

**To:** BLM\_UT\_All[blm\_ut\_all@blm.gov]  
**From:** Sutherland, Ryan  
**Sent:** 2017-03-02T18:47:47-05:00  
**Importance:** Normal  
**Subject:** Daily News Report - March 2  
**Received:** 2017-03-02T18:47:57-05:00  
Daily News Report March 2.docx

Attached is the daily news report for March 2.

Ryan Sutherland  
Bureau of Land Management Utah  
Public Affairs Specialist  
[rrsutherland@blm.gov](mailto:rrsutherland@blm.gov)  
801 539 4089



## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

### DAILY NEWS REPORT - UTAH

#### UTAH – TOP STORIES – MARCH 2, 2017

##### 1. Op-ed: Who will enforce these laws if not federal officers

*The Salt Lake Tribune, March 1 | Jay Banta*

Introduced in the House of Representatives in January by Rep. Jason Chaffetz, the Local Enforcement for Local Lands Act (H.R. 622) would eliminate hundreds of critical law enforcement jobs with the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management. As someone who spent a career in public lands resource management — and a lot of years enforcing regulations on public lands and waters — I have major concerns with Rep. Chaffetz's bill. Here are just a few reasons why.

##### 2. Outdoor retailers have no right to bully Utah

*The Richfield Reaper, March 1 | Editorial*

After negotiations broke down earlier this month, the Outdoor Retailer show is leaving Utah.

##### 3. National monument helped us blossom, says renowned Utah restauraunt

*The Salt Lake Tribune, March 1 | Brian Maffly*

A few years after the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument was designated in 1996, Blake Spalding and Jen Castle set up a restaurant in the ranching hamlet of Boulder on the monument's northern periphery.

##### 4. Utah's ancient sites are in danger, you can help

*The Spectrum, March 2 | David DeMille*

From the top of a knobby hill overlooking the confluence of the Virgin and Santa Clara rivers in St. George, archaeologist Greg Woodall can look out and see for miles the increasingly urbanized communities hugged up against the edges of the waterways.



## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

### DAILY NEWS REPORT - UTAH

#### 5. **My view: Utah visit is defining moment for Interior Secretary Zinke**

*The Deseret News, March 2 | David Jenkins*

New Secretary of Interior Ryan Zinke, after much ear-bending by Sens. Mike Lee and Orin Hatch, Congressman Rob Bishop and other Beehive State lawmakers, has promised that one of his first acts upon confirmation will be a visit to Utah — the nation's proverbial squeaky wheel on public land policy.

#### **E&E/NATIONAL NEWS – TOP STORIES**

#### 1. **INTERIOR: On secretary's first day, Chaffetz demands documents**

*E & E News, March 2 | Kellie Lunney*

New Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke got a housewarming gift from Congress on his first day on the job yesterday: a request for official documents related to issues ranging from the designation of national monuments to complaints against Bureau of Land Management law enforcement agents for alleged bullying.

#### 2. **COAL: GOP senators cheer Trump plans to lift leasing moratorium**

*E & E News, March 2 | Dylan Brown*

Western Republican senators are applauding President Trump's plans for nixing the Obama-era moratorium on leasing public land for coal mining.

#### 3. **COAL: Interior offers to help coal plant by softening regulations**

*E & E News, March 2 | Benjamin Storrow*

Department of the Interior officials promised Tuesday to "turn over every rock" to keep one of the country's largest coal plants running, saying they would examine the regulatory costs of an associated coal mine in hopes of driving down the operation's expenses.



## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

### DAILY NEWS REPORT - UTAH

#### 4. RENEWABLE ENERGY: As wind grows, so does its opposition

*E & E News, March 2 | Benjamin Storrow and Daniel Cusick*

Oklahoma wind developers are fresh off a record-setting year. Only Texas installed more wind capacity in 2016, a fact that thrusts the Sooner State's power markets into a sudden transition and is agitating opponents along the way.

#### 5. MINING: Trade group appeals to Commerce chief for relief

*E & E News, March 2 | Dylan Brown*

The National Mining Association appealed to new Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross to help slash regulations on the industry as a means to foster the manufacturing renaissance President Trump has put atop his economic agenda.

#### 6. INTERIOR: Zinke literally takes the reins

*E & E News, March 2 | Corbin Hiar*

There's a new sheriff at the Interior Department, and his name is Ryan Zinke.

#### 7. BLM: Associate director appointed for Utah office

*E & E News, March 2 | Scott Streater*

The Bureau of Land Management announced today the promotion of a veteran administrator to associate director of the BLM Utah State Office.

#### 8. PUBLIC LANDS: Zinke moves to promote access, revoke lead ammo ban

*E & E News, March 2 | Corbin Hiar*

On his first full day in office, Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke issued orders to expand access to public lands and revoke restrictions on lead ammunition and fishing tackle.



## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

### DAILY NEWS REPORT - UTAH

#### UTAH – FULL STORY

##### 1. **Op-ed: Who will enforce these laws if not federal officers**

*The Salt Lake Tribune, March 1 | Jay Banta*

Introduced in the House of Representatives in January by Rep. Jason Chaffetz, the Local Enforcement for Local Lands Act (H.R. 622) would eliminate hundreds of critical law enforcement jobs with the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management. As someone who spent a career in public lands resource management — and a lot of years enforcing regulations on public lands and waters — I have major concerns with Rep. Chaffetz's bill. Here are just a few reasons why.

Numerous federal laws have been passed by Congress to protect our public lands and the resources they hold that state and county law enforcement officers simply do not have the legal authority to enforce. I'd start with what I consider to be the single most important law ever promulgated to protect wildlife in the United States, the Lacey Act. This law, which is really the hammer on those who would commercialize our wildlife resources, is of paramount importance. State conservation officers and county sheriff deputies can't issue a citation for violations of this bedrock law.

How about the Migratory Bird Act? While it doesn't protect many hunted game species, it sure is a critical law for protecting every other avian species in North America. Guess what? State conservation officers and county sheriff deputies can't issue Migratory Bird Treaty Act violation notices, either.

Then there is the Archaeological Resources Protection Act, which is vital in protecting the non-renewable cultural resources that are part of the critical mission of all federal land management agencies. That's right. State conservation officers and county sheriff deputies can't issue Archaeological Resources Protection Act citations. In fact, on non-state parks lands in Utah, it is actually legal to collect such resources. This was made clear by a case a few years ago when a judge dismissed a case against someone who was caught looting a Native American grave site on Utah state trust lands.

I could list another 10 federal laws that state and county officers do not have jurisdictional authority to enforce, but you get the drift. These are critical laws passed by Congress specifically to protect resources on public lands. H.R. 622 is part of the plan by Chaffetz and others to abdicate its responsibility to uphold the will of Congress that these lands be managed under very specific laws, with the goal of keeping our public lands and waters healthy for us and the generations that follow.

