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Cc: Meredith Black[mblack@blm.gov]; Pat Wilkinson[p2wilkin@blm.gov]
From: Allen, Matthew
Sent: 2017-06-23T13:26:41-04:00
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Subject: Re: E&E News Clips—June 21, 2017
Received: 2017-06-23T13:26:48-04:00

Mike,
Here is that

story: <https://www.eenews.net/greenwire/stories/1060056453/search?keyword=sexual+harassment>

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Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke said today that sexual harassment might be a departmentwide problem, not just within the National Park Service.

"It's not just the Park Service," Zinke said in response to a question from Rep. Niki Tsongas (D-Mass.) during a House Natural Resources Committee hearing on the administration's fiscal 2018 budget proposal.

When Tsongas followed up and asked if he was suggesting sexual harassment was a "broader issue" through the department, Zinke agreed.

"It may be departmentwide, I think that is a fair assessment," he said, specifically mentioning the Bureau of Land Management as another trouble spot.

Zinke, who reiterated that he has "zero tolerance" for sexual harassment, which he witnessed in the military, told lawmakers he may need legislative help in combatting the problem.

"I want to make sure we have an environment free of harassment and free of intimidation," said the secretary.

One area where Zinke might seek help from Congress is getting bad apples out of the department faster. It's notoriously difficult to fire career federal employees, something Zinke alluded to in response to a question from Rep. Don McEachin (D-Va.).

McEachin today asked the full panel and the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee to hold a hearing to investigate the pervasive sexual harassment at agencies, including the NPS (*E&E Daily*, June 8).

The Virginia Democrat asked Zinke why Interior hasn't hired more lawyers in response. Zinke said some of the problem is structural and that he "couldn't fire" those who engaged in misconduct because of red tape.

"I need some help from Congress," he said. Lawmakers recently passed legislation to make it easier to fire employees at the Veterans Affairs Department.

Subcommittee Chairman Raúl Labrador (R-Idaho) said he was open to McEachin's request to holding a hearing on sexual harassment at NPS.

'No gag order'

Zinke today also committed to meeting Democrats "in person" to discuss department issues, after hearing complaints from the minority over the department's failure to respond to several formal information requests.

"There is no gag order," Zinke said, responding to questions from House Natural Resources Committee ranking member Raúl Grijalva (D-Ariz.). "I have met with the minority in person; I committed to meeting with the minority."

Zinke, who sat on the Natural Resources panel when he was a Montana congressman, added that he would give Grijalva his phone number as a professional courtesy. Zinke also said he has pledged to meet quarterly with members.

"While I appreciate the gesture, the fact remains these responses for the record need to occur," Grijalva said, referring to letters from Democrats to Interior.

Grijalva has sent Interior several missives since January on various issues, including the department's wide-ranging review of 27 national monuments, and has not yet received any response, said Adam Sarvana, communications director for the Democrats on Natural Resources.

The Justice Department earlier this month concluded that the executive branch's constitutional duty to respond to information requests is largely limited to committee chairs ([*Greenwire*](#), June 9).

Senate Judiciary Chairman Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa) later dismissed DOJ's interpretation as "nonsense," joining Democrats in their criticism.

Offshore drilling

Zinke largely stuck to his script during his appearance, one of several this week, pointing out that the budget proposal was a "starting point" and that it represented a "balanced" approach.

Members once again outlined concerns about the \$11.7 billion request and proposed cuts affecting a host of programs, including the Land and Water Conservation Fund, payments in lieu of taxes program, and the administration's Atlantic and Pacific offshore drilling push.

"All of a sudden, the talk is doing more with less, everyone tightening their belts, making sacrifices," said Grijalva, who complained about the 85 percent proposed cut to LWCF in particular.

He added: "But I don't see the oil and gas industry making sacrifices in this budget. I don't see polluters setting up any new cleanup fund to pay for their actions."

