

From: Domenech, Douglas
To: [Scott Hommel](#); [Nancy Guiden](#); [Mashburn, Lori](#); [Daniel Jorjani](#); [James Cason](#); [Megan Bloomgren](#); [Swift, Heather](#); [Micah Chambers](#); [Magallanes, Downey](#); [Bauserman, Christine](#); [Laura Rigas](#); [Caroline Boulton](#)
Subject: Interior Cabinet Affairs Report for 5/8/17
Date: Tuesday, May 09, 2017 6:53:59 AM
Attachments: [DOI DAILY UPDATE FOR CABINET AFFAIRS 5-8-17.docx](#)

Sorry I neglected to send this to you yesterday. The report was submitted to Cabinet Affairs though.

DOI DAILY UPDATE FOR CABINET AFFAIRS – 5/8/17

Doug Domenech, Senior Advisor

Status of the Secretary

The Secretary is traveling in Utah having meetings on the President's EO on National Monuments.

TODAY: The Secretary will:

- have breakfast meeting with Utah Federal Delegation.
- Fly over Grand Staircase Escalante National Monument en route
- Black Hawk Helicopter Tour (South Portion of Monument)
- HOLD for Media Access - Bears Ears National Monument
- hiking Tour of Bears Ears National Monument
- Meeting with Friends of Cedar Mesa
- Dinner at Edge of Cedar Mesa Museum Hosted by Governor Herbert

SCHEDULE:

Tuesday, May 9, 2017

The Nature Conservancy's Dugout Ranch

HOLD: Media Access - Trailhead at Bears Ears National Monument

Tour Monument via Horseback to Predetermined Sites

Wheels Up Blanding, UT (KBDG) en route Kanab, UT (KKNB)

Wednesday, May 10, 2017

Breakfast Meeting with Kane and Garfield County Commissioners and Area Legislators

Driving Tour of Portions of Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument

State Helicopter Tour of Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument

HOLD: Media Access

Wheels Up Kanab, UT (KKNB) en route Salt Lake City, UT (SLC)

Holiday Inn Express & Suites Salt Lake City-Airport East

Thursday, May 11, 2017

POLITICAL EVENT: Keynote Remarks at the RNC Spring Meeting Dinner

Friday, May 12, 2017

Wheels down Billings, MT

VPOTUS lands at 1:00pm MDT

Arrive at Westmoreland Coal Company Tour of Westmoreland Coal Company Property on Horseback

Roundtable with Tribal Leaders & Absaloka Mine Energy Producers

POLITICAL EVENT: Rally for Greg Gianforte, Candidate for MT-AL

VPOTUS remarks at 6:35PM

Long Range: 5/25-5/28. The Secretary will participate in a CODEL sponsored by Senator Murkowski. Arctic Council. Norway, Greenland, Alaska. The Secretary is set to keynote the Alaska Oil & Gas Association meeting in Anchorage 5/31.

Upcoming Media

Speaking Invitations

Accepted

5/16 DOI Annual Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Ceremony (DC)

5/31 Alaska Oil and Gas Association Conference remarks in Anchorage

Regretted

5/10 Association of California Water Agencies 2017 Spring Conference (Monterey, CA)

5/11 Ball on the Mall (DC) (I forgot to add this one last week)

5/11 Safari Club International Lobby Day (Crystal City, VA)

5/12 Heritage Foundation's Edwin Meese III Center for Legal and Judicial Studies' 2017 Spring Legal Strategy Forum (Colorado Springs, CO)

5/16 Western Growers' Board of Directors Meeting (DC)

5/19 Montana Logging Association Annual Meeting (Bozeman, MT)

5/20 Zoar Maifest National Historic Landmark Designation (Zoar, OH)

5/23 7th Annual Massachusetts Fallen Heroes Dinner (Boston, MA)

6/3 Ducks Unlimited National Convention (San Antonio, TX)

Outstanding Invitations in Process

5/16 BLM's Agent of the Year and Ranger of the Year Award Ceremony (DC) (waiting on logistics)

5/23 Southwest Border Forum (Phoenix, AZ)

5/24 Virginia Chamber of Commerce Energy Conference

5/24 National Wildlife Refuge Association (DC)

5/25 US Oil & Gas Association Board of Directors Meeting (DC)

6/5 Society of American Indian Government Employees Annual Training Program (Scottsdale, AZ)

6/6 Recreation Vehicle Industry Association Joint Committee Lunch (DC)

Emergency Management

USGS continues to deploy crews in response to flooding in Indiana and Missouri, where recent storm systems affected many river basins in the area. In Ohio, a storm system entering the area on Friday prompted deployment of 4 USGS crews, where minor to moderate flooding has affected the Portage, Tiffin, Blanchard, Auglaize, Muskingum, and Cuyahoga river basins.

