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INTERIOR DAILY COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

Top Stories

- [Fox News: Secretary Zinke joins 'Fox and Friends'](#)
- [Fox News: Secretary Zinke appears on Varney and Company](#)

Associated Press: TRUMP OFFERS FLAG-WAVING OPTIMISM IN VISIT TO HARVEY'S PATH

"President Donald Trump answered Harvey's wrath Tuesday by offering in-person assurances to those in the storm zone that his administration will work tirelessly to help the region recover from the massive flooding and storm-inflicted destruction."

TALKING POINTS

- **The Department of the Interior (DOI)** is expanding its support activities through six mission assignments, including the U.S. Geological Survey providing advance support, real-time field measurements, and daily reporting of water heights via deployed storm-tide sensors to help public officials assess storm damage, discern between wind and flood damage, and improve computer models used to forecast future floods. USGS is also supporting collection of remote-sensed imagery, updating coastal change forecasts based on storm surge forecasts, and liaising with the Texas State Emergency Operations Center.

United States Geological Survey:

- All USGS personnel in Texas and Louisiana are accounted for.
- USGS crews from Texas, Louisiana and Oklahoma are now in the field in Texas navigating floodwaters by truck and boat to measure river levels and check and repair stream-gages as necessary to ensure they continue to transit vital information used for flood forecasting.
- **USGS field crews are taking flood measurements near the Addicks and Barker dams where 1.2 million people live downstream.**
- Crews are taking additional flood measurements for the Weather Service to help with predictions.
- Later this week other USGS crews will be out identifying high-water marks on buildings, bridges, rivers and other locations. Coastal high-water marks can be used to verify the accuracy of storm surge predictions and calibrate models. Inland high water marks can be used to forecast future floods, help FEMA determine the extent of floodplains, and are used by property owners and insurers to document flood losses.

- USGS has a coordinated information and data website at:

<https://www.usgs.gov/harvey>

National Park Service:

- The National Park Service is the lead agency to coordinate search and rescue assets in the Department of the Interior.
- Currently, the representatives are working alongside the Department of Defense, United States Coast Guard, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency to provide assistance to survivors in Texas after the landfall of Hurricane Harvey.
- **The NPS is actively working with other National Park Service units nationwide and several bureaus in the DOI to identify boats, boat operators, and rescue technicians to support the coordinated response to help those in flood waters.**

Bureau of Reclamation:

- Bureau of Reclamation is monitoring dams and reservoirs in Texas

US Fish and Wildlife Service:

- **In addition to the USFWS fleet of flat-bottom boats, additional watercraft are needed for evacuations. In preparation, Law Enforcement Officers responding to the incident have been asked to bring their boats with them. USFWS will also lend any aircraft needed.**

- Currently, additional resources are being leveraged to be deployed, including:

- o Two Saw Teams (AZ and NM) will be deployed
- o Law Enforcement (OK) will be deployed
- o Resources from Southeast Region: Six vessels, one boat teams, and two SORT teams have been rostered. The Hurricane Response Trailer will be mobilized to Mississippi Sandhill Crane NWR around Monday

Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement:

- BSEE's Hurricane Response Team monitors oil and gas activity in the Gulf of Mexico ranging from shut-ins of production, to personnel evacuations, to damage to facilities and potential pollution events
- When the severe weather passes through the Gulf of Mexico, the BSEE team works with NOAA and the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency to compare past satellite imagery to the current data to see if all facilities are in their correct locations following the storm and to look for any indicators of pollution (can begin 1 – 3 hours after the storm passes and clouds clear away).
- After the severe weather passes through the Gulf of Mexico and flight conditions allow, BSEE inspectors travel offshore on observation flights to determine if there is damage to facilities and to look for signs of pollution (may take 1 -3 days depending on weather and ground conditions).

OilPrice.com: Alaskan Oil Returns With A Vengeance

“Now, after an executive order from U.S. Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke, the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) is updating their assessments of oil and gas on Alaska’s North Slope. The USGS is looking into areas that have been protected from drilling since the 1980s, and reevaluating whether they should be opened anew for petroleum exploration. For the first time in a long time, Alaska is now facing the very real potential of a major energy industry comeback.”

TALKING POINTS

- 100,000+ jobs in AK are oil and gas, making up 1/3 of the state’s employment
- The National Petroleum Reserve serves a critical role in both our energy and national security.
- This is land that was set up with the sole intention of oil and gas production, however years of politics over policy put roughly half of the NPR-A off-limits.
- Using this land for its original intent will create good paying jobs and revenue for our Northern-most city and strengthen our energy and national security.
- Interior will identify areas in the NPR-A where responsible energy development makes the most sense and devise a plan to extract resources. We will do it in a way that both respects the environment and traditional uses of the land as well as maintains subsistence hunting and fishing access.

