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From: Rees, Gareth
Sent: 2017-02-09T11:25:10-05:00
Importance: Normal
Subject: Weekly report to the Secretary - February 9, 2017
Received: 2017-02-09T11:25:19-05:00
[DOI Weekly Report to the Secretary 02-10-17.docx](#)

Good Morning All,
Please find attached the weekly report to the Secretary. I have attached both the word and Google Doc versions of the reports. If there are any issues, please let me know.

Thanks

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DOI Weekly Report to the Secretary 02-10-17 (V2)

WEEKLY REPORT TO THE SECRETARY DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

February 20, 2017

Office of the Solicitor

Week Ahead Announcements and Actions

SIGNIFICANT LITIGATION DEADLINES FOR NEXT TWO WEEKS SEPARATELY REPORTED

NEW CASES:

***Sauk Prairie Conservation Alliance v. US DOI et al.*, (W. D. Wisc. 17-cv-35) - Challenging NPS Federal Lands to Parks (FLP) Program's Approval of a change of use of Wisconsin Recreation Area**

Plaintiffs challenge the National Park Service's (NPS) "approval" of a recent change of use of lands previously conveyed by NPS to the State of Wisconsin. Pursuant to the Federal Property and Administrative Services Act of 1949, FLP worked with the General Services Administration (GSA) to grant the former Badger Army Ammunition Plant to Wisconsin based on an application that contemplated only low-impact recreation. However, the State then prepared an internal plan and EIS that contemplated more high-impact uses such as rocketry, off-road vehicle (ORV) use, and dog training involving firing guns. FLP appeared to have approved the plan. Sauk Prairie Conservation Alliance, a local non-profit, sued NPS and GSA, alleging that the NPS's approval was not consistent with the Federal Property and Administrative Services Act and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The State of Wisconsin has expressed interest in intervening in the case as a defendant.

***In re Vertellus Specialties, Inc., et al.* (D. Del) - Natural Resource Damages Claims in Bankruptcy Proceeding**

On February 24, the United States will participate in a confirmation hearing to seek entry of an agreement establishing an environmental response trust. In November 2016, Department of the Interior (DOI) filed proofs of claims in the above-captioned bankruptcy matter for natural resource damages (NRD) and unreimbursed NRD assessment costs for the Quendall Terminals Superfund Site in Renton, Washington and for unreimbursed NRD assessment costs for the Lower Passaic Study Area of the Diamond Alkali Superfund Site in Newark, New Jersey. Debtor and its successors manufactured chemicals and creosote at a number of sites across the United States. These operations released hazardous substances into the surrounding environment and as a result, Debtor is a liable for response costs and damages for injury to natural resources. Debtor, the United States and state environmental response agencies entered into a settlement agreement that requires Debtor to transfer assets to create an environmental response trust benefiting the United States and state agencies. Per the terms of the proposed environmental response trust agreement, Debtor will provide funds and assign insurance policies to the environmental response trust. A trustee will oversee environmental response trust activities

including pursuing insurance recoveries from those policies assigned to the trust. Subject to priority claims, natural resource trustees will receive an allocated share of any insurance recoveries. Recoveries shall be used to reimburse NRD assessment costs and to restore injured natural resources.

Ctr. for Biological Diversity v. USEPA (9th Cir) - EPA Pesticide Section 7 Litigation

Note: Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) is not a party to this case, but it could have implications to FWS based on remand. On February 2, 2017, the Court generally affirmed the district court's decision to dismiss Plaintiff's claims of the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) failure to consult under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) with FWS (and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)) on EPA's reregistration of certain pesticide active ingredients and pesticide products. Although the Ninth Circuit agreed with many of the district court's rulings on statute of limitations, lack of subject-matter jurisdiction, and lack of control and discretionary action, the Ninth Circuit concluded that the district court erred in its application of the collateral-attack doctrine and in requiring plaintiffs to amend the operative Complaint. Therefore, the Ninth Circuit reversed in part and remanded for further proceedings. Under settlement on separate pesticide consultation cases, EPA is already consulting with FWS on other pesticides. If the courts find a requirement to consult on the collateral-attack-related pesticides, this would affect both agencies' workload.

