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[monuments clip 8-2017.pdf](#)

hi andrea,  
per our short conversation today, here's some add'l monuments info.  
the attached clip does a good job of spelling out the who/what/when on the monuments review report due out later this week.  
to recap what i relayed, the monuments with reclamation facilities within or nearby are 1. gold butte nat'l mon (nv); giant sequoia nat'l mon (ca); and cascade-siskiyou nat'l mon (or).  
we've relayed info to the department as requested earlier this year, but reclamation's nexus to this is extremely limited.  
with the secy's report to the president due this week, if i see anything from doi regarding messaging this week, i'll be sure to send it your way per your request.  
thx  
- mat

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8/21/2017

INTERIOR: Decision time looms for 20 monuments Friday, August 18, 2017 www.eenews.net

THE LEADER IN ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT NEWS

## INTERIOR

**Decision time looms for 20 monuments**

Jennifer Yachnin, E&amp;E News reporter • Published: Friday, August 18, 2017



Carrizo Plain National Monument in California's Central Valley was home to a super bloom earlier this year. Bob Wick/Bureau of Land Management/Flickr

As Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke approaches the deadline next week for his recommendations to President Trump on whether to alter dozens of national monuments, conservation proponents say it remains all but impossible to predict which sites the administration could target for reductions or even wholesale elimination.

In recent months, Zinke has traveled from coast to coast as he conducted the review, which included 27 national monuments created since 1996, the majority of which are larger than 100,000 acres.

But even as he visited states from Maine to Oregon and Utah to New Mexico, Zinke managed to touch down in only eight of those monuments over the 3 ½-month review.

In the weeks before his final report recommending changes is due to the White House on Thursday, Zinke has begun to roll out reprieves to some of the sites under review: As of late Wednesday, he had named six sites that will see no boundary adjustments or management changes.

But conservation advocates have largely panned those early decisions, arguing that the review process has proved opaque even as Zinke's office asserts that the secretary has provided details about his schedule and meetings.

"The review process that the Trump administration has been undertaking has been fairly arbitrary, so it is honestly a guessing game as to which monuments are most at risk and how the review is being conducted and whose voices are being heard to drive Secretary Zinke's decision," the Wilderness Society's vice president for conservation, Melyssa Watson, said in a news conference yesterday.

The six sites removed from review are Craters of the Moon National Monument and Preserve in Idaho, Hanford Reach National Monument in Washington state, Canyons of the Ancients National Monument in Colorado, Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument in Montana, Grand Canyon-Parashant National Monument in Arizona and Sand to Snow National Monument in California.

Notably, although Zinke has previously visited the Montana monument — he served as the Treasure State's at-large House lawmaker before his appointment to the Trump Cabinet — he did not make official visits to any of the sites he has removed from the review to date.

An Interior spokesman could not confirm whether Zinke plans to excuse any other monuments before the final report is issued. Zinke was on vacation this week to celebrate his 25th wedding anniversary; he appeared to be in the Mediterranean (*Greenwire*, Aug. 17). But Zinke acknowledged earlier this year that not every monument included in the report will receive the same level of scrutiny.

"I think we're focusing on just a few," Zinke told the House Natural Resources Committee, and he later told reporters: "We're not taking a deep dive in all of them" (*E&E News PM*, June 22).

DOI-2019-11 02836

8/21/2017

INTERIOR: Decision time looms for 20 monuments Friday, August 18, 2017 www.eenews.net

In the meantime, while conservationists continue to urge the Trump administration to refrain from trying to make changes to any of the nation's monuments, some Western state GOP lawmakers have lobbied Zinke and Trump to rescind or sharply reduce the acreage of many of the remaining 21 monuments.

Zinke indicated in an interim report that he plans to call for significantly slashing the 1.35 million acres now included in Bears Ears National Monument in southeastern Utah (*E&E News PM*, June 12).

Below is a summary of the 20 national monuments that remain under review:

#### **Basin and Range National Monument, Nev.**

The nearly 704,000-acre site created by President Obama in 2015 is among the handful Zinke visited personally in recent months.

In a letter to Zinke earlier this year, 15 members of the Congressional Western Caucus derided the monument as a "personal favor" to former Senate Democratic Leader Harry Reid of Nevada ahead of his retirement from Congress.

Among their complaints, the lawmakers noted that the site surrounds artist Michael Heizer's large installation "City," which sits on private land.

