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**Subject:** Fwd: DOI 30-Day Policy Look Ahead for 10/24  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 24, 2017 6:33:56 PM  
**Attachments:** [DOI Cabinet 30 Day Report 10-24-17.docx](#)

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Sharing with the team.

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **Hommel, Scott** <[scott\\_hommel@ios.doi.gov](mailto:scott_hommel@ios.doi.gov)>

**Date:** Tue, Oct 24, 2017 at 6:32 PM

**Subject:** DOI 30-Day Policy Look Ahead for 10/24

**To:** Cabinet Affairs (b) (6) McGinley, William J. EOP/WHO"

(b) (6), Staff Secretary (b) (6) Scott

Hommel <[scott\\_hommel@ios.doi.gov](mailto:scott_hommel@ios.doi.gov)>

Please see attached.

MEMORANDUM FOR THE WHITE HOUSE STAFF SECRETARY AND CABINET SECRETARY  
October 24, 2017

FROM: Scott Hommel, Chief of Staff, U.S. Department of the Interior

SUBJECT: Interior Department Weekly Update for the Week of October 24, 2017

**DOI 30-Day Policy Look Ahead**

**Presidential Initiatives and Awareness**

1. **GULF OF MEXICO OIL AND GAS LEASE SALE 250:** The Proposed Notice of Sale Package for Lease Sale 250 was finalized on October 24<sup>th</sup> and sent to the Federal Register for publication. In terms of acreage, this will be the largest single oil and gas lease sale ever conducted by the United States, and the maximum acreage possible given the 5 year national oil and gas leasing plan under which BOEM is operating from the previous administration. The lease sale is scheduled to take place in March 2018.  
**Timing:** October 24, 2017  
**Contact:** Kate MacGregor, Acting Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals
2. **NATIONAL PARK SERVICE FEE INCREASES:** In response to Secretary Zinke's commitment to improve the visitor experience, the NPS will seek public comment on a proposal to implement peak-season, defined as its busiest contiguous five month period, fee increases for FY 2018. The implementation of a peak-season price structure would likely increase total entrance fee revenues from \$199.9M to \$268.5M annually - an increase of 34.3% over Fiscal Year 2016. All of the funds would be used to improve facilities, infrastructure, and visitor services, with an emphasis on maintenance projects that will enhance visitor experiences.  
**Timing:** October 24, 2017  
**Contact:** Jason Larabee, Acting Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks
3. **CRITICAL MINERALS REPORT:** USGS will release a new report presenting resource and geologic information for 23 critical mineral commodities important to our national economy and national security, many of which are sourced entirely outside of the United States. This is the first update since the last assessment undertaken in 1973. Staff Secretary is circulating a draft Executive Order (EO) directing Interior to help coordinate the appropriate agencies to undertake a government-wide approach to facilitate the domestic mining and processing of critical minerals. The Department is holding the release of the study to be issued in conjunction with the EO. DOI is awaiting the scheduling of the EO issuance.  
**Timing:** October 2017  
**Contact:** Jim Cason, Associate Deputy Secretary
4. **KING COVE LAND EXCHANGE:** Interior plans to exchange a 500-acre corridor through Izembek National Wildlife Refuge with the King Cove Corporation, an Alaska Native corporation. Through a separate agreement with the state, this will result in a road connecting the fishing community of King Cove with an airport capable of handling jet aircraft used for medical evacuations, which will improve the health, safety, and quality of life for residents. This is a

critical issue to Senator Murkowski, Senator Sullivan, and Congressman Don Young. Interior has submitted a scheduling proposal for POTUS to announce the land exchange during the White House Tribal Leaders Summit the week of November 13<sup>th</sup>.

**Contact:** Jim Cason, Associate Deputy Secretary

**Timing:** Week of November 13, 2013

5. **MEMORIAL BRIDGE PROJECT AND REBUILD THE PARKS INITIATIVE:** The Secretary has worked with NEC and OMB on legislative language to create an account funded by energy revenues that would address the \$11.5 billion in backlog in the National Park Service and Fish and Wildlife Service Refuge maintenance. NEC has agreed to include this language in the infrastructure bill. The Secretary believes POTUS or VPOTUS should call on Congress separately to address the backlog. Senator Alexander has tentatively agreed to introduce legislation after this occurs. DOI has submitted a request that POTUS or VPOTUS announce this initiative with the Arlington Memorial Bridge as the backdrop. The National Park Service (NPS) is ready to award the contract for the bridge by November 17. NPS has secured all funding (\$227 million) for a complete rehabilitation under budget and in a single phase rather than multi-phase. This would be an ideal backdrop to show the Trump Administration is doing all it can to fix America's infrastructure, but that Congress needs to do its part to restore and rebuild the parks. We will submit a scheduling request to Cabinet Affairs offering the week of November 13 as an ideal date.

