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[HNR QFRs 6.22 FY 2018 budget zinke NPS-Antiquities Act-LWCF.docx](#)

All -- OMB did not clear BOR's questions until last week. So the NPS QFRs (which were cleared in August!) may now be stale.... So will you take a look at these cleared QFRs and let me know if there are any updates that are needed? In particular, there is a question on the workforce survey and NAGPRA (Gallego Q1 -4), Dyke Marsh (Beyer Q)... Is it possible to provide these edits today?? Let me know what might work. Thanks!!

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Questions from Rep. McClintock

Question 2. After years of talking and concerted efforts by telecommunications companies and concessioners, too many front country areas of our national parks and too many key road corridors in our parks still offer no cellular or WiFi connectivity. There are safety issues and lost opportunities to boost park experiences with helpful visitor information.

Q: Does the FY2018 budget envision additional WiFi connectivity requests for proposals?

Q: Will this be one of your priorities as Secretary?

Response: Yes, one of my top priorities is to expand recreational access to public lands and waters, and connectivity is one way to achieve this goal. As I have previously remarked, in parks, we're the old generation; the young generation appreciates connectivity and we should embrace that to make sure the park experience going down a trail is available on your phone. We will look to build public-private partnerships to make our outdoor recreation experience even better.

Question 3. Across the National Park System stays are down. RV overnights in national park campgrounds are down more than two million, or almost 50%, at a time when the RV market is booming. Recently while speaking to the Recreational Vehicle Industry Association you stated: "As the secretary, I don't want to be in the business of running campgrounds."

Q: Does the FY2018 budget include a major push to improve and transfer campground operations?

Response: This budget is focused on leveraging public-private partnerships in order to improve visitor experiences on public lands and waters, while also helping to reduce the Department's maintenance backlog. The Park Service has a long history of working with our partners and concessioners to create positive experiences for visitors. We look to improve and build upon that cooperation.

Question 8. Increasing Public Private Partnerships is one of the many ways to help reduce the National Park Service maintenance backlog.

Which types of P3s do you believe will be most effective in addressing the backlog while also upholding the guiding principles of the NPS?

Response: In July, I hosted a roundtable meeting focused on expanding public-private partnerships on America's public lands in order to make the outdoor recreation experience even better. Public-private partnerships can help address the backlog by upgrading visitor

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accommodations, including RV hookups and campgrounds, expanding visitor services, including boat ramps and cafeterias, to name a few.

Question 9. Historic leasing is an example of a public-private partnership that could help alleviate the deferred maintenance backlog.

What are your recommendations for how to expand this innovative approach?

Response: The Department is currently reviewing opportunities to lease under-utilized federal properties, both historic and nonhistoric, as one approach to addressing the maintenance backlog. Public-private partnerships will help reduce the Department's maintenance backlog, while improving the visitor experience on public lands and waters.

Question 10. What are the goals that the National Park Service hoped to achieve with the Capital investment strategy?

Does the focus on the high-priority projects come at the expense of lower-priority projects?

Response: The President's budget proposes to balance the Federal government's budget by 2027, in order to do this priorities must be identified. The 2018 budget prioritizes taking care of the assets we currently own. The majority of ongoing operational requirements cannot be deferred and maintenance needs have been postponed for too long.

Questions from Rep. LaMalfa

Questions from Ranking Member Grijalva

Border Wall:

Question 21. Secretary Zinke: You have indicated support for President Trump's proposal to construct a wall along the southern border. Construction of such a border wall would split the Tohono O'odham Nation and threaten the tribe's connection to its ancestral lands. How will President Trump's border wall respect tribal sovereignty and self-determination?

Response: I defer to the Department of Homeland Security for decisions on the details of the wall, but I expect the Department of Homeland Security will work closely in consultation with the Tohono O'odham Nation as it moves forward to secure our borders in accordance with the President's directives.