During his visit to Basin and Range last month, Zinke met with officials from the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, which agreed to a conservation easement last year to grant the Bureau of Land Management rights to 1,300 acres of private land around the installation within the monument.

The Western Caucus letter urged Zinke to reduce the site to just 2,500 acres, or less than 1 percent of its current size.

#### **Berryessa Snow Mountain National Monument, Calif.**



A hiker walks through Berryessa Snow Mountain National Monument in California. Bob Wick/Bureau of Land Management/Flickr

Both state and congressional lawmakers pushed for designation of this Northern California site before Obama agreed to set aside nearly 331,000 acres in 2015.

The area sits at the meeting point of two tectonic plates — giving it scientific importance — but it is considered a recreation hot spot for the populations of nearby San Francisco and Sacramento.

"Only a few places on the planet illustrate the scientific process as clearly as does the Berryessa region," University of California, Davis, geologist Eldridge Moores told California state lawmakers at a hearing in 2015, California public radio station KQED reported at the time.

Although state lawmakers approved a resolution urging the creation of the monument, Western congressional lawmakers called for its "total rescission."

State Attorney General Xavier Becerra, a former Democratic House lawmaker, has threatened to file suit against the Trump administration if it tries to alter the Berryessa site or any other of the state's national monuments (*Greenwire*, June 9).

#### **Carrizo Plain National Monument, Calif.**

In his final three days in the White House, President Clinton named seven new national monuments, including this 204,000-acre site in San Luis Obispo County.

Both proponents and opponents of the monument's current boundaries have highlighted its potential for oil and gas production.

In their June letter, Western lawmakers noted that the monument counted 15 active oil wells in 2010 and that "giant fields with billions of barrels of reserves surround the monument."

Greenpeace has similarly highlighted the area's energy stores, noting that it is among the six national monuments with the largest potential energy development if its boundaries are reduced or eliminated (*Greenwire*, May 10).

8/21/2017

INTERIOR: Decision time looms for 20 monuments Friday, August 18, 2017 www.eenews.net

Becerra also noted development in the area surrounding the monument, writing in June that the site "offers refuge to many animals and plants that are threatened, endangered or rare."

#### **Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument, Ore. and Calif.**

When Clinton set aside the then-53,000-acre site in 2000, it marked the first time a monument had been created with the sole intention of protecting biodiversity.

In his final weeks in office, Obama expanded the monument to its current 100,000 acres, asserting that the additional land would "increase habitat connectivity, watershed protection and landscape-scale resilience for the area's unique biological values" ([Greenwire](#), Jan. 12).

But Oregon's congressional delegation has split over the monument along party lines, with Democratic Sens. Jeff Merkley and Ron Wyden advocating for the site and GOP Rep. Greg Walden vowing to help roll back the "midnight expansion." Republicans have argued that the land should be open to timber harvesting.

Oregon Gov. Kate Brown (D) urged Zinke to retain the monument during his visit to the state last month but said he gave no indication about his plans ([Greenwire](#), July 17).

#### **Giant Sequoia National Monument, Calif.**



Giant Sequoia National Monument in California is still under Interior Department review. Melissa Wiese/Flickr

Opponents of the nearly 328,000-acre monument created by Clinton in early 2000 likewise say it should be open to timber harvesting, arguing that it is otherwise a safety hazard.

"This is a health and safety issue for us," Tulare County Deputy Administrator Eric Coyne told the *San Francisco Chronicle* in June. "We need the flexibility to do responsible tree mitigation" ([Greenwire](#), June 28).

But the monument was designated to protect the 33 groves of the largest trees on earth, allowing for removal of the trees only when there is a "clear need" for maintenance or public safety.

Environmentalists successfully challenged early management plans for the site that included predictions for the volume of timber that would be regularly removed from the monument ([Greenwire](#), Sept. 5, 2012).

#### **Gold Butte National Monument, Nev.**

The 297,000-acre Gold Butte National Monument is home to rock art and cultural sites — and hundreds of illegally grazing cattle that belong to jailed Nevada rancher Cliven Bundy, whose own 160-acre ranch is nearby.

While Zinke held a news conference in Bunkerville, Nev., during his visit to the area, he declined to discuss the animals that prompted a standoff between ranchers and federal officials in 2014. Bundy is expected to face trial in the case as soon as next month.