The Natural Resources panel boasts several members from California, and a couple of them took an opportunity this morning to grill Zinke over President Trump's April 28 executive order directing Interior to review offshore oil and gas drilling in the Atlantic and Pacific outer continental shelf regions, which President Obama declared off-limits under a five-year plan.

"We do not want new leasing off our coastline," said Rep. Jared Huffman (D-Calif.). "The people of California are simply not going to allow it to happen. You will be doing less with less if you attempt to drill for oil off the coast of California."

Zinke told Huffman the department plans to publish a request for information on the five-year plan. "I want to say in the next 30 days, if not sooner," said Zinke. "We think the whole five-year plan

will be done in two to three years."

'I don't have a director of anything'

Zinke today complained, as he has previously, that he is the only confirmed official in place at his department. "I've got about 70 appointments, not one that has gone through Senate confirmation yet," he told lawmakers, during the exchange with McEachin.

"I have five solicitors that are pending confirmation," Zinke said. "I don't have a deputy. I don't have a director of Fish and Wildlife. I don't have a director of parks. I don't have a director of anything."

Zinke has frozen hiring in Washington, D.C., and Denver, but told McEachin that he might be open to an exception to that if necessary.

Monuments review

Natural Resources Chairman Rob Bishop (R-Utah) praised Zinke for his "inclusive process" in the department's review of 27 national monuments, including two in Utah.

"After eight years, it is a breath of fresh air to have someone leading the department who understands the reason why it was created in the first place, and just how far its core statutory functions have strayed since that time," Bishop said.

The Utah Republican said he was committed to introducing legislation to help Zinke clean up ambiguities in the management of monuments, including Bears Ears.

Zinke has said previously that while the 1906 Antiquities Act gives the president authority to proclaim monuments, managing those properties — especially when they conflict with other designations such as wilderness areas that have separate federal restrictions — is challenging. And in those cases, it's Congress, not the president, with the authority to sort that out.

"The committee is ready to do any kind of legislation to succeed in any of those broader reforms you would like to do," Bishop said.

Reporter Jennifer Yachnin contributed.

On Fri, Jun 23, 2017 at 12:17 PM, Michael Nedd <mnedd@blm.gov> wrote:

Meredith,

Did you send out clips for yesterday? I'm trying to find an EE ?? article about sexual harassment issue in BLM.

Take care and have a wonderful day! :)

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A thought to consider "Do all the good you can, in all the ways you can, for all the people you can, while you can!"

From: Black, Meredith [mailto:mcblack@blm.gov]

Sent: Wednesday, June 21, 2017 4:43 PM

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Subject: E&E News Clips—June 21, 2017

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1. Zinke defends reorganization, budget to skeptical senators

Kellie Lunney, E&E News reporter

Published: Wednesday, June 21, 2017

Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke today defended his decision to reassign dozens of senior executives as part of a major departmentwide reorganization that is just getting underway.

<http://bit.ly/2sWdTpr>

2. Group demands documents on senior executive moves

Kellie Lunney, E&E News reporter

Published: Wednesday, June 21, 2017

A conservation group today filed a Freedom of Information Act request with Interior seeking details on the department's reassignment of dozens of career senior executives.

<http://bit.ly/2sUMnsT>

3. Interior to rewrite BLM rule

Pamela King, E&E News reporter

Published: Wednesday, June 21, 2017

Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke yesterday gave his most definitive indication to date that his agency would rework an Obama-era regulation to curb methane emissions from oil and gas operations on public lands.

<http://bit.ly/2sR8Je0>

4. Bishop to Grijalva: Have you Googled it?

Jennifer Yachnin, E&E News reporter

Published: Wednesday, June 21, 2017

House Natural Resources Chairman Rob Bishop (R-Utah) today offered an acerbic reply to his Democratic counterpart's plea for assistance in obtaining details on the Trump administration's ongoing review of dozens of national monuments: Why don't I Google that

for you?

