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INTERIOR DAILY COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

NEWS TO SHARE:

Las Vegas Review Journal: EDITORIAL: A smaller Gold Butte no big deal

“Trigger alert! — many rural residents living near these new designations, including those in Nevada, want no part of the more stringent land-use restrictions that accompany monument status. It’s worth noting that Mesquite officials had requested the Gold Butte modification to ensure the city maintained access to certain water rights... But the idea that a slight reduction in Gold Butte’s size will result in environmental catastrophe — particularly in a state where some 85 percent of the land is already under the domain of distant Beltway bureaucrats — is patently ridiculous.”

The Bend Bulletin (OR): Editorial: Cascade-Siskiyou should be shrunk

“Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke clearly recognizes how damaging national monument designation can be to those who live nearby. Oregon’s Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument, and his suggestions about what should be done with it, make both points. In a memo Zinke wrote to President Donald Trump after a four-month study of monuments created since 1996, he recommends trimming four of them, including the one in Oregon.”

Las Cruces Sun-News: Leak of Zinke review was a fitting ending: Editorial

“But for all of that, we still take this leaked report as good news. We can move forward with plans to promote and market the national monument without this threat hanging over our heads.”

The Democrat Herald: Editorial: Fire season lingers here, in Congress

“Last week, Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke directed land managers and park superintendents to be more aggressive in cutting down small trees and underbrush to help stop fires from becoming the high-intensity unpredictable fires that we’ve frequently seen this season. A memo from Zinke didn’t call for any new spending, but he urged federal officials to be “innovative” and use all tools available to prevent and fight fires. It’s not clear what exactly Zinke has in mind, but he probably isn’t calling for a return to the days when federal agencies did their best to put out every forest fire as soon as it was spotted. (That helped to created the conditions we see now in forests across the West, choked with underbrush that fuels fires.)”

CORRECTING THE RECORD:

Boston Globe: Katahdin, marine monument may get less protection under Trump

“US Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke has recommended that President Trump make significant changes to 10 national monuments, including proposals to allow commercial fishing in a protected expanse off Cape Cod and to open woodlands in Northern Maine to “active timber management.” The recommendations add a surprising uncertainty to two vast areas set aside last year by the Obama administration, which established the Northeast Canyons and Seamounts Marine National Monument, about 130 miles off Cape Cod, and the Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument, some 87,000 acres in Maine’s North Woods.”

- DOI is not commenting on the document, referring press inquiries to the White

House.

- **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.”
- **White House statement:**
 - "The Trump Administration does not comment on leaked documents, especially internal drafts which are still under review by the President and relevant agencies."

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.

OTHER TOP STORIES:

THE HILL: Zinke puts 'Big Buck Hunter' in Interior Dept cafeteria to promote hunting

“Zinke's announcement follows his submittal of a formal report to President Trump recommending that several national monuments be downsized and opened up for hunting, fishing and other outdoor recreational activities. The game features plastic guns which can be used to shoot animated deer on the console's screen. The Interior Department also announced the addition of "Big Buck Hunter" to the cafeteria in a statement.”

TALKING POINTS

- Completing the Department's goals and objectives hinges on employee awareness and involvement. Having the "Big Buck Hunter Pro" arcade game will get many employees involved in sportmen's season, in turn furthering the Department's mission of wildlife and habitat conservation.
- The installation of the arcade game comes on the heels of a groundbreaking directive from Secretary Zinke to expand hunting access on public lands
- This September and October, the Department of the Interior is setting its sights on the continued role that hunters and anglers play in wildlife conservation.

CNN: Hurricane Maria pounds Puerto Rico with 145 mph winds

"Hurricane Maria made landfall Wednesday in southeast Puerto Rico, ripping trees out of the ground and entangling two-thirds of the island in hurricane-force winds. Maria made landfall near the city of Yabucoa with winds of 155 mph -- just 2 mph short of Category 5 status, the National Hurricane Center said. By 9 a.m., those winds had weakened to 145 mph. But Maria is still a Category 4 hurricane, capable of ripping roofs off houses. The storm was so fierce, it broke two National Weather Service radars on the island Wednesday."

TALKING POINTS

- As of 9/16, the **U.S. Department of the Interior** (DOI) currently has a total of 193 personnel supporting FEMA missions related to Hurricanes.
- There are currently 900,000 people without power in Puerto Rico.
- Interior's Bureau of Indian Affairs has so far has deployed 75 of 125 approved personnel from BIA, Tribes and DOI bureaus to support the Seminole Tribe for Irma relief.
- For updates on Hurricane operations of other Interior bureaus, please go to their hurricane web sites (hyperlinked here): [USGS](#), the [National Park Service](#), the [Office of Insular Affairs](#) (re: USVI and Puerto Rico), and [U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service](#).

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