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Question 22. Federal agencies are required to initiate formal consultation with Fish and Wildlife Service if their actions “may affect” a listed species or designated critical habitat. President Trump’s border wall would affect listed species or designated critical habitat. Federal agencies are required to prepare an environmental impact statement on major Federal actions “significantly affecting the quality of the human environment.” President Trump’s border wall constitutes a major action significantly affecting the environment. Have the Departments of Homeland Security and U.S. Customs and Border Protection conducted a new analysis of the proposed wall?

a. Do they intend to do so before any construction takes place?

Response: I cannot speak to the actions undertaken or contemplated by another Department outside my purview and I defer to the Department of Homeland Security on this question. More generally, under my leadership, Interior bureaus will fully comply with the President’s directives and existing law as they pertain to securing our borders and protecting the environment.

Question 23. As you have noted, building a wall along the southern border is complex. Where then, would the wall go? On the Texan side of the Rio Grande? Down the middle of the river? Through Big Bend National Park? Through Tribal lands?

Response: As noted above, I defer to the Department of Homeland Security for decisions on the details of the wall.

Question 24. How exactly will President Trump extract payment from Mexico to pay for the border wall?

Response: Decisions related to payments necessary to secure our border will be made by the President, in accordance with applicable laws.

Question 25. Should money come from the Interior Department budget if Mexico refuses to pay?

Response: The Department of Homeland Security is the agency with responsibility for securing our borders.

National Heritage Areas:

Question 26. Last year Senator John McCain requested that the National Park Service undertake a “Reconnaissance Study” of the Yuma Quartermaster Depot to determine its suitability to tell the nationally significant story of the past, present, and future of the Colorado River. I support his efforts. We know that the work in the field has been done by the NPS Intermountain Region. Can your office provide me a status report on the

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“Reconnaissance Study”?

Response: I understand that the NPS continues to make progress on the reconnaissance survey of the Yuma Quartermaster Depot, but has not yet completed it.

Question 27. Secretary Zinke, I understand that your community of Great Falls is considering asking for designation as a National Heritage Area. My community in Arizona has had pretty good results in Yuma with the program. What are your general thoughts about the National Heritage Area program, which seeks to conserve national and historic resources through a community-based approach, as opposed to a top-down approach?

Response: National Heritage Areas provide cultural benefits, and are an example of the benefits of partnerships. However, the President’s budget proposes to balance the Federal government’s budget by 2027, in order to do this priorities must be identified. The 2018 budget prioritizes taking care of the assets we currently own. The majority of ongoing operational requirements cannot be deferred and maintenance needs have been postponed for too long. The National Heritage Area Program can be supported through partnerships and community engagement.

Protecting Public Lands:

Question 33. Mr. Secretary, you’ve said repeatedly that the review of national monuments is not about selling public land. Can you guarantee that not one acre of federal land will be given to state or county control during your tenure as Secretary?

a. If you do give that land away, can you guarantee none of it will be sold to private interests?

Response: As I have previously stated on multiple occasions, I am firmly against the large-scale sale or transfer of federal lands. I also support taking care of the land we own. In all instances, we will comply with the laws established by Congress for the management of our Federal lands.

National Monuments Review:

Question 34. Mr. Secretary, you’ve said the governor and state congressional delegation have to be consulted before you make recommendations on national monuments. So far you’ve only met with the Republican governors of Utah and Maine. How many governors do you plan to meet with as part of this review?

a. Just to look at the states affected by this monument review, have you reached out yet to the Democratic governors of Washington, California, Oregon, Hawaii, Colorado, Connecticut, Rhode Island or Montana?

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Response: To comply with the President's Executive Order, and provide a recommendation to the President, we have sought input from stakeholders on all levels, from Governors, Tribal leaders, and Members of Congress, to locals on the ground and county commissioners and I thank you for the time you took to provide your written comments as well. We took all this information into consideration before making recommendations to the President.

Question 35. Mr. Secretary, during your hearing before the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee you informed Senator Gardner that Canyons of the Ancients wasn't "currently on our priority list."