Cayuga Nation v. BIA Eastern Regional Director, IBIA Docket Number 17-025

One of two competing tribal groups appealed from a December 15, 2016 decision issued by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Eastern Regional Director (RD) (through a delegation from the Principal Deputy AS-IA) recognizing one tribal group over another based on a plebiscite. In the same appeal, appellants also challenged a separate decision by the RD returning their PL 93-638 contract proposal as unauthorized. Appellants argued that (1) a written delegation from the Principal Deputy AS-IA to the RD to issue a final agency decision was invalid; and (2) the decision was incorrect on the merits because it recognized a rival group based on a plebiscite instead of traditional law. Variations on the same two factions have been disputing the government of the Cayuga Nation since at least 2006. On January 23, the Interior Board of Indian Appeals (IBIA) accepted jurisdiction to determine its own jurisdiction and ordered the BIA to file a brief by Feb. 14 addressing the legal basis of the RD's delegated authority to make the December 15, 2016 decision a "final agency action." On January 31, the Acting AS-IA issued a memo withdrawing the purported delegation of authority from the Principal Deputy AS-IA. Also on January 31, the Acting AS-IA issued notice of assumption of jurisdiction under 25 CFR 2.20(c) and 43 CFR 4.332(b), noting a briefing schedule would follow. A decision by AS-IA must be signed within 60 days after the time for pleadings (and granted extensions) has expired. On February 2, IBIA issued an Order vacating its Order for briefing on the delegation issue but requiring that the RD file a statement by Feb. 14 on whether the appeal falls under 25 C.F.R. Part 2 or Part 900.

SIGNIFICANT DECISIONS:

Nothing to report.

OTHER LITIGATION MATTERS:***National Mining Ass'n v. U.S. DOI (D.D.C.) – Stream Protection Rule***

On January 31, 2017, National Mining Association (NMA) filed a complaint against DOI challenging the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement's (OSMRE's) promulgation of the Stream Protection Rule. They claim that it violates the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act (SMCRA), the Clean Water Act, and the Administrative Procedure Act (APA). They also claim that FWS's 2016 Biological Opinion and Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with OSMRE violate SMCRA, the APA, and the ESA.

DNC Parks & Resorts at Yosemite, Inc. (DNCY) v. The United States of America (Fed. Cl.)

February 17, 2017: Suit for money damages against the NPS arising out of alleged breach of a concession contract for visitor services at Yosemite and alleged breach of implied contract to conduct a fair competition for a new concession contract at the park. On January 13, 2017, the Plaintiff filed its Motion for Partial Summary Judgment on Defendant's Affirmative Defense of Prior Material Breach. The defense alleges that DNCY breached its duty of good faith and fair dealing by demanding payment for (i) certain so-called "fixed capitalized assets" for which it is not entitled to compensation; and (ii) a grossly exaggerated value of \$51 million for its intellectual property and certain intangibles. DNCY also filed a Motion for Partial Stay of Discovery Pending Disposition of Motion for Partial Summary Judgment. Defendant filed its opposition to the latter on January 30, 2017. The due date for its opposition to the Motion for Summary Judgment is February 13, 2017.

NRDC v. NPS (M.D. Fla.) - Big Cypress Seismic-survey Litigation

In addition to challenging the site-specific ESA Section 7 consultation between the FWS and the NPS regarding the authorization of seismic surveys in Big Cypress National Preserve, Plaintiffs also challenge NPS's and USFWS's failure to reinstate consultation on three NPS land-management plans after the Florida bonneted bat was listed in 2015. This issue was recently addressed by the Ninth Circuit, which held the U.S. Forest Service retains "discretionary Federal involvement or control" over existing land and resource management plans (forest plans) when determining whether reinitiation of consultation under Section 7 is triggered under the implementing regulations. *Cottonwood Envtl. Law Ctr. v. United States Forest Service*, 789 F.3d 1075 (9th Cir. 2015), cert. denied. (b) (5) DPP AWP ACP

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[REDACTED]

Western Energy Alliance v. DOI - Greater Sage-Grouse plan litigation -Rocky Mountain and Great Basin Plan Amendments/Revisions and RODs

Plaintiffs challenge the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM's) plan amendments and revisions in Nevada, Utah, Northwest Colorado, North Dakota, and Montana. On December 19, 2016, the U.S. District Court for the District of North Dakota granted the Federal Defendants' motion to

sever and transfer those parts of the case unrelated to North Dakota to other district courts.

