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INTERIOR DAILY COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

NEWS TO SHARE:

Indianz: Secretary Ryan Zinke among those excited to take part in #RockYourMocs this year

"It's #RockYourMocs week and thousands across the nation are expressing Native pride by wearing moccasins to work, to school and just about anywhere... Among those who are excited to take part this year is Secretary Ryan Zinke. He plans to sport a pair of Crow moccasins as he works at the Department of the Interior, the parent agency of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, on Wednesday. "Thanks to the Crow for the mocs!" Zinke wrote in a post on Twitter. The Crow Tribe is based in Montana, Zinke's home state."

Associated Press: Utah Sen. Orrin Hatch's office says President Donald Trump is expected to significantly downsize two sprawling Utah national monuments

"President Donald Trump is expected to significantly downsize two sprawling Utah national monuments that protect more than 3 million acres of the state's red rock country, Utah Sen. Orrin Hatch's office said Tuesday. Ron Dean, Hatch's Central and Eastern Utah Director, testified during a meeting in Utah of a state legislative public lands committee that he expects Bears Ears National Monument will be cut by at least 80 percent of its current size, while Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument will be reduced by about 40 percent to 60 percent. Trump told Hatch and Utah's governor last month that he would follow the recommendation of Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke and shrink both monuments, but the White House and Zinke's office have not offered details about how they'd redraw the monument boundaries. Dean said Tuesday that while he hasn't seen Zinke's recommendations, he could speak with "some certainty" on how much of a reduction Hatch's office expected to see."

E&E News: Trump's 'energy dominance' transforms Alaska's future

"Today, Murkowski's committee is due to mark up her bill allowing exploration in the Arctic refuge's coastal plain. If the measure is approved by Congress, it would almost certainly be signed into law by the president (E&E Daily, Nov. 9). In the year since Trump's election, the federal government has begun a radical reversal of President Obama's ambitious wildlife preservation policies for Alaska. During his eight years in the White House, Obama blocked seismic studies on ANWR's coastal plain. He outlawed oil and gas development in most of the Arctic Ocean and in Bristol Bay along Alaska's southwestern coast. And he placed almost half of the 22.8-million-acre National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska (NPR-A) off-limits to development. In total, Obama preserved at least 170 million acres of federal lands in Alaska. But all that is changing under Trump. As Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke declared in May, today Alaska "is open for business."

CORRECTING THE RECORD:

Huffington Post: Whistleblower Sues Interior Department For Information On Staff Shuffle

"A scientist-turned-whistleblower who resigned from the Interior Department in October citing agency chief Ryan Zinke's "poor leadership" and "resume of failure" is suing to obtain

information concerning his own reassignment and that of several of his former colleagues. Joel Clement told HuffPost he has been “completely stonewalled” in his attempts to get documents via Freedom of Information Act requests and was left with no choice but to file suit against the department. “They are bringing this on themselves,” he said by phone Tuesday. Clement sounded the alarm on the Trump administration in July, alleging that he was transferred to a position for which he had no qualifications because he warned about the dangers of climate change. A seven-year Interior employee, Clement was among dozens of senior agency staff reassigned in June as part of a sweeping reorganization that a spokesperson claimed would “better serve the taxpayer and the department’s operations.”.”

Regarding the shuffling of SES at DOI:

- The President signed an executive order to reorganize the federal government for the future and the Secretary has been absolutely out front on that issue. In fact, he mentioned a Department-wide, front lines-focused reorganization on his first day address to all employees.
- The purpose of the Senior Executive Service is to ensure that the executive management of the government of the United States is responsive to the needs, policies, and goals of the Nation and otherwise is of the highest quality. Senior executives are the highest paid employees in the federal government and signed up for the SES knowing that they could be called upon to work in different positions at any time. Congress meant for the SES to be a mobile force that are capable of taking on different assignments to meet the needs of the agency. Personnel moves among the Senior Executive Service are being conducted to better serve the taxpayer and the Department's operations.

OTHER TOP STORIES:

Morning Consult: Senate Minority Whip to Meet With Zinke After Hold on Interior Nominees

“Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke will meet with a group of Democratic senators on Tuesday about his recommendations to President Donald Trump to reduce the size of certain national monuments, according to a Senate aide. Sen. Dick Durbin (D-Ill.), the second-ranking Democrat in the Senate, requested the meeting on Oct. 23, along with other Democrats. A public letter last week announcing a hold on four Interior Department nominees prompted Zinke to respond and schedule the meeting, Durbin’s press secretary, Emily Hampsten, said on Tuesday. “First, what is his legal basis for believing that this president should change the designation of national monuments in the Antiquities Act?” Durbin said Tuesday in a brief interview. “Hope that he’ll tell us, I don’t think there is a legal basis for it.”

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