- a. Will you share with this committee what is on your priority review list?**
- b. If the public comment period is still underway what determines whether a monument is a priority for review?**
- c. What does it take for a monument to be left alone or removed from the review list?**
- d. How can the public trust this review process if we have just now discovered that there is a second list of monuments that are especially threatened by this review?**
- e. Shouldn't the public, elected officials and other stakeholders have been aware of this when the comment period started?**

Response: On May 11, 2017, the Notice of the Opportunity for Public Comment was published in the Federal Register, which included a list of national monuments under review by the Secretary in accordance with the President's Executive Order. The public comment period related to the Bears Ears National Monument closed on May 26, 2017, and the comment period for all other National Monuments closed on July 10, 2017. The Secretary evaluated comments and, in certain instances, visited monuments as he prepared his recommendations for the President. As monuments were reviewed and found to require no modification, the Department removed them from the review and letting press and local stakeholders know the Department's decision to keep all interested parties informed. A draft report was submitted to the President on August 24, 2017. Final action and authority rests with him.

The Antiquities Act:

Question 37. Mr. Secretary, I have heard you say on numerous occasions that your top priority as Secretary of Interior is to ensure that the federal government is a good neighbor and steward of public resources. Recommending executive action to decrease protections for national monuments would go directly against this fundamental principle. Does the President have the legal to authority to shrink or abolish national monuments?

Response: Being a good neighbor remains one of the Department's top priorities. Our goal throughout this review process has been to listen to our state, local, tribal and federal partners

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and make recommendations that reflect the wishes of the neighbors who most affected by these monuments. Ultimately, however, our role in the review of monuments is to provide a recommendation to the President. Final action and authority rests with him.

National Park Service Services:

Question 38. Since 2011, National Park Service commercial services staff has declined by 10 percent. Meanwhile, the number of commercial leases has increased by 25 percent, and the number of Commercial Use Agreements has nearly tripled. Moreover, the program's workload keeps growing, particularly as the agency begins to award new contracts under the Visitor Experience Improvements Authority established by last year's National Park Service Centennial Act. Your budget proposal includes an over half a million dollar cut to commercial services. How do you plan to increase P3 partnerships and ensure adequate oversight of public resources while reducing the amount of staff devoted to commercial services?

Response: The President's budget proposes to balance the Federal government's budget by 2027, in order to do this priorities must be identified. The 2018 budget prioritizes taking care of the assets we currently own. It also focuses on leveraging public-private partnerships in order to improve visitor experiences on public lands and waters. In addition, as we move forward, I believe that we have to realign our employees to make sure that the focus is at the field level, rather than in layers of bureaucracy. I am committed to providing our front lines in the parks with the appropriate resources to get the job done.

Questions Regarding Review of National Monuments:

On April 26, 2017, President Trump ordered a sweeping review of a wide range of national monuments established under the Antiquities Act in the last twenty years. The Executive Order directed the Department of the Interior with 45 days to issue a report on the Bears Ears National Monument in Utah and any other monument determined appropriate for inclusion in the interim report. The justification for this review was the allegation that certain monument designations were made without sufficient public input and a review was needed to allow the American people to comment on their national monuments. The justification for this review was the allegation that certain monument designations were made without sufficient public input and a review was needed to allow the American people to comment on their national monuments.

Question 88. In the spirit of transparency and open government, please provide a detailed itinerary and list of your meetings while in Utah and any other location associated with the review of national monuments.

Question 89. Additionally, please provide an account of all comments received during the public comment period that includes a tally of positive and negative

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submissions.

Response: A draft report, which includes the Department's findings and recommendations on national monuments was submitted to the President on August 24, 2017 in accordance with the President's Executive Order. Final action and authority rests with him.

Questions from Rep. Brown

Questions from Rep. McEachin

Sexual Harassment:

Question 1. Secretary Zinke, during questioning at the hearing, you agreed that your hiring freeze was the reason the DOI attorneys needed to work through the backlog of sexual harassment allegations have not yet been hired. But you seem to blame others for that. There are only two people that can approve exceptions to your hiring freeze; you and your Deputy Secretary – or acting Deputy Secretary in the this case. There are really only two people to blame for the failure to do what it takes to work through the backlog. When will those attorneys in the ELLU unit be hired?