In Georgia, the West Mims Fire in the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge has burned 129,746 (+18,114) acres. The fire is 12 (no change)-percent contained and managed by a Type-1 Incident Management Team with 624 (+121) personnel assigned, including 102 (+25) DOI personnel. There are 502 (+415) residences and 7 (-10) commercial structures threatened. There are 79 (+79) evacuees. Active fire behavior was observed during this reporting period. The main danger exists on the southeast corner of the fire, where more than 11,000 acres were consumed this weekend, forcing evacuations in St. George. Ten helicopters are conducting air attacks in the southeast corner of the fire. The containment date remains November 1.

Inspector General

Summary: Company Pleads Guilty to Concealing Violation of the Clean Water Act

Report Date: April 10, 2017

OIG initiated an investigation after receiving allegations that Champion Technologies Inc. (Champion), and four other companies concealed oil sheens from a Gulf of Mexico offshore oil platform, and altered water samples prior to testing mandated by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The purpose of the testing was to ensure that water discharged into the Gulf of Mexico during offshore operations met environmental standards.

We conducted a joint investigation with EPA's Criminal Investigation Division and found that between 2010 and 2012, employees of an offshore oil and gas facility operator purchased 4,025 gallons of a chemical product from Champion, and both companies knew the chemical would be used to conceal the unauthorized discharge of hydrocarbons into the Gulf of Mexico. Our investigation also confirmed that employees working for the offshore facility operator had actually used the dispersant to conceal oil sheens during their operations in violation of the Clean Water Act. We did not substantiate the allegation that one of the companies altered water samples.

The offshore facility operator dissolved its business operations through bankruptcy proceedings. Champion pled guilty to misprision of a felony and was subsequently sentenced to a \$1,000,000 fine, \$250,000 for community service, and a \$400 special assessment. This is a summary of a report of investigation issued to the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement.

Media of Interest

Secretary Zinke Travels To Utah To Start National Monuments Tour.

The Washington Times (5/7, Wolfgang) reports that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke on Sunday “launched a ‘listening tour’ across Utah designed to quell an uproar over his department’s controversial review of national monuments.” Zinke is “spearheading a federal study of more than two dozen land and marine monuments following an executive order from President Trump last month.” According to the article, “the process is likely to lead to the first revocation of a U.S. monument, though there are still outstanding legal questions about whether a president has the power to make such a rescission.”

The AP (5/7, Price, McCombs) reports that Zinke will “spend Sunday in Salt Lake City before traveling Monday to the southeastern corner of Utah to spend time in the Bears Ears area.” The AP (5/7, Price, McCombs) reports that Zinke and is scheduled to spend Monday morning touring Bears Ears National Monument “by helicopter as the Interior secretary sets out on day two of a four-day Utah visit to re-assess two vast national monuments.” On Tuesday, “he plans to tour the area on horseback.” On Wednesday, Zinke will be in the area near the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument.

National Monument Advocates Hold Protest.

The [AP](#) (5/7) reports that “more than 500 protesters urging the protection of Utah’s Bears Ears National Monument demonstrate outside a Salt Lake City building where Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke is meeting with tribal leaders.” According to the article, “protesters carried signs Sunday and shouted ‘Save our monuments, stand with Bears Ears!’ as Zinke started a four-day Utah trip.”

Interior Department Releases List of 27 National Monuments Under Review.

The Wall Street Journal (5/5, Carlton) reports that the Interior Department has published a list of 27 national monuments and marine preserves that are now under review either to be downsized or eliminated, which the Journal says includes Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante in Utah. The 27 monuments and preserves represent 210 million acres and they all were either created or expanded by former Presidents Bill Clinton and Barack Obama. The Journal says the review is being welcomed by those who have complained in recent years about government overreach in its control of Federal lands.

Interior Department Suspends Advisory Panels.

