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Published: Wednesday, June 14, 2017

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<http://bit.ly/2rigrKl>

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Kellie Lunney, E&E News reporter

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<http://bit.ly/2sBdEA6>

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<http://bit.ly/2spIeMn>

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<http://bit.ly/2rwzKPq>

7. Scalise: Energy industry ally who backs wetlands protections

Arianna Skibell, E&E News reporter

Published: Wednesday, June 14, 2017

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<http://bit.ly/2ri3rEG>

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Published: Wednesday, June 14, 2017

The developer behind the controversial Pebble mine project near Bristol Bay in Alaska has joined forces with a coalition of Alaskan tribal interests from the oil-rich North Slope region.

<http://bit.ly/2t2PpYR>

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1. Interior halts restrictions on methane emissions

Ellen M. Gilmer, E&E News reporter

Published: Wednesday, June 14, 2017

The Trump administration has indefinitely postponed upcoming deadlines for oil and gas companies to slash greenhouse gas emissions on public lands.

In a *Federal Register* **notice** to be published tomorrow, the Bureau of Land Management announced that companies will not have to comply with new rules for venting, flaring and leaking of methane from their operations on public and tribal lands, pending judicial review.

The news comes less than a day after U.S. EPA proposed a two-year freeze of its own methane restrictions for new oil and gas operations across the country (*Energywire*, June 14).

BLM's rule, known as the Methane and Waste Prevention Rule, was finalized by the Obama administration last year and immediately faced legal challenges from industry groups and Western states. The rule narrowly escaped being scrapped through the Congressional Review Act in May (*Energywire*, May 11).

Now, BLM is rethinking the rule and pausing January 2018 compliance deadlines for measuring flared gas, upgrading equipment, capturing vapors from storage tanks, and implementing leak detection and repair programs.

Other provisions of the rule are already in effect, including general restrictions on venting and flaring, well maintenance, and royalty calculations. Those remain unaffected by the delay.

Industry groups including the American Petroleum Institute and Western Energy Alliance earlier this year sent letters to Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke requesting the stay. They say the rule's provisions are overly burdensome and will force some companies to halt operations (*Energywire*, May 19).

BLM is delaying the compliance dates under an Administrative Procedure Act provision that allows agencies to pause challenged rules pending judicial review.

"Given this legal uncertainty, operators should not be required to expend substantial time and resources to comply with regulatory requirements that may prove short-lived as a result of pending litigation or the

administrative review that is already under way," the *Federal Register* notice says. "Postponing these compliance dates will help preserve the regulatory status quo while the litigation is pending and the Department reviews and reconsiders the Rule."

Environmental groups that support the Obama-era rule have argued it's too late for the Trump administration to invoke that Administrative Procedure Act provision because, while the various compliance deadlines are phased in over time, the rule officially took effect earlier this year. They have promised to sue over any attempt to sideline the restrictions.

Earthjustice attorney Robin Cooley, who has been defending the methane rule court, slammed the administration's move.

"Once again the Trump administration is bowing to the wishes of the oil and gas industry with no concern for public health and the environment," she said in an email. "Methane regulations are common sense, cost effective standards that reduce pollution while saving money. It is imperative that these rules go into effect, and we will be in court fighting every step of the way."

Industry, meanwhile, celebrated the news.

"Western Energy Alliance is very pleased that the Interior Department has listened to the concerns of companies having to comply with a rule that is likely to be overturned in court or changed significantly through the rulemaking process," alliance President Kathleen Sgamma said in an email, adding that industry will continue working to improve methane capture rates.

<http://bit.ly/2rigrKl>

2. Zinke's Bears Ears report featured photo of another site

Jennifer Yachnin, E&E News reporter

Published: Wednesday, June 14, 2017

Utah is home to more than 34 million acres of federal lands, including various national parks and monuments — so maybe it's no wonder everyone seems to mix them up when it comes time to post a photograph of Bears Ears National Monument.

The Interior Department topped its Monday announcement that Secretary Ryan Zinke will recommend significant reductions to the 1.35-million-acre Bears Ears monument with a striking photo of the former Montana lawmaker looking over a vista of rocky, red hills.

But according to Interior's public account on photo sharing site Flickr, the image actually belongs to a collection of photos from Zinke's recent visit to Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument.

The discrepancy was first reported by NPR's Utah station KUER.

The Interior Department did not immediately return a request for comment. Zinke is in the midst of a tour of New England states and is scheduled to visit the Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument today.

The photographic mix-up is only the latest in a string of errors identifying the Bears Ears monument.

