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Paul R. Ross
Senior Public Affairs Specialist
Office of Communications
U.S. Department of the Interior
Office: (202) 501-4633 | Cell: (202) 507-1689

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NEWS BRIEFING

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DATE: FRIDAY, JANUARY 27, 2017 7:00 AM EST

TODAY'S TABLE OF CONTENTS

DOI IN THE NEWS:

- + [Backlash Against Perceived Hostility By Trump Administration Mounts.](#)
- + [Zinke, Perry To Be Voted On By Senate Committee Tuesday.](#)
- + [Trump Hiring Freeze Criticized As Hurting Veterans.](#)
- + [Energy Rules Trump Can And Cannot Undo Unilaterally.](#)
- + [Former Interior Official Embellished Credentials.](#)
- + [Additional Coverage: Chaffetz Proposes Public Land Sell-offs, Elimination Of Police Posts In Utah.](#)

AMERICA'S GREAT OUTDOORS:

National Park Service:

- + [Trump Personally Directed Acting NPS Director To Release Additional Inaugural Photos.](#)
- + [NPS Team Visits Anniston Monument Sites.](#)
- + [Bill Would Expand Boundary Of Kennesaw Mountain.](#)
- + [San Francisco's Women's Building Downgrades National Historic Landmark Request.](#)
- + [National Register Adds Former Intelligence Buildings.](#)
- + [Despite Challenges, Next 100 Years Of National Parks Look Promising.](#)

Fish and Wildlife Service:

- + [Hunters, Anglers Want Repeal of Fishing Tackle Restrictions .](#)
- + [Endangered Species Act Could Block Trump's Border Wall.](#)
- + [Harsh Winter In West Has Endangered Animals.](#)
- + [Bogue Chitto National Wildlife Refuge To Close Temporarily.](#)
- + [FWS Lifts Boating Wake Restrictions At Havasu National Wildlife Refuge.](#)
- + [Aerial Operations To Start For Mexican Wolf Population Survey.](#)
- + [Key Deer Outfitted With Radio Collars In Battle Against Screwworm Outbreak.](#)

- + [Avian Cholera Killing Birds At McNary National Wildlife Refuge.](#)

Bureau of Land Management:

- + [Utah Conservationists Condemn Possible BLM Chief.](#)
- + [Rancher Fights BLM For Grazing Rights.](#)
- + [Aerial Seeding Project Aims To Speed Recovery Of Burned Areas Across Eastern Nevada.](#)
- + [Strategy For Sage-grouse Conservation In Wyoming Touts Collaboration.](#)

SECURING AMERICA'S ENERGY FUTURE:

Onshore Energy Development:

- + [Epstein: Trump Actions Pave Way For DAPL Completion.](#)
- + [TransCanada Submits New Application For Keystone XL.](#)
- + [BLM Auctions 843 Acres In Chaco Canyon For \\$3 Million.](#)
- + [Four Conservation Groups Plan To Sue To Ban Fracking In Wayne National Forest.](#)
- + [Some Tribes Pushing For Drilling On Reservations.](#)
- + [Coal Cost A Factor In Navajo Generating Station's Fate.](#)
- + [Peabody Energy Defends Bankruptcy Plan In Court.](#)
- + [No Damage Reported After Two Oklahoma Earthquakes.](#)

Renewable Energy:

- + [Hayes: Trump's Energy Plan Ignores "America First" Renewables.](#)
- + [Kitty Hawk Lease Auction Welcomed.](#)

EMPOWERING NATIVE AMERICAN COMMUNITIES:

- + [BIA's Recognition Of Clint Halftown Leadership On Hold.](#)
- + [Mohawks Apply For Land-in-trust.](#)

OFFICE OF INSULAR AFFAIRS:

- + [U.S. Virgin Islands Facing Mounting Fiscal Problems.](#)

TACKLING AMERICA'S WATER CHALLENGES:

- + [BOR Looks To Increase Water Storage In Boise River System.](#)
- + [Drought Declared Over In Much Of California.](#)
- + [Final Hearing On Klamath River Dams Scheduled Thursday.](#)

TOP NATIONAL NEWS:

- + [Administration Floats Mexico Import Tax As Peña Nieto Cancels Meeting With Trump.](#)
- + [Senior State Department Officials Submit Resignations.](#)
- + [Trump To GOP Lawmakers: This May Be "Busiest Congress...Ever."](#)

EDITORIAL WRAP-UP:

- + [New York Times.](#)
- + [Washington Post.](#)
- + [Wall Street Journal.](#)

BIG PICTURE:

- + [Headlines From Today's Front Pages.](#)

WASHINGTON SCHEDULE:

- + [Today's Events In Washington.](#)

LAST LAUGHS:

- + [Late Night Political Humor.](#)

DOI in the News:

BACKLASH AGAINST PERCEIVED HOSTILITY BY TRUMP ADMINISTRATION MOUNTS. [E&E](#) (1/26) reports that “feeling under fire from the new administration, federal workers, greens and former Obama officials are mounting their opposition movement using social media, leaks to the press, protests and other tactics — like illegally scaling construction equipment to hang an anti-Trump banner near the White House.” According to the article, “Trump’s campaign rhetoric and early actions perceived as hostile to federal workers and climate change policies — combined with a new era in social media — have sparked an unprecedented backlash from the left during the first days of his presidency.” Eric Schaeffer, executive director of the Environmental Integrity Project, “who resigned from U.S. EPA in 2002 in protest of the George W. Bush administration’s environmental policies,” said, “I expect more of this,” said. “They came in stomping with very heavy boots ... determined to make the federal workforce the enemy. You get what you pay for.”

[Bloomberg News](#) (1/26, Dlouhy, Natter, 2.41M) reports that White House spokesman Sean Spicer said the EPA and Interior Department are taking steps “to address inappropriate use of social media.” However, “he denied there was any broader mandate from the White House muzzling federal agencies.” He said, “There’s nothing that’s come from the White House – absolutely not.”

Additional coverage was provided by [Roll Call](#) (1/26, Garcia, 63K), [CBS News](#) (1/26, 4.4M), [CBS News](#) (1/26, 4.4M), the [Knoxville \(TN\) News Sentinel](#) (1/26, 245K), the [New York Post](#) (1/26, 3.82M), the [Daily Mail](#) (1/26, 4.59M), the [Daily Mail](#) (1/26, 4.59M), the [Huffington Post](#) (1/26, 237K), [The Verge](#) (1/26, 1.25M), the [International Business Times \(IND\)](#) (1/26, 38K), the [Independent \(UK\)](#) (1/26, Revesz, 1.28M), [Bravo TV](#) (1/26, 949K), the [Huffington Post](#) (1/26, 237K), [KYW-TV Philadelphia \(PA\)](#) Philadelphia (1/25, 29K), [WRTV-TV Indianapolis \(IN\)](#) Indianapolis (1/26, 76K), and [WXYZ-TV Detroit \(MI\)](#) Detroit (1/26, 141K).

Lawmakers Say Trump’s Agency “Gag Orders” May Violate Law. [Reuters](#) (1/26, Volcovici) reports that in a letter to White House counsel Don McGahn on Thursday, Rep. Elijah Cummings (D-MD), ranking member of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, and Rep. Frank Pallone Jr. (D-NJ), ranking member of the House Committee on Energy and Commerce, called on the Administration “to lift orders barring government agency employees from communicating with the public and Congress, saying such restrictions may violate federal laws.” In the letter, the lawmakers call for “immediate action to address the administration’s ‘gag orders on federal employees that prevent them from communicating with Congress.’” They wrote, “We urge you to immediately rescind all policies on employee communications that do not comply with the Whistleblower Protection Enhancement Act and other federal statutes.”

The [Washington Post](#) (1/26, Hamburger, Goldstein, 11.43M) says Cummings and Pallone wrote that HHS memo instructing employees “not to communicate about regulatory policy with members of Congress,” as well as “others sent in recent days by other agencies, ‘appear to violate multiple federal laws,’” asked Trump “to make it clear that federal employees have an unrestricted ability to communicate with lawmakers.”

Rogue Tweeters In Government Could Face Legal Consequences. The [AP](#) (1/27, Bridis, 272K) reports that the “rogue tweeters” could be prosecuted by the Justice Department under federal hacking laws, according to legal experts, “but the FBI so far was not involved.” The article says that “employees or former employees publishing unauthorized messages on official accounts could be prosecuted under the U.S. Computer Fraud and Abuse Act, which prohibits someone from exceeding authorized access to computers.” Moreover, “even employees authorized to use official agency Twitter accounts could face legal jeopardy posting messages they weren’t supposed to write, said Stewart Baker, a cybersecurity lawyer and former National Security Agency and Department of Homeland Security official.”

Coverage by the AP was also picked up by [U.S. News & World Report](#) (1/27, 1.02M), the [Minneapolis \(MN\) Star Tribune](#) (1/26, 1.27M), [Philly \(PA\)](#) (1/27, 942K), and the [Daily Mail](#) (1/27, 4.59M).

Scientists Alarmed Trump Administration Will Silence Researchers, Reject Scientific Evidence. In “Speaking of Science,” the [Washington Post](#) (1/26, Achenbach, 11.43M) reports, “Leaders of several of

the nation's top science organizations say they've been shunned by the Trump administration and are alarmed by signs that the administration will muzzle government researchers and reject the scientific evidence that informs such critical issues as vaccine safety and climate change." The Post says, "The flaring conflict with the Trump administration is a delicate matter for the leaders of science organizations, which are nonpartisan by tradition." Many of these organizations "represent scientists across the country who frequently depend on government funding for their research." So far, the President has not nominated "anyone to head NASA, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the US Geological Survey, or the White House's Office of Science and Technology Policy."

[TIME](#) (1/26, Kluger, 6.98M) reports the Trump team has "moved quickly and appallingly" to try to deny or silence established science. Even before the election, "Trump was a shameless peddler of scientific fictions – that climate change is a Chinese hoax; that vaccines cause autism." Upon taking office, the Trump "went much further, launching a series of strikes on both indisputable fact and institutional science," removing any mention of climate change or the effort to fight it, from the White House website, for example. The article says, "President Trump is picking a fight he is certain to lose." Outbreaks "can't [be pinned] on a crooked media or a rigged election." They are "simply the way the fact-based world works." Additionally, the science community is "pushing back" with a march on the capital for science.