E&E Publishing (5/5, Streater) reports that the Interior Department is “formally reviewing the ‘charter and charge’ of more than 200 advisory panels that assist federal agencies managing hundreds of millions of acres of public lands at a time when the Trump administration is

considering significant changes to land-use designations and management practices.” Heather Swift, an Interior spokeswoman, said that the review is part of an ongoing effort by Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke aimed at “restoring trust in the Department’s decision-making.” Swift said the review of “the charter and charge of each Board/Advisory Committee” is designed to “maximize feedback from these boards and ensure their compliance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act.”

King Cove Residents’ Hopes Rise For Road Through Izembek Refuge.

The Bristol Bay (AK) Times (5/5, Martinson) reports that residents of King Cove are “cautiously optimistic” that a road through the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge “might happen, under the guiding force of the new Trump administration.” Residents “say they’ve exhausted other options: Lives are at risk — rough weather that prevents flying out of King Cove means costly and time-sensitive air extractions are required for sick and hurt residents.” Also, “they say that the people of King Cove, especially Natives, should have the right to cross the land.”

Oil Companies Exploring Challenge To Gulf Of Mexico Drilling Ban.

The Hill (5/7, Henry) reports that “oil groups this week said they are eyeing potential exploration in the eastern Gulf, a prospect buoyed by the Trump administration’s recent review of federal offshore drilling policies.” Drilling within 125 miles of Florida’s Gulf Coast is currently banned, but “with that ban expiring in 2022 and President Trump pushing for expanded oil development offshore,” energy companies are hoping to win approval of more exploration while environmental groups are preparing to fight to extend the ban. Energy companies see the section of the Gulf of Mexico covered by the ban as “an oil-rich section of the sea that contains up to 2.35 billion barrels of oil, according to federal estimates.”

Interior Department Sets Four Public Meetings On Navajo Generating Station.

The Arizona Republic (5/5) reports that “Arizonans will have four opportunities this month to share thoughts with federal officials on the pending closure of the Navajo Generating Station coal-fired power plant.” The Interior Department has “scheduled public comment meetings in Phoenix, Page and the Navajo and Hopi capitals of Window Rock and Kykotsmovi.”

Dakota Access Pipeline To Start Service June 1.

E&E Publishing (5/5) reported Energy Transfer Partners will start operations of the Dakota Access pipeline on June 1, about two weeks later than the previously announced start date. CFO Thomas Long said, “We reiterate our commitment to continue to protect all cultural resources along with the environment and the safety of all those in the area.”

USVI Faces Budget Crisis.

In the first part of a series, the St. Croix Source (4/10, Kossler) reported on the budget crisis facing the US Virgin Islands. According to the article, “along with this year’s \$110 million deficit, the USVI is facing ongoing structural deficits of around \$170 million per year out of a locally funded budget of around \$850 million.” Part 1 looks “at the history of the territory’s finances and some of the many factors that led to this crossroads.” In part 2, the St. Croix Source (4/16, Kossler) takes a closer look at the 2012 closure of Hovensa. In part 3, the St. Croix Source (4/24, Kossler), highlights the growing insolvency of the Government Employee Retirement Plan. In part 4, the St. Croix Source (5/1, Kossler) analyzes whether the problem is “the growing debt or is it spending that leads to deficits that expand the debt?”

White House Communications Report

No report was sent on Friday.

Federal Register Listings.

REG0006982 BIA Notice of Service Area Designation. This Notice announces the BIA's approval of the designation of Kern County, California, as a service area for the Tejon Indian Tribe for purposes of operating the BIA financial assistance and/or social services programs as authorized under 25 CFR part 20, Financial Assistance and Social Services Programs. Notice 05/02/2017.

REG0006962 BLM Notice of Individual Special Recreation Permit Requirement and Cave Closures on Public Lands in Lincoln, Nye, and White Pine Counties, Nevada. The BLM provides notice of a new Individual Special Recreation Permit (ISRP) requirement for recreational use in three caves within the Ely District in east-central Nevada. The BLM also provides notice of seasonal or temporary cave closures. Notice 05/01/2017.

REG0006842 FWS Nonessential Experimental Population of Red Wolves in North Carolina. This notice advises the public that FWS intends to gather information necessary to develop a proposed rule to revise the existing nonessential experimental population designation of red wolves in North Carolina under section 10(j) of the Endangered Species Act, and prepare a draft environmental review pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act. Advance Notice of Proposed Rule 05/05/2017.