President Obama took flak in December when his administration tweeted out a photo of Arches National Park when he designated Bears Ears (*Greenwire*, Jan. 24).

At the time, Utah Republican lawmakers including Rep. Jason Chaffetz and Sen. Mike Lee slammed Obama on social media.

"Classic. @WhiteHouse pic is Arches not monuments. Couldn't find a pic of Bears Ears & doesn't even know where it is. #WorstPresidentEver," Chaffetz wrote in late December.

Similarly, in a [video](#) at the time, Lee compared Obama's error to President Clinton's decision to designate the Grand Staircase monument at a ceremony in Arizona.

"Look at this picture," Lee said. "That's not the Bears Ears area. ... We should be particularly disturbed by the fact that the same people who made this decision, the same people who decided to declare this national monument, apparently don't know the difference between the Bears Ears area, on the one hand, and Arches National Park."

E&E News has likewise made errors in identifying national monuments in Utah. In early May, this publication used a photo of Bears Ears instead of an image of the Grand Staircase-Escalante monument.

<http://bit.ly/2rhYFHR>

3. Bishop 'happier' if Zinke had revoked Bears Ears

[Kellie Lunney](#), E&E News reporter

Published: Wednesday, June 14, 2017

The chairman of the House Natural Resources Committee said yesterday that he was "a little" disappointed that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke didn't recommend revoking the status of Bears Ears National Monument in his interim review.

While Rep. Rob Bishop (R-Utah) said he was satisfied with Zinke's recommendation to significantly shrink the 1.35-million-acre monument in southeastern Utah, he acknowledged to reporters that he "would have been happier if it was completely redone." But he then added that he is "still convinced [Zinke's] probably going to do it the right way."

Zinke bought himself some time with the interim review of Bears Ears; the final recommendations, including where and by how much to reduce the monument, will come later this summer when the Interior secretary's report on 27 monuments is due.

Although Utah's Legislature adopted a resolution earlier this year encouraging President Trump to revoke the monument's status entirely, Zinke indicated on a press call Monday that he would not make that recommendation in his final report due Aug. 24. "Certainly, rescinding the monument was an option, but looking at it, there are some antiquities within the monument that I think deserve to be protected," he said (*E&E News PM*, June 12).

Still, Bishop said he is confident Interior will come up with the "correct" map for redrawing the boundaries of Bears Ears.

"That is time-consuming," Bishop said, "and that's what I was freaking out [about], thinking that if he did something different than what he did, I would have to come up with a map."

In the meantime, however, the chairman can focus on shepherding Bears Ears-related legislation through Congress — his ultimate goal. Zinke has said he wants Congress to weigh in on the Bears Ears site: The interim report asked lawmakers to establish co-management of the site with tribal nations, as well as to protect some portions of the monument as national recreation or conservation areas.

Bishop yesterday was eager to pursue such legislation. "The [legislative] language is ready," he said.

But he wants to talk to the rest of the Utah congressional delegation "to make sure we're all there, especially the senators." Then he joked, "So, I'll have to find them when they are awake."

Bishop said the "management aspect" of Bears Ears is "really important" to him.

"Writing down what the practices will be, and getting them into statute and not leaving it up to secretarial discretion in the future," he said, "so the next administration won't just come back with a 2-million-acre monument."

<http://bit.ly/2sBdEA6>

4. EPA announces 2-year stay for emissions rule

Mike Soraghan, E&E News reporter

Published: Wednesday, June 14, 2017

The Trump administration wants a two-year stay of key requirements of U.S. EPA's regulations to limit methane emissions from new and substantially modified sources in the oil and natural gas sector.

EPA officials announced last night that they are proposing a two-year stay of the methane rules, on top of an existing 90-day stay. In a news release, the agency said officials want to ensure the rules don't go into effect while the administration reconsiders the rules that were drafted during the Obama administration.

The move is likely to be challenged in court by environmental groups, who are already suing over the 90-day stay.

It was known that the administration would be seeking a longer, interim stay, but at least one environmentalist was surprised by the length requested. Natural Resources Defense Council attorney David Doniger said the administration is trying to put off the rule without going through the work involved in the administrative process.

"What they're proposing is to change it before they change it," Doniger said. "This is basically giving them a free pass for two years."

The stays apply to the fugitive emissions, pneumatic pumps and professional engineer certification requirements in the rule, which was issued a year ago.

EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt initiated the 90-day stay in agreeing to requests from energy industry trade groups to administratively reconsider the rule (*Greenwire*, April 19). Pruitt signed the notice submitting the two-year stay to the *Federal Register* on Monday.

