

To: BLM_CA_LeadershipTeam_StateWide[blm_ca_leadershipteam_statewide@blm.gov]; BLM_CA_PAO[blm_ca_pao@blm.gov]; BLM_CA_SO_EA[blm_ca_so_ea@blm.gov]; Niebauer, Erica[erica.niebauer@sol.doi.gov]; Martha Maciel[mmaciel@blm.gov]
From: Webster, Sarah
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CALIFORNIA

Thoroughly reviewed Cadiz project to provide water, jobs: Guest commentary
The Sun Columns, March 20

U.S. Sen. Dianne Feinstein recently authored a column decrying the Cadiz Water Project as bad for the environment, in violation of federal regulations and a threat to a national monument. That's not the Cadiz Water Project I know, nor the project that's been publicly reviewed, approved and upheld in our state's courts. Unfortunately, Sen. Feinstein, D-Calif., seems to have overlooked key facts about a project that will help California, not hurt it...but there is no nexus for federal review. The 43-mile Cadiz pipeline will be built underground, alongside an existing railroad route, to avoid federal land or pristine open space.

Months after Obama national monument designation, controversy erupts over 2,200 homes planned nearby
The Desert Sun, March 20

A prospective residential development in Desert Hot Springs, first proposed in 2007, is generating controversy, splitting the city between those who feel increasing density could threaten the natural environment surrounding the city and those who feel such projects could help promote the city and its natural features... The project site sits at the entrance to the Mission Creek Preserve, which serves as a gateway to the Sand to Snow National Monument...

BLM opens oil lease hearings
The Californian, March 16

An orderly audience of about 50 people attended a rally and hearing on Thursday regarding the Bureau of Land Management's effort to resume leasing public land in California to oil companies. "The BLM has not held a single oil-lease sale in the state since 2013," a news release from the Center for Biological Diversity states, "when a federal judge ruled that the agency violated the law by issuing oil leases in Monterey County without considering the environmental risks of fracking."

Trump's BLM May Lease 700,000 Acres of California for Drilling - Several decisions and a local measure have already ruled that the Bureau of Land Management cannot sell leases to drill on public land.
telesur, March 15

California may lease out 700,000 acres of land across the state to exploit oil resources that the Bureau of Land Management has repeatedly failed to sell in the

past.

Resist Trump's BLM' Rally at Salinas Hearing on Fracking on Public Land - Federal Plan Could Auction Off 700,000 Acres in California to Oil Industry

Center for Biological Diversity, March 15

Dozens of people will stage a “Resist Trump’s BLM” rally on Thursday afternoon outside a Salinas hearing on the federal Bureau of Land Management’s plan to open hundreds of thousands of acres of public land in California to oil drilling and fracking. The hearing is part of BLM’s effort to resume leasing public land in California to oil companies.

Knight Resubmits Bill to Block Cemex-Soledad Mine

Scv tv, March 16

Representative Steve Knight, CA-25, reintroduced a bipartisan measure on Thursday that would prevent Cemex or any other company from mining in Soledad Canyon. H.R. 1557, The Soledad Canyon Consistency Act, co-sponsored by nearby Representatives Judy Chu (CA-27), Rep. Adam Schiff (CA-28), and Rep. Brad Sherman (CA-30), would withdraw the mineral rights for land in the eastern portion of the Santa Clarita Valley, effectively blocking future mining projects in the area.

Travel photo of the week: Rare desert super bloom in California

theguardian.com, March 16

The normally parched landscapes of southern and eastern California have been transformed into a colourful oasis in the past week as swathes of wild flowers have burst into life across the region’s deserts. Unexpected heavy autumn rains and cold winter conditions have caused a rare “super bloom” that last occurred in the El Niño years of 1998 and 2005. These purple sand verbena and desert sunflowers can be seen around the Amboy Crater in the Mojave Trails national monument off Route 66.

NATIONAL

The Antiquities Act and national monuments. A good idea gone bad

Idaho State Journal, March 18

That the President of the United States is hereby authorized, in his discretion, to declare by public proclamation historic landmarks, historic and prehistoric structures, and other objects of historic or scientific interest that are situated upon the lands owned or controlled by the Government of the United States to be national monuments, and may reserve as a part thereof parcels of land, the limits of which in all cases shall be confined to the smallest area compatible with proper care and management of the objects to be protected... I find the process of Monument designation, especially as it applied to Bears Ears, to be troubling. Especially so in light of the fact that it is entirely possible to create National Monuments, such as The Berryessa Snow Mountain National Monument (also designated by President Obama in 2015), with a great deal of buy in from nearly all stakeholders.

White House delays release of climate executive action

The Hill, March 20

The White House has pushed back the release of an executive order related to federal climate change policies, sources confirmed on Monday. President Trump was expected to sign an order as early as Monday beginning the process of ending several climate initiatives advanced by the Obama administration. But the White House has pushed back that timetable until potentially next week, two sources told The Hill.

Sarah K. Webster

Lead Public Affairs Specialist
Office of Communications
Bureau of Land Management California State Office
Office: (916) 978 4622