*Jay Banta is an avid outdoorsman who spent a career dedicated to conserving and managing our public lands. He lives in St. George.*



## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

### DAILY NEWS REPORT - UTAH

[BACK](#)

#### 2. **Outdoor retailers have no right to bully Utah**

*The Richfield Reaper, March 1 | Editorial*

After negotiations broke down earlier this month, the Outdoor Retailer show is leaving Utah.

Representatives for the retailer's organization were quoted in state media as being disappointed with Utah's state government and congressional representatives stances on public lands.

Essentially what was said by the Outdoor Retailer group was, "I don't like you, I'm taking my ball and going home."

The move is myopic, shortsighted, and frankly, childish.

Outdoor Retailer representatives essentially presented Utah leaders with an ultimatum on public lands — do what we want, or else. What they wanted, was for Utah to abandon efforts to explore transfer of federally controlled lands to the state, stop efforts to fight the Antiquities Act, and abandon efforts to have the January designation of the Bears Ears National Monument rescinded.

All of these demands were made with a black and white view of how public lands work. Apparently, the retailers organization feels that only the federal government is capable of administering public lands, in spite of the fact that Utah has more than 40 state parks. Utah's state parks include areas that protect Native American cultural sites, recreation and even primitive lands.

Utah understands the importance of public lands, and the importance of preserving and protecting them.

The Outdoor Retailer concerns about the Antiquities Act and the Bears Ears designation are essentially the same issue. Utah's representatives would not try to fight the Antiquities Act, if not for the fact that it's been abused at great cost to the state.

When national monuments are declared, it effectively removes any chance of any land within the designation being used for any type of industry other than tourism. Monument designation is used to push out or eliminate mining, energy development and even grazing. It can also be used in eliminating motorized access.



## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

### DAILY NEWS REPORT - UTAH

This severely hampers economic development.

Advocates of the 1.88 million acres set aside for the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, and the 1.35 million acres set aside for the Bears Ears National Monument will say that tourism will help fuel local economies. It's not the declaration of these monuments that people have a problem with — it's the immense scope of them. When it was passed in 1909, the act was designed to protect specific areas for cultural or scientific regions, not huge swaths of land.

While tourism is an important part of the economy and should be supported, it is no substitute for industry. Compare the wage of a coal miner to that of a short order cook, or a truck driver to that of a hotel clerk.

Of course, tourism isn't of high concern when federal officials shut down established roads, trails and uses of public lands. Talk to ranchers who have had grazing allotments reduced, and they will tell you they've never had restored what has been taken away.

Also, more than 70 percent of Utah's land mass is controlled by the federal government. This creates huge challenges from a property tax perspective as Utah tries to fund schools and county governments with its tax base reduced to less than 30 percent of the total land mass.

Yes, Utah's efforts to have federal lands transferred to state stewardship are unrealistic, but state officials are pursuing it out of the need for breathing room, or at least a bigger say in the state's destiny.

However, the Outdoor Retailers group apparently has no appreciation for the challenges created by public land. Only Nevada has more federally controlled land than Utah.

The Outdoor Retailer representatives might have found more success in their efforts to sway public policy had they stayed put and made their arguments through communication with the local populace.

Instead, the Outdoor Retailer organization tried to extort state officials into ignoring their constituents and abandoning economic development not directly tied to the outdoor recreation industry. It's a self-serving move that shows a lack of interest in fostering a partnership with the state.



## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

### DAILY NEWS REPORT - UTAH

[BACK](#)

#### 3. **National monument helped us blossom, says renowned Utah restauraunt**

*The Salt Lake Tribune, March 1 | Brian Maffly*

A few years after the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument was designated in 1996, Blake Spalding and Jen Castle set up a restaurant in the ranching hamlet of Boulder on the monument's northern periphery.

Naming the business after one of the area's stunning geological features, they hoped to capture some of the tourists cruising through on State Route 12.

Today, Hell's Backbone Grill and Farm is world famous, supports a payroll of \$700,000 and employs four full-time farmers to provide Spalding's kitchen with 23,000 pounds a year of local fruits and vegetables. All the beef and lamb they serve is raised on a Boulder ranch.

The restaurateurs are now part of growing chorus of Garfield and Kane county business owners challenging what they say is a phony narrative pushed by Utah's political leaders to justify shrinking the monument and rescinding the new Bears Ears National Monument.

"We pour so much into the tax rolls and yet they ignore us. That's painful," Spalding said Wednesday at a news conference at the state Capitol hosted by the Escalante Chamber of Commerce. Business leaders met with Gov. Gary Herbert to counter claims by Garfield County leaders that the national monument is sapping the economic vitality of rural communities.

Spalding invited new Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke, whom the Senate confirmed Wednesday, to dine at Hell's Backbone and see for himself the economic surge unfolding in Boulder and along Escalante's Main Street.

Before the monument was created, State Route 12 passed by several boarded-up storefronts that are now housing thriving businesses, according to Keith Watts, founder of Earth Tours guiding service.

During his confirmation hearings, Zinke, a Montana congressman, pledged to come to southern Utah to evaluate the monument designations.

County commissioners and Rep. Mike Noel, R-Kanab, describe cultural decline, job losses and displaced families caused by federal mismanagement of public land. President Bill Clinton's





## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

### DAILY NEWS REPORT - UTAH

surprise Staircase designation derailed a vibrant movie industry, two proposed coal mines, public access and multiple uses of these lands, Noel contends.

He sponsored HCR12 calling on the Department of the Interior to explore reducing the size of the monument by as much as three-fourths. The Kane County Commission has passed an identical resolution and the Garfield County Commission will hold a public hearing on a similar one March 13.

Commissioners complain that tourism businesses don't support families because the pay is low and the work is seasonal.

But Spalding said she paid a living wage to the 72 people who worked for her farm and restaurant last year. Many of her employees come from Boulder, she said. And others who moved to Boulder are staying and having babies.

"They are falling in love after working together in the restaurant. It's very sweet," Spalding said. "Our values are about people, about place and about community."

Scott Berry, co-founder of the Boulder Mountain Lodge, attributes this economic activity to the monument, which communicates to the world that the area's desert lands are filled with canyons, mesas and other wonders that can be explored in relative solitude.

"Our visitors come from all over Utah, the nation and the world. What they tell me is that's the most amazing drive they have ever taken," said Berry. "They are pleased to have done it and come to a facility like ours. We have seen our business grow and grow and help other businesses get started. It's a story that is not often heard in the Capitol. We see the monument as a call to start a new garden and after 20 years we are seeing those shoots come up."

[BACK](#)

#### 4. **Utah's ancient sites are in danger, you can help**

*The Spectrum, March 2 | David DeMille*

From the top of a knobby hill overlooking the confluence of the Virgin and Santa Clara rivers in St. George, archaeologist Greg Woodall can look out and see for miles the increasingly urbanized communities hugged up against the edges of the waterways.

But when he closes his eyes and combines a career's-worth of knowledge with some imagination, he can also see the communities that came before.



## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

### DAILY NEWS REPORT - UTAH

Centuries of history are buried beneath the homes, packed under centuries of changing soils and embedded in the landscape.