Additional coverage was provided by the [Washington \(DC\) Post](#) (1/26, Achenbach, 11.43M).

ZINKE, PERRY TO BE VOTED ON BY SENATE COMMITTEE TUESDAY. [E&E](#) (1/26) reports that the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee on Tuesday will "vote on President Trump's picks to lead the Interior and Energy departments." The vote on Rep. Ryan Zinke, nominee for Interior secretary, and former Texas Gov. Rick Perry, Trump's selection to lead the Department of Energy, was previously scheduled for this week but was abruptly postponed. According to the article, "unlike other Trump Cabinet picks, both Zinke and Perry fared fairly well during their respective confirmation hearings, facing mild opposition from Senate Democrats, and are expected to be confirmed."

Zinke's Confirmation Performance Reviewed. In an op-ed for the [Missoulian \(MT\)](#) (1/26, 114K), Lance Trebesch, CEO/co-owner of Ticket River and Ticketprinting.com, offers an analysis of Interior nominee Ryan Zinke's comments during his confirmation hearing. Trebesch notes that "Zinke expressed support for keeping public lands public after the troubling House vote earlier this month that would assign a zero-dollar value to federal public lands" and says that "Montanans will need to hold him to his word." Trebesch welcomes Zinke's support for "making permanent the Land and Water Conservation Fund," and tackling the National Park Service maintenance backlog. However, he is troubled by "Zinke's answers on national monuments and the Antiquities Act." Trebesch also wished that Zinke had acknowledged the economic impact of outdoor recreation and hopes that Zinke will strike a "balance" in his stewardship of public lands.

Democratic Senators Face Pressure From Left To Oppose All Trump Cabinet Picks. The [Washington Post](#) (1/26, Weigel, 11.43M) reports on the impassioned pleas that Sen. Cory Booker has heard from the left to oppose all of President Trump's Cabinet nominees, and adds, "Nearly every Democrat has been hearing the same this week." The Post says, "On Twitter and other social media, Democrats are excoriated for the votes" in favor of the nominees, and "there are fitful suggestions of primary challenges for senators who go off the reservation." The Post adds that Sen. Elizabeth Warren, "one of the left's most popular figures, attempted to quell protests about her vote for [HUD Secretary-designate] Carson with a Facebook post," in which she "said that she and every Democrat was faced not with choices between opposition and appeasement, but bad and worse."

TRUMP HIRING FREEZE CRITICIZED AS HURTING VETERANS. [McClatchy](#) (1/26, Bergengruen, 74K) reports President Trump's announced federal hiring freeze is "disproportionately affecting" veterans, who have "preference" in seeking federal jobs, and in receiving services from the "chronically understaffed" Department of Veterans Affairs. Now 53 Democratic members of Congress, led by Sen. Jon Tester and Rep. Tim Walz (D-MN) have written to the President asking him to "exempt veterans from the freeze." White House spokesman Sean Spicer defended the freeze, saying it is intended to stop "money getting wasted in Washington on a job that is duplicative," adding, "we've got to respect the American taxpayer." Regarding the VA, Spicer said, "Hiring more people isn't the answer," adding, "Right now, the system is

broken.” Meanwhile, Acting VA Secretary Snyder wrote in an email to McClatchy that the VA can exempt “anyone it deems necessary.” Also quoted objecting to the freeze are: Paul Rieckhoff, head of Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America; Will Fischer, executive director of the Union Veterans Council at the AFL-CIO; Charles E. Schmidt, the national commander of the American Legion; and Peter Kauffmann, senior adviser to VoteVets.

Additional coverage of the hiring freeze was provided by the [Salem \(OR\) Statesman Journal](#) (1/25, 140K) and [Men’s Journal](#) (1/26, 12.47M).

ENERGY RULES TRUMP CAN AND CANNOT UNDO UNILATERALLY. The [New York Times](#) (1/26, Davenport, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) details what President Trump can and cannot do to dismantle Obama’s energy and environmental rules. Richard J. Lazarus at Harvard University, says, “Anything that was done without a lot of process up front can be undone without much process,” such as the halt to coal leasing on public lands and a stream protection rule to reduce mountaintop-removal coal mining. An Interior Department methane rule also falls within the 60-day window allowing Congress to quickly overturn it with a 51-vote majority. Fuel standards could be softened in 18 months, according to Jeffrey Holmstead, a former senior EPA official, but to end the Clean Power Plan, Trump would need to find an alternative regulation.

FORMER INTERIOR OFFICIAL EMBELLISHED CREDENTIALS. [Politico Pro](#) (1/26) reports that the former deputy director of the Office of Acquisition and Property Management “admitted to falsifying his military and federal employment history in order to get a better job,” according to a report released Wednesday by Interior’s inspector general. James McCaffery, “who retired in late November, said he claimed an unearned Purple Heart and lied during his background investigation.”

Additional coverage was provided by the [Daily Caller](#) (1/26, Watson, 898K).

ADDITIONAL COVERAGE: CHAFFETZ PROPOSES PUBLIC LAND SELL-OFFS, ELIMINATION OF POLICE POSTS IN UTAH. Additional coverage that Rep. Jason Chaffetz has “introduced two bills (H.R. 621 and H.R. 622) with the explicit aim to sell Federal lands and ‘terminate the law enforcement functions of the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management’” was provided by the [Men’s Journal](#) (1/26, 12.47M).

America’s Great Outdoors:

National Park Service:

TRUMP PERSONALLY DIRECTED ACTING NPS DIRECTOR TO RELEASE ADDITIONAL INAUGURAL PHOTOS. The [Washington Post](#) (1/26, Tumulty, Eilperin, 11.43M) reports that on Saturday morning, acting National Park Service Director Michael Reynolds “received an extraordinary summons: The new president wanted to talk to him.” In a phone conversation, President Trump “personally ordered Reynolds to produce additional photographs of the previous day’s crowds on the National Mall” in the belief “that they might prove that the media had lied in reporting that attendance had been no better than average,” according to three individuals “who have knowledge of the conversation.” Trump also “expressed anger over a retweet sent from the agency’s account, in which side-by-side photographs showed far fewer people at his swearing-in” than turned out for President Obama in 2009.

Additional coverage was provided by the [New York \(NY\) Times](#) (1/26, Shear, Haberman, Subscription Publication, 13.9M), [The Hill](#) (1/26, Vladimirov, 1.25M), [CNN](#) (1/26, Merica, 29.79M), [USA Today](#) (1/26, Ventura, 5.28M), the [Huffington Post](#) (1/26, 237K), [CNBC](#) (1/26, 2.17M), the [Washington \(DC\) Times](#) (1/26, Daly, 272K), the [Chicago \(IL\) Sun-Times](#) (1/26, 798K), the [Minneapolis \(MN\) Star Tribune](#) (1/26, 1.27M), [Philly \(PA\)](#) (1/26, 942K), [U.S. News & World Report](#) (1/26, 1.02M), the [New York Post](#) (1/26, 3.82M), the [Sacramento \(CA\) Bee](#) (1/26, 574K), the [Denver \(CO\) Post](#) (1/26, 778K), the [Boston \(MA\) Globe](#) (1/27, Tumulty, Eilperin, 1.08M), the [Chicago \(IL\) Tribune](#) (1/26, 2.54M), [The Guardian \(UK\)](#) (1/26, Levin, 4.07M), the [Independent \(UK\)](#) (1/26, Revesz, 1.28M), and the [Talking Points Memo](#) (1/26, 517K).

NPS TEAM VISITS ANNISTON MONUMENT SITES. The [Anniston \(AL\) Star](#) (1/26, 60K) reports that “a team from the National Park Service visited Anniston this week as the agency prepares to welcome visitors to the new Freedom Riders National Monument.” Pete Conroy, co-chair of the Freedom Riders Park Committee, said, “They wanted the community to know that they are engaging in a process that should result in visible signs of their involvement soon.” Saudia Muwwakkil, “an Atlanta-based communications staffer for the park service in a statement Thursday wrote that the search for someone to head up the monument is underway.”

The [Birmingham \(AL\) News](#) (1/26, 157K) reports that according to Muwwakkil, “what impact President Trump’s administration and the federal hiring freeze will have on the planning and establishment of the national monuments is currently unknown.” Birmingham Mayor William Bell has said the NPS has “committed an annual budget of \$300,000 to the Birmingham Civil Rights National Monument.” But “it’s unclear if that could change under Trump’s administration.”

Additional coverage was provided by the [Alabama Live](#) (1/26, 804K).

BILL WOULD EXPAND BOUNDARY OF KENNESAW MOUNTAIN. The [Atlanta Journal-Constitution](#) (1/26, 1.41M) reports that Rep. Barry Loudermilk re-introduced a bill on Jan. 13 “to include more historic structures from the Civil War into Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park by expanding the boundary eight acres.” The legislation, House Resolution 558, would authorize the National Park Service “to acquire the property through donation or exchange.” Loudermilk said in a statement, “Sites such as Kennesaw Mountain Battlefield Park allow us to look back in time to get a glimpse of the events that shaped our nation. It is extremely important that we understand our history; otherwise, we will be destined to repeat the mistakes of our past.”

SAN FRANCISCO’S WOMEN’S BUILDING DOWNGRADES NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK REQUEST. The [Bay Area Reporter \(CA\)](#) (1/26, 310) reports that “with President Donald Trump in office, an LGBT historic site in San Francisco has dropped its request to become a National Historic Landmark.” According to the article, “the leadership of the Women’s Building in the city’s Mission district had been working with Donna Graves, a public historian based in Berkeley, to fill out the paperwork for the structure to secure a landmark designation.” Graves had secured a grant from the National Park Service’s LGBTQ Heritage Initiative. But “due to the nomination of Republican Montana Congressman Ryan Zinke to be the federal agency’s secretary, who in that role would sign off on National Historic Landmark applications, Graves was advised to seek a lesser listing for the Women’s Building on the National Register of Historic Places, which has a different approval process, said a person briefed on the matter.”