In its creation of the monument late last year, the Obama administration pointed to concern over vandalism in the area, much of which had previously been designated as areas of critical environmental concern for the desert tortoise and bighorn sheep.

While Nevada Republicans have called for a significant reduction to the monument's size, Democratic Rep. Dina Titus and Sen. Catherine Cortez Masto have urged Zinke to retain the site.

"Apparently, the 2.7 million public comments submitted in favor of keeping these monuments were not enough to help Mr. Zinke make up his mind," Cortez Masto said in a video released last month.

#### **Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, Utah**

The southwestern Utah monument marked its 20th anniversary last year, but debate over the site remains as heated as it was when Clinton announced the 1.9-million-acre monument in 1996.

Republicans have long criticized the monument status for blocking access to massive coal deposits in the area's Kaiparowits Plateau and crippling potential economic growth for the region.

8/21/2017

INTERIOR: Decision time looms for 20 monuments Friday, August 18, 2017 www.eenews.net

But environmentalists who have backed the monument — which Clinton had hoped would rally green voters to his bid for a second term as he preserved cliffs, slot canyons and sandstone arches — point out that the plateau has proved to be a paleontological jackpot since the monument's establishment, producing tens of thousands of fossils.

Zinke acknowledged during a May visit to the area that he would like to balance those interests.

"I have some in my truck," he said of the site's coal at the time. "It's there, and the creation of a monument was to protect and not to prevent" (*Greenwire*, May 11).

Utah's all-GOP congressional delegation has rallied against the monument, and Western GOP lawmakers urged Zinke to rescind the site's status in their June letter.

The Trump administration is expected to face legal challenges if it attempts to reduce or roll back any of the monuments under review, but Grand Staircase-Escalante is more complicated than most of the sites being assessed. That's because Congress itself has twice adjusted the monument's boundaries to exclude small towns and exchange state lands with Utah, as well as paid the state \$50 million in the process (*Greenwire*, May 2).

#### **Ironwood Forest National Monument, Ariz.**

In his proclamation designating this 129,000-acre site in mid-2000, Clinton said the Ironwood Forest presents a "quintessential view of the Sonoran Desert" and pointed to vegetation including its "ironwood, palo verde and saguaro."

The monument, located southwest of Tucson, is also home to species including hawks, owls, desert bighorn sheep and tortoises.

While the Congressional Western Caucus has called for the site's elimination — arguing that it has blocked access to state trust lands and hindered grazing in the area — the Friends of Ironwood Forest has disputed its criticisms.

"Monument designation had no impact on management of State Trust Land which, by law, is open only to holders of valid use permits," Friends of Ironwood Forest board member William Thornton wrote in the *Arizona Daily Star* last month. He noted that ranchers can still graze their animals on state lands, while hunters and anglers can likewise access the land with licenses.

Unlike typical state parks, state trust lands are used by Western states to generate funds for education and public services and are not broadly available for public access.

"The monument has not resulted in one dime of lost revenue to K-12 education," Thornton added.

#### **Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument, Maine**



Visitors sit on a boulder in Wassataquoik Stream within Maine's Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument. Elliottsville Plantation Inc

Maine Gov. Paul LePage (R) is leading the charge to dismantle the state's sole national monument, arguing that the public has seen a reduction in access to the nearly 88,000-acre site, largely made up of former working timberland.

Obama created the monument last year after Burt's Bees co-founder Roxanne Quimby purchased the land, then donated it to the federal government via her family's nonprofit foundation, Elliottsville Plantation Inc.

In opposition to LePage is Elliottsville Plantation President Lucas St. Clair, who is also Quimby's son.

St. Clair has argued that the monument has increased access to the previously private lands. He has also touted the fact that the nonprofit has endowed a \$40 million fund for upkeep of the monument.

Zinke traveled to Maine in June and at the time indicated he was leaning away from reducing the size of the monument.

"Scaling back I don't think makes a lot of sense for here," he told the *Portland Press Herald* during his visit. Still, Zinke would not commit to maintaining the site as a monument, suggesting he could seek to have Congress change the site's status to a national park or other public land designation.

8/21/2017

INTERIOR: Decision time looms for 20 monuments Friday, August 18, 2017 www.eenews.net

### **Marianas Trench, Rose Atoll and Pacific Remote Islands marine national monuments, Pacific Ocean**

President George W. Bush created three marine monuments during his final days in office in early 2009, setting aside nearly 196,000 square miles of oceanic reserves intended to address overfishing and pollution and to help the ocean adapt to climate change.