#### **Undiscovered cities remain underneath**

Beneath his feet, about 100 feet away from a billboard and not much farther from Interstate 15, surveys have identified the remains of about a dozen pit houses, numerous store rooms and other artifacts dating back to between 500 and 1200 A.D. Scientists armed with ground-penetrating radar surveyed the remains of a pit house here just last year.

Even here, in the very heart of St. George, the rich archaeological history of the area is obvious, said Woodall, a member of the Dixie Archaeological Society.

Archaeologists scan site in middle of St. George

Volunteers to patrol petroglyph sites

"The way a lot of us look at this area is it has been a great place to live for a long time," he said. "People are people. They kind of all want to live in the same place. We like to live where we like to live, and that hasn't changed a lot for 10,000 years."

More than 6,500 catalogued archaeological sites have been recorded in Washington County, with nearly 11,000 in the nearby Arizona Strip and countless more still left undiscovered. Half-buried pit houses, stone tools, corn husks, woven baskets, petroglyphs, meticulously shaped arrow points and other artifacts tell the stories, providing precious clues in the quest to piece together the history. They also serve as powerful reminders of the connectedness of all those who have made their homes here. People have lived in Utah for at least 12,000 years, according to the Utah Division of State History, with each generation contributing to a layered and sometimes complicated history.

#### **The primitive settlers**

There were the earliest "paleoindians," groups of people who hunted and lived alongside mammoths, camelops and other extinct beasts as they spread out across North America.

There were early makers of baskets and wickiup shelters, hunters who used an atlatl or spear-thrower, and painters who created petroglyphs still visible today.



## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

### DAILY NEWS REPORT - UTAH

The Anasazi, or ancestral puebloans, developed a more settled lifestyle and farmed corn, squash and other food along the region's waterways more than 1,000 years ago, with southwestern Utah attracting a "rural" development related to the societies that built the iconic settlements at Mesa Verde and Chaco Canyon in the four-corners area.

The southern Paiute moved in around the year 1200, farming, hunting, gathering and largely thriving until Mormon settlers arrived in the mid-19th century.

"Archaeology is about more than just the stuff," Woodall said. "It's about the people, their lore, their beliefs. There is a respect, an honoring of their culture that we have to have when we go in."

#### **Showing respect**

As populations grow and southwestern Utah continues to attract more visitors, the area's reputation for outdoor recreation and public lands travel is also pushing more people into sensitive archaeological areas.

For the most part, authorities say visitors are generally aware of the rules, which prohibit taking or damaging archaeological resources from public lands, including seemingly small items like arrowheads or pottery shards found above ground.

But there are plenty of cases where travelers pick those pieces up and take them home, essentially robbing future generations the ability to learn more or observe the site in its original state, said Lori Hunsaker, archaeologist with the Bureau of Land Management.

Small acts like those might seem innocuous, she said, but hundreds or thousands of similarly "small" thefts add up to a major loss.

"Those things belong to us, to the public," she said. "When they take those things, they're stealing from you."

Shanan Anderson, cultural resources manager for the Shivwits Band of the Paiute Indian Tribe of Utah, said the tribe has requested avoidance of significant cultural resources whenever possible on public lands, noting that many sites have been destroyed over the years, especially on private land.

#### **Destruction of sacred land**



## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

### DAILY NEWS REPORT - UTAH

Those sites where Paiute ancestors lived are sacred to those living today, she said, attributing a spiritual value to those places valued by the scientific community as resources. Her father, LaVan Martineau, published a book called "The Rocks Begin to Speak" that attempted to decipher the meaning of the petroglyphs and pictographs left behind by his ancestors.

"Each one of those writings is a story," she said. "They're our books, our libraries, and they have sacred meanings."

A few major archaeological sites are blocked off for protection, but the vast majority are easily visited by the public.

Authorities say they do what they can to protect the sites but have to balance the goal of allowing public access to lands that by definition belong to the public.

Developer agrees to preserve archaeological site in Dammeron Valley

State archaeology records go digital

Some locations aren't advertised. Other sites are protected more through management strategies, such as limiting motorized vehicle travel or having visitors park farther away from a valuable resource.

The key is education, said Marian Jacklin, forest archaeologist with the Dixie National Forest.

First-hand experience and better understanding make people better stewards of the landscape and of its history, Jacklin said, describing her own childhood experience visiting the Ancestral Puebloan cliff dwellings of Mesa Verde National Park in Colorado and seeing a piece of ancient pottery.

"I realized at that point, at eight years old, that some woman had made that 1,000 years ago and it was important to her," Jacklin said. "And it was important to me."

These days Jacklin said she beams when she sees similar realizations among young people visiting the forest. A group of scouts getting a hands-on experience making arrowheads provides for some real learning, she said.

"Then they're a little more appreciative," she said. "It takes some time and it takes some skill and after seeing that it makes them think, oh, this is valuable."



## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

### DAILY NEWS REPORT - UTAH

#### **Finding protection**

In December, two people were convicted over looting at a site near Beaver Dam, Arizona, with authorities indicating that the \$4,000 in damages reported did not reflect the long-term impacts to public interest and to Native American tribes who considered the site sacred.

Last year the BLM joined with a local advocacy group called the Southwest Utah National Conservation Lands Friends Group to create the volunteer "Petroglyph Patrol," a team of local residents trained to monitor sensitive sites and protect against vandalism or looting.

Group members head out on busy visitation days to places like the popular Land Hill Heritage Site outside of Santa Clara and engage with the public there, looking to raise awareness and prevent any problems, said Susan Crook, SUNCLF director.

"It's very disheartening," she said of vandalism at petroglyph sites. "I've likened it to going to somebody's home and scribbling on the walls or going to the public library and ripping out pages or blacking out passages."

All those wide open public lands are starting to see increased visitation in recent years, well-used by the growing numbers of people out to recreate.

Populations are growing in cities and towns across the region, and area tourism is on the rise, led by record numbers of visitors to Zion National Park and other major destinations.

But that doesn't mean the area's cultural resources have to suffer, Woodall said.

More people can actually serve to protect sites, because they become less remote and less likely to be isolated, he said, and as more people take up the cause of protecting cultural resources the more those ideas will spread to the rest of the population.

"I don't see every new person who moves here as a problem necessarily," he said. "They could be part of the solution."

#### **Petroglyph Patrol**

A group of southwest Utah residents volunteer to help protect the area's well-known petroglyph sites through the Petroglyph Patrol. The program, organized by the Southwest Utah National Conservation Lands Friends (SUNCLF) and supported by the Bureau of Land Management,



## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

### DAILY NEWS REPORT - UTAH

includes training for members, and director Susan Crook said anyone interested in joining can contact her at [susan@conserveswu.org](mailto:susan@conserveswu.org).

#### **Utah's archaeological history**

People have lived in Utah for 12,000 years or more, based on the archaeological evidence. The Utah Division of State History provides brief descriptions of some of those peoples, using the ages of found artifacts, structures and other items to piece together a general timeline.

##### **Paleoindians**

Up to about 10,000 to 8,000 years ago, North America was occupied by "Paleoindians," people who lived here soon after the last ice age ended approximately 10,000-12,000 years ago.