NATIONAL REGISTER ADDS FORMER INTELLIGENCE BUILDINGS. The [Washington Post](#) (1/26, Hendrix, 11.43M) reports the National Register of Historic Places accepted several sites of early intelligence development to commemorate the history of programs such as the CIA’s precursor, the Office of Strategic Services. The move comes amid an initiative to protect the historical integrity of the Observatory Hill site and another compound near the Potomac, which are currently set for State Department expansion programs. GSA Director of Planning and Design Mina Wright said that the Federal government is “totally dedicated to protecting the sense of history here, which will depend on the successful integration of the old and the new.”

DESPITE CHALLENGES, NEXT 100 YEARS OF NATIONAL PARKS LOOK PROMISING. In a piece for the [Mother Nature Network](#) (1/26, 68K) Jenn Savedge takes a look at “what the next 100 years might look like for the nation’s parks.” Savedge identifies some “major concerns,” but concludes that “the future of the National Park Service looks promising.” She says that “climate change will certainly take its toll, but park managers are working to adapt to those changes as they come.” Also, “younger generations are looking into new ways to explore the nation’s parks and make them their own.” According to Savedge, “with a renewed level of interest, and the help of some corporate sponsorships, the parks may be able to stay relevant and therefore protected for the next century.”

Fish and Wildlife Service:

HUNTERS, ANGLERS WANT REPEAL OF FISHING TACKLE RESTRICTIONS . The [Spokane \(WA\)](#)

[Spokesman-Review](#) (1/26, 170K) reports that “some hunting, shooting and fishing organizations are fuming over pending lead restrictions on ammunition and fishing tackle for some federal lands approved through executive action by the Obama administration before he left office.” President Donald Trump so far has “not addressed the limits on ammunition that could impact the use of lead for hunting, shooting and fishing on federal lands.”

Additional coverage was provided by the [Minneapolis \(MN\) Star Tribune](#) (1/26, 1.27M), the [Oregonian](#) (1/26, 894K), the [Chico \(CA\) Enterprise-Record](#) (1/26, 90K), the [Winter Haven \(FL\) News Chief](#) (1/26, 32K), the [Black Hills \(SD\) Pioneer](#) (1/26, 11K), and [KBND-AM Bend \(OR\)](#) Bend, OR (1/26, 112).

ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT COULD BLOCK TRUMP’S BORDER WALL. The [Daily Caller](#) (1/26, Bastasch, 898K) reports that “President Trump’s political opponents may use existing federal laws designed to protect endangered species to stop him from building a border wall to stem the flow of illegal immigrants coming from Mexico.” Environmentalists claim “Trump’s proposed border wall would hinder the movement of endangered species migrating through their natural, cross-border habitats, and activists aren’t above filing suit under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) to stop the wall.” Margie Kelly, a spokeswoman for the National Resources Defense Council, said, “Litigation is just one tool in our advocacy work, and we take nothing off the table.”

HARSH WINTER IN WEST HAS ENDANGERED ANIMALS. The [AP](#) (1/26, 1.27M) reports that “a beastly winter in the American West” has “buried much of the region in snow, and temperatures have often stayed below freezing, endangering a rich diversity of wild animals.” The article notes that “in western Wyoming, supplemental feeding of elk wintering on the National Elk Refuge near Jackson started the first week of January, three weeks earlier than usual because heavier than normal snowfall buried the natural forage the thousands of elk graze on at the 24,700-acre refuge.” However, there have been “some bright spots.” In California, “some of the heaviest snow and rain in decades should prove a life-saver for threatened native salmon, whose numbers have dropped during the state’s five-year drought that is now easing.”

Coverage by the AP was also picked up by the [Albuquerque \(NM\) Journal](#) (1/27, 234K), [Philly \(PA\)](#) (1/26, 942K), [U.S. News & World Report](#) (1/27, 1.02M), the [Washington \(DC\) Times](#) (1/27, Selsky, 272K), the [Daily Mail](#) (1/27, 4.59M), and [KSBY-TV San Luis Obispo \(CA\)](#) San Luis Obispo, CA (1/27, 114K).

BOGUE CHITTO NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE TO CLOSE TEMPORARILY. The [New Orleans Times-Picayune](#) (1/26, 656K) reports that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announced Thursday it was closing Bogue Chitto National Wildlife Refuge “due to high levels of the Pearl River.” The article notes that “regulations require closure of the refuge whenever the Pearl River at the Pearl River, La., gauge reaches 15.5 feet.” Forecasters are predicting “it to remain at or above that height through at least Jan. 31.”

FWS LIFTS BOATING WAKE RESTRICTIONS AT HAVASU NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE. The [Havasu \(AZ\) News-Herald](#) (1/27, 27K) reports that “the half-mile of backwater in Lake Havasu Wildlife Refuge that sparked local concern when it was abruptly closed in May 2015 will re-open to boaters Feb. 1.” The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announced Thursday that “it will lift wake restrictions in the secluded area north of Mesquite Bay that was once a favorite spot for water sports enthusiasts.” The announcement also arrives with “assurances of more transparency from USFWS Southwest Regional Director Benjamin Tuggle.” Tuggle said, “I remain committed to working with the local community and partners to ensure the safety of all users and to taking a comprehensive approach to recreational uses on the Refuge that are vital to the economic and social fabric of the area.”

AERIAL OPERATIONS TO START FOR MEXICAN WOLF POPULATION SURVEY. The [White Mountain \(AZ\) Independent](#) (1/26, 31K) reports that biologists working on the Mexican Wolf Reintroduction Project will “conduct their annual wolf population survey and capture” from Jan. 23 to Feb. 4. The project is “a multi-agency cooperative effort between the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Arizona Game and Fish Department, U.S. Forest Service, USDA-Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Wildlife Services and White Mountain Apache Tribe.” Southwest Regional Director Dr. Benjamin Tuggle said, “Our biologists and wildlife managers, and our state, tribal and stakeholder partners are working diligently to bring the Mexican wolf population back to a healthy level on a working landscape. Conducting

this annual wolf count provides us a good indication of where we are in the reintroduction process.”

KEY DEER OUTFITTED WITH RADIO COLLARS IN BATTLE AGAINST SCREWORM OUTBREAK.

The [Miami Herald](#) (1/26, 856K) reports that “thirty female Key deer have been outfitted with radio collars in the ongoing battle against New World screwworm in the Florida Keys.” The deer were “trapped and collared over three days this month by a team from Texas A&M University and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service biologists.” The collars will “help biologists better monitor the does during the spring fawning season, when they are more vulnerable to infection by the flesh-eating flies.”

AVIAN CHOLERA KILLING BIRDS AT MCNARY NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE. The [Tri-City Herald \(WA\)](#) (1/26, 104K) reports that “an outbreak of avian cholera has killed about 500 birds at the McNary National Wildlife Refuge near Burbank in the last week.” According to Dan Haas of the Mid-Columbia River National Wildlife Refuge Complex, “the disease is not unusual in cold and wet weather.” However, “he does not remember a previous outbreak at the McNary refuge.”

Bureau of Land Management:

UTAH CONSERVATIONISTS CONDEMN POSSIBLE BLM CHIEF. [E&E](#) (1/26) reports that “conservation and outdoor recreation interests are opposing Utah state Rep. Mike Noel’s (R) bid to lead the Bureau of Land Management.” Black Diamond Equipment founder Peter Metcalf “joined 15 other Utah business people and environmentalists in writing a letter to President Trump, condemning Noel’s candidacy.” The article notes: “Noel is a longtime opponent of federal land ownership. He has fought for increased fossil fuel extraction on public land and made a career of fighting the federal government over Western lands. He has indicated a desire to abolish the agency.”

Additional coverage was provided by the [St. George \(UT\) Spectrum](#) (1/26, 45K).

RANCHER FIGHTS BLM FOR GRAZING RIGHTS. The [Washington Times](#) (1/26, Richardson, 272K) reports that “ten months after her husband was killed in a standoff with the federal government,” Jeanette Finicum is fighting for “the grazing allotment she inherited upon the death of her husband,” Robert “LaVoy” Finicum, who was killed Jan. 26, 2016. Finicum “fears” a directive by the BLM to “keep off” the Tuckup Allotment may be “more than a bureaucratic snafu, that federal officials want to wrest her grazing rights in order to discourage other ranchers from challenging land-management policies, as her husband did.”

AERIAL SEEDING PROJECT AIMS TO SPEED RECOVERY OF BURNED AREAS ACROSS EASTERN NEVADA. The [Las Vegas Review-Journal](#) (1/26, 676K) reports that “starting this week, helicopters are dropping seeds from native plants on almost 12,000 acres of public land, including Strawberry Creek at Great Basin National Park. The objective of the operation by the Bureau of Land Management and the Nevada Department of Wildlife is “to spur plant recovery, curb erosion and slow the invasion of non-native grasses in habitat used by greater sage grouse and other sensitive species.” According to the BLM, “the aerial seeding is expected to take two to four weeks to complete.

STRATEGY FOR SAGE-GROUSE CONSERVATION IN WYOMING TOUTS COLLABORATION. The [Rawlins \(WY\) Times](#) (1/26, 10K) reports that “in a lengthy release put out by the Sage-Grouse Implementation Team (SGIT), the group stated that in an ‘unprecedented collaborative process among Wyoming stakeholders,’ the SGIT had developed a strategy for sage-grouse conservation, a strategy that leaves the bird off the endangered species list while developing mechanisms to allow grouse populations to thrive, along with Wyoming’s business interests as well.” The Bureau of Land Management, which is a part of SGIT and Brad Purdy, “public affairs specialist for the BLM in Wyoming, said that the continued partnership between local, state, private and federal agencies is key to the sage-grouse’s continued survival.” Purdy said, “I think collaboration is key. Wyoming has been a leader in sage-grouse conservation since the beginning (and) I think we’ll continue to be a leader in sage-grouse conservation.”

Securing America’s Energy Future:

Onshore Energy Development:

EPSTEIN: TRUMP ACTIONS PAVE WAY FOR DAPL COMPLETION. Richard Epstein, a contributor writing at [Forbes](#) (1/26, 15.17M), says the Presidential Memorandum (PM) signed by President Donald Trump on Tuesday regarding the Dakota Access Pipeline “will cut through the tangled confusion that surrounded and blocked the issuance of permits and easements” necessary to complete the project. “The PM does not, of course, grant the approvals needed to put finish the construction of the pipeline, but it authorizes an expedited pathway for approval that will be difficult, if not impossible to stop, through judicial challenges that might be raised by the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, or their supporters,” Epstein writes.