<http://bit.ly/2tORreE>

5. More money, less production if royalties raised — GAO

Dylan Brown, E&E News reporter

Published: Wednesday, June 21, 2017

Oil, gas and coal production on public lands would likely dip if royalty rates were raised, but the federal government would still make more money, according to the Government Accountability Office.

<http://bit.ly/2rVQkIW>

6. Industry finds fracking poses little threat to drinking water

Published: Wednesday, June 21, 2017

A new study conducted by top scientists in Texas has found that the shale oil boom there has caused earthquakes, degraded natural resources, overwhelmed some communities, and even boosted the frequency and severity of traffic collisions, while enriching companies, residents and the state itself.

<http://bit.ly/2sqV7p2>

7. Interior pushes to freeze appeal as plans to nix rule advance

Ellen M. Gilmer, E&E News reporter

Published: Wednesday, June 21, 2017

As the White House reviews the Interior Department's plans to roll back an Obama-era hydraulic fracturing rule, government lawyers are again urging a court to pause related litigation.

<http://bit.ly/2sRfE6X>

8. Small producers complain of 'frack hits'

Published: Wednesday, June 21, 2017

In Oklahoma, small oil and gas producers say more than 100 of their wells have been damaged by hydraulic fracturing jobs done for large companies.

<http://bit.ly/2sBEXrl>

9. Zinke's answer about temperature is called 'stupid'

Brittany Patterson, E&E News reporter

Published: Wednesday, June 21, 2017

Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke evaded questions yesterday about the extent of rising temperatures during a Senate budget hearing for an agency that oversees fossil fuel development on a fifth of the nation's land.

<http://bit.ly/2sWQiVA>

10. Industry risks losing trillions from climate rules — report

Benjamin Hulac, E&E News reporter

Published: Wednesday, June 21, 2017

The global oil industry has trillions of dollars at risk from climate regulation, money that could be lost if governments clamp down on emissions, according to a report released today.

<http://bit.ly/2srdVot>

11. After some 'finesse,' reform bill coming soon — Murkowski

Geof Koss, E&E News reporter

Published: Wednesday, June 21, 2017

The leaders of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee will soon reintroduce a revised comprehensive energy package they hope will avoid the fate of last year's predecessor, which expired in the closing days of the 114th Congress after months of formal talks with the House collapsed.

<http://bit.ly/2sRb6NQ>

12. Panel announces marathon land, mining, water markup

Kellie Lunney, E&E News reporter

Published: Wednesday, June 21, 2017

The House Natural Resources Committee will begin consideration of 22 bills tomorrow, including legislation to approve the construction of a controversial road in Alaska and measures related to water, mining and forest management.

<http://bit.ly/2rDqhHc>

13. Staffer for 'No. 1 public lands enemy' moves to CEQ

Emily Holden and Corbin Hiar, E&E News reporters

Published: Wednesday, June 21, 2017

A former legislative assistant for a Republican senator who is a vocal critic of federal landownership has taken a job with the White House Council on Environmental Quality.

<http://bit.ly/2tu8cwu>

14. Department seeks input on which rules to kill

Jennifer Yachnin, E&E News reporter

Published: Wednesday, June 21, 2017

The Interior Department today kicked off its regulatory reform initiative, seeking public comment on which policies it should work to eliminate or amend.

<http://bit.ly/2sWEDpY>

15. Montanans don't want changes to Clinton-created site — poll

Jennifer Yachnin, E&E News reporter

Published: Wednesday, June 21, 2017

A majority of Montanans oppose reducing or eliminating the state's Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument, one of dozens of sites currently under review by the Trump administration, according to a new survey released today.

<http://bit.ly/2rSvvmj>

16. Western governors invite Zinke to discuss review

Jennifer Yachnin, E&E News reporter

Published: Wednesday, June 21, 2017

Western state governors involved in the development of conservation efforts for the greater sage grouse said this week they are "ready to engage" with Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke on his agency's ongoing review of federal plans.

<http://bit.ly/2rDIzbb>

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