Deseret News-Opinion: Op-ed: The southern Utah economy should not be dependent on coastal elites

“There is an advertisement currently running on the local television stations promoting that public lands be kept in their pristine state for the benefit of generations to come. I don’t think it is a coincidence that this ad is running at the same time that Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke has made recommendations concerning the Bears Ears and Grand Staircase monuments for the way they were formed and the size and scope of the monuments. The purpose is to put pressure on public officials to retain the monuments in their current status and size.”

US News: US Interior Secretary Urges Mining Ban Near Yellowstone

“U.S. Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke wants to speed up a proposal to block new gold mining claims on forested public lands in Montana near Yellowstone National Park and will also consider blocking other types of mining, agency officials said Monday. Federal officials are undergoing a two-year review of mining on more than 30,000 acres among the towering peaks of the Absaroka mountains just north of the park.”

TALKING POINTS

- Secretary Zinke pledged Department of the Interior resources to assist the U.S. Forest Service with the environmental review process in an attempt to speed up the process to protect the area.
- Secretary Zinke is dedicated to the future of the Paradise Valley and the tourism communities surrounding Yellowstone National Park.

Las Vegas Review Journal: Democrats, environmental groups ready for battle over national monuments

“Democrats are charging the Trump administration of using a politically driven process to undermine protections to public lands as environmental groups gird for a legal battle to stop

the shrinking of national monuments under review — including two in Nevada.”

- **Secretary Zinke’s statement:**

- “No President should use the authority under the Antiquities Act to restrict public access, prevent hunting and fishing, burden private land, or eliminate traditional land uses, unless such action is needed to protect the object. The recommendations I sent to the president on national monuments will maintain federal ownership of all federal land and protect the land under federal environmental regulations, and also provide a much-needed change for the local communities who border and rely on these lands for hunting and fishing, economic development, traditional uses, and recreation.”

- **DOI statement:**

- “The Secretary’s draft report has been sent to the White House. The Secretary’s summary has been released to the press. Please contact the White House with any questions about any action on the report.”

- **White House statement:**

- “President Trump has received Secretary Zinke’s draft report for the Antiquities Act, and is currently reviewing his recommendations to determine the best path forward for the American people.”

- The Antiquities Act calls for the President to designate the “smallest area compatible with proper care and management of the objects to be protected.” Despite this clear directive “smallest area” has become the exception and not the rule.

- In an effort to make the process transparent and give people a voice in the process, the Secretary announced on May 5, 2017 the opening up of a formal comment period for the review. This is the first time ever that a formal comment period was open on [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov) for National Monuments designated under the Antiquities Act.

- Since May, Secretary Zinke has visited eight national monument sites in six states. He’s held dozens of meetings with Tribal, local, and state government officials, local stakeholders, and advocates from conservation, agriculture, tourism, and historic preservation organizations. The Secretary meets with people and organizations who represent all sides of the issues.

- Many of the most controversial national monuments were designated or expanded in the waning days of the previous administration after partisan efforts to designate the land stalled in Congress. This is a clear violation of the will of the people and an overuse of executive power.

Fact and Fiction of the Monument Review

- Myth: No president has shrunk a monument.

- Fact: Monuments have been shrunk at least ten times under presidents on both sides of the aisle. Some examples include President John F. Kennedy removing 2,882 acres from Bandelier National Monument, Presidents Taft, Wilson, Coolidge reducing Mount Olympus National Monument (President Wilson halved it), and President Eisenhower reducing Great Sand Dunes National Monument in Colorado.

- Myth: The monument review will sell/transfer public lands to states.

- Fact: This is not true. Under the Antiquities Act, the monuments are designated on already federal land. Therefore, if any monument is rescinded or shrunk, the land would remain federally owned and be managed by one or more land management agencies, including the Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the National Park Service.
- Myth: The monument review will close/sell/transfer National Parks.
- Fact: No National Parks are under review, and the Secretary has continually committed he is against the sale/transfer/privatization of public lands, especially National Parks. While some of the monuments are managed by the National Park Service - much like historic sites, national recreation areas, and national seashores are - none of them are National Parks.

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Alex Hinson

Deputy Press Secretary
Department of the Interior
C: 202-641-5381