[E&E](#) (1/26) reports that Standing Rock Sioux Chairman Dave Archambault II “urged President Trump to allow completion of the full environmental impact statement for the Dakota Access pipeline in a letter published today.” Archambault wrote in the letter, “This change in course is arbitrary and without justification; the law requires that changes in agency positions be backed by new circumstances or new evidence, not simply by the president’s whim.”

Meanwhile, [Politico Pro](#) (1/26) reports that “a little-noticed recommendation from an Army Corps of Engineers commander in December to approve the Dakota Access pipeline could prove an extremely potent hurdle for project opponents to overcome.” Col. John Henderson “wrote in a Dec. 3 memo that his office ‘intends to execute and issue’ a pivotal permit to finish Dakota Access, but his verdict was overridden the next day in a memo delaying a decision on the project.” According to the article, “ordinarily permit decisions are made by district commanders, and Trump’s Tuesday memo ordering the government to ‘review and approve’ as quickly as possible any necessary permits for the \$3.8 billion pipeline could allow Henderson’s positive judgment to replace the earlier hold.”

Additional coverage was provided by the [Billings \(MT\) Gazette](#) (1/26, 208K), the [Forum of Fargo-Moorhead \(ND\)](#) (1/26, 47K), and [Fox News](#) (1/25, 11.07M).

TRANSCANADA SUBMITS NEW APPLICATION FOR KEYSTONE XL. [Reuters](#) (1/26, Khettry) reports that TransCanada Corp announced on Thursday that it had filed an application with the Department of State seeking approval of the Keystone XL pipeline. The application followed the order signed by President Trump allowing the company to apply for a new permit after President Obama rejected its application in 2015.

The [New York Times](#) (1/26, Krauss, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) reports that Trump has “reversed the government’s position” on the pipeline, in a case “pitting environmentalists against advocates of energy independence and economic growth.” The Times says that the project would create “thousands of construction jobs” but “few permanent jobs and would add only modestly to the United States’ energy security,” but is “a major symbol in the fight over...climate change.” The Times says the pipeline and the Canadian oil it would carry are “superfluous” in the current world oil market, and it would be “challenged in the courts and by vigorous local civil disobedience.”

BLM AUCTIONS 843 ACRES IN CHACO CANYON FOR \$3 MILLION. The [AP](#) (1/26) reports the Bureau of Land Management auctioned 843 acres in the Chaco Canyon for \$3 million on Wednesday despite protests from Native Americans and environmentalists. BLM spokeswoman Donna Hummel said the agency would not issue the parcels to the winning bidders until protests filed in connection with the sale are resolved. Environmentalists and the Navajo Nation say the area has particular significance for Native communities.

Additional coverage was provided by the [Durango \(CO\) Herald](#) (1/26, 31K).

FOUR CONSERVATION GROUPS PLAN TO SUE TO BAN FRACKING IN WAYNE NATIONAL FOREST. The [Cleveland Plain Dealer](#) (1/26, 976K) reports four conservation groups are planning to sue the US Forest Service, US Bureau of Land Management and US Fish and Wildlife Service in an attempt to ban hydraulic fracturing in the Wayne National Forest in Southeast Ohio. In December, the BLM auctioned 719 acres for \$1.7 million to 22 oil and gas companies, and has scheduled a second auction for

March 23 for and additional 1,186 acres. The Center for Biological Diversity, Ohio Environmental Council, Heartwood and the Sierra Club filed a 60-day notice of intent to sue the federal agencies for violating the Endangered Species Act and for failing to consider the environmental impacts of hydraulic fracturing.

SOME TRIBES PUSHING FOR DRILLING ON RESERVATIONS. [Reuters](#) (1/27, Volcovici) reports that with President Trump “in office and oil prices rising,” there is “a renewed push to streamline approvals for drilling and mining on Indian reservations.” Although “some tribes, for environmental or cultural reasons, have shunned the idea of developing these reserves,” the article says that “many others want to tap the vast wealth beneath their homelands.” The article notes that “a coalition of Native Americans appointed by Trump’s team to guide his Indian policy is researching proposals to make energy development easier on tribal lands – including the controversial idea of transferring them to private ownership.”

COAL COST A FACTOR IN NAVAJO GENERATING STATION’S FATE. The [Navajo Times \(AZ\)](#) (1/26, 66K) reports that owners of the Navajo Generating Station are “considering options that include keeping it open, but also closing it within the next few years, SRP spokesman Scott Harelsen said.” Navajo Nation President Russell Begaye “recently met with NV Energy CEO and president Paul Caudill, the company’s attorney, and another individual to ask why they are not consenting to a lease extension.” Begaye explained, “They said they are ready to sign. They want guarantee that they will have no liability beyond 2019 because their legislators voted saying they cannot use energy from NGS on account of it being a coal-fired power plant.”

PEABODY ENERGY DEFENDS BANKRUPTCY PLAN IN COURT. [Reuters](#) (1/26, Rucinski) reports that in court on Thursday, Peabody Energy defended its bankruptcy reorganization plan and testified against alternative proposals put forth by opposing creditors that would require the mining company to take on additional debt. Peabody Energy CEO Amy Schwetz said it would be “irresponsible” to take on additional debt, adding, “we only want to do this once.” [Reuters](#) (1/26) reports briefly that Peabody Energy “receive[d] approval to seek creditor votes on reorganization plan.”

NO DAMAGE REPORTED AFTER TWO OKLAHOMA EARTHQUAKES. The [AP](#) (1/26) reports no damage has been reported after two earthquakes hit northern Oklahoma this week. The USGS said a 2.7 magnitude quake hit near Medford on Wednesday and a 3.4 magnitude earthquake struck near Enid on Thursday morning.

Renewable Energy:

HAYES: TRUMP’S ENERGY PLAN IGNORES “AMERICA FIRST” RENEWABLES. David J. Hayes writes in a column for the [Sacramento \(CA\) Bee](#) (1/26, 574K) reports President Trump’s “America First Energy Plan” as outline on the White House website “misses the mark” by reiterating “two familiar, dubious claims from the Trump campaign” that energy regulations have held down growth and that reviving coal will open up vast domestic energy reserves and advance the economy. The plan ignores the “America First” story about US wind energy and does not acknowledge “that the US renewable energy industry now accounts for most of the new supply being added to the electricity grid, and most of the new jobs in the energy industry.”

KITTY HAWK LEASE AUCTION WELCOMED. In his column for the [Hickory \(NC\) Daily Record](#) (1/26, 48K), Larry Clark welcomes the recent announcement that the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management will “conduct the bidding process for the commercial lease of offshore wind power on the Outer Continental Shelf for the North Carolina Kitty Hawk area.” He notes that “the Kitty Hawk lease was years in the making and involved numerous environmental impact assessments, possible effects on traditional commercial concerns such as fishing, and even a study to determine if historic sites would be affected.” Clark supports offshore wind power because “it’s clean” and “catastrophes such as the Deepwater Horizon can’t happen.”

Empowering Native American Communities:

BIA’S RECOGNITION OF CLINT HALFTOWN LEADERSHIP ON HOLD. The [Auburn \(NY\) Citizen](#)

(1/26, 37K) reports that the Interior Board of Indian Appeals has “stayed the Bureau of Indian Affairs’ December decision to recognize the Clint Halftown faction of the Cayuga Nation as the nation’s official leaders.” The BIA “released a letter to both factions in December from Eastern Regional Office Director Bruce Maytubby.” In the letter, Maytubby “recognizes a ballot collection Halftown and his council created where 237 citizens out of 392 that were contacted, gave Halftown statements of support.” According to the stay order, Maytubby has until Feb. 14 to explain “the legal basis of his authority to make the decision a ‘final agency action,’ and not subject to appeal to the board.”

MOHAWKS APPLY FOR LAND-IN-TRUST. The [Plattsburgh \(NY\) Press Republican](#) (1/26, 90K) reports that “for the second time in 10 years, the St. Regis Mohawks at Akwesasne have applied to the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs to have certain parcels in Franklin and St. Lawrence counties placed in trust on their behalf.” The action “may trigger renewed negotiations with Franklin County to settle a 35-year-old lawsuit.”

Office of Insular Affairs:

U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS FACING MOUNTING FISCAL PROBLEMS. The [Wall Street Journal](#) (1/26, Gillers, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) reports that the U.S. Virgin Islands faces fiscal problems that led to Moody’s Investors Service on Tuesday downgrading certain Virgin Islands bonds. Mood’s cited “an increased possibility that the government may be forced to restructure its debt to address its financial problems.” Nikolao Pula, director of the Office of Insular Affairs, said, “I think this is a critical juncture. We just hope whatever decision they make will be good moving forward.”

Tackling America’s Water Challenges:

BOR LOOKS TO INCREASE WATER STORAGE IN BOISE RIVER SYSTEM. The [AP](#) (1/26, 272K) reports that the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation is “hoping to find a way to increase water storage capacity on the Boise River system.” The BOR “told the Idaho Water Resource Board this week that it would like to conduct a feasibility study to look for storage options.” According to Roland Springer, who manages the bureau’s Snake River area office, “the study could begin as soon as this year.”

Coverage by the AP was also picked up by the [Bristol \(VA\) Herald Courier](#) (1/26), the [Idaho Statesman](#) (1/26, 197K), and [KTVB-TV Boise \(ID\)](#) Boise, ID (1/26, 108K).

DROUGHT DECLARED OVER IN MUCH OF CALIFORNIA. The [AP](#) (1/26, Antczak, 272K) reports that “drought conditions have retreated from nearly half of California after January’s onslaught of storms, the U.S. Drought Monitor said Thursday, and one large water wholesaler urged state regulators to lift restrictions on areas with adequate supplies.” The board of directors of the San Diego County Water Authority “voted to declare an end to drought conditions in its region and to call on Gov. Jerry Brown and the State Water Resources Control Board to rescind statewide emergency water-use regulation.” The U.S. Drought Monitor “said in its weekly update that moderate, severe or extreme drought continues in just 51.4 percent of the state and the remainder has either zero indicators or a condition called abnormally dry.”