Methane is a potent greenhouse gas. The 2016 standards were a key part of former President Obama's goal of reducing emissions from the oil and gas industry between 40 and 45 percent by 2025 compared with 2012 levels.

But U.S. oil and gas companies say they have substantially reduced methane emissions in recent years, both on their own and because of the "green completions" rule. That rule targets volatile organic compounds, but in some instances, it also reduces methane emissions. They also object to specific provisions in the EPA rule, such as the inclusion of low-production wells.

EPA also proposed a separate three-month stay to cover any time gap between the end of the 90-day stay and the beginning of the two-year stay.

Both new stays are subject to a 30-day comment period after it is published in the *Federal Register*.

<http://bit.ly/2s0eULO>

5. New technique may boost older wells' output

Published: Wednesday, June 14, 2017

A new hydraulic fracturing technique may yield more oil from older wells in North Dakota's Bakken Shale.

The technique, known as refracturing, involves injecting smaller segments of wells with larger volumes of fluid and sand.

Industry leaders say it has the potential to recover more oil without increasing the footprint on the land.

Several oil companies are now refracturing older wells and getting promising results, said Justin Kringstad, director of the North Dakota Pipeline Authority.

"On average, they're getting better performance from the wells," Kringstad said (Amy Dalrymple, *Forum of Fargo-Moorhead*, June 12). — MJ

<http://bit.ly/2spleMn>

6. Hill reeling after shootings; Scalise stable

Geof Koss, E&E News reporter Published: Wednesday, June 14, 2017

A gunman opened fire on Republican members of Congress at baseball practice in suburban Virginia this morning, wounding House Majority Whip Steve Scalise (R-La.), one staffer and at least two Capitol Hill police officers.

In a statement, Scalise's office said the congressman, wounded in the hip, was undergoing surgery and was in stable condition. "Prior to entering surgery, the Whip was in good spirits and spoke to his wife by phone. He is grateful for the brave actions of U.S. Capitol Police, first responders and colleagues," said the statement.

Also shot was Zach Barth, a legislative correspondent in the office of Rep. Roger Williams (R-Texas). "He is receiving medical attention but is doing well and is expected to make a full recovery," Williams said on Twitter this morning.

The shooting injured two members of Scalise's security detail. Capitol Police Chief Matthew Verderosa told reporters their injuries do not appear to be life-threatening, and the officers are in "good condition." One of them used to work for the Fish and Wildlife Service.

The Washington Post reported that Tyson Foods Inc. Director of Government Relations Matt Mika was also injured in the shooting.

Authorities declined to name the suspect, but multiple news outlets identified him as James T. Hodgkinson, 66, of Belleville, Ill., citing unnamed law enforcement officials.

President Trump, in a brief statement from the White House Diplomatic Reception Room, said the suspect had died from his injuries.

The *Post* said Hodgkinson owned a home inspection business and had a minor criminal record. The newspaper said his business license expired last November and was not renewed.

Snapshots of Hodgkinson's Facebook page sporting a photo of Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.) quickly went viral. Also on the page was a request for signatures against approval by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission of the Nexus natural gas pipeline, a contentious project cutting through the Midwest. In other posts, Hodgkinson declared Trump a "traitor."

A man identified as Charles Orear told the newspaper he had campaigned for Sanders with Hodgkinson in Iowa last year, describing him as "very mellow, very reserved."

Sanders took to the Senate floor this morning to acknowledge that the shooter was a volunteer for his campaign. "I am sickened by this despicable act," he said. "Let me be as clear as I can be. Violence of any kind is unacceptable in our society, and I condemn this action in the strongest possible terms."

Despite the anti-Trump rhetoric on Hodgkinson's Facebook page, House Freedom Caucus Chairman Mark Meadows (R-N.C.) told reporters he didn't necessarily view it as a political issue but as more of a "mental health" problem.

"It shows that each and every day, there are people out there that make decisions, whether they be premeditated or not, that sometimes have a mental health component," he said.

Democratic Caucus Chairman Joseph Crowley (D-N.Y.) also said he didn't view the incident through a political lens, saying the attack was "on all of us, regardless of where it happened, or the motivation."

'And then boom'

Members described a harrowing scene this morning at the Alexandria, Va., field where an estimated 22 Republicans were practicing for tomorrow's annual Congressional Baseball Game, a long-standing tradition that pits Democrats and Republicans against one another for charity.

Rep. Jeff Duncan (R-S.C.) told media outlets he may have spoken to the shooter, who asked whether the players were Democrats or Republican. Duncan said it was a GOP practice.

At around 7 a.m., Sen. Jeff Flake (R-Ariz.) said there was "a very loud shot ... that sounded like a gun."