Mostly nomadic, Paleoindians hunted mammoths, giant sloths, camelops, giant bison and other animals that are now extinct. They also fished, hunted birds and gathered seeds, berries and other plants.

The climate 10,000 years ago was much different. Utah's temperatures were cooler and it might have rained more often. Paleoindians camped along the shores of lakes and streams, including the Great Salt Lake, which was much larger and not yet salty. The oldest inhabited sites archaeologists have found in Utah are in caves in the Great Salt Lake Desert.

*Source: Utah Division of State History.*

##### **Archaic**

Approximately 8,000 years ago, the climate turned drier and warmer and lifestyles had to change. Archaeologists call the culture of this time the Archaic.

Archaic people were hunters and gathers, usually moving around as they followed food sources. Their shelters were usually caves or wickiups made from brush.

People at this time made baskets, which they used for collecting seeds, pinyon nuts and other plants. They also used baskets for cooking.

Archaic people made several kinds of spear points. An atlatl, or spear-thrower, helped them hurl small spears faster and farther. They also would have eaten insects.



## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

### DAILY NEWS REPORT - UTAH

The Archaic people left behind petroglyphs, and you can see echoes of their lives in the Barrier Canyon style marks left behind in sites around the San Rafael Swell and Canyonlands National Park.

*Source: Utah Division of State History.*

#### **Fremont**

Life gradually changed approximately 2000 years ago from nomadic hunting and gathering to more farming. Two broad cultures evolved during this time, one of which was the Fremont. This is the general term for people who lived in northern and eastern Utah.

Fremont people were farmers and foragers. We know the Fremont were farmers because many Fremont sites around Utah have granaries where dry food was stored. The climate was probably close to what it is now.

We see change in the archaeological clues which tell us that people created more objects such as clay figurines and petroglyphs. We see these as “art” but might have served other purposes.

As the climate continued to change, the Fremont people couldn’t easily adapt their lifestyle to the hot, dry weather. They returned to hunting and gathering. What became of them is unknown. Other groups moving into the area known as “Numic” might have driven them out or the Fremont may have assimilated into these new cultures.

*Source: Utah Division of State History.*

#### **Numic**

Starting sometime after AD 1250 the Anasazi migrated out of Utah and Colorado, the Fremont culture disappeared, and people in Utah stopped farming and went back to hunting and gathering. The climate turned drier, with long periods of drought, including a 30-year drought that began in AD 1270. With a growing population, food may have become scarce. We know there was violence during this time, perhaps a reaction to the scarce resources.

The Numic-speaking people migrated into Utah around AD 1200. They might have driven out or assimilated the previous inhabitants into the Numic culture.



## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

### DAILY NEWS REPORT - UTAH

Over time, Numic-speaking people evolved into four groups:

- Northern Shoshone: They lived in northern Utah, Idaho, and Wyoming, as hunter-gatherers.
- Goshute: Living in the west deserts of Utah, they masterfully adapted to this harsh climate.
- Southern Paiute: Living in southwestern Utah, they both hunted and gathered and did some farming using irrigation.
- Ute: Several groups of Ute people ranged throughout northern and central Utah. Some acquired horses early and became horse-traders, as well as slave-traders (raiding the Southern Paiutes and Navajos).

*Source: Utah Division of State History.*

#### **Navajo**

The Navajos moved into Utah and were in the Four Corner area by AD 1400. Although the Navajo, who spoke an Athabaskan language as opposed to Numic, were Numic contemporaries, they weren't amicable.

The Navajo presently still reside in the southeastern corner of Utah and the Four Corner area. More than half of the population of San Juan County, Utah is Navajo – most living south of the San Juan River.

Because the Navajo archaeology dates to times when there is written documentation about their early practices and ways of life archaeologists consider them in the category of "historic," and not "prehistoric."

*Source: Utah Division of State History.*

[BACK](#)





## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

### DAILY NEWS REPORT - UTAH

#### 5. **My view: Utah visit is defining moment for Interior Secretary Zinke**

*The Deseret News, March 2 | David Jenkins*

New Secretary of Interior Ryan Zinke, after much ear-bending by Sens. Mike Lee and Orin Hatch, Congressman Rob Bishop and other Beehive State lawmakers, has promised that one of his first acts upon confirmation will be a visit to Utah — the nation’s proverbial squeaky wheel on public land policy.

This visit will likely be a defining moment for Secretary Zinke, who has gained popularity and support among sportsmen and centrist conservation groups as a strong Republican defender of our nation’s public lands.

Zinke began his Senate confirmation hearing by calling himself an “unapologetic admirer of Teddy Roosevelt,” and stating his belief that Roosevelt “had it right when he placed under federal protection millions of acres of federal land. ...”

Those comments reflect the same values and commitment to public lands that led him to boycott last year’s Republican convention in protest of the party’s platform plank calling for the transfer of federal lands to states.

Unfortunately, the elected officials who will be hosting Zinke’s visit to Utah do not share his values. Quite the contrary. Congressman Bishop, Sens. Lee and Hatch, and other Utah lawmakers, along with Gov. Gary Herbert, are leading agitators in the public land transfer effort.

They also want to gut Roosevelt’s Antiquities Act, do away with existing national monuments, undermine the Land and Water Conservation Fund, strip the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and Forest Service of their law enforcement authority, and weaken the Endangered Species Act.

Ironically, each of the items targeted have always enjoyed broad bipartisan support and represent a big part of the Republican Party’s conservation legacy. This underscores just how out-of-sync the priorities of Utah officials are with longstanding American conservation values.

Will the incoming secretary continue to stand on principle — and with Teddy — or will he allow himself be cajoled and bullied into aiding the advancement of a radical and exploitive anti-public lands agenda?



## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

### DAILY NEWS REPORT - UTAH

This largely Utah-driven agenda is unpopular with the vast majority of Americans, especially outdoor enthusiasts. The pushback is growing in Utah too. A massive outcry from hunters, anglers and outdoor businesses recently caused Congressman Jason Chaffetz (Utah 3rd District) to abandon his bill requiring the secretary to dispose of 3.3 million acres of public lands.

Bishop, Lee, Herbert and others remain undeterred.

Atop these officials' wish list is the rollback or reversal of the Bears Ears National Monument designation, an unfortunate priority that recently led to Salt Lake City losing at least two vital outdoor industry trade shows, along with more than \$45 million in economic impact.

Secretary Zinke's hosts will no doubt double down on peddling the notion that the new monument stokes conflict and lacks in-state support.

Such a portrayal is at odds with a Colorado College poll showing that Utah voters favor the Bears Ears designation 47 percent to 32 percent. While some legitimate in-state polls reflect a more even split, none has shown public opinion lopsidedly opposed to the monument.

That same Colorado College poll found that 80 percent of Western voters favor keeping national monument designations in place, while only 13 percent support having them removed.

The monument opposition that does exist is primarily driven — as is most opposition to public land protections — by short-term special interests. These same forces have resisted virtually every national monument, park, refuge or other public land protection since 1900.