Additional coverage was provided by the [Sacramento \(CA\) Bee](#) (1/26, 574K), the [Valley Center \(CA\) Roadrunner](#) (1/26), and the [Santa Maria \(CA\) Times](#) (1/25, 42K).

FINAL HEARING ON KLAMATH RIVER DAMS SCHEDULED THURSDAY. The [Klamath Falls \(OR\) Herald And News](#) (1/25, 45K) reports that “a public hearing on removal of four hydroelectric dams on the Klamath River is scheduled for 5 to 7 p.m. Thursday in the Best Western Miner’s Inn convention center auditorium, 122 E. Miner St., Yreka.” It is “the final meeting in a series of three seeking public comments on dam removal.”

Top National News:

ADMINISTRATION FLOATS MEXICO IMPORT TAX AS PEÑA NIETO CANCELS MEETING WITH TRUMP. Coverage of the US-Mexico border wall debate focuses on the Administration's floating of a 20 percent import tax and on Mexican President Enrique Peña Nieto's cancellation of his scheduled meeting with President Trump, with Trump's own remarks on the wall at the Republican retreat in Philadelphia getting less attention. The coverage remains mostly negative, with many reports stating that an import tax would put the cost burden on Americans, not on Mexico.

[ABC World News Tonight](#) (1/26, lead story, 4:10, Muir, 14.63M) opened with "the showdown over the wall, President Trump telling us just 24 hours ago that Americans will pay at first, but Mexico will pay us back. Tonight, the Mexican president saying that won't happen. And there is new fallout: President Peña Nieto's visit to the White House next week, now canceled." ABC's Jonathan Karl: "Mexico may insist it's not going to happen, but today Donald Trump was as defiant as ever." Trump: "I've said many times that the American people will not pay for the wall. And I have made that clear to the government of Mexico." During an interview with [Fox News' Hannity](#) (1/26, 535K), the President said, "The wall is necessary. It's not just politics."

The [CBS Evening News](#) (1/26, lead story, 2:45, Pelley, 11.17M) reported, "It's become a chaotic first week for the Trump Administration. Late today the President's press secretary told reporters that Mr. Trump never said the Mexican government would pay for the wall. Earlier he announced a 20 percent tax on Mexican goods, and then the White House arranged a hasty news conference to knock that down. This morning Mr. Trump insulted the president of Mexico with a tweet, and now their summit meeting in Washington is off."

[NBC Nightly News](#) (1/26, lead story, 3:00, Holt, 16.61M) reported, "President Trump's plan to build a wall on the Mexican border is potentially running up against its own walls as he looks for ways to pay for it that don't leave Americans on the hook. The President's insistence that Mexico will foot the bill has now antagonized the Mexican president to the point of calling off the next week's scheduled face-to-face meeting." NBC's Hallie Jackson: "Late this afternoon, the Administration floating an idea to slap a 20 percent tax on Mexican imports – a way to fund the estimated \$8 billion to \$14 billion wall, but under that plan it would be Americans who would probably end up paying more for imports like cars, fruits and vegetables, and alcohol, in effect footing the bill themselves."

[Fox News Special Report](#) (1/26, 1.53M) said, "It only took four days of his first official working week but...Trump is already deeply embroiled in his very first diplomatic spat." [CNN's Situation Room](#) (1/26, 554K) reported that "some top Republicans are growing increasingly concerned about the President's policies towards Mexico," including the "recent proposal by the White House to impose a 20 percent tax on Mexican imports."

The [AP](#) (1/26, Pace) reports that Trump, speaking at a Republican retreat in Philadelphia, called on the GOP "to help him enact 'great and lasting change'...at a party retreat Thursday but offered few details. Later his spokesman said the president will seek a 20 percent tax on Mexican imports to pay for a proposed border wall." [Bloomberg Politics](#) (1/26, Sink, 201K) reports that Sean Spicer told reporters, "When you look at the plan that's taking shape now, using comprehensive tax reform as a means to tax imports from countries that we have a trade deficit from, like Mexico, if you tax that \$50 billion at 20 percent of imports, by doing that we can do \$10 billion a year and easily pay for the wall just through that mechanism alone." However, the AP says Spicer later "tried to take back his earlier comments by saying the 20 percent tax is one of several options under consideration and Trump hasn't settled on it as the way to recoup construction costs for building the wall."

[The Hill](#) (1/26, Fabian, 1.25M) also says Spicer "sought to clarify his earlier comments about the plan, saying they were not meant to be an official policy rollout." He said, "Our job right now isn't to roll something out or be prescriptive. It's to show that there are ways that the wall could be paid for. Full stop. That's it." [Politico](#) (1/26, Nussbaum, 2.46M) headlines a report "Trump Team Walks Back Plan To Fund Wall With Import Tax."

The [Los Angeles Times](#) (1/26, Memoli, 4.52M) says that "although Trump repeatedly has said that Mexico would pay for the wall," such a tax "actually would fall on U.S. consumers, not on Mexicans." [USA Today](#)

(1/26, Korte, Jackson, 5.28M) says Spicer “gave few details, and described it as a beginning of a process that would be part of overall tax reform.” The [Washington Post](#) (1/26, Partlow, Rucker, 11.43M) calls the tax proposal “a stunning new detail,” and says Trump’s moves “have rekindled old resentments in Mexico, a country that during its history has often felt bullied and threatened by its wealthier, more powerful neighbor.”

The [New York Daily News](#) (1/26, Joseph, 4.45M) says Trump would also need to formally pull the US out of NAFTA to implement such a tax, since the trade agreement “bans unilateral decisions on new taxes and tariffs between the countries.” The [New York Times](#) (1/26, Bradsher, Abrams, Vlasic, Subscription Publication, 13.9M), in an examination of the prospect of broader import taxes, says “linking the plan to Mexico left corporate groups mostly silent, leery of offending the president by criticizing him but also leery of offending Americans who dislike Mr. Trump’s denunciations of Mexico and Mexican immigrants.”

The [New York Times](#) (1/26, Shear, Subscription Publication, 13.9M), the [Washington Times](#) (1/26, Dinan, 272K), and [US News & World Report](#) (1/26, Soergel, 1.02M) also report on the prospects for a Mexican import tax. The [New York Times](#) (1/26, Porter, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) also examines other ways to “make Mexico pay” for the wall, including “impounding remittances of Mexicans working in the United States, or charging Mexicans more for visas.” But in terms of the former, “Mexicans would come up with other conduits to send the \$100 a week that their parents, children or siblings back home rely on to pay the bills,” and taxing remittances “might be illegal...as discriminatory on the basis of national origin.”

[Twitter discussion](#) of the wall Thursday was somewhat negative, with many commenting that the proposed tax would impact Americans, not Mexico. The most shared [Facebook pieces](#) were similarly critical.

Media Analysis: Meeting Cancellation Latest Sign Of Quick “Souring Of Relations.” The [AP](#) (1/26, Stevenson) reports that Peña Nieto’s cancellation of the visit signaled “a remarkable souring of relations between Washington and one of its most important international partners just days into” the Trump Administration. The rift “capped days of increasingly confrontational remarks – on Twitter and in dueling public appearances – between” Trump and Peña Nieto.

Trump [tweeted](#) at 8:51 a.m. Thursday, “The U.S. has a 60 billion dollar trade deficit with Mexico. It has been a one-sided deal from the beginning of NAFTA with massive numbers of jobs and companies lost. If Mexico is unwilling to pay for the badly needed wall, then it would be better to cancel the upcoming meeting.” Three hours later, Peña Nieto [tweeted](#) that the meeting was canceled, adding in a subsequent [tweet](#) that Mexico remains interested in negotiations.

The [New York Times](#) (1/26, Ahmed, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) says Trump’s wall announcement “escalated into a diplomatic standoff” as Peña Nieto canceled the meeting and Trump accused Mexico “of burdening the United States with illegal immigrants, criminals and a trade deficit. ... Having called for dialogue in the face of Mr. Trump’s vows to build a wall during the American presidential campaign, Mr. Peña Nieto ultimately bowed to public pressure in Mexico to respond more forcefully to his northern neighbor.”

However, the [Washington Times](#) (1/26, Miller, 272K) reports that Trump told Republicans that he and Peña Nieto mutually agreed to cancel the meeting. Trump said, “[We] have agreed to cancel our planned meeting scheduled for next week. Such a meeting would be fruitless. ... The world has taken advantage of us for many years. It’s not going to happen anymore.” The [Los Angeles Times](#) (1/26, Memoli, 4.52M) reports that Trump also told the GOP legislators, “The American people will not pay for the wall. It is time that the American people had a president fighting as hard for its citizens as other countries do for theirs. And that is exactly what I’m going to do for you.”

In an analysis, the [Washington Post](#) (1/26, Deyoung, Rucker, 11.43M) says that in his first days in office, Trump began “to reshape the U.S. role in the world, laying the groundwork, in a series of planned and signed executive actions and statements, for the ‘America first’ foreign policy on which he campaigned.”

[The Hill](#) (1/26, Fabian, 1.25M) says that the cancellation “escalates brewing tensions” between the US and Mexico. [USA Today](#) (1/26, Agren, 5.28M) and the [NPR](#) (1/26, Kennedy, 1.92M) website also have brief reports on the cancellation.

Congressional GOP Expects Wall Spending Request Of Up To \$15 Billion. [USA Today](#) (1/26, Kelly, 5.28M) reports, “Congressional leaders said Thursday they expect the Trump administration to send them a request soon for \$12 billion to \$15 billion to fund construction of a wall on the U.S.-Mexico border.” Senate Majority Leader McConnell said, “We intend to address the wall issue ourselves.” House Speaker Ryan said Congress “will take up President Trump’s expected request before the end of September...in the form of an emergency budget request” separate from the regular federal spending bill. The [Washington Post](#) (1/26, Sullivan, 11.43M) reports that the GOP leaders “declined to specify where that funding would come from, continuing the uncertainty over one of President Trump’s signature campaign promises.” The [Wall Street Journal](#) (1/26, Rubin, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) notes that congressional Republicans floated an import tax several weeks ago, but Trump criticized it at the time.

