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INTERIOR DAILY COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

Top Stories

THE HILL: Interior recommends Trump shrink national monuments

"In a formal report he's sending to Trump on Thursday, Zinke will not ask the president to eliminate any of the 27 protected areas that were under review since an April executive order, he told The Associated Press. He did not specify the changes he is recommending in the AP interview. But he said any areas removed from national monuments would remain under federal control and public access would either stay the same or improve."

Bloomberg: Secrecy Surrounding Plan to Trim U.S. Monuments Spurs Suspensions

"The Interior Department on Thursday gave President Donald Trump its recommendations for scaling back national monuments. But the agency didn't say what it proposed after its four-month review -- fanning the suspicions of critics that the administration is laying the groundwork for a dramatic rollback in protections, opening up public territory for more oil drilling, logging and mining."

Wall Street Journal: National Monuments Could Be Pared Back Under Administration Guidelines

"The Interior Department didn't release a detailed account of Mr. Zinke's suggested changes, but any reductions would likely launch a battle between environmentalists, who want the monuments preserved, and some locals and businesses, who argue the protections go too far and would like the land open to the possibility of commercial activity. A Zinke spokeswoman said the secretary has asked that boundaries of an unspecified, small number of monuments be "modified" but that none be eliminated."

TALKING POINTS for Monument Review

- 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.

Wall Street Journal: The Park Service's Botched Bottle Ban-Obama's behavioral economists must have been on vacation.

"Vacationers can now buy bottled water in national parks, after the Trump Administration this month ended an Obama-era policy that sought to reduce plastic waste. Environmentalists

responded with predictable outrage, but reversing the ban is healthier and greener.”

TALKING POINTS

- The National Park service is committed to providing a safe and world-class visitor experience and is discontinuing Policy Memorandum 11-03, entitled "***Recycling and Reduction of Disposable Plastic Bottles in Parks***" which has been referred to as the "*Water Bottle Ban*".
- The policy is being discontinued to allow sales of water in disposable plastic water bottles to provide additional healthy hydration options for recreationalists, hikers, and other visitors to national parks.
- We will continue to expand and encourage the use of free water bottle filling stations as appropriate to ensure our visitors and their families can remain hydrated during visits to a national park, particularly during hot summer visitation periods.

Washington Post: Harvey Forecast to Slam Texas Coast as “Major” Hurricane with Devastating Flooding

“Extremely dangerous Hurricane Harvey intensified into a powerful Category 2 hurricane overnight Thursday. The life-threatening storm is strengthening and predicted to plow into southeast Texas on late Friday or early Saturday as the first major hurricane, rated Category 3 or higher (on the 1-5 Saffir-Simpson intensity scale), to strike U.S. soil in 12 years.”

TALKING POINTS

- The NOAA National Hurricane Center indicated Harvey has intensified quickly. It’s forecast to be a major hurricane at landfall, bringing life-threatening storm surge, rainfall, and wind hazards to parts of Texas’ coast.
- The USGS Coastal Storm Team is activated and holding daily calls to coordinate response activities and partner coordination.
- The USGS Texas Water Science Center (TXWSC) is deploying storm surge sensors at up to 20 location between San Luis Pass and the Corpus Christi metro area. A total of 5 TXWSC crews (10 personnel) will work today to deploy surge sensors and pull back from the coast tonight.
- USGS is coordinating with federal, state, and local partners in the region on potential needs for support, including the need for additional stream discharge measurements, high water marks, and surveys.

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