Had such opposition prevailed in the past, many of our most cherished national parks would have never been protected.

All of this makes it important for Secretary Zinke to meet independently with all sides of the Bears Ears issue. He should have his own itinerary for the Utah visit and not allow monument opponents to control what he sees and whose voices he hears.

It is one thing to admire Theodore Roosevelt; it is another to approach the stewardship of our shared public lands with the same moral courage, foresight and commitment to conservation.

Many other Roosevelt admirers — Americans of all political stripes who love the great outdoors and cherish our country's natural and cultural heritage — will be watching to see if Secretary Zinke will emulate their hero, or placate those trying to destroy his century-old conservation legacy.



## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

### DAILY NEWS REPORT - UTAH

*David Jenkins is the president of Conservatives for Responsible Stewardship, a national nonprofit organization.*

[BACK](#)

#### E&E/NATIONAL NEWS – FULL STORY

##### 1. INTERIOR: On secretary's first day, Chaffetz demands documents

*E & E News, March 2 | Kellie Lunney*

New Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke got a housewarming gift from Congress on his first day on the job yesterday: a request for official documents related to issues ranging from the designation of national monuments to complaints against Bureau of Land Management law enforcement agents for alleged bullying.

The House Oversight and Government Reform Committee sent Zinke a [letter](#) including document and record requests on seven matters it submitted to Interior Department officials between October 2015 and December 2016 and is still waiting for feedback on.

"The committee currently has certain pending requests for documents and information with the Department of the Interior. As the department transitions to new leadership, I reiterate these requests here," wrote Chairman Jason Chaffetz (R-Utah).

The panel wants information related to several issues that cropped up during the previous administration, including:

- Allegations from state officials in Nevada and Utah that some BLM law enforcement officers are intimidating and harassing residents and tourists, as well as the controversy stemming from extravagant budget requests — including 24-hour access to ice cream — to manage the 2015 Burning Man event.
- A March 2015 BLM rule, now tied up in court, that would expand federal oversight of hydraulic fracturing in several Western states.
- The Obama administration's use of the Antiquities Act to designate more national monuments, including 1.8 million acres of land in California, Bears Ears National Monument in Utah and Gold Butte National Monument in Nevada.
- BLM's decisionmaking process as it related to the Cadiz Valley Water Conservation, Recovery and Storage Project in California.



## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

### DAILY NEWS REPORT - UTAH

The Senate confirmed Zinke yesterday in a 68-31 bipartisan vote (Greenwire, March 1). He now leads a department of 70,000 employees that oversees 20 percent of U.S. lands. The federal government's role in managing those lands vis-à-vis states' authority will be a central issue facing the new secretary.

Interior's Office of Congressional and Legislative Affairs will review yesterday's congressional request from the House committee, department spokeswoman Heather Swift said today.

[BACK](#)

#### 2. **COAL: GOP senators cheer Trump plans to lift leasing moratorium**

*E & E News, March 2 | Dylan Brown*

Western Republican senators are applauding President Trump's plans for nixing the Obama-era moratorium on leasing public land for coal mining.

The White House could strike down the Interior Department's leasing halt along with various other environmental regulations via executive order as soon as next week, Reuters reported yesterday, citing a White House official.

Sens. Mike Enzi (R-Wyo.), Steve Daines (R-Mont.), John Barrasso (R-Wyo.), Cory Gardner (R-Colo.) and Orrin Hatch (R-Utah) have already urged Trump to lift the "wholly unnecessary" moratorium on new federal coal leases in a recent [letter](#).

Obama administration Interior Secretary Sally Jewell halted leasing in January 2016 to allow the Bureau of Land Management to scrutinize federal coal management.

After the first year of an estimated three-year review, the Obama administration published a scoping review just days before leaving office.

The report validated the long-standing concerns of environmentalists and government watchdogs that revenues from coal shortchanged taxpayers and underestimated the climate impacts of coal.

The senators condemned the report for setting "the stage for an agency review of the program under politically-motivated terms."

Coal companies argue they already pay back more than their fair share into state and federal coffers.



## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

### DAILY NEWS REPORT - UTAH

The Obama administration said 20 years' worth of coal is already leased nationwide, but critics argued the moratorium was destabilizing places dependent on coal.

"Terminating the Secretarial Order will allow us to get this program back on track, and get people in coal-producing communities back to work," the senators wrote.

[BACK](#)

### 3. **COAL: Interior offers to help coal plant by softening regulations**

*E & E News, March 2 | Benjamin Storrow*

Department of the Interior officials promised Tuesday to "turn over every rock" to keep one of the country's largest coal plants running, saying they would examine the regulatory costs of an associated coal mine in hopes of driving down the operation's expenses.

"Clearly there is a difference between the current administration and the last administration related for our appetite to encourage coal use," said James Cason, acting Interior deputy secretary. "So if there is any regulatory costs we can pick out, let's talk about that."

The statement, made at a summit of tribal leaders, Arizona regulators, utility executives and federal officials at Interior's Washington headquarters, followed a dramatic decision by utilities last month to close the Navajo Generating Station (NGS) 25 years early.

Leaders of the Navajo tribe have called on the Trump administration to keep the plant open, saying closing it would devastate the local economy and upend the area's power market (Climatewire, Feb. 15). The Bureau of Reclamation, a division of Interior, owns a 24.3 percent stake in the plant.

But the meeting laid bare the challenges the government faces in keeping NGS running. Low natural gas prices have been devastating to the economics of running the facility, which had been scheduled to operate until 2044.

Utility estimates say that NGS's owners would lose \$100 million to \$150 million annually if they continued to operate the plant beyond 2019.

Officials with the Salt River Project, the plant's operator, said they are willing to work with another power company if a second firm concludes it could operate the plant at a lower cost.



## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

### DAILY NEWS REPORT - UTAH

Finding such a buyer is another matter.

"We have sharpened our pencils on the O&M [operations and maintenance] before we ever got here," Salt River Project Deputy Manager Mike Hummel told the gathering.

Hummel said SRP is looking for ways to avoid laying off NGS employees by transferring them to other sites.

Cason, who led the meeting, tasked the group with pursuing a series of parallel efforts, including a study of the plant's decommissioning and how to transition the tribes if efforts to keep NGS open fail.

But the greatest tasks, he said, were finding a company willing to buy the facility and reducing its operating costs.

Cason suggested that could be done in part by addressing some of the regulatory costs at the Kayenta mine, a Peabody Energy Corp.-operated facility that serves NGS.

"It sounds like you've already gone through the process of going through the market and selling it to somebody, and so far, you're drawing a blank," Cason said, addressing utility executives. "And my impression of the market is you would have to pay somebody to take it."

He raised the possibility of the Navajo and Hopi tribes owning the facility, as well as a takeover by Reclamation, though he added, "if we actually have the capacity to run a plant like that — I don't know if we do or not."

The economic stakes are enormous. NGS and Kayenta employ roughly 800 people and provide more than 30 percent of the Navajo Nation's annual revenue and about 80 percent of the Hopi tribe's revenues.