REG0006978 FWS Low-Effect Habitat Conservation Plan for the Mount Hermon June Beetle at the Scotts Valley Middle School, Santa Cruz County, California. The Scotts Valley Middle School has applied for an incidental take permit under the Endangered Species Act. The application addresses the potential for take of the endangered Mount Hermon June beetle, incidental to the renovation of the middle school campus. This is a high-profile school

renovation project that was funded through a local bond measure. Notice 05/01/2017.

REG0006980 FWS Incidental Take Permit Application; Draft Habitat Conservation Plan for the R-Project Transmission Line, and Draft Environmental Impact Statement The Nebraska Public Power District (NPPD) has applied for an incidental take permit under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) for the R-Project transmission line in north-central Nebraska. The permit would authorize the take of the federally endangered American burying beetle incidental to the construction, operation, and maintenance of the transmission line. Notice 05/02/2017.

REG0006988 FWS Revised Notice of Intent to Prepare a Comprehensive Conservation Plan for the National Bison Range, Moiese, Montana. The Service is revising a previously published notice of intent to prepare a draft Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) for the National Bison Range (NBR). This notice informs the public that the Service will not proceed with evaluating a previously stated preferred alternative of legislative transfer of the NBR. With this notice, the Service requests comments in order to obtain suggestions and information on a revised scope of issues to be considered in the planning process. Notice 05/04/2017.

REG0006989 FWS Notice of Intent to Prepare a Comprehensive Conservation Plan for Pablo, Lost Trail, and Ninepipe National Wildlife Refuges, and the Northwest Montana Lake County Wetland Management District, Montana The Service intends to gather information necessary to prepare a draft Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) for Pablo, Lost Trail, and Ninepipe National Wildlife Refuges, and the Northwest Montana Lake County Wetland Management District, all part of the National Bison Range Complex. Notice 05/04/2017.

REG0006977 ONRR Major Portion Prices and Due Date for Additional Royalty Payments on Indian Gas Production in Designated Areas Not Associated with an Index Zone. To value gas produced from Indian leases, ONRR is required to determine major portion prices and to notify industry by publishing the prices in the Federal Register. ONRR also must publish a due date for industry to pay additional royalties based on the major portion prices. Consistent with these requirements, this Notice provides major portion prices for the 12 months of calendar year 2015. Notice 05/02/2017.

REG0006993 OS Review of Certain National Monuments Established Since 1996; Notice of Opportunity for Public Comment. DOI is conducting a review of certain National Monuments designated or expanded since 1996 under the Antiquities Act of 1906 in order to implement Executive Order 13792. This Notice identifies 27 National Monuments under review, including five Marine National Monuments, and invites public comments. Notice 05/05/2017.

Doug Domenech
Senior Advisor
US Department of the Interior

DOI DAILY UPDATE FOR CABINET AFFAIRS – 5/8/17

Doug Domenech, Senior Advisor

Status of the Secretary

The Secretary is traveling in Utah having meetings on the President's EO on National Monuments.

TODAY: The Secretary will:

- have breakfast meeting with Utah Federal Delegation.
- Fly over Grand Staircase Escalante National Monument en route
- Black Hawk Helicopter Tour (South Portion of Monument)
- HOLD for Media Access - Bears Ears National Monument
- hiking Tour of Bears Ears National Monument
- Meeting with Friends of Cedar Mesa
- Dinner at Edge of Cedar Mesa Museum Hosted by Governor Herbert

SCHEDULE:

Tuesday, May 9, 2017

The Nature Conservancy's Dugout Ranch

HOLD: Media Access - Trailhead at Bears Ears National Monument

Tour Monument via Horseback to Predetermined Sites

Wheels Up Blanding, UT (KBDG) en route Kanab, UT (KKNB)

Wednesday, May 10, 2017

Breakfast Meeting with Kane and Garfield County Commissioners and Area Legislators

Driving Tour of Portions of Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument

State Helicopter Tour of Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument

HOLD: Media Access

Wheels Up Kanab, UT (KKNB) en route Salt Lake City, UT (SLC)

Holiday Inn Express & Suites Salt Lake City-Airport East

Thursday, May 11, 2017

POLITICAL EVENT: Keynote Remarks at the RNC Spring Meeting Dinner

Friday, May 12, 2017

Wheels down Billings, MT

VPOTUS lands at 1:00pm MDT

Arrive at Westmoreland Coal Company Tour of Westmoreland Coal Company Property on Horseback

Roundtable with Tribal Leaders & Absaloka Mine Energy Producers

POLITICAL EVENT: Rally for Greg Gianforte, Candidate for MT-AL

VPOTUS remarks at 6:35PM

Long Range: 5/25-5/28. The Secretary will participate in a CODEL sponsored by Senator Murkowski. Arctic Council. Norway, Greenland, Alaska. The Secretary is set to keynote the Alaska Oil & Gas Association meeting in Anchorage 5/31.