**Timing:** November 14-17, 2017

**Contact:** Jason Larabee, Acting Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks

6. **BOEM DRAFT PROPOSED PLAN:** On November 17, BOEM plans to publish the Draft Proposed Program (DPP) for the new National OCS Oil & Gas Program. Publication of the DPP is the first opportunity for the Administration to share proposed leasing areas with the public. Publication of the DPP follows the Request for Information that was published on July 3, in response to which BOEM received over 815,000 comments.

**Timing:** November 17, 2017

**Contact:** Kate MacGregor, Acting Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals

7. **INTERIOR DISASTER RELIEF PROPOSAL:** Interior has submitted a proposal for the President's consideration to call on Congress to give him the authority to lift environmental restrictions on resource-abundant lands to help develop construction materials to rebuild after a Presidentially-declared disaster. This proposal was submitted as a part of the National Security Council request for proposals. Interior is also working with OMB to submit legislative language to the supplemental appropriations bill.

**Timing:** Ongoing

**Contact:** Downey Magallanes, Acting Deputy Chief of Staff

8. **MONUMENTS REQUEST:** Interior has submitted the final draft monuments report to Staff Secretary. Secretary Zinke plans to send the final report this week. Interior has also submitted specific monument recommendations for Bears Ears National Monument (BENM) and the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument (GSENM) to OLC for the form and legality review. Finally, Interior has submitted a scheduling request that POTUS travel to Utah to sign the proclamations for the BENM and GSENM. This issue is critical to the entire Utah delegation.

**Timing:** Ongoing

**Contact:** Downey Magallanes, Acting Deputy Chief of Staff

### **Reports to Congress and Congressional Testimony**

1. **UPCOMING SCIA HEARING:** The Senate Committee on Indian Affairs is holding a legislative hearing on S. 1870, Securing Urgent Resources Vital to Indian Victim Empowerment Act 2017; S. 1953, Reauthorization of the Tribal and Law Order Act of 2010; and S. \_\_, Native Youth and Tribal Officer Protection Act. Witness will Bryan Rice, Director, Bureau of Indian Affairs.

**Timing:** October 25, 2017

**Contact:** Amanda Kaster, Policy Adviser, Congressional Affairs

2. **UPCOMING HNRC HEARING:** The House Natural Resources Indian, Insular, and Alaska Native Affairs Subcommittee is set to host a legislative hearing on Rep. Don Young's H.R. 215, American Indian Empowerment Act of 2017. Witness is John Tahsuda, Acting Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs.

**Timing:** October 25, 2017

**Contact:** Amanda Kaster, Policy Adviser, Congressional Affairs

3. **DOI NOMINEES IN PROGRESS:** Brenda Burman (BOR) and Susan Combs (A/S PMB) were passed out of committee August 3, 2017. Joe Balash (Assistant Secretary, Land & Minerals) and Ryan Nelson (Solicitor) appeared before the SENR committee on September 7, 2017. Both passed and now await full Senate approval.

**Timing:** October 25, 2017

**Contact:** Micah Chambers, Deputy Director, Congressional Affairs

### **Other/Awareness Only**

1. **VETERANS ROUNDTABLE:** As part of National Hunting and Fishing Month, the Secretary is hosting a roundtable and listening session to hear from veterans on barriers to enjoying hunting and fishing access on our public lands. This is a part of the Secretary's ongoing efforts to highlight how motorized and mechanized travel restrictions on public lands limits access and the public's enjoyment. It will also focus on how veterans are currently participating in DOI programs and initiatives and how these initiatives can better serve them.

**Timing:** October 26, 2017

**Contact:** Todd Willens, Assistant Deputy Secretary

2. **SAGE GROUSE TASK FORCE MEETING:** On October 23<sup>rd</sup>-24<sup>th</sup>, the Sage Grouse Task Force met in Denver to discuss any additional issues or concerns raised by stakeholders, specific proposed policy changes, and any remaining issues that may require a plan amendment in connection with Secretary's Order 3353. The task force is led by the Governors of WY and CO and includes membership from the 11 sage-grouse States, BLM, Forest Service, Natural

Resources Conservation Service, USGS, and the Fish and Wildlife Service. Deputy Secretary Bernhardt attended the meeting.