NYTimes, WPost, WSJournal Say Trump Risking Trade War With Mexico. The [New York Times](#) (1/26, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) says in an editorial that Trump “raised the specter of a trade war” with Mexico “as the White House warned that the United States could impose a 20 percent tariff on Mexican imports. This absurd threat, issued as a proposal to cover the cost of a border wall,” came shortly after Peña Nieto canceled his visit. The Times calls the “tariff tantrum” the “latest in a head-spinning torrent of lies, dangerous policy ideas and threats from the White House since Mr. Trump was sworn in last Friday. They have underscored just how impulsive and apparently ignorant the new occupant of the Oval Office is of international economic and security relationships that serve American interests.”

The [Washington Post](#) (1/26, 11.43M) editorializes, “Until a few days ago, the U.S.-Mexico relationship was a strong one that benefited both countries. In the first week of his term, President Trump seems determined to change that – and for no good reason.” The Post urges Administration officials to “reach out and seek to repair the week’s damage. It took the United States nearly a decade to recover from the economic wreckage of the last recession. A wealth-destroying trade war with one of America’s closest partners would threaten that long-sought recovery.”

In an editorial headlined “Trump’s Little Mexican War,” the [Wall Street Journal](#) (1/26, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) says Trump has sparked a diplomatic crisis and put an important economic relationship at risk, and says Trump forced Peña Nieto into a position where negotiation was not possible.

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS SUBMIT RESIGNATIONS. The [Washington Post](#) (1/26, Gearan, 11.43M) reports that according to State Department officials, a number of career Foreign Service officers “were informed this week that they will not be asked to stay on in senior or sensitive posts that are under direct White House control.” The decision, which officials said affected “officials at the level of assistant secretary and above were affected,” means when Secretary of State-designate Tillerson is confirmed, “he will face an unusual leadership vacuum among senior ranks of the State Department.” According to the Post, the diplomats “were not technically fired” as the Trump Administration “opted to remove a number of top officials in charge of the State Department’s 13 divisions responsible for policy, security and other matters.” All career diplomats running those bureaus “had submitted pro forma resignations that were effective upon the end of the Obama administration, State Department spokesman Mark Toner said.” On [ABC World News Tonight](#) (1/26, story 3, 3:35, Muir, 14.63M), Martha Raddatz referred to “an unusually large exodus of senior-level foreign service officers,” and, like the Washington Post, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (1/26, Schwartz, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) also says the resignations create a possible leadership vacuum at the agency ahead of Tillerson’s confirmation.

[Bloomberg Politics](#) (1/26, Wadhams, 201K) says the personnel moves come as the Trump Administration “exerts control over the agency with an eye toward purging an old guard seen as representing the establishment he railed against during the campaign.” While Toner said the Administration request that “politically appointed officers submit letters of resignation is ‘standard with every transition,’” Bloomberg Politics says that position “isn’t shared by other current and former officials.” To [Reuters](#) (1/26, Wroughton), it was unclear whether the departures were “part of the normal transition process when a

new administration starts or whether it was a coordinated walkout by diplomats who had served in Democrat Barack Obama's administration."

The [AP](#) (1/26, Lee, Lederman) says resignations have been accepted from "Thomas Countryman, who had been serving as the acting undersecretary of state for arms control and international security" and Undersecretary for Management Patrick F. Kennedy, as well as "two assistant secretaries, Joyce Barr and Michele Bond; and Gentry Smith, who directs the Office of Foreign Missions." Since the election, "Victoria Nuland, the former assistant secretary for European and Eurasian Affairs, and Gregory Starr, the assistant secretary for diplomatic security," and "Lydia Muniz, a non-career political appointee who had run Overseas Building Operations," have also left the Department. None "has linked his or her departure explicitly to Trump," but "many diplomats have privately expressed concern about serving in his administration given the unorthodox positions he's taken on many foreign policy issues."

TRUMP TO GOP LAWMAKERS: THIS MAY BE "BUSIEST CONGRESS...EVER." Coverage of President Trump's Thursday speech in Philadelphia to Hill Republicans gathered for a GOP retreat emphasizes the President's vow to work closely with the GOP-controlled Congress to accomplish his policy goals. In particular, reports almost universally highlight Trump's remark, "This Congress is going to be the busiest Congress we've had in decades, maybe ever." But while some reports are straightforward and neutral in tone, others strike a negative note, homing in on what is said to be a lack of details offered by Trump on his proposals and the President straying from his prepared remarks.

For example, under the headline "Hill Republicans Leave Retreat With Few Answers On Key Questions," the [Washington Post](#) (1/26, Debonis, 11.43M) – which does highlight the President's "busiest Congress" remark – says that "for scores of rank-and-file lawmakers looking for clarity, Trump's 25-minute address did not contain the specifics they were seeking." On the [CBS Evening News](#) (1/26, story 4, 2:10, 11.17M), Scott Pelley reported on Trump's remarks to GOP lawmakers, saying, "Yesterday, Mr. Trump advocated torture. Today, he told Republicans his agenda is based on a moral foundation." The segment showed Trump saying, "This Congress is going to be the busiest Congress we've had in decades, maybe ever." CBS' Nancy Cordes later added, "To the great relief of Republicans" gathered for the retreat, "Trump relied on prepared remarks and a teleprompter, and avoided getting sidetracked like he did at the CIA this weekend."

But in a negative report for [Politico](#) (1/26, 2.46M), Nolan McCaskill wrote, "Winning. Crowd size. Dishonest media. Voter fraud. Mexico. A laundry list of" the President's "obsessions overshadowed the substance of" his address. McCaskill described those aforementioned listed items as Trump's "fixations," and added that "nearly every mention of presidential memoranda and other actions he's signed since taking office last Friday included off-the-cuff segues into" subjects such as "a projection of 600,000 people for Saturday's anti-abortion March for Life and an assertion that there's 'nothing fair about the media' because they allegedly report unfairly on crowd sizes."

[Reuters](#) (1/26, Cowan, Cornwell) highlights Trump's "busiest Congress" comment, but says the President "did not hold an expected question-and-answer session with the lawmakers, and his speech veered into side issues such as predicting crowd size for an anti-abortion march in Washington, alleging American voting irregularities and touting winning Pennsylvania in the Nov. 8 election." [Bloomberg Politics](#) (1/26, Sink, House, 201K) similarly says that although Trump "spoke from a teleprompter, the speech characteristically veered off topic. Trump twice asked if his CIA director, Mike Pompeo, a former congressman, was in the audience. 'Where is Pompeo, where the hell is he?'" asked Trump, who also "recounted his election and bragged about winning Pennsylvania" and "returned again to the subject of his inauguration crowd size."

The [New York Times](#) (1/26, Shear, Flegenheimer, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) highlights the President's "busiest Congress" remark, adding, "Gesturing to House Speaker Paul D. Ryan, Mr. Trump said: 'He's writing his heart out. And we're actually going to sign the stuff that you're writing. You're not wasting your time.'" The Times says Trump "was met warmly in the room," and Rep. Tom Cole (R-OK) is quoted as saying, "It's like being actually led into the Promised Land by Moses. We're there and he's our leader and people feel very comfortable." The [Washington Times](#) (1/26, Miller, 272K) reports that Trump stated "the days of a do-nothing Congress are over. 'Enough all talk, no action. We have to deliver,' Mr.

Trump said,” later adding, “Now is the dawn of a new era of American independence and re-dedication to the idea that the people are in charge of their own destiny.”

The [New York Post](#) (1/26, Schultz, 3.82M) reports, “Striking a populist message, Trump told lawmakers to remember who they’re working for. It’s time, he said, to ‘restore the rule of law and return power to everyday Americans.’” Meanwhile, the Post describes Trump’s remarks on Pompeo as a “comedic moment.” [U.S. News & World Report](#) (1/26, Levy, 1.02M) reports that Trump “said Democrats should be grateful that Republicans were taking steps to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act, removing what he said would be a political albatross from around their necks in a show of magnanimity. ‘Every time they try to tell you about Obamacare, we’re getting them out of a big jam,’ Trump” said, adding, “We’re taking a risk, taking it off their plates.”

Pence To Hill Republicans: “Buckle Up.” [USA Today](#) (1/26, Kelly, 5.28M) reports that Vice President Pence, addressing the gathering in Philadelphia on Thursday, told congressional Republicans “to ‘buckle up’ and get ready to work with the new Trump administration on everything from repealing Obamacare to confirming a ‘strict constructionist’ to fill the Supreme Court. ‘My friends, this is our moment,’” Pence said, adding, “We got this far because President Donald Trump marshaled a movement unlike any movement in American history.”

The [Washington Times](#) (1/26, Sherfinski, 272K) reports that Pence said Trump and congressional Republicans “are in the ‘promise-keeping business’ and that he and the president have a ‘profound respect’ for Congress’s constitutional role in government.” Said Pence, “So I can say unequivocally that President Trump and I will forge a strong working relationship with the Congress and with all of you to enact the laws that will serve the interests of the American people as contemplated by the Constitution of the United States.”

Politico: Meeting Privately With Pence, Republicans “Rehash Years-Old Political Controversies.” Under the headline “GOP Airs Old Grievances In Private Pence Meeting,” [Politico](#) (1/26, Bade, 2.46M) reported that while meeting privately with the Vice President on Thursday, GOP lawmakers “rehash[ed] years-old political controversies – even suggesting Pence fire the IRS commissioner, according to sources in the room.” Politico said “a handful of the House’s most conservative lawmakers peppered Pence with questions on topics ranging from the 2012 Benghazi terrorist attack to the 2013 IRS tea party-targeting scandal.” Politico called it “a sign that while Republicans might control the levers of power in Washington, some are having trouble moving on from old run-ins with the Obama administration.”

Roll Call: Trump Appears “To Embrace House Republicans’ Border Adjustment Tax Proposal.” [Roll Call](#) (1/26, Bennett, 63K) reported that Trump on Thursday “seemed to embrace House Republicans’ border adjustment tax proposal. ‘I want to go a different route. We have no choice,’ he said of America’s trade deals with Mexico. ‘Paul Ryan and other leaders in Congress and I and Mike Pence...we’re working on a tax reform bill that will reduce our trade deficits, increase American exports and will generate revenue from Mexico that will pay for the wall if decide to go that route. Ryan, when asked Thursday before Trump’s speech if Trump had told him specifically that he likes the border adjustment proposal, said, ‘We’re in a very good place on tax reform.’”