At the time of their designation, the largest of the sites was the 95,000-square-mile Marianas Trench monument near the Northern Mariana Islands and Guam, an area that has been compared to an underwater Yellowstone and Grand Canyon for its unique geology of hydrothermal vents, mud volcanoes and pools of boiling sulfur.

The Rose Atoll near American Samoa covers more than 13,000 square miles, including coral reefs and a lagoon that serves as a home to sea turtles, birds and giant clams.

Bush also set aside nearly 87,000 square miles for the Pacific Remote Islands monument, which likewise claims a wealth of biodiversity that includes sea turtles, manta rays, sharks and whales as well as birds like the masked boobies and red-footed boobies among its islands, reefs and atolls.

Obama then enlarged the Pacific Remote Islands site to nearly six times its original size in late 2014, to its current 490,000 square miles ([Greenwire](#), Sept. 25, 2014).

Commercial fishing, deep-sea mining and other extraction activities are banned within the sites.

The five marine monuments included in the Interior review are also part of a Commerce Department study examining whether 11 marine national monuments and national marine sanctuaries should be opened to oil and gas development ([Greenwire](#), Aug. 16).

That study was prompted by Trump's executive order mandating a review of offshore energy policies.

### **Mojave Trails National Monument, Calif.**

This 1.6-million-acre site in Southern California is the largest of a trio of monuments Obama set aside in the Mojave Desert in early 2016.

Earlier this week, Zinke excused the 154,000-acre Sand to Snow National Monument from his review. Castle Mountains National Monument, at just 21,000 acres, was not large enough to qualify for automatic inclusion in the Interior review.

But the Mojave Desert site, with its lava flowers and sand dunes, is also involved in a debate over whether Cadiz Inc. will be able to build a proposed 43-mile-long pipeline to pump water from an aquifer under land it owns to 100,000 households in Southern California.

The Trump administration has placed it on a list of infrastructure priority projects, which raised questions for now-Interior Deputy Secretary David Bernhardt, who briefly led the Trump transition team. Before his confirmation to the Trump administration, Bernhardt was chairman of the natural resources department at the law firm Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck. The firm's lobbying arm worked to advance the Cadiz project ([Greenwire](#), April 6).

"Diverse communities across the desert fought for over a decade to designate all three of our California desert national monuments," Mojave Desert Land Trust Executive Director Danielle Segura told the *Highland Community News* in California on Wednesday. "We encourage Secretary Zinke to recognize the public's will and the unique ecological and historical significance of places like Mojave Trails National Monument in his forthcoming recommendations."

### **Northeast Canyons and Seamounts Marine National Monument, Atlantic Ocean**

Obama created the first Atlantic marine monument in 2016 when he designated nearly 5,000 square miles for preservation off the coast of Massachusetts.

But the decision — which barred oil and gas exploration in the area and restricted commercial fishing — drew a lawsuit from Northeastern fishermen, including the Massachusetts Lobstermen's Association, Atlantic Offshore Lobstermen's Association, Long Island Commercial Fishing Association, Rhode Island Fishermen's Alliance and Garden State Seafood Association.

The case is pending in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia, but a judge stayed action in the case in May to await the outcome of the Trump administration's reviews ([E&E News PM](#), May 12).

During his visit to the East Coast in June, Zinke stopped in Boston to meet with both fishermen's groups and scientists about the monument.

*The Boston Globe* reported that Zinke appeared sympathetic while meeting with about 20 representatives of New England's seafood industry.

"When your area of access continues to be reduced and reduced ... it just makes us noncompetitive," Zinke said at the time. "The president's priority is jobs, and we need to make it clear that we have a long-term approach to make sure that fishing fleets are healthy."

### **Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument, N.M.**

New Mexico's congressional delegation has split over the future of the 496,000-acre boundary of the site — with its Democratic senators pushing Zinke to retain the site, while New Mexico GOP Rep. Steve Pearce has argued for it to be cut to just 60,000 acres.

Obama created the monument in 2014, designating four separate areas in close proximity to Las Cruces, N.M.: the Organ Mountains, Desert Peaks, Potrillo Mountains and Doña Ana Mountains.

