Trump reported more than \$167,000 energy-related income. This figure includes oil, gas and coal firms; automobile manufacturers; utilities; and rail companies that ship coal and other resources.

The total could be significantly higher since filings show only wide ranges for the incomes, such as \$15,001-\$50,000 for Trump's holdings in Halliburton.

Some of the revenue likely resulted from the trades Trump made when he divested from stock and securities, but it is unclear how much.

The president has defended retaining much of his business empire, saying people who voted for him knew he was a billionaire dealmaker.

**Clarification:** *This story was updated to clarify that President Trump's earnings from corporate holdings do not mean he still has ties to those companies.*

<http://bit.ly/2sSS61R>

### 13. Bundys seek release, claim violation of right to swift trial

*Jennifer Yachnin*, E&E News reporter

Published: Tuesday, June 20, 2017

Nevada rancher Cliven Bundy and eight co-defendants last week filed an emergency motion seeking their release from federal custody, arguing that their due process rights have been violated as they await trial over charges related to the 2014 armed standoff between ranchers and federal agents.

Attorneys for Bundy and his co-defendants, including his sons Ammon, Melvin and David, asserted that their clients' detention has become "excessively prolonged, and therefore punitive," following 15 months in federal custody.

"Collectively, the defendants have already lost more than a decade of their lives to pretrial incarceration. Their continued detention strains due process and the presumption of innocence past its breaking point. The defendants should be released," attorneys for the nine defendants wrote to U.S. District Judge Gloria Navarro.

Although Bundy and his co-defendants had been expected to face trial next week — in the second of three trials related to the 2014 standoff near Bunkerville, Nev., when federal agents attempted to seize Bundy's cattle over unpaid grazing fees — a mistrial in the first case has delayed the subsequent trials.

Federal prosecutors are now set to retry four of the six defendants in that first case in a trial that is scheduled to begin July 10 (*Greenwire*, May 18).

The second trial is slated to begin 30 days after the conclusion of that trial, which Cliven Bundy's attorneys note could push that case to a September or October start date, with an even later trial for defendants in the third group.

"Despite repeatedly invoking their rights to a speedy trial, these defendants do not have a set trial date, and even under the best case scenario in the court's sequential trial order, many of the defendants do not have a prospect of a trial until sometime in the year 2018," the motion states.

The motion also argues that the Bundys, along with defendants Ryan Payne, Pete Santilli, Brian Cavalier, Joseph O'Shaughnessy and Jason Woods, are not flight risks and should therefore be freed ahead of their trial dates.

"This Court has already found that Cliven Bundy has 'significant family ties in the community, steady employment, ownership of property in the community, and no criminal history,'" the motion states. "Cliven Bundy's health has begun to decline during his long incarceration."

But Navarro has previously rejected motions to release the defendants, and in May rejected a motion by Cliven Bundy to be tried along with the defendants in the retrial (*Greenwire*, May 22).

<http://bit.ly/2tphXvG>