The fates of the mine and the plant are inextricably linked. NGS is Kayenta's sole customer.

Kayenta is a relatively small part of Peabody's operations. The 6.8 million tons of coal mined at Kayenta in 2015 represented almost 4 percent of the St. Louis-based coal company's sales that year.



## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

### DAILY NEWS REPORT - UTAH

Peabody executives acknowledged that low natural gas prices present a formidable challenge but stressed the variability of gas prices in recent years.

One presentation by a coal company consultant predicted that NGS would continue to operate at a loss in the short term but would become profitable again as gas prices rise in future years as a result of increased demand for electricity generation and a growing export market for liquid natural gas.

"Listen, I've got no doubt natural gas is going to be a competitor of ours," said Kemal Williamson, president of Peabody's American operations. "We operate a lot of mines, ship coal to a lot of different companies and utilities across this country, and we slug it out with natural gas every single day."

He added, "I think collectively we're up to the challenge to get at or below that line to see Navajo Generating run for years to come."

[BACK](#)

#### 4. **RENEWABLE ENERGY: As wind grows, so does its opposition**

*E & E News, March 2 | Benjamin Storrow and Daniel Cusick*

Oklahoma wind developers are fresh off a record-setting year. Only Texas installed more wind capacity in 2016, a fact that thrusts the Sooner State's power markets into a sudden transition and is agitating opponents along the way.

Wind barely registered in Oklahoma a decade ago, but it now accounts for 20 percent of the state's electricity generation.

Instead of celebrating, industry leaders find themselves facing a torrent of anti-wind legislation in Oklahoma City, the state capital. By one tally, 88 bills concerning wind development have been filed in the opening days of the legislative session. They range from a proposal to provide advanced notification for new developments to a plan backed by Gov. Mary Fallin (R) that would impose a 0.5-cent-per-kilowatt-hour tax on wind-generated electricity.

Most expect Fallin's plan to fail. Wind's importance to the local power grid means there is little appetite among lawmakers to back a bill that could raise consumers' rates. But a proposal to end a tax credit that has helped make Oklahoma the third-largest producer of wind power in the country is gaining steam.



## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

### DAILY NEWS REPORT - UTAH

"The credit has gone out of control of where it's supposed to be," said state Rep. David Brumbaugh (R), who sponsored a measure to phase out the incentives. "The industry was in its infancy, and now the state is on the hook for hundreds of millions of tax credits."

Brumbaugh's concerns hint at a larger issue. As oil- and gas-reliant states like Oklahoma attempt to dig themselves out of a budget hole born from weak crude prices, they are increasingly looking toward wind to help balance the books. There is also this: Some worry the industry's growth represents a challenge to traditional fossil fuels.

Wyoming lawmakers shot down proposals earlier this year to raise the Cowboy State's 0.1-cent-per-kWh wind production tax and bar utilities from buying renewables. Budget concerns and allegiance to fossil fuels were both factors behind the proposals.

But some express a different set of concerns. Greens are so eager to bring renewables online that they haven't considered the environmental impacts of wind development, said state Sen. Cale Case (R), who authored the tax proposal.

He strongly disputes assertions that his plan attempts to prop up the state's ailing coal industry. Instead, Case says taxes are needed to help offset the impacts of wind development and ensure Wyoming benefits from its growth.

"I want national people to realize what this means to our Wyoming viewsheds, wildlife," Case said. "I want people to realize how permanent these developments are. It's huge and permanent."

#### **Cancel wind perks, help the budget**

In North Dakota, one lawmaker proposed a two-year moratorium on new wind development. He expressed concern that wind power is killing the local coal industry, but ultimately shelved his plan in exchange for a promise the state would study the issue (Energywire, Feb. 24).

Wind's opponents argue tax incentives and other laws have distorted the market, effectively forcing utilities to choose wind over cheaper and more reliable fossil fuels.

"There are very good arguments for why tax credits are working against the public interest," said Lisa Linowes, executive director of the New Hampshire-based WindAction Group, which opposes industrial-scale wind development. "The states are right to reconsider the subsidies they are providing."





## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

### DAILY NEWS REPORT - UTAH

Nowhere is the issue more fraught than Oklahoma. The debate has divided the state's traditional political powers. The Oklahoma Independent Petroleum Association, which counts Harold Hamm's Continental Resources Inc. among its members, is a prominent backer of plans to impose a production tax and end incentives for the wind industry. The proposals would level the playing field and help the state fill a nearly \$900 million budget shortfall, the association argues.

The Oklahoma State Chamber of Commerce, meanwhile, has voiced opposition to Fallin's play, saying wind is a vital source of jobs and tax revenue. The Oklahoma Oil and Gas Association has remained neutral.

Much of the fervor is owed to the sheer size of Oklahoma's wind industry. The state installed 1,192 megawatts of wind capacity in the fourth quarter of 2016. That's more than the total capacity of 33 states.

A [2015 study](#) conducted by Oklahoma State University at the behest of the Chamber of Commerce concluded that wind installations had increased the appraised value of local tax rolls by \$3.3 billion. That's in addition to the \$134 million the industry paid in ad valorem taxes in 2014. Wind industry estimates now project the sector employs around 7,000 Sooners.

The state tax credit paid to zero-emission energy sources like wind has also grown. The incentive cost Oklahoma \$113 million in fiscal 2014, according to a consulting firm hired by the state.

Oklahoma can hardly afford to spare the money. Advocates of phasing out the incentives say the revenue could be used to pay more to teachers, who will rank as the poorest paid in the country unless lawmakers approve a salary bump this year.

They also argue wind has outgrown the incentives. The state has already exceeded its goal of producing 15 percent of its power from renewable sources, Brumbaugh said.

"It's not anything against the wind industry," he said. "It's a budgetary matter. We had a \$1 billion shortfall last year and \$1 billion shortfall this year."

#### **Gas incentive bigger than wind credit**

The wind industry, for its part, is prepared to negotiate. Jeffrey Clark, president of the Wind Coalition, said the industry is willing to let the credit expire at the end of 2018, three years ahead of schedule. In exchange, he hopes to preserve the incentives for projects already in development, arguing that it's unfair to investors to change the rules midstream. But he also senses a wider political plot to knock wind back a notch.



## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

### DAILY NEWS REPORT - UTAH

"As long as they are blaming wind energy for the state budget, they are not talking about tax credits for other industries," Clark said.

A tax credit for horizontal drilling cost Oklahoma \$427 million in 2016, according to David Blatt, executive director of the Oklahoma Policy Institute. With lawmakers unlikely to approve tax increases, he argues that lawmakers should rein in tax incentives to help solve Oklahoma's budget woes.

"It raises questions as to why there is so much attention paid to \$100 million to the wind industry," Blatt said. "While wind has done well in the state at the Legislature, it is still a new and not-well-entrenched industry where oil and gas calls the shots."

Susan Sloan, vice president for state policy at the American Wind Energy Association, characterized Oklahoma's debate over wind power as a "huge fight," adding that the state has "in some ways become the ground zero" of a broader effort to discredit wind energy's economic benefits to rural America.