8/21/2017

INTERIOR: Decision time looms for 20 monuments Friday, August 18, 2017 www.eenews.net



Hikers rest in Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument in New Mexico. Bureau of Land Management/Flickr

Obama's proclamation notes that in addition to the geologic and biological resources of the region, the monument encompasses "hundreds of artifacts, rock art, dwellings, and other evidence of the Native peoples."

#### **Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument, Hawaii**

This site near Hawaii is the world's largest marine protected area at nearly 600,000 square miles.

Bush first designated the site — originally named the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Marine National Monument — in 2006, then renamed it to Papahānaumokuākea in early 2007 in honor of Hawaiian gods Papahānaumoku and Wākea, whose mythology includes the creation of the Hawaiian archipelago and its people.

In 2016, Obama opted to quadruple the site's size to protect the 7,000 species that live in the monument's boundaries, as well as to extend prohibitions on commercial fishing and extractive activities (*E&E Daily*, Aug. 26, 2016).

The Trump administration could opt to try to roll back those prohibitions as well as the monument's size.

#### **Rio Grande del Norte National Monument, N.M.**

Although Zinke visited the Land of Enchantment last month, he didn't include a trip to northern New Mexico to see this 243,000-acre monument Obama established in 2013.

The monument itself stretches from the Colorado border south to Pilar, N.M., following the Rio Grande through a deep gorge. In his proclamation designating the monument, Obama described the area as "an extraordinary landscape of extreme beauty and daunting harshness."

The proclamation barred mineral and geothermal leasing in the area.

While Pearce has called for the site to be reduced by an unspecified amount, both the state's Democratic senators have lobbied for its retention.

But in an exchange at a Senate Interior, Environment and Related Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee hearing in June, Zinke would not indicate his position on either of the state's monuments.

"In the case of New Mexico, I do not want to rip a Band-Aid off a monument that's settled. ... If it's settled and people are happy with it, I find no reason to recommend any changes," he said at the time (*Greenwire*, June 21).

#### **San Gabriel Mountains National Monument, Calif.**



A storm brews in San Gabriel Mountains National Monument. Rennett Stowe/Flickr

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8/21/2017

INTERIOR: Decision time looms for 20 monuments Friday, August 18, 2017 www.eenews.net

The more-than-356,000-acre site is located between Los Angeles and San Bernardino, making it a popular area of respite for more than 15 million people who live within a 90-minute drive of the monument.

Although congressional Democrats in the region had pushed for a much larger 600,000-acre recreation area, Obama's final proclamation in 2014 offered a smaller site, which is managed by the Forest Service.

The Congressional Western Caucus has raised complaints that the site includes nonwilderness Forest Service land, as well as a small mining operation, and has called for unspecified cuts to the site.

But environmentalists have urged for the monument to remain untouched, noting that it is among the most likely monuments to be opened to oil and gas production if its protections are eliminated.

#### **Sonoran Desert National Monument, Ariz.**

The southern Arizona site is another of the seven monuments Clinton created in his final days in office, covering more than 486,000 acres near the Mexico border.

The site has long drawn the ire of conservatives, including a failed legal challenge by the Mountain States Legal Foundation. It argued that Clinton had exceeded his authority to create the Sonoran Desert monument as well as others like the Cascade-Siskiyou and Ironwood Forest ([Greenwire](#), Oct. 21, 2002).

It has also been the focus of lawsuits over grazing rights in the area, after Clinton's proclamation disallowed the practice in portions of the monument, as well as a long-running fight over recreational target shooting ([E&E News PM](#), Dec. 16, 2016).

In addition, the Congressional Western Caucus has complained that the monument creates a hindrance to Homeland Security and Customs and Border Protection agents, who must comply with environmental regulations on federal lands operated by the Interior and Agriculture departments.

#### **Vermilion Cliffs National Monument, Ariz.**

The nearly 280,000-acre site is located in northern Arizona near the Utah border, a remote area that BLM describes as a "geologic treasure."

"Despite its arid climate and rugged isolation, the monument contains a wide variety of biological objects and has a long and rich human history," Clinton wrote in his 2000 proclamation. "Full of natural splendor and a sense of solitude, this area remains remote and unspoiled, qualities that are essential to the protection of the scientific and historic objects it contains."

Among the most popular locations in Vermilion Cliffs is the "Wave," a sandstone formation located in the Coyote Buttes North. But visitation to the site is limited to 20 people per day, who must apply for permits in a lottery system.

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