Seeking Agreement On Agenda, GOP Lawmakers Grapple With “An Unconventional Presidency.” The [Wall Street Journal](#) (1/26, Peterson, Rubin, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) reports that Trump and Hill Republicans on Thursday were unable to reach agreement on a number of policy issues related to tax reform, trade, and other key components of the agenda they want to enact in the year ahead. The Journal says Hill Republicans wrestled with how to respond to a GOP president who can sign their measures into law, but also can publicly ignite feuds and pay little heed to the traditions of Capitol Hill. Speaking with reporters, House Speaker Ryan said, “This is going to be an unconventional presidency,” adding, “That’s something we’re just all going to have to get used to.” However, referring to the agenda being pursued by Trump and GOP lawmakers, Ryan said, “We are on the same page.”

The [Washington Times](#) (1/26, Howell, 272K) says that Hill GOP leaders “outlined an aggressive agenda Thursday for the first 200 days of their partnership with...Trump, pledging to overhaul the U.S. health care and tax systems while looking for up to \$15 billion to pay for Mr. Trump’s border wall with Mexico.” The

Times highlights Ryan's "on the same page" remark, and further quotes him as saying, "We've been working with the administration on a daily basis to map out and plan a very bold and aggressive agenda to make good on our campaign promises."

Under the headline "Mitch McConnell Caught Between Trump, Republican-led Congress," [McClatchy](#) (1/26, Tate, 74K) reports that Senate Majority Leader McConnell is "heading down a bumpy, unpredictable road," as the Kentucky lawmaker finds himself "caught between conflicting interests. Restless Republican conservatives want the always-deliberative Senate to move faster. Senate Republicans are hardly unified, and because the GOP controls 52 of the 100 seats, it takes only three dissenters to derail a party initiative." At the same time, President Trump's "impulsive ways, and his marketing skills, make it hard for Congress to claim credit for change. In the middle of all this is McConnell."

Trump Looks For CIA Director At GOP Lawmakers' Retreat. The [New York Times](#) (1/26, Rosenberg, Haberman. Harris, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) reports in its "First 100 Days Briefing" that as he addressed the annual retreat for GOP lawmakers Thursday in Philadelphia, President Trump "seemed to think" CIA Director Pompeo would be among those in attendance as he scanned the crowd and asked, "Where is Pompeo? Where the hell is he?" However, Pompeo "was not in Philadelphia" because the CIA "is supposed to be apolitical, and its chief does not have a direct role in creating administration policies." While Pompeo attended the retreat as a member of the House, "it would be considered highly inappropriate for him to take part" in his new position.

NYTimes: GOP Lawmakers Uncomfortably Avoid Questions About Trump's "Whoppers." The [New York Times](#) (1/26, Flegenheimer, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) reports on how Hill Republicans have responded to questions about "two whoppers" President Trump and his team have recently told: "doubling down on false claims about his inauguration crowd and illegal voting in the election." The Times says GOP lawmakers' "strategies have been tested and recalibrated – the senatorial speed-walk, the bemused deflection, the jittery laughter – honed through a presidential" race "of refutable claims, racially charged rhetoric and tape-recorded boasts of sexual assault." The Times adds if GOP lawmakers held "any expectation that this ritual of the campaign cycle would end – the grimacing through questions about Mr. Trump, the hedging when asked if their party's leader had overstepped – these early days have supplied a decisive verdict: not so much."

The Hill: Trump Emerging As "Schmooser-In-Chief." [The Hill](#) (1/26, Fabian, Bolton, 1.25M) reported that President Trump "has emerged from his earliest days in the White House with a new title: schmoozer-in-chief." The President, said The Hill, hopes "to build the kinds of relationships that can lead to cooperation with Republicans and Democrats that would advance his agenda. Lawmakers who felt shunned at worst or tolerated at best by former President Barack Obama are hopeful for the change." Rep. Adam Kinzinger (R-IL) told The Hill, "We're a couple days in but it's going to be way better than what we've had during the last eight years," adding of the President, "He's a builder and he wants to bring people together."

Thousands Protest Against Trump In Philadelphia. The [Washington Post](#) (1/26, Hesse, 11.43M) reports, "Several thousand protesters converged Thursday in Philadelphia, hoping to have their voices heard by President Trump and" GOP lawmakers, "who were meeting in a hotel blocks away to plot out their legislative agenda for the coming months. Less than a week after Trump's inauguration inspired demonstrations – notably, the millions of marchers who descended on Washington and cities worldwide to protest his presidency" – Thursday's "gathering seemed to signal a new era of what could turn out to be perpetual protest."

Peyton Manning Speaks At GOP Retreat. Under the headline "Peyton Manning Boards The Trump Train," the [Daily Beast](#) (1/26, Weill, 1.11M) reports, "For nearly a year, Donald Trump's crush on Peyton Manning went unrequited, but now the former quarterback appears to have had a change of heart. Manning spoke just after Trump and...Pence at [the] Republican retreat." Manning, says the Daily Beast, "has often given money to major Republicans, with Trump as notable exception. A donor to George W. Bush's 2004 reelection campaign, and Mitt Romney's 2012 presidential bid, Manning donated to primary candidate Jeb Bush in 2015, but not to" Trump.

Editorial Wrap-Up:

NEW YORK TIMES. *“Donald Trump’s Mexico Tantrum.”* The [New York Times](#) (1/26, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) says in an editorial that President Trump “raised the specter of a trade war” with Mexico “as the White House warned that the United States could impose a 20 percent tariff on Mexican imports. This absurd threat, issued as a proposal to cover the cost of a border wall,” came shortly after Mexican President Enrique Peña Nieto canceled his visit. The Times calls the “tariff tantrum” the “latest in a head-spinning torrent of lies, dangerous policy ideas and threats from the White House since Mr. Trump was sworn in last Friday. They have underscored just how impulsive and apparently ignorant the new occupant of the Oval Office is of international economic and security relationships that serve American interests.”

“Mr. Trump’s ‘Gag Rule’ Will Harm Global Health.” A [New York Times](#) (1/26, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) editorial says President Trump’s reinstatement and expansion of the Mexico City policy “may well have made it harder for health workers around the world to fight cancer, H.I.V., Zika and Ebola” because the language “would appear to apply to any international health funding,” and “would seem to go well beyond family-planning aid from the Agency for International Development and the State Department, to also include money from all American governmental agencies and departments.”

“South Dakota Lawmakers Snuffing Out Ethics Reform Referendum.” In an editorial, the [New York Times](#) (1/27, Subscription Publication, 13.9M) criticizes South Dakota’s Republican-controlled Legislature for “brutally rejecting the people’s will” by moving to undo the recently-approved ethics reform referendum. The Times concludes, “the G.O.P. machine snuffed out the democratic process.”

WASHINGTON POST. *“Trump Is Starting A Trade War We Don’t Need.”* The [Washington Post](#) (1/26, 11.43M) editorializes, “Until a few days ago, the U.S.-Mexico relationship was a strong one that benefited both countries. In the first week of his term, President Trump seems determined to change that – and for no good reason.” The Post urges Administration officials to “reach out and seek to repair the week’s damage. It took the United States nearly a decade to recover from the economic wreckage of the last recession. A wealth-destroying trade war with one of America’s closest partners would threaten that long-sought recovery.”

“In China, Torture Is Real, And The Rule Of Law Is A Sham.” The [Washington Post](#) (1/26, 11.43M) editorializes that President Trump “show[ing] no interest in either” human rights or the rule of law, while also “endorses[ing] the use of torture in interrogations” will “only embolden China’s leaders the next time they decide to” imprison and torture their citizens who are fighting for rights. The Post says there are two “fresh examples” of China using “imprisonment, forced confessions and deprivation.” The Post highlights the cases of lawyer Xie Yang – who remains in prison after being detained in July 2015 and has been tortured – and lawyer Li Chunfu – who was kept in “secret detention” for 500 days.

“Montgomery County Does Not Need A \$15 Minimum Wage.” A [Washington Post](#) (1/26, 11.43M) editorial.

WALL STREET JOURNAL. *“Trump’s Little Mexican War.”* In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (1/26, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) says Trump has sparked a diplomatic crisis and put an important economic relationship at risk, and says Trump forced Mexican President Enrique Peña Nieto into a position where negotiation was not possible.

“Chuck Schumer Goes Wild.” A [Wall Street Journal](#) (1/26, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) editorial criticizes Senate Minority Leader Schumer over a statement in which he blasted Education Secretary-designate Betsy DeVos, saying she would “single-handedly decimate our public education system if she were confirmed.” The Journal says DeVos does not oppose public schools, and laments the fact that while school reform had been a bipartisan issue, Democrats now take their cues from teachers unions.

“The Trump-Brexit Opening.” The [Wall Street Journal](#) (1/26, Subscription Publication, 6.37M) in an

editorial says that President Trump and British Prime Minister Theresa May would both benefit from achieving a trade agreement quickly. It urges the President to insist that the EU treat Britain fairly in exit talks and work to finalize an agreement while the Congress is in friendly hands. It also urges Trump to guarantee a focus on equitable rules rather than negotiating market share.

Big Picture:

HEADLINES FROM TODAY'S FRONT PAGES.