(b) (5) DPP AWP ACP

Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance & Grand Canyon Trust, IBLA 2017-75

Appellants appeal and seek to stay a decision by the BLM Monticello Field Office to build an all-terrain vehicle (ATV) trail and three parking areas in Indian Creek, which is located within Bears Ears National Monument. Appellants assert in their stay petition that, because BLM's decision was ineffective during the 30-day appeal period, and the President issued the proclamation creating the monument before the appeal period expired, the proclamation's restriction on designating new trails prohibited BLM from authorizing the ATV trail. BLM's response to the stay petition is due February 10.

Navajo Nation v. Western Regional Director, IBIA No. 16-104

The Navajo Nation appealed the BIA's 2013 "fee-to-trust" acquisition of the Twin Arrows property for the Hopi Tribe, arguing that (1) the Nation did not receive sufficient notice as an "interested party" during the acquisition process, and (2) BIA failed to comply with regulatory requirements for the acquisition. The Nation also objected to BIA's administrative record and filed a motion to compel additional documents and to suspend the briefing schedule. During the week of January 30, 2017, IBIA suspended the briefing schedule, and the BIA responded to motion to compel.

Usibelli Ten Day Notices— Informal Review Response Due

2/14/2017: On January 30, 2017, Alaska requested that OSMRE conduct an informal review of the decision by OSMRE's Denver Field Office's that determined that Alaska's response to two Ten Day Notices (TDN) related to Usibelli Coal Mine's Wishbone Hill Mine was arbitrary and capricious and ordering a federal inspection. Pursuant to OSMRE's regulations, OSMRE has until February 14 to affirm, reverse, or modify the Field Office's decision (although OSMRE rarely meets this deadline).

Stream Protection Rule

On Wednesday, February 1, the House passed a H.J. Res. 38 to repeal OSMRE's Stream Protection Rule pursuant to the Congressional Review Act. The Senate followed suit on February 2.

EPA's CERCLA 108(b) Rule

Comments are due to Office of Management and Budget (OMB) on February 10 on the information collection provisions of EPA's proposed rule implementing the "financial responsibility" requirements in Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) Section 108(b). The required briefing paper for OES is currently being surnamed through the document tracking system, which requires a 5-day review period before submitting Departmental comments. BLM and SOL collaborated on comments, and BLM is

surnaming separately.

Implementation of New Contracting Authority under Centennial Legislation

National Parks Branch attorneys is attending a 2-day meeting hosted by the NPS Commercial Services Program to explore new business models and possible regulations for providing and administering commercial visitor services and facilities in national parks, pursuant to very broad authority (known as the Visitor Experience Improvements Authority or VEIA) in the recently-enacted National Park Service Centennial Act. This authority is in addition to concession contract authority in the Concessions Management Improvement Act of 1998. The statute provides for VEIA to expire in seven years.

Deepwater Horizon Restoration (Alabama): Recreational Use Restoration Plan and Environmental Impact Statement (RP/EIS)

The Alabama Trustee Implementation Group (AL TIG) (DOI, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), EPA, U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the State of Alabama) for the Deepwater Horizon oil spill released a Draft RP/EIS on December 16, 2016 for public comment. The public comment period concluded on January 30, 2017, and the AL TIG is in the process of considering public comments and preparing a Final RP/EIS. The AL TIG is proposing in the Draft and Final RP/EIS to contribute \$56.3 million in natural resource damages to the construction of the Gulf State Park Lodge and Public Amenities Project located in Gulf State Park, Alabama. The Alabama TIG's previously selected to contribute \$58.5 million to construction of the Gulf State Park Lodge and Conference Center project, which was enjoined by the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Alabama on February 16, 2016 pending the completion of a proper alternatives analysis under the Oil Pollution Act (OPA) and NEPA (*Gulf Restoration Network v. Jewell*, No. 1:15-cv- 0191-CB- C, 2016 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 18231 (S.D. Ala. Feb. 16, 2016)). (b) (5) DPP AWP ACP

WS Director's Rejection of Four Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA)-Proposed Multi-State Grant Proposals

Under a provision of the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration (WSFR) Improvement Act of 2000, at 16 USC 669h-2 (for Wildlife Restoration) and 16 U.S.C. 777m (for Sport Fish Restoration), the FWS Director may fund projects that benefit two or more States (totaling up to \$3 million annually under each program), from a list of proposals submitted by the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA). Previously, the FWS Director has routinely accepted and funded all of the proposed projects on the AFWA list. Based on the opinion of the Solicitor's office, that the FWS Director has complete discretion on whether to fund or not fund projects on the AFWA list. Then-Director Dan Ashe, in a January 19, 2017 letter to AFWA, declined to fund four projects on the AFWA list, which totaled \$445,682 in funding, because he believed that the four project proposals involved lobbying, did not support "conservation" efforts, and would contribute too much to funding the administrative costs of the AFWA organization. (b) (5) DPP