**Timing:** October 23-24, 2017

**Contact:** Kate MacGregor, Acting Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals

3. **NV GEOTHERMAL LEASE SALE:** On October 24<sup>th</sup>, BLM-NV will host a competitive geothermal lease sale for 20 parcels located in the Battle Mountain, Carson City, Elko and Winnemucca Districts containing 38,208.46 acres for geothermal leasing. This will be the first online geothermal lease sale for NV. This lease sale is not expected to be controversial. At this time, the BLM cannot predict the level of bidding interest.

**Timing:** October 24, 2017

**Contact:** Kate MacGregor, Acting Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals

4. **COAL MINING ACTIONS:** Throughout October, the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement will submit mining decisions and a notice of availability.
  - **Cordero Rojo Mine.** In mid-October, OSMRE plans to submit the Cordero Rojo Mine's Mining Plan decision documents to OSMRE Headquarters for review and approval by ASLM. Cloud Peak Energy's Cordero Rojo Mine is a surface mine located in Campbell County, WY. The mine employs 383 people and produces approximately 20 million tons of coal per year.
  - **Rosebud Mine.** On October 27, OSMRE anticipates publishing an NOA of a Draft EIS for Western Energy Company's Rosebud Mine proposed Permit Area F. The proposed permit area, which is located near Colstrip, MT, would add 6,746 acres to the 25,576-acre surface coal mine. The mine currently employs 400 people and produces 12.3 million tons per year.
  - **King II Mine Modification :** In mid- to late fall, BLM-CO expects to issue a decision on whether to modify GCC Energy's King II Mine in Montezuma County in southwest Colorado by 951 acres, which would allow GCC to access an estimated 4.66 million tons of recoverable Federal coal reserves for an additional 6.5 years of mining. Montezuma County supports the modification, noting Federal mineral development's positive impacts on the region through jobs and tax revenue.

**Contact:** Kate MacGregor, Acting Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals

5. **COAL POLICY REVERSALS AND STREAM PROTECTION RULE:** In September ASLM directed OSMRE to rescind two policy documents- one on self-bonding and the second regarding the Clean Water Act. Both of these were put in place by the previous administration. OSMRE is also readying the final regulation to implement necessary changes to comply with P.L. 115-12, which nullified the Stream Protection Rule.

**Timing:** Early November 2017

**Contact:** Kate MacGregor, Acting Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals

6. **HURRICANE IRMA RESPONSE/RECOVERY OPERATIONS:** Thirty-three employees from DOI bureaus and offices are currently supporting the FEMA Surge Capacity Force. An additional group of employees will begin supporting SBA activities on October 23. The group is comprised of volunteers supporting recovery efforts in Puerto Rico, Texas, the U.S. Virgin

Islands, Nevada, Florida, and Alabama. OEM is working with FEMA and SBA to deploy DOI employees at the end of October.

**Timing:** Ongoing

**Contact:** Scott Hommel, Chief of Staff

7. **HURRICANE MARIA RESPONSE/ RECOVERY OPERATIONS:** DOI bureaus and offices continue to transition to long-term response and recovery operations on Puerto Rico (including Vieques and Culebra) and the US Virgin Islands (St. Thomas, St. Croix and St. John). DOI continues to staff a Liaison position at the FEMA Puerto Rico Joint Field Office to support interagency coordination between FEMA and DOI bureaus and offices, primarily FWS, NPS, USGS, and OEPC. Ongoing engagement is occurring with the lead agencies for the Recovery Support Functions including the Department of Commerce, Health and Human Services and FEMA. All DOI personnel, resident and responders, alike, are accounted for.

**Timing:** Ongoing

**Contact:** Scott Hommel, Chief of Staff

8. **NORTHERN CALIFORNIA WILDLAND FIREFIGHTING OPERATIONS:** During the recent wildland firefighting activity in the vicinity of Santa Rosa, California, DOI has contributed to major firefighting efforts using personnel and equipment from NPS, BLM, BIA, and FWS for a total of 463 (303 Overhead / 8 crews of 20 Type 2IA tactical) DOI personnel, which includes 1 helicopter, 1 fixed wing lead plane, and 49 major firefighting apparatus (engines, front loaders, pickups).