Upcoming Media

Speaking Invitations

Accepted

5/16 DOI Annual Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Ceremony (DC)
5/31 Alaska Oil and Gas Association Conference remarks in Anchorage

Regretted

5/10 Association of California Water Agencies 2017 Spring Conference (Monterey, CA)
5/11 Ball on the Mall (DC) (I forgot to add this one last week)
5/11 Safari Club International Lobby Day (Crystal City, VA)
5/12 Heritage Foundation's Edwin Meese III Center for Legal and Judicial Studies' 2017 Spring Legal Strategy Forum (Colorado Springs, CO)
5/16 Western Growers' Board of Directors Meeting (DC)
5/19 Montana Logging Association Annual Meeting (Bozeman, MT)
5/20 Zoar Maifest National Historic Landmark Designation (Zoar, OH)
5/23 7th Annual Massachusetts Fallen Heroes Dinner (Boston, MA)
6/3 Ducks Unlimited National Convention (San Antonio, TX)

Outstanding Invitations in Process

5/16 BLM's Agent of the Year and Ranger of the Year Award Ceremony (DC) (waiting on logistics)
5/23 Southwest Border Forum (Phoenix, AZ)
5/24 Virginia Chamber of Commerce Energy Conference
5/24 National Wildlife Refuge Association (DC)
5/25 US Oil & Gas Association Board of Directors Meeting (DC)
6/5 Society of American Indian Government Employees Annual Training Program (Scottsdale, AZ)
6/6 Recreation Vehicle Industry Association Joint Committee Lunch (DC)

Emergency Management

USGS continues to deploy crews in response to flooding in Indiana and Missouri, where recent storm systems affected many river basins in the area. In Ohio, a storm system entering the area on Friday prompted deployment of 4 USGS crews, where minor to moderate flooding has affected the Portage, Tiffin, Blanchard, Auglaize, Muskingum, and Cuyahoga river basins.

In Georgia, the West Mims Fire in the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge has burned 129,746 (+18,114) acres. The fire is 12 (no change)-percent contained and managed by a Type-1 Incident Management Team with 624 (+121) personnel assigned, including 102 (+25) DOI personnel. There are 502 (+415) residences and 7 (-10) commercial structures threatened. There are 79 (+79) evacuees. Active fire behavior was observed during this reporting period. The main danger exists on the southeast corner of the fire, where more than 11,000 acres were consumed this weekend, forcing evacuations in St. George. Ten helicopters are conducting air attacks in the southeast corner of the fire. The containment date remains November 1.

Inspector General

Summary: Company Pleads Guilty to Concealing Violation of the Clean Water Act

Report Date: April 10, 2017

OIG initiated an investigation after receiving allegations that Champion Technologies Inc. (Champion), and four other companies concealed oil sheens from a Gulf of Mexico offshore oil platform, and altered water samples prior to testing mandated by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The purpose of

the testing was to ensure that water discharged into the Gulf of Mexico during offshore operations met environmental standards.

We conducted a joint investigation with EPA's Criminal Investigation Division and found that between 2010 and 2012, employees of an offshore oil and gas facility operator purchased 4,025 gallons of a chemical product from Champion, and both companies knew the chemical would be used to conceal the unauthorized discharge of hydrocarbons into the Gulf of Mexico. Our investigation also confirmed that employees working for the offshore facility operator had actually used the dispersant to conceal oil sheens during their operations in violation of the Clean Water Act. We did not substantiate the allegation that one of the companies altered water samples.

The offshore facility operator dissolved its business operations through bankruptcy proceedings. Champion pled guilty to misprision of a felony and was subsequently sentenced to a \$1,000,000 fine, \$250,000 for community service, and a \$400 special assessment. This is a summary of a report of investigation issued to the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement.

Media of Interest

Secretary Zinke Travels To Utah To Start National Monuments Tour.