"And then boom," Flake recounted on CNN. "Rapid succession after that. He had a rifle of some kind. And it was obviously a large-gauge rifle."

Members and staff sought shelter behind trees and in the first-base dugout as police exchanged gunfire with the shooter for at least 10 minutes. Flake estimated that at least 50 shots were fired.

"He had a lot of ammo," the senator said. "He must have been secured in the third-base dugout for a while."

One staffer who was shot in the outfield managed to run to the dugout. Members quickly hustled the 10-year-old son of Rep. Joe Barton (R-Texas) into the dugout, as well, Flake said.

Flake said he believed a wounded member of Scalise's security detail "brought the shooter down." "He ran around for quite a while with a leg wound, returning fire," Flake said on CNN.

Scalise, meanwhile, crawled from second base to the outfield, leaving a trail of blood. Once the shooting stopped, Flake was the first to reach him.

"He was coherent the whole time, but, boy, he laid out there for at least 10 minutes, alone in the field. We couldn't get to him," said Flake.

Members applied a tourniquet to Scalise using a belt, and Flake said he used Scalise's phone to call his wife in Louisiana. "I just didn't want her to wake up and hear the news and not know what was going on," he said.

Rep. Mo Brooks (R-Ala.) said on CNN that Scalise "seemed to be conscious the whole time. He was in pain" and wanted liquids, Brooks said on CNN.

Barton later broke down in tears as he told reporters that Scalise's security and Capitol Police "saved our lives."

The president echoed the sentiment. "Many lives would have been lost if not for the heroic actions of the two Capitol Police officers who took down the gunman despite sustaining gunshot wounds during a very, very brutal assault," he said during his remarks.

Speaker Paul Ryan (R-Wis.) led a moment of silence on the House floor shortly after noon and called for unity in a speech that drew a bipartisan standing ovation.

"We are one House, the people's House, united in our humanity; it's that humanity that will win the day and always will," said Ryan, who called for lawmakers to slow down and stand united.

He said he was moved by images of House Democrats practicing at a separate field this morning praying after they received word of the attack.

Ryan also praised Capitol Police, saying their actions likely saved many lives today. He said he had already spoken with the two injured officers to express his gratitude.

Ryan drew laughter when he noted Scalise would be "really frustrated" that he can't play in tomorrow night's Congressional Baseball Game, which will go on as scheduled at Nationals Park.

Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) echoed Ryan's remarks and urged House lawmakers to use the occasion to come together.

The House canceled votes for the day. And lawmakers and groups moved to cancel or postpone hearings and events, including a House Natural Resources Committee meeting on sportsmen's legislation.

Also postponed were a House Appropriations hearing on Treasury international programs and an Energy and Commerce hearing on energy security. Lawmakers moved a House Financial Services Committee markup on flood insurance to the afternoon.

Reporters Hannah Northey, Kellie Lunney, George Cahlink and Manuel Quiñones contributed.

<http://bit.ly/2rwzKPq>

7. Scalise: Energy industry ally who backs wetlands protections

Arianna Skibell, E&E News reporter

Published: Wednesday, June 14, 2017

The congressman who was shot today at a House Republican baseball practice in Virginia is a longtime advocate of opening up federally protected lands for oil and gas exploration and a fierce defender of Louisiana's coastal wetlands.

House Majority Whip Steve Scalise (R-La.) was shot this morning, along with a congressional staffer and two members of the Capitol Police, when a gunman open fired at the Eugene Simpson Stadium Park in the Del Ray neighborhood of Alexandria, Va., where GOP members were practicing for tomorrow's scheduled congressional baseball game against the Democrats. Scalise is out of surgery and in stable condition, according to Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy (R-Calif.) (*see related story*).

Scalise, 51, was voted into the House in a 2008 special election. He became the head of the influential Republican Study Committee in 2011 and was elected party whip in 2014. He is the only Southerner in the top echelons of House GOP leadership — a significant fact in a caucus that is dominated by Southerners.

An early supporter of President Trump, Scalise endorsed the president's executive order to ban entry to the United States to citizens of seven majority-Muslim countries. He continues to support many of Trump's policy positions, including his "America First" energy strategy.

A member of the Energy and Commerce Committee who serves on the Subcommittee on Communications and Technology, Scalise has advocated to lift the moratoriums on oil and gas leasing in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, on the outer continental shelf and on the oil shale lands in Colorado, Wyoming and Utah in order to reduce the United States' dependence on foreign oil.

Scalise praised Trump's January decision to advance construction of the Keystone XL and Dakota Access pipelines, calling it a "great win for American workers and American energy security."