Response: Thank you for bringing this issue to my attention. Hiring in Washington DC and Denver is still under a freeze for anything GS-12 and above. I look forward to working towards a solution to this problem. As I have stated before, I have a zero tolerance policy for sexual harassment and the Department remains committed to addressing this issue head on.

Question 2. Sexual harassment is a sizable, difficult, complex problem that requires a serious long term commitment. A problem like that needs a plan with clear goals and a viable path to achieving them. I have not found a plan for NPS. I could cobble together the promises made in various statements, memos, and briefing notes to see what has been said but I have not found a plan. Without a plan, it's hard to address the problem efficiently and have accountability for those in charge of getting rid of sexual harassment. Is there a written plan for how NPS will address its sexual harassment problem?

Response: The National Park Service's plan is to pursue a number of proactive strategies on multiple fronts to address the harassment issues. First, the NPS is examining the breadth and depth of the problems with a workplace survey of both permanent and seasonal employees. Second, the NPS is encouraging employees to consult with a newly-established Ombuds Office if they encounter workplace problems. Third, the NPS is improving training programs aimed at recognizing and addressing harassment. Fourth, the NPS is seeking input from employee resource groups. Fifth, the NPS building stronger procedures for reporting, investigating, tracking, and resolving work environment issues. And sixth, the NPS is acting as quickly as possible when new cases are brought to its attention. These issues did not develop overnight and

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they will not be solved overnight, however, NPS is committed to bringing a culture of transparency, respect and accountability back to the organization.

Inspector General:

1. Secretary Zinke, would a permanent Inspector General help you and your department function more efficiently and transparently?

Response: The Department appreciates the work of Interior's Office of the Inspector General, currently led by the Deputy Inspector General Mary L. Kendall, in the detection and investigation of waste, fraud and abuse. I would note that the appointment of an Inspector General is a decision to be made by the President, with the advice and consent of the Senate.

Questions from Rep. Gallego

Sexual Harassment:

Question 1. Secretary Zinke, as a follow up to Mrs. Tsongas' questions during the hearing, please address the following. A workforce survey on sexual harassment is an important tool available to those that are serious about rooting out sexual harassment in their organizations. As you alluded to in your testimony, the military has a sexual assault and harassment problem of its own. In seeking to address this grave and prevalent issue, the military now conducts such a survey every other year. Making the surveys recurring is an honest way to track progress in eliminating sexual harassment, helps refine departmental efforts, and sends a clear signal to employees that sexual harassment is a priority.

With this in mind, will the Department commit to ensuring the National Park Service (NPS) performs its survey on a recurring basis?

Response: As we await the final data on the workforce survey, which is being compiled and externally peer reviewed, we are mindful of the opportunity to perform this survey on a recurring basis. Any such decision will be informed by the results and effectiveness of the current survey.

Question 2. In his recent testimony before the Senate, acting NPS Director Michael Reynolds said this about the results of the sexual harassment workforce survey they are currently conducting: "I assure you that we are committed to transparency and once we receive the final data, we will share it widely with this subcommittee as well as all employees and interested stakeholders." It's a step in the right direction but accountability requires true transparency. And true transparency means anyone— not just the employees or stakeholders— can see the results. Again, the military published the results of its survey for all to see.

In your testimony before the committee, you indicated your openness to sharing the results

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of both the January 2017 survey and the seasonal survey scheduled for July 2017. Please confirm that the Department will make both survey results available on the public-facing website.

Response: The Department will work with the NPS to ensure that the survey is appropriately shared with stakeholders.

Question 3. You indicated during the hearing that the sexual harassment issues known to exist in the National Park Service “may be department-wide.” Accordingly, and given your stated zero-tolerance policy, please explain what efforts you will undertake to expand information gathering and response efforts so to include the totality of Interior Department personnel.