But she said the most strident opponents of wind power are not rural landowners themselves. Rather, they are individuals and organizations representing fossil energy, or those who have a broader agenda based on political, economic or aesthetic concerns.

Sloan said AWEA does not discount what she said are legitimate concerns about wind energy, including how best to integrate turbines and other infrastructure into rural communities.

"The bigger the industry gets, the more we're seeing some of these questions, and the wind industry has to continue to do the best job it can to be a good neighbor," she said.

"But the idea that rural America doesn't want wind power, that's just not what we've experienced out there," Sloan added. "There are plenty of landowners who are very willing to lease their land, to put up turbines and to earn that additional long-term income."

Regarding legislative efforts to roll back wind energy in places like Oklahoma, Wyoming and North Dakota, Sloan noted that those bills often fail at the committee level.

"So when the process allows for a true discussion about the pros and cons of wind power, these efforts are not successful," she said.

[BACK](#)



## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

### DAILY NEWS REPORT - UTAH

#### 5. **MINING: Trade group appeals to Commerce chief for relief**

*E & E News, March 2 | Dylan Brown*

The National Mining Association appealed to new Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross to help slash regulations on the industry as a means to foster the manufacturing renaissance President Trump has put atop his economic agenda.

Mining could supply the raw materials for "American-made" products, but the current permitting process shackles the industry's vast potential, NMA CEO Hal Quinn told Ross in a letter Tuesday, soon after the Senate confirmed him.

Last year, a Government Accountability Office report found that federal agencies take about two years, on average, to permit hardrock mines — on par with rivals Canada and Australia. Environmentalists say U.S. mining laws heavily favor mining, even over other forms of development.

Companies, however, say it can often take state and federal agencies seven to 10 years to process permits for significant projects.

"Restricted access to mineralized lands and a broken permitting system pose two substantial obstacles to the responsible development of our nation's first class mineral endowment," Quinn wrote.

Delays, NMA argues, have created "a gross structural mismatch between domestic mineral supply and demand."

For 50 metal and mineral commodities in 2016, the U.S. Geological Survey found that more than half of what was used nationwide came from overseas. China was the top provider, followed by Canada.

The United States is a net exporter of key minerals like gold, iron and zinc, but the country brought in 34 percent more copper and 73 percent more platinum than it shipped out, USGS said.

Foreign countries also provide 100 percent of 20 minerals, including rare earth elements that are vital parts of advanced military and energy technologies.

Such dependence has motivated lawmakers, including Senate Energy and Natural Resources Chairwoman Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska), to push for critical mineral legislation (Greenwire, Jan. 16).



## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

### DAILY NEWS REPORT - UTAH

Mining companies and allies in Congress are also looking to lift or block various federal mining bans, including a proposed 10-million-acre withdrawal associated with sage grouse management.

GAO did indicate that permitting agencies — the Bureau of Land Management and Forest Service — could do more to expedite permitting.

NMA urged Ross to work with other Cabinet members to implement best practices like improved coordination between state and federal regulators, minimizing duplication, and introducing more accountability and deadlines.

[BACK](#)

#### 6. **INTERIOR: Zinke literally takes the reins**

*E & E News, March 2 | Corbin Hiar*

There's a new sheriff at the Interior Department, and his name is Ryan Zinke.

On his first day leading the sprawling agency, which is responsible for managing 20 percent of the nation's land and 10 separate bureaus, the ex-Montana congressman and former Navy SEAL rode an Irish sport horse named Tonto from the National Park Service's stables on the National Mall to the steps of Interior's headquarters.

When he arrived at 1849 C St. NW, in blue jeans and a black cowboy hat, Zinke was greeted by more than 350 employees, including one Bureau of Indian Affairs staffer from Montana's Northern Cheyenne Tribe who played a veterans' honor song for him on a hand drum.

Former acting Secretary Jack Haugrud was also on the steps of the building to symbolically hand over leadership to Zinke, who was confirmed yesterday morning by the Senate and sworn into the Cabinet later that day by Vice President Mike Pence (E&E Daily, March 2).

"Secretary Zinke was proud to accept an invitation by the U.S. Park Police to stand shoulder to shoulder with their officers on his first day at Interior — the eve of the Department's anniversary," spokeswoman Heather Swift said in an email. The agency, originally founded as the Home Department, turns 168 years old tomorrow.

"As a Montanan, the new Secretary is excited to highlight the Department's rich and diverse cultural heritage as he gets to work advancing the Department's mission," Swift added.

#### **Zinke's top priorities**



## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

### DAILY NEWS REPORT - UTAH

In an email sent out to all of the agency's 70,000 employees this morning, Zinke reiterated his support for maintaining federal control of public lands — a position out of step with the Republican Party platform that helped earn him the confirmation votes of 16 Democrats and independent Maine Sen. Angus King.

"I have absolutely and unequivocally opposed any attempts to transfer, sell, or privatize our public lands, and serving as their top steward is not a job I take lightly," he wrote. "I approach this job in the same way that Boy Scouts taught me so long ago: leave the campsite in better condition than I found it."

Zinke also laid out "three main priorities that I hope you will join with me in working to achieve."

The first was to address NPS's estimated \$12.5 billion deferred maintenance backlog, which he suggested could be reduced by the forthcoming infrastructure bill Trump has been touting.

Second was to "increase employee morale and ensure those of you on the front lines have the right tools, right resources, and flexibility to make the decisions to allow you to do your job," he said.

And the third priority was to ensure that tribal "sovereignty needs to mean something," said Zinke, who is an adopted member of the Assiniboine-Sioux tribes of northeast Montana.

"I will do everything in my power to ensure respect to the sovereign Indian Nations and territories," he added. "My commitment to the territories and Nations is not lip service."

Those top concerns differ slightly from the three "immediate tasks" he promised to focus on during his confirmation hearing.

At that time, he said that "I fully recognize that there is distrust, anger and even hatred against some federal management policies," and pledged to focus on restoring "trust by working with rather than against local communities and states." Promoting tribal sovereignty, on the other hand, did not make the list (E&E News PM, Jan. 17).

Zinke also shared with employees a story about public lands that he said had shaped who he is. He recounted how he broke his ankle while trying to show off rock-climbing skills to his future wife during a hike on public lands.



## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

### DAILY NEWS REPORT - UTAH

"I did what any guy would do in my situation: I stood up and kept on hiking, surely messing up my ankle a bit more," he wrote. "Lola and I finished the hike and I didn't collapse in pain, but the bigger accomplishment was I won Lola's heart. In the years since, Lola and I continued to hike and float on our public lands and waterways where we instilled in our children and grandchildren the same love and appreciation for America's great outdoors that helped build our own relationship."

#### **Strengthening ethics**

After changing into a suit and tie, Zinke sat down for his first meeting as secretary with the ethics office. "#LeadingByExample," he wrote in a tweet about the briefing.

In a separate all-employee email, the secretary said "our understanding and observance of Federal ethics rules are essential to maintaining that trust and carrying out our mission."