"After eight years of an Obama White House that undermined American energy at every turn, our nation finally has a president who is focused on strengthening our energy security, growing our economy and creating American jobs," he said in a statement.

In 2009, Scalise voted against a bill to set enforceable limits on global warming pollution. The year before, he voted against tax credits for renewable electricity. And in 2010, he signed the No Climate Tax Pledge, promising to vote against climate change legislation that increases government revenue.

Scalise spent the bulk of 2010 responding to the Deepwater Horizon explosion in the Gulf of Mexico, which left 11 workers dead and spilled hundreds of thousands of gallons of crude oil.

While he lauded a federal court ruling in 2014 that found BP PLC mostly responsible for the incident, Scalise also accused President Obama of attempting to "exploit" the disaster to promote policies to curtail carbon emissions.

Scalise sponsored a bill to give the bulk of the Clean Water Act fines related to the spill to the Gulf Coast states. Under his 2012 "Gulf Coast Restoration Act," H.R. 56, 80 percent of the BP fines would have been designated for coastal and ecosystem restoration.

He has also advocated for hurricane and flood protection. His "Disaster Recovery Improvement Act," from the same Congress, would have expedited FEMA's disaster response time. It would also have required FEMA to issue and implement regulations to expedite public assistance payments. The bill did not receive a vote.

Last week, Scalise urged his constituents to prepare for hurricane season and pledged to double down on coastline restoration.

"Louisiana has lost nearly 2,000 square miles of land since the 1930s, and today we continue to lose a football field of land every hour on average," he wrote in an *op-ed* in the New Orleans *Times Picayune*.

"Our commitment to protect this valuable resource must be strong. This is a critical issue, and one that is very important to me," Scalise wrote.

A longtime proponent of offshore revenue sharing for Louisiana from oil and gas development in the Gulf, Scalise said that the money his state will begin to receive this year will go directly to coastal restoration projects.

Legislation that passed Congress in 2006 enabled Louisiana to begin receiving a portion of the revenue generated by offshore activity starting in 2017. The funds will be shared by Louisiana, Texas, Mississippi and Alabama.

"Over the past few years there have been attempts to take this revenue away from Louisiana and other energy-producing states," he wrote. "But make no mistake: like in previous years, I will not allow this critical coastal restoration money to be raided."

In 2014, Scalise introduced a bill that would have limited U.S. EPA's ability to finalize regulations. The House passed the bill despite a veto threat from Obama.

Scalise is the middle of three children and grew up in a suburb of New Orleans. His mother was a homemaker and volunteer, and his father sold real estate.

A lifelong Republican, Scalise credits his interest in politics to President Reagan. He was elected to the Louisiana state House in 1995, where he served for 12 years before moving to the state Senate in 2007.

In May 2008, Scalise beat Democrat Gilda Reed for the suburban New Orleans House seat left open by Bobby Jindal (R), who had been elected governor. He has easily been re-elected since then.

Before Jindal, the 1st District seat had been held by David Vitter (R), who went on to serve two terms in the Senate, and Bob Livingston (R), the powerful chairman of the Appropriations Committee, who is now a prominent Washington lobbyist.

Scalise is married to Jennifer Ann Scalise; the couple have two children.

<http://bit.ly/2ri3rEG>

8. Pebble mine opponents upset after Native corp. joins project

Published: Wednesday, June 14, 2017

The developer behind the controversial Pebble mine project near Bristol Bay in Alaska has joined forces with a coalition of Alaskan tribal interests from the oil-rich North Slope region.

The proposed Pebble mine would be located in southwest Alaska, hundreds of miles south of North Slope.

The Pebble Partnership said the move would give tribal interests more contracting opportunities for land holdings near the proposed gold and copper mine.

Bristol Bay tribal organizations condemned the agreement.

Local mine opponents say the company is trying to divide local opinion and that the Arctic Slope Regional Corp., the North Slope company run by native groups, should stay out of the dispute.

"No one from Bristol Bay has ever told the people of the North Slope how to develop their resources," said Alannah Hurley, executive director for Pebble opponent United Tribes of Bristol Bay. "It's tragic ASRC cannot extend us the same courtesy and respect."

Opponents fear the mine will pollute the rivers that feed Bristol Bay and ruin the salmon fisheries that support and feed the local communities.

Pebble settled with U.S. EPA in May, ending an agency suit blocking the project. Pebble is applying for state and federal permits for development (Alex DeMarban, *Alaska Dispatch News*, June 13). — **NB**

<http://bit.ly/2t2PpYR>