Wall Street Journal:

[Trade Threat, Canceled Meeting Deepen Us-Mexico Rift](#)
[Nafta's Impact On US Has Been Mixed](#)
[Verizon Is Weighing A Combination With Cable Firm Charter](#)
[European Investors Bet On Economic Revival](#)

New York Times:

[White House Sows Confusion About Plan For A 20% Import Tax](#)
[In A Corner, President Enrique Peña Nieto Of Mexico Punches Back](#)
[Trump Will Call For A Pentagon Plan To Hit ISIS Harder, Officials Say](#)
[Trump Strategist Stephen Bannon Says Media Should 'Keep Its Mouth Shut'](#)
[Republicans Now Marching With Trump On Ideas They Had Opposed](#)
[Nearly 8 Decades Later, An Apology For A Lynching In Georgia](#)

Washington Post:

[Talk Of Import Tax On Mexico Sours Relations](#)
['And We Accomplished Zero'](#)
[Part-human, Part-pig Embryo Is Grown In Lab](#)
[President Begins A Push To Change US Role In World](#)
[Trump Pressured Park Official Over Crowd Size](#)

Financial Times:

[Greek Court Rejects Turkish Request To Return Airmen](#)
[Trump Threatens 20% Tax As Mexican Summit Scrapped](#)
[Corporate America Split Over Republican Tax Plan](#)
[Johnson & Johnson Agrees \\$30bn Deal For Actelion](#)

Washington Times:

[Trump Plan For Wall On Border Sinks Talks With Mexico](#)
[Republican Gains Boost Morale For March For Life](#)
[ISIS Airstrike Limits In Iraq Come Under Review](#)
[Trump Argument Bolstered: Clinton Received 800,000 Votes From Noncitizens, Study Finds](#)
[Finicum Family, Bureau Of Land Management Still Tangling A Year After Fatal Standoff](#)
[Trump To GOP Lawmakers: 'We Have To Deliver'](#)

Story Lineup From Last Night's Network News:

ABC: Trump-Mexico Border Wall; Trump-Illegal Votes; Trump Transition-State Department HR; Trump-Manning; Police Violence Ft. Worth; Health-Mumps Outbreak; Tax Return Tips; Sacramento Utility Poles Crash; American Air New 737; San Francisco Restaurant Flooding; William Sisters Match; Father-Daughter Duet.

CBS: Trump-Mexico Border Wall; Mexico Border Wall Responses; Middle East Immigrants; Trump-Republican Agenda; Steve Bannon Comments; TPP Withdrawal Responses; Police Chief Apologizes For Historic Lynching; UK Prime Minister US Visit; William Sisters Match; Mary Tyler Moore-Memorial.

NBC: Trump-Mexico Border Wall; UK Prime Minister US Visit; Police Violence Ft. Worth; Airline Food Allergies; Southern California Avalanche; Sanctuary Cities; Grocery Prices; Tennis Aged Stars; McDonald Limited Edition Sauce; Doomsday Clock; Young-Old Friendship.

Network TV At A Glance:

Trump-Mexico Border Wall – 9 minutes, 55 seconds
Police Violence Ft. Worth – 3 minutes, 55 seconds
UK Prime Minister US Visit – 3 minutes, 40 seconds

Story Lineup From This Morning's Radio News Broadcasts:

ABC: Trump-Mexico Border Wall; Trump-Republican Retreat; Pence-March For Life; Muslim Employee Hate Crime.

CBS: Trump-Mexico Border Wall; Wall Street News; Trump-Immigration Policy; Sanctuary Cities; Mike Connors Dead; NFL Lower Injuries.

FOX: Trump-Mexico Border Wall; Republican Retreat; Texas Death Sentence Execution.

NPR: Trump-Mexico Border Wall; Trump-EPA Cuts; Pence-March For Life; US House Price Down; San Bernardino Shooting Trial; Police Violence Ft. Worth; Philadelphia Amtrak Derailment Investigation; Wall Street News.

Washington Schedule:

TODAY'S EVENTS IN WASHINGTON.

White House:

PRESIDENT TRUMP — Participates in meeting on trade and commerce; participates in his Official Portrait Sitting; meets with Chief of Staff, Reince Priebus; holds bilateral meeting and joint press conference with Theresa May, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom; participates in briefing with the joint chiefs of staff; partakes in Ceremonial Swearing-in of the Secretary of Defense, General James Mattis; signs Executive Orders.

VICE PRESIDENT PENCE — Offers remarks at the March for Life; participates in a working luncheon with Theresa May, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom; participates in briefing with the Joint Chiefs of Staff; partakes in ceremonial swearing-in of the Secretary of Defense, General James Mattis; joins the President as he signs Executive Orders.

US Senate: 10:00 AM Senate convenes for pro forma session Location: Washington, DC

<http://www.senate.gov/>

US House: 2:00 PM House of Representatives convenes for pro forma session Location: Washington, DC <http://www.house.gov/>

Other: 8:30 AM UK PM Theresa May lays wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier – UK Prime Minister Theresa May lays wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery, ahead of her White House talks with President Donald Trump. National Capital Region and U.S. Army Military District of Washington Joint Force Headquarters Commanding General Maj. GEN. Bradley Becker hosts the ceremony Location: Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, VA <http://mdwhome.mdw.army.mil/>
https://twitter.com/JFHQNCR_MDW

8:30 AM 'Pro-life Con' Digital Action Summit – Family Research Council 'Pro-life Con' Digital Action Summit – annual conference for the online pro-life community. Speakers include Republican Reps. Randy Hultgren and Claudia Tenney Location: Family Research Council HQ, 801 G St., NW, Washington, DC <http://www.frc.org/prolifecon> <https://twitter.com/FRCdc>

11:45 AM Annual March for Life – March for Life 2017, themed 'The Power of One', held to protest abortion as a human rights abuse on the anniversary of 1973 'Roe v. Wade' U.S. Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion. Agenda includes rally in the grounds of the Washington Monument, before march to the U.S. Supreme Court, where 'Silent No More' testimonies are read. Speakers include Senior Counselor to President Donald Trump, Kellyanne Conway, Republicans Sen. Joni Ernst and Reps. Mia Love and Chris Smith, Archbishop of New York Cardinal Timothy Dolan, Baltimore Ravens Tight End Benjamin Watson, former Planned Parenthood Director Abby Johnson, Mexican telenovela star Karyme Lozano, author Eric Metaxas, and Church of God in Christ World Missions President Bishop Vincent Mathews Jr., Washington Monument, 2 15th St NW, Washington, DC (11:45 AM EST) * Followed by Rose Dinner with keynote from Cardinal Dolan, Renaissance Hotel, 999 9th St NW, Washington, DC (7:00 PM EST) Location: Washington, DC www.marchforlife.org https://twitter.com/March_for_Life
#marchforlife

Last Laughs:

LATE NIGHT POLITICAL HUMOR.

Jimmy Kimmel: “I want to update you on our new celebrity President who sat down last night with David Muir for his first official interview since taking office. The President will be happy to know his ratings were very good. He almost did as well as ‘The Bachelor.’”

Jimmy Kimmel: “The [UK] Prime Minister wants to reaffirm the special relationship between the United States and Britain. I guess she hasn’t checked America’s Facebook status recently. We’re already in a special relationship with a new world leader – his name is Vlad, he’s handsome, wrestles bears with his shirt off, and still knows his way around a computer. Sorry, Theresa May.”

Jimmy Kimmel: “One leader with whom Trump will not be bonding is Enrique Pena Nieto, the President of Mexico. El Presidente was supposed to visit Trump in Washington on Tuesday, but the meeting has been canceled in protest, to which Trump said, ‘See, I’m already stopping Mexicans from crossing the border.’”

Jimmy Kimmel: [Referring to the canceled meeting between Trump and the Mexican President] “[Trump] said the decision to cancel was mutual. It’s like the foreign policy version of ‘I broke up with her first.’”

Trevor Noah: “You know, it’s been almost a week, a whole week since Donald Trump became President. Yeah, but it feels like a lot longer. In Trump’s presidency, one day is like a year. I mean, this was me last Friday. Look how innocent I was. Look at me, look how I’ve aged!”

Trevor Noah: “By the way, dead people using their power to vote, that’s the weirdest ‘Walking Dead’ episode ever.”

Trevor Noah: “These guys just copy everything about the Obamas. They copied Obama’s cake. They copied Obama’s speech. The only thing Trump couldn’t copy was Obama’s approval ratings.”

Trevor Noah: “Then we came to work yesterday and Donald Trump’s cake was here at the building. Someone had brought it. I didn’t believe that it was real. ...this is what was delivered. ...But we looked at the pictures and this is the exact same cake. ...It’s not a cake. It’s styrofoam except the piece Donald Trump cut into. That was the only real piece of cake in the cake. Which for me was, like, isn’t this the perfect metaphor for Donald Trump’s presidency?”

Jimmy Fallon: “I read that Trump’s White House is already stocked with his favorite snacks, including Lay’s potato chips and Doritos. So that makes one cabinet Trump’s managed to fill. ...‘Has Congress confirmed my ramen noodles yet? Chicken or beef? I don’t like the shrimp flavor.’”

Jimmy Fallon: “Trump said getting the nuclear codes was a very sobering moment for him. Which is interesting, because that’s also the moment most people started drinking.”

Jimmy Fallon: “Trump also praised the White House, saying it has the most beautiful phones he’s ever used in his life. He says it really takes the sting out of being hung up on by other world leaders.”

Jimmy Fallon: “CNN is reporting that North Korean leader Kim Jong-Un wants to meet with President Trump. You know things are crazy when even Kim Jong-Un’s like ‘I’ve got to see this for myself.’”

Jimmy Fallon: “Mexican President Enrique Pena Nieto canceled his trip to Washington, after Trump signed an order to start construction on his border wall, marking perhaps the only Mexican who will actually be kept out by it.”

Jimmy Fallon: “This morning President Trump went to Philadelphia, taking his first flight on Air Force One. And since this plane doesn’t have his name on it, he spent 20 minutes on the tarmac pressing his

keys trying to figure out which one was his.”

Jimmy Fallon: “Trump is attending the Republican retreat in Philadelphia, and the lawmakers attending received a welcome gift in their hotel rooms. ...Trump socks. Trump socks. It’s the perfect gift, because right now Republicans are getting cold feet about this whole thing.”

Seth Meyers: “President Trump’s golf club in Mar-a-Lago, Florida recently doubled it’s initiation fee from \$100,000 to \$200,000. And if you think that’s crazy, he tripled the number of people who were at the inauguration.”

Seth Meyers: “President Trump reiterated his promise to build a wall along the Mexican border. Though at this point, I think we’re putting up a wall the same way the nurse pulls the curtain around your hospital bed. ‘You don’t want to see this.’”

Seth Meyers: “Just think about that. The President of the United States thinks dead people voting is a problem.”

Seth Meyers: “Right, no one would ever cheat to help Trump. Well, maybe someone would.”

Seth Meyers: “Mexico is going to pay us in a complicated form? So, definitely not with money then. ‘Bad news, Mexico didn’t give us any cash for the wall. Good news, we have new hats.’”

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