Response: As Secretary of the Interior, I am committed to combatting all forms of harassment. On April 12, 2017, I issued a memorandum to all employees setting forth the Department’s policy on harassment. I directed the Chief Human Capital Officer and the Solicitor to establish additional harassment reporting procedures for managers and supervisors. I also ensured that all managers and supervisors throughout the Department will now be required to complete training on preventing harassment and improving the workplace environment. In addition, I have directed the Department to update its policy, procedures, and guidance to address the impact of harassment as it relates to performance and conduct. This is an important and ongoing process here at the Department and I look forward to working with you and your colleagues to craft real solutions that protect employees and hold wrongdoers accountable.

Questions from Rep. Torres

4. I understand that the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act Review Committee has been suspended as part of a larger review of DOI committees. This is congressionally-charted committee and does critical work across the country in the rightful return of human remains to Indian tribes. Do you have an estimate of when the department’s review will be completed and the committee re-activated?

Response: In order to make sure all commissions are giving local communities adequate opportunities to comment on park management decisions, the Department is reviewing the more than 200 boards, committees, and commissions under its responsibility. Throughout this review process, committees and commissions have been given the option to pursue waivers to meet. We recognize the critical work performed by these committees, and the review is scheduled to be completed later this year so that commissions can get back to work.

Questions from Rep. Hanabusa

Questions from Rep. Sablan

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Questions from Rep. Napolitano

Question 1. President Trump's executive order on the Review of Designations Under the Antiquities Act on April 26, 2017 stated, "Within 120 days of the date of this order, the Secretary shall provide a final report to the President." Do you expect the report to be finished on time?

a. Will your report recommend any action and/or changes through the legislative process or through executive order?

b. After these recommends, how can local residents, business and cities be confident to implement their city and business plans without fear that the President or the Interior Department will review their nearby designation again?

Response: A draft report, which includes the Department's findings and recommendations on national monuments in accordance with the President's Executive Order, was submitted to the President on August 24, 2017. As we move forward in managing the federal lands, we will continue to coordinate with all levels, from locals on the ground and county commissioners to Governors, Tribal leaders, and Members of Congress to fulfill our mission to be a good neighbor.

Question 2. Do you plan to visit the San Gabriel Mountains National Monument before the comment period ends on July 10, 2017?

a. If not, how do you plan to make a decision on the San Gabriel Mountains National Monument without meeting with local residents, businesses and cities?

b. What other information besides public comments made online will you take into consideration? Where will that information come from and who? How can local residents, businesses and cities ensure that that information is in their best interest?

Response: Each monument is being reviewed in a holistic fashion. Although the Secretary was not able to visit the San Gabriel Mountains National Monument before the comment period ended, we heard from the local communities including state, county and federally elected officials, tribes, local businesses, and trade associations and I thank you for the input you provided to me. For all of the reviews, each group's input is weighed as we craft recommendations for the President.

Question 3. The monument designation has helped San Gabriel communities leverage additional federal dollars for critically needed recreation, trail maintenance, trash collection and fire prevention. Seeing that three major fires – the 2009 Station Fire, the 2014 Colby Fire, and the 2015 Cabin Fire – have threatened our local communities. How do you expect our region to continue to fight forest fires without this critical designation?

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Response: Wildfires are not constrained by land ownership or land designation. The Department is committed to ensuring that all our firefighting assets are utilized in the most efficient way possible, regardless of land designation, and that we work with other federal agencies, along with our state and local partners, to improve our operational efficiency and take advantage of the firefighting infrastructure and assets that are currently in place.

Question 4. Thanks to the help of the designation, the monument has raised more than \$5 mil through the San Gabriel Mountains National Monument fund. One example, is Coca-Cola who has donated \$900,000 toward clean-up efforts in the forest. This was possible because USFS land cannot form private-public partnership unless they are designated a national monument. Seeing that the USFS and Interior Department budgets continue to shrink, do you believe public-private partnerships like the one listed above is important for our parks?

a. Without a monument designation, how do you plan to allow USFS lands to form these partnerships?

Response: We support innovative public-private partnerships, and believe that they are important for management of all federal lands, regardless of designation or land managing agency.