(b) (5) DPP AWP ACP

UPCOMING LITIGATION APPROVAL/SURNAME PACKAGES:***Sierra Club, et al. v. Jewell, et al. (D.D.C.) – Settlement of Attorney’s Fees Claim in NHPA Case***

February 2017: This lawsuit challenged the Secretary’s 2009 decision to remove Blair Mountain Battlefield from the National Register of Historic Places due to a perceived error in NPS determination to list the site. After the district court granted summary judgment in our favor on standing grounds, the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals reversed, and Plaintiffs prevailed on summary judgment on the merits. Plaintiffs (environmental and preservation groups) claim entitlement to \$594,000 in attorney’s fees and costs under the National Historic Preservation Act, 54 U.S.C. § 307105, but have agreed to settle this claim for \$350,000, which will be satisfied from the Judgment Fund. NPS does not object to the proposed settlement. There is no specific deadline, but DOJ requests our position prior to their approval of the settlement

UPCOMING ESA LISTING ACTIONS FROM FEBRUARY 6 – APRIL 14, 2017

The dates in the “Deadline” column are FWS’s internal targets for delivery to the Federal Register. If there are statutory deadlines (“Stat.”), or deadlines required by court orders or court-approved settlement agreements (“CO”), they are indicated in parentheses after the species name.

<u>Deadline</u>	<u>Species</u>	<u>Action</u>
Feb. 17	5 Species	Batch of 90-Day Petition Findings
Feb. 22	Western Glacier and Meltwater Lednian Stoneflies (10/4 FL, Stat.)	Proposed Critical Habitat; Comment Reopening for Proposed Listing
Feb. 28	2 Australian Parakeets (Scarlet- Chested, Turquoise) (asap, Stat.)	Final Delisting Determination
Feb. 28	Bone Cave Harvestman (3/30, CO)	90-Day Finding on Petition to Delist
Feb. 28	Suwannee Moccasinshell	Proposed Critical Habitat
Mar. 3	Deseret Milk-Vetch (Utah)	Proposed Delisting
Mar. 3	Manatee (1/8, Stat.)	Final Downlisting Determination
Mar. 10	Slickspot Peppergrass	Revised Proposed Critical Habitat
Mar. 15	Hualapai Mexican Vole (asap, Stat.)	Final Delisting Determination
Mar. 15	Eastern Cougar (asap, Stat.)	Final Delisting Det. Due to Extinction
Mar. 23	Headwaters and Roundtail Chubs (4/17, Stat.)	Final Listing Determination
Mar. 30	Woodland Caribou (Selkirk pop.) (asap, Stat.)	Final Amendment to Listing
Mar. 31	Florida Bristle Fern	Proposed Critical Habitat
Mar. 31	Black Pine Snake (asap, Stat.)	Final Critical Habitat Determination
Mar. 31	Spring Pygmy Sunfish (FCH asap, Stat.)	Reopening Comment on Proposed CH
Mar. 31	Island Marble Butterfly	Proposed Listing

Mar. 31	Southwestern Willow Flycatcher	12-Month Finding
Mar. 31	4 Florida Keys Plants (Blodgett's Silverbush, Wedge Spurge, Big Pine Partridge Pea, Sand Flax)	Proposed Critical Habitat
Mar. 31	Texas Hornshell	Proposed Critical Habitat
Mar. 31	Yellow Lance and Atlantic Pigtoe (3/31, CO)	12-Month Finding
Apr. 1	Beaverpond Marstonia (4/1, CO)	12-Month Finding
Apr. 14	Sonoyta Mud Turtle	Proposed Critical Habitat
TBD	3 Big Island Plants	Final Critical Habitat Determination; and CH corrections for 4 species
TBD	7 Species	Tech. Corrections, Where Listed
TBD	40 Species	Tech. Corrections, Scientific Names

Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks

Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel

No meetings, hearings, or travel scheduled for Maureen Foster or Virginia Johnson.

