

**To:** Martha Maciel[mmaciel@blm.gov]  
**From:** Webster, Sarah  
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[New Clips 6 20 LONG.pdf](#)

## **CALIFORNIA**

### Highway Fire covering 1,500 acres, evacuation orders in place

23 ABC, June 19

The Highway Fire, burning in the Kern River Canyon, is now 20 percent contained. New numbers released Tuesday morning show the fire is still covering 1,541 acres. The total number of fire personnel on scene has grown from about 400 to 729.

### Holcomb Fire at 950 acres, burning away from Big Bear

*Big Bear Grizzly*, June 20

The Holcomb Fire grew overnight and is now at 950 acres and 10 percent contained. Nick Bruinsma of Big Bear Fire Department said the fire made a couple of significant flare ups and runs during the pre-dawn hours. Humidity in the morning hours has the fire and smoke laying low so smoke isn't as visible in Big Bear this morning. Bruinsma said the smoke will be more visible as the day goes on...Crews from Big Bear Fire Authority, Bureau of Land Management, San Bernardino County Fire, CalFire, and the California Department of Corrections are also on scene.

### PG&E Begins Daily Aerial Patrols To Spot Wildfires

*Sierra News*, June 19

Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) announced today that they have begun daily aerial fire detection patrols across hundreds of miles of their service area. The patrols are intended to assist the U.S. Forest Service, Cal Fire and local fire agencies with early fire detection and response this summer. PG&E says they are launching the patrols this week due to an increase in fire danger from rising temperatures, coupled with the potential for winds. The patrols also will occur in time for the Independence Day holiday with its risk of fires sparked by illegal or misuse of "Safe and Sane" fireworks.

### Cadiz Water Project Will Safeguard Environment

*SCV News*, opinion, June 19

...The Cadiz Project aims to provide a supplemental supply and storage opportunity in Southern California for local water agencies. It would conserve water presently lost to high-salinity and evaporation at dry lake playas that serve as the only outflow of the vast

Cadiz-Fenner watershed, which is 1,300 square miles and contains 17 million to 34 million acre-feet of water in storage. The project would capture less than 1 percent of the water in storage, or 50,000 acre-feet per year, to minimize this ongoing loss and provide new water in Southern California.

Fish and Wildlife Service releases Central California tiger salamander recovery plan

*Monterey Herald*, June 19

The plan will help the local population of the threatened tiger salamander, which inhabits most of the pools at Fort Ord and was placed on the list because of a diluted gene pool brought about by the introduction in the 1950s of the barred salamander, according to a previously published report...The lake is one of about 45 vernal pools on Bureau of Land Management land at the former Army base.

## **NATIONAL**

Zinke envisions cutting 4,000 full-time staff

*GREENWIRE*, June 20

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. *See PDF for full story.*

Shrinking Utah's Bears Ears National Monument would be one more broken promise to Native Americans

*LA Times*, June 20

Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke plans to advise President Trump to shrink Utah's Bears Ears National Monument to a scatter of isolated sites. The secretary's recommendation, announced last week, is one more act of disrespect and arrogance in a story that began in 1492.

Interior head says public lands can make U.S. a 'dominant' oil power

*Reuters*, June 16

Boosting drilling and mining on America's protected federal lands can help the United States become not just independent, but "dominant" as a global energy force, according to Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke, whose agency manages about one-fifth of U.S.

territory. In an interview with Reuters, Zinke outlined his approach to development and conservation in America's wildest spaces, and discussed how that philosophy was guiding his review of which national monuments created by past presidents should be rescinded or resized to make way for more business.

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## NATIONAL

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"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."