Questions from Rep. Huffman

Question 1. Reliable broadband access can frequently be hard to come by in rural communities that border our public lands. As you may know, I recently introduced the Public Lands Telecommunications Act, which provides public land management agencies with fee retention authority to increase funding for telecommunications deployment, and cooperative agreement authority to improve partnerships with local communities and the private sector to expand broadband access. I have long believed that our public land management agencies could do more to improve broadband access in remote and rural communities.

How do you believe the Department of the Interior could achieve this aim with new, sustained funding for telecommunications deployment, as well as cooperative agreement authority to improve partnerships with our constituents and the private sector?

Response: The Administration has not been requested to provide its position on your bill, H.R. 2425, the Public Lands Telecommunications Act, which was reported out of the House Natural Resources Committee on June 27, 2017. However, the Department supports innovative public-private partnerships, and believes that they are important for management of all federal lands. I have consistently advocated for increased internet access on our federal lands to help enhance the outdoor experience for visitors, particularly millennials.

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Question 5. On June 20, 2017, when Senator Cory Gardner asked you whether Canyons of the Ancients National Monument would be impacted by the broader federal review of NMs, you mentioned that it wasn't on your "priority review list." This was despite the Canyons of the Ancients NM being specifically named on your list of National Monuments under review. Again, the following day (June 21, 2017), during a Senate subcommittee hearing, you indicated to Senator Tom Udall that you were unlikely to recommend changes to any New Mexico monuments.

Stating that some National Monuments will be left alone, even though they were listed on the DOI "priority review list" and before the public comment period is finished, seems arbitrary. Which national monuments are actually on your "priority review list?"

Response: All of the national monuments listed in May 11, 2017, Federal Register have been reviewed by the Secretary in accordance with the President's Executive Order. The Secretary evaluated comments and, in certain instances, visited monuments as he prepared his recommendations for the President. As monuments were reviewed and found to require no modification, the Department removed them from the review and let press and local stakeholders know the Department's decision to keep all interested parties informed. A draft report was submitted to the President on August 24, 2017. Final action and authority rests with him.

Part II

Questions from Rep. Beyer

Question 1. Please confirm for me that the contract for Dyke Marsh is on track to be awarded before the end of the fiscal year.

Response: I am advised that the NPS expects to award the contract for construction at Dyke Marsh this fall, but it will probably not occur before the end of the fiscal year since not all permits are yet in hand. However, I understand that the construction documents are complete, a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) has already been advertised to prospective bidders, and the permit application process is well underway.

Question 2. I increasingly hear concerns about traffic and traffic safety along the GW Parkway.

a. Please indicate how the Department tracks usage statistics for the Parkway.

Response: I understand that there are traffic counters on the roadway that track the number of vehicles on the George Washington Memorial Parkway (Parkway), trail counters on the Mount Vernon Trail to track bicycle and pedestrian usage, and entrance counters at some park sites that track vehicles and tour buses.

b. Please indicate how the Department tracks accidents along the Parkway.

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Response: The United States Park Police (USPP) utilizes a centralized database, the Department's Incident Management, Analysis and Reporting System (IMARS), that allows law enforcement officers to electronically document accidents/incidents.

c. What is the Department doing to increase the safety of the parkway? Please speak to the Department's plans for Morningside Lane and how it will budget appropriately to be able to address safety concerns.

Response: The safety of park visitors is of the utmost importance. I understand that the NPS has implemented several recommendations from a 2016 Federal Highway Association safety assessment of Morningside Lane. Also, NPS has scheduled an additional study to begin next year to identify alternate traffic patterns within the local community to increase safety at Morningside Lane.

d. What is the Department doing to improve the accuracy of its traffic counts?

Response: I am told that the NPS is currently assessing equipment along the Parkway and working to replace those pieces that are in disrepair.

e. What is the Department doing to improve how it tracks accidents?

Response: The USPP continue to work on crash reporting in IMARS. Specifically dispatchers are being trained to document detailed locations of crashes. This associated with previous improvements should allow for more detailed and accurate reporting.