The Washington Times (5/7, Wolfgang) reports that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke on Sunday "launched a 'listening tour' across Utah designed to quell an uproar over his department's controversial review of national monuments." Zinke is "spearheading a federal study of more than two dozen land and marine monuments following an executive order from President Trump last month." According to the article, "the process is likely to lead to the first revocation of a U.S. monument, though there are still outstanding legal questions about whether a president has the power to make such a rescission."

The AP (5/7, Price, McCombs) reports that Zinke will "spend Sunday in Salt Lake City before traveling Monday to the southeastern corner of Utah to spend time in the Bears Ears area." The AP (5/7, Price, McCombs) reports that Zinke and is scheduled to spend Monday morning touring Bears Ears National Monument "by helicopter as the Interior secretary sets out on day two of a four-day Utah visit to re-assess two vast national monuments." On Tuesday, "he plans to tour the area on horseback." On Wednesday, Zinke will be in the area near the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument.

National Monument Advocates Hold Protest.

The [AP](#) (5/7) reports that "more than 500 protesters urging the protection of Utah's Bears Ears National Monument demonstrate outside a Salt Lake City building where Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke is meeting with tribal leaders." According to the article, "protesters carried signs Sunday and shouted 'Save our monuments, stand with Bears Ears!' as Zinke started a four-day Utah trip."

Interior Department Releases List of 27 National Monuments Under Review.

The Wall Street Journal (5/5, Carlton) reports that the Interior Department has published a list of 27 national monuments and marine preserves that are now under review either to be downsized or eliminated, which the Journal says includes Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante in Utah. The 27 monuments and preserves represent 210 million acres and they all were either created or expanded by former Presidents Bill Clinton and Barack Obama. The Journal says the review is being welcomed by those who have complained in recent years about government overreach in its control of Federal lands.

Interior Department Suspends Advisory Panels.

E&E Publishing (5/5, Streater) reports that the Interior Department is "formally reviewing the 'charter and charge' of more than 200 advisory panels that assist federal agencies managing hundreds of millions

of acres of public lands at a time when the Trump administration is considering significant changes to land-use designations and management practices.” Heather Swift, an Interior spokeswoman, said that the review is part of an ongoing effort by Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke aimed at “restoring trust in the Department’s decision-making.” Swift said the review of “the charter and charge of each Board/Advisory Committee” is designed to “maximize feedback from these boards and ensure their compliance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act.”

King Cove Residents’ Hopes Rise For Road Through Izembek Refuge.

The Bristol Bay (AK) Times (5/5, Martinson) reports that residents of King Cove are “cautiously optimistic” that a road through the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge “might happen, under the guiding force of the new Trump administration.” Residents “say they’ve exhausted other options: Lives are at risk — rough weather that prevents flying out of King Cove means costly and time-sensitive air extractions are required for sick and hurt residents.” Also, “they say that the people of King Cove, especially Natives, should have the right to cross the land.”

Oil Companies Exploring Challenge To Gulf Of Mexico Drilling Ban.

The Hill (5/7, Henry) reports that “oil groups this week said they are eyeing potential exploration in the eastern Gulf, a prospect buoyed by the Trump administration’s recent review of federal offshore drilling policies.” Drilling within 125 miles of Florida’s Gulf Coast is currently banned, but “with that ban expiring in 2022 and President Trump pushing for expanded oil development offshore,” energy companies are hoping to win approval of more exploration while environmental groups are preparing to fight to extend the ban. Energy companies see the section of the Gulf of Mexico covered by the ban as “an oil-rich section of the sea that contains up to 2.35 billion barrels of oil, according to federal estimates.”

Interior Department Sets Four Public Meetings On Navajo Generating Station.

The Arizona Republic (5/5) reports that “Arizonans will have four opportunities this month to share thoughts with federal officials on the pending closure of the Navajo Generating Station coal-fired power plant.” The Interior Department has “scheduled public comment meetings in Phoenix, Page and the Navajo and Hopi capitals of Window Rock and Kykotsmovi.”

Dakota Access Pipeline To Start Service June 1.

E&E Publishing (5/5) reported Energy Transfer Partners will start operations of the Dakota Access pipeline on June 1, about two weeks later than the previously announced start date. CFO Thomas Long said, “We reiterate our commitment to continue to protect all cultural resources along with the environment and the safety of all those in the area.”

USVI Faces Budget Crisis.