Perhaps referring to sexual harassment allegations that have rocked the Park Service in recent years, he noted that "issues have been raised and, in some cases, actions have been taken to address them." But Zinke added, "I expect us to do better. We must conduct ourselves at all times with integrity and a focus on ethics."

To aid in that effort, the secretary asked his deputy and other top officials "to report to me 30 days from today on actions to improve the Department's adherence, oversight, and accountability regarding the Federal ethics rules."

Zinke committed travel fraud during his time in the Navy, but that incident and other ethical issues went largely unmentioned during his confirmation process (E&E Daily, Jan. 31).

The secretary's effort to promote adherence to ethical guidelines at Interior may also be an attempt to distance himself from that past as well as conflict-of-interest questions swirling around the White House and failed Trump administration nominees. President Trump has refused to divest from his real estate empire or to release tax returns that would detail his holdings. Meanwhile, Trump's picks to lead the Army and Navy both recently withdrew from Senate consideration because of financial entanglements.

[BACK](#)



## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

### DAILY NEWS REPORT - UTAH

#### 7. **BLM: Associate director appointed for Utah office**

*E & E News, March 2 | Scott Streater*

The Bureau of Land Management announced today the promotion of a veteran administrator to associate director of the BLM Utah State Office.

Anita Bilbao, an 18-year BLM employee, will oversee internal operations in Utah, where the agency manages nearly 23 million acres.

Bilbao most recently served as the chief of staff to acting BLM Director Kristin Bail, where she was responsible for working with senior staff, setting strategic direction and executing strategy, the agency said.

Bilbao has also served in various leadership roles in BLM's Oregon/Washington State Office and Washington, D.C., including an assignment as the branch chief of the Division of Decision Support, Planning and National Environmental Policy Act.

"I've worked with Anita in Washington, D.C., and I am excited about the experience and dedication she will bring to the BLM Utah State Office team," BLM Utah State Director Ed Roberson said in a statement. "Anita's extensive knowledge of BLM programs and thoughtful leadership style makes her a perfect fit for this important leadership position."

In Utah, Bilbao will help oversee BLM operations in a state that has long been a hotbed of controversy.

Ever since President Clinton designated the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument in 1996 over the strenuous objections of congressional and state leaders, Utah has been at the center of some of the nation's most contentious public lands debates.

Utah congressional leaders are still upset at the designation of the 1.9-million-acre Grand Staircase-Escalante monument and have vowed to overturn President Obama's recent designation of the 1.35-million-acre Bears Ears National Monument.

The Utah Legislature last month advanced a pair of measures urging the Trump administration and Congress to reduce or eliminate national monuments in the state (Greenwire, Feb. 1).

Because two-thirds of the state is federally owned, elected leaders like House Natural Resources Chairman Rob Bishop (R-Utah) have frequently expressed frustration over BLM management practices that they say favor conservation over other uses.



## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

### DAILY NEWS REPORT - UTAH

While BLM-managed lands in the state attracted 7.4 million visitors, contributing \$527 million in economic activity in fiscal 2015, state leaders want more say in how these lands are managed.

Some would like to see federal lands transferred to the state.

Utah Gov. Gary Herbert (R) in 2012 signed legislation calling for the transfer of most of the 35 million acres of federal lands within the state's borders.

Utah state Rep. Mike Noel (R), a longtime opponent of federal landownership, is rumored to be in the running to lead BLM in the Trump administration (Greenwire, Jan. 26).

Noel has sponsored legislation urging Congress to reduce the boundaries of the Grand Staircase-Escalante monument to the minimum possible area needed.

But BLM Utah has also advanced some major oil and gas drilling projects in recent months.

The biggest is the proposed Monument Butte oil and gas development project in northeast Utah, which would allow as many as 5,758 new oil and gas wells to be drilled in the next 16 years on 10,122 acres.

BLM issued a final environmental impact statement for the project last summer (Greenwire, June 23, 2016).

The bureau is also analyzing a proposal to offer two parcels near Zion National Park for oil and gas leasing later this year (Greenwire, Jan. 16).

A native of Boise, Idaho, Bilbao earned a master's degree in public administration from Portland State University and a bachelor's degree in biology from Lewis & Clark College.

[BACK](#)

#### 8. **PUBLIC LANDS: Zinke moves to promote access, revoke lead ammo ban**

*E & E News, March 2 | Corbin Hiar*

On his first full day in office, Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke issued orders to expand access to public lands and revoke restrictions on lead ammunition and fishing tackle.

Zinke described the moves as a rebuke to the Obama administration. He was joined at the signing ceremony by officials from the National Rifle Association, the National Marine





## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

### DAILY NEWS REPORT - UTAH

Manufacturers Association, the Safari Club and other sportsmen's groups that didn't closely collaborate with his predecessor.

Over the past eight years, "hunting and recreation enthusiasts have seen trails closed and dramatic decreases in access to public lands across the board," the new secretary said in a statement.

"It worries me to think about hunting and fishing becoming activities for the land-owning elite," he added. "This package of secretarial orders will expand access for outdoor enthusiasts and also make sure the community's voice is heard."

The secretarial order on "conservation stewardship and outdoor recreation" calls for the assistant secretary of fish and wildlife and parks and the assistant secretary for land and minerals management to provide Zinke with a report in 30 days detailing actions the agency has taken and could still take to promote access.

The secretary will then share the report with Interior's Wildlife and Hunting Heritage Conservation Council and Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council for feedback. They have another month to weigh in, after which Zinke will choose someone in his office to implement the recommendations.

Vacancies at the top of the agency could make fulfilling the order on time a challenge. None of the assistant secretary nominations has been sent so far from the White House to the Senate for confirmation.

The second order blocks a controversial phaseout of lead ammo and tackle in national wildlife refuges that was issued by former Fish and Wildlife Service Director Dan Ashe on his last full day in office. Ashe's directive came as a surprise to many sportsmen's groups and would have required the use of nontoxic ammo and tackle "to the fullest extent practicable" by January 2022.

FWS has long warned of the dangers of lead exposure to fish and wildlife, particularly birds. Some animals ingest lead shot or fishing weights directly from carcasses left in the field or waters (E&E News PM, Jan. 23).

But Zinke said in the order that he determined Ashe's directive was "not mandated by any existing statutory or regulatory requirement and was issued without significant communication, consultation, or coordination with affected stakeholders."



## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

### DAILY NEWS REPORT - UTAH

Senate Environment and Public Works Chairman John Barrasso (R-Wyo.) praised the orders as "important steps to increase access to public lands and protect the rights of Americans who enjoy hunting and fishing."

The Sierra Club, however, took issue with the lead ban repeal.

"Lead is extremely toxic to people and wildlife, even at very low levels," said Athan Manuel, the director of public lands protection for the conservation group. "Non-lead options are available, effective, cost-competitive, and most importantly safer. Overturning the lead ammunition ban may win political points with a few special interests, but it could cost the lives of millions of birds and the health of families that rely on game to feed their families."

Earlier today, Zinke also requested a report on actions the agency can take to strengthen its ethical practices (Greenwire, March 2).

[BACK](#)