**Timing:** Ongoing

**Contact:** Scott Hommel, Chief of Staff

9. **NAVAJO GENERATING STATION:** On July 2nd, the Navajo government approved a two-year lease extension for continuing operation of the Navajo Generating Station (NGS) through 2019. The Department's Bureau of Reclamation has a participation (quasi-ownership) interest in the power generated by the plant and thus the Administration has a role in decisions associated with the plant. Interior is facilitating a process being led by Peabody Energy and Lazard (investment banking) to identify a possible future owner(s) to keep the plant generating power post-2019, since the current utility owners will exit the plant at the end of 2019. DOE transmitted two studies to DOI and Peabody that analyze energy efficiency and grid reliability respectively. EPA is working with Lazard and Peabody on analyzing calculations of Regional Haze Rule compliance.

**Timing:** October thru November 2017

**Contact:** Dr. Andrea Travnicek, Acting Assistant Secretary for Water and Science

10. **WEST ELK MINE ROYALTY RATE REDUCTION:** In early December, BLM-CO expects to issue a decision on whether to grant a royalty rate reduction for the West Elk Mine. The BLM proposes to approve Mountain Coal Company, LLC's application for a royalty rate reduction from 8 percent to 5 percent for 10.3 million tons of coal in the West Elk Mine in southwest Colorado's North Fork Valley. Colorado Governor John Hickenlooper expressed support for the royalty rate reduction, contingent on Mountain Coal Company exploring methane capture at the mine.

**Timing:** December 1-2, 2017

**Contact:** Kate MacGregor, Acting Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals

11. **DOI ENERGY SUMMIT:** In support of the President's energy dominance agenda, Secretary Zinke will be hosting an all-day energy summit at DOI HQ on December 6, 2017. The summit will broadcast all aspects of the DOI's energy portfolio, including the economic benefits for the American taxpayer. The summit will definitively set forth the Administration's energy priorities. Participants will also include cabinet principles, members of congress, industry and NGO representatives.

**Timing:** December 6, 2017

**Contact:** Vincent DeVito, Counselor to the Secretary for Energy Policy

### **Other Significant Rulemakings and Actions**

1. **US FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE TO ADDRESS CORMORANT ISSUE:** USFWS is planning to release a draft environmental assessment that could give some authority for local residents to kill cormorants in select circumstances. The birds, currently protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, are being blamed for waning fish populations in the Finger Lakes region of New York.  
**Timing:** Late October 2017  
**Contact:** Jason Larabee, Acting Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks
5. **IMPORTS OF AFRICAN ELEPHANT TROPHIES FROM ZIMBABWE:** The Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) plans to publish in the Federal Register a change to the permitting status for imports of African elephant trophies from Zimbabwe. After receiving information from Zimbabwe on a number of substantial improvements to their management program and elephant conservation efforts, FWS has determined that taking of African elephant trophy animals in Zimbabwe on or after January 21, 2016 (the date that Zimbabwe's new management plan was officially adopted) through 2017 would enhance the survival of African elephants, and import permits can be issued for these trophies.  
**Timing:** Late October 2017  
**Contact:** Jason Larabee, Acting Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks

### **Release of High-Profile Grants**

1. **URBAN PARTNERSHIP GRANTS:** National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) in cooperation with US Fish & Wildlife, will award over \$2 million in grants under their Five Star and Urban Waters Restoration Program. The grants fund multiple federal initiatives, including new and existing Urban Wildlife Refuge Partnerships and Urban Bird Treaty cities. NFWF will make its initial announcement and FWS will follow the next day.  
**Timing:** Ongoing  
**Contact:** Jason Larabee, Acting Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks
2. **CENTENNIAL CHALLENGE PROJECTS:** The NPS will announce the award of \$18 million in Centennial Challenge projects. Many of the projects accomplish deferred

maintenance projects, and all represent public-private partnerships, since each project requires a minimum 50/50 match with non-Federal funds.

**Timing:** Ongoing

**Contact:** Jason Larabee, Acting Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks

### Key Events for Upcoming 30-Days

#### Travel by Secretary

October 30-November 5      **Secretary Zinke** on personal leave until November 5<sup>th</sup>.

November 10      **Secretary Zinke** traveling to Virginia to tour Manassas National Battlefield Park