In the first part of a series, the St. Croix Source (4/10, Kossler) reported on the budget crisis facing the US Virgin Islands. According to the article, “along with this year’s \$110 million deficit, the USVI is facing ongoing structural deficits of around \$170 million per year out of a locally funded budget of around \$850 million.” Part 1 looks “at the history of the territory’s finances and some of the many factors that led to this crossroads.” In part 2, the St. Croix Source (4/16, Kossler) takes a closer look at the 2012 closure of Hovensia. In part 3, the St. Croix Source (4/24, Kossler), highlights the growing insolvency of the Government Employee Retirement Plan. In part 4, the St. Croix Source (5/1, Kossler) analyzes whether the problem is “the growing debt or is it spending that leads to deficits that expand the debt?”

White House Communications Report

No report was sent on Friday.

Federal Register Listings.

REG0006982 BIA Notice of Service Area Designation. This Notice announces the BIA's approval of the designation of Kern County, California, as a service area for the Tejon Indian Tribe for purposes of operating the BIA financial assistance and/or social services programs as authorized under 25 CFR part 20, Financial Assistance and Social Services Programs. Notice 05/02/2017.

REG0006962 BLM Notice of Individual Special Recreation Permit Requirement and Cave Closures on Public Lands in Lincoln, Nye, and White Pine Counties, Nevada. The BLM provides notice of a new Individual Special Recreation Permit (ISRP) requirement for recreational use in three caves within the Ely District in east-central Nevada. The BLM also provides notice of seasonal or temporary cave closures. Notice 05/01/2017.

REG0006842 FWS Nonessential Experimental Population of Red Wolves in North Carolina. This notice advises the public that FWS intends to gather information necessary to develop a proposed rule to revise the existing nonessential experimental population designation of red wolves in North Carolina under section 10(j) of the Endangered Species Act, and prepare a draft environmental review pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act. Advance Notice of Proposed Rule 05/05/2017.

REG0006978 FWS Low-Effect Habitat Conservation Plan for the Mount Hermon June Beetle at the Scotts Valley Middle School, Santa Cruz County, California. The Scotts Valley Middle School has applied for an incidental take permit under the Endangered Species Act. The application addresses the potential for take of the endangered Mount Hermon June beetle, incidental to the renovation of the middle school campus. This is a high-profile school renovation project that was funded through a local bond measure. Notice 05/01/2017.

REG0006980 FWS Incidental Take Permit Application; Draft Habitat Conservation Plan for the R-Project Transmission Line, and Draft Environmental Impact Statement The Nebraska Public Power District (NPPD) has applied for an incidental take permit under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) for the R-Project transmission line in north-central Nebraska. The permit would authorize the take of the federally endangered American burying beetle incidental to the construction, operation, and maintenance of the transmission line. Notice 05/02/2017.

REG0006988 FWS Revised Notice of Intent to Prepare a Comprehensive Conservation Plan for the National Bison Range, Moiese, Montana. The Service is revising a previously published notice of intent to prepare a draft Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) for the National Bison Range (NBR). This notice informs the public that the Service will not proceed with evaluating a previously stated preferred alternative of legislative transfer of the NBR. With this notice, the Service requests comments in order to obtain suggestions and information on a revised scope of issues to be considered in the planning process. Notice 05/04/2017.

REG0006989 FWS Notice of Intent to Prepare a Comprehensive Conservation Plan for Pablo, Lost Trail, and Ninepipe National Wildlife Refuges, and the Northwest Montana Lake County Wetland Management District, Montana The Service intends to gather information necessary to prepare a draft Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) for Pablo, Lost Trail, and Ninepipe National Wildlife Refuges, and the Northwest Montana Lake County Wetland Management District, all part of the National Bison Range Complex. Notice 05/04/2017.

REG0006977 ONRR Major Portion Prices and Due Date for Additional Royalty Payments on Indian Gas Production in Designated Areas Not Associated with an Index Zone. To value gas produced from Indian leases, ONRR is required to determine major portion prices and to notify industry by publishing the prices in the Federal Register. ONRR also must publish a due date for industry to pay additional royalties based on the major portion prices. Consistent with these requirements, this Notice provides major portion prices for the 12 months of calendar year 2015. Notice 05/02/2017.

REG0006993 OS Review of Certain National Monuments Established Since 1996; Notice of Opportunity for Public Comment. DOI is conducting a review of certain National Monuments designated or expanded since 1996 under the Antiquities Act of 1906 in order to implement Executive Order 13792. This Notice identifies 27 National Monuments under review, including five Marine National Monuments, and invites public comments. Notice 05/05/2017.