

Bcc: james_cason@ios.doi.gov[james_cason@ios.doi.gov]
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INTERIOR DAILY COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

NEWS TO SHARE:

My Statesman: Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke says Hurricane Harvey recovery at 20%

"In Austin to visit the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Joint Information Center and receive a department update on relief efforts at a local U.S. Geological Survey office, U.S. Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke said Saturday that recovery will be a "marathon, not a sprint," that lasts for years. "This is going to take a long time for recovery," Zinke said. "I would say we're probably at 20 percent." Zinke commended first responders as well as federal and state government for the immediate response to Harvey. "It was a good first sprint, and I think it was a tribute to the great state of Texas and the governor and the president working all together," Zinke said."

SouthCoastToday-Opinion: Our View: Fishing industry may get a win from Washington

"The unexpected re-examination of the status of the Northeast Canyons and Seamounts Marine National Monument under President Trump is a welcome development for New Bedford's commercial fisherman. The nearly 5,000 square miles of protected waters that lie about 130 miles southeast of Cape Cod was closed off to commercial fishing last year when President Obama designated the area the first Atlantic marine national monument."

Correcting the Record:

The Atlantic: Will Trump Change the Way Presidents Approach National Monuments?

"In April, President Trump ordered Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke to review more than two dozen national monuments, arguing that the designation of sites under previous administrations had gotten out of hand. Months later, Zinke's recommendations, detailed in a leaked memo delivered to the White House, have sparked concern among local officials and environmental groups, prompting some to describe the proposals as "unprecedented."

- **Secretary Zinke's statement:**

- "No President should use the authority under the Antiquities Act to restrict public access, prevent hunting and fishing, burden private land, or eliminate traditional land uses, unless such action is needed to protect the object. The recommendations I sent to the president on national monuments will maintain federal ownership of all federal land and protect the land under federal environmental regulations, and also provide a much-needed change for the local communities who border and rely on these lands for hunting and fishing, economic development, traditional uses, and recreation."

- **DOI statement:**

- "The Secretary's draft report has been sent to the White House. The Secretary's summary has been released to the press. Please contact the White House with any questions about any action on the report."

- **White House statement:**

- "President Trump has received Secretary Zinke's draft report for the

Antiquities Act, and is currently reviewing his recommendations to determine the best path forward for the American people."

- The Antiquities Act calls for the President to designate the "smallest area compatible with proper care and management of the objects to be protected." Despite this clear directive "smallest area" has become the exception and not the rule.
- In an effort to make the process transparent and give people a voice in the process, the Secretary announced on May 5, 2017 the opening up of a formal comment period for the review. This is the first time ever that a formal comment period was open on [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov) for National Monuments designated under the Antiquities Act.
- Since May, Secretary Zinke has visited eight national monument sites in six states. He's held dozens of meetings with Tribal, local, and state government officials, local stakeholders, and advocates from conservation, agriculture, tourism, and historic preservation organizations. The Secretary meets with people and organizations who represent all sides of the issues.
- Many of the most controversial national monuments were designated or expanded in the waning days of the previous administration after partisan efforts to designate the land stalled in Congress. This is a clear violation of the will of the people and an overuse of executive power.

Fact and Fiction of the Monument Review

- Myth: No president has shrunk a monument.
- Fact: Monuments have been shrunk at least ten times under presidents on both sides of the aisle. Some examples include President John F. Kennedy removing 2,882 acres from Bandelier National Monument, Presidents Taft, Wilson, Coolidge reducing Mount Olympus National Monument (President Wilson halved it), and President Eisenhower reducing Great Sand Dunes National Monument in Colorado.
- Myth: The monument review will sell/transfer public lands to states.
- Fact: This is not true. Under the Antiquities Act, the monuments are designated on already federal land. Therefore, if any monument is rescinded or shrunk, the land would remain federally owned and be managed by one or more land management agencies, including the Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the National Park Service.
- Myth: The monument review will close/sell/transfer National Parks.
- Fact: No National Parks are under review, and the Secretary has continually committed he is against the sale/transfer/privatization of public lands, especially National Parks. While some of the monuments are managed by the National Park Service - much like historic sites, national recreation areas, and national seashores are - none of them are National Parks.

Casper Star Tribune: Interior Department likely to propose big changes to sage grouse management soon

"It was a part of the strategy to keep the bird from being listed as endangered, which would have created a tremendous scuffle across public lands in fossil fuel-dependent states like

Wyoming and likely damaged conservation efforts as a result, experts say. But sage grouse conservation could lose that yardstick in the coming weeks on the order of the Interior Department, a move some say is another step to weaken the bird's protection from industry development. Others disagree, pointing out that the language is too vague to be effective."

TALKING POINTS

- **Secretary Zinke's statement:**

- "While the federal government has a responsibility under the Endangered Species Act to responsibly manage wildlife, destroying local communities and levying onerous regulations on the public lands that they rely on is no way to be a good neighbor. State agencies are at the forefront of efforts to maintain healthy fish and wildlife populations, and we need to make sure they are being heard on this issue. As we move forward with implementation of our strategy for sage-grouse conservation, we want to make sure that we do so first and foremost in consultation with state and local governments, and in a manner that allows both wildlife and local economies to thrive. There are a lot of innovative ideas out there. I don't want to take anything off the table when we talk about a plan."

- Secretary Zinke understands each state has different needs; he is committed to working with local communities on this key issue.

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Alex Hinson

Deputy Press Secretary
Department of the Interior