Week Ahead Announcements and Actions

On February 11-12, the NPS anticipates upwards of 20,000 “Trump Must Go – Now” protesters at Ocean Beach in Golden Gate National Recreation Area. This is a First Amendment permit event.

On February 12 -15, The Corps Network, a coalition of over 130 Service and Conservation Corps youth employment organizations across the country, will be hosting their 2017 national conference in Washington, DC. Invitations have been extended to leadership of the Department of the Interior. Panel discussions will explore the importance of public-private partnerships, public lands stewardship, and engaging the next generation of outdoor enthusiasts. The NPS provides over 10,000 employment opportunities to young people under the age of 35 annually, many of which are employed through Service and Conservation Corps organizations.

On February 12 -16, the Friends Alliance (approximately 100 attendees) and the Public Lands Alliance (approximately 200 attendees) will be holding a joint-conference in Washington, D.C. The Friends Alliance is comprised of the 200+ nonprofit philanthropic organizations that support parks locally across the country. The Public Lands Alliance membership includes educational, cooperating and interpretive associations and partners. NPS staff will be participating in both conferences and Acting Director Reynolds will address the Friends Alliance on February 14.

U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel

Acting Director Jim Kurth has no travel planned through February 17.

Week Ahead Announcements and Actions

Elk in Wyoming and emergency feed operations: Due to the severe winter weather and high snowpack, large numbers of elk have moved into the area around Cokeville Meadows NWR in southwest Wyoming. The elk are causing a high incidence of vehicle accidents along Highways 30 and 89. Wyoming Game and Fish Department (WYGFD) is also concerned that elk calf mortality may be severe due to the snow depths. In response to these concerns, WYGFD has requested and received permission to conduct emergency feeding operations on the refuge’s Antelope Tract. This is the first time in several decades that WYGFD has considered feeding operations in this area, and there are no plans for the feeding on the refuge in the future. R6 (Mountain-Prairie Region)

Monarch Butterfly: Monarch overwintering numbers in Mexico: In mid-February, FWS will

coordinate with Mexico and Canada to report newly collected overwintering numbers for the eastern population of the monarch butterfly. The Trinational Monarch Communications Working Group is developing an outreach plan. HQ

Final conservation strategy on the monarch butterfly: In early March, FWS will release the conservation strategy on the monarch butterfly. The conservation strategy is separate from the ongoing species status assessment for the monarch, which will inform FWS' determination on whether to propose the monarch for listing under the ESA. The strategy includes target acreages for habitat needed to reverse the downward trend in monarch numbers for eastern and western populations. The strategy's preliminary estimate for suitable new or restored habitat needed to reverse the decline of monarchs is 29 million acres in the eastern population. It also defines monarch habitat, which includes overwintering habitat in Mexico and California. Outreach planned. R3 (Midwest Region)

WSFR funding to states: In mid-February, FWS will distribute \$1.1 billion in revenues generated by the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration and Dingell-Johnson Sport Fish Restoration acts to states, territories and District of Columbia. The funding, which supports critical state wildlife conservation and recreation projects throughout the nation, is generated by excise taxes on firearms, ammunition, fishing equipment and motorboat fuels paid by the hunting, shooting, boating and angling industries. Outreach is planned. HQ

Marine Mammal Protection Act Actions:

U.S.-Russia Polar Bear Commission determination on annual taking limit for the Alaska-Chukotka polar bear population: FWS will publish a notice of the commission's determination to maintain the harvest limit adopted in 2010. The commission notified the Secretary of its determination on December 19, 2016; as required by the Marine Mammal Protection Act, the notice must publish no later than February 16. Target submission date to the *Federal Register* is February 16. Outreach planned. R7 (Alaska Region)

Marine Mammal population assessment reports for polar bears In February, FWS will send to the *Federal Register* draft population assessment reports for the Southern Beaufort Sea and Chukchi-Bering seas populations of polar bear in Alaska, and open a 90-day public comment period. Target to the *Federal Register* is February 21. Outreach is planned. R7 (Alaska Region)

Endangered Species Act Recovery Actions:

Santa Ana sucker draft recovery plan: In February, FWS will publish, once cleared, a notice of availability of a draft recovery plan for the Santa Ana sucker. This recovery plan will help restore healthy populations of the sucker within its range. The plan was developed in collaboration with state, local and federal partners that includes local landowners, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and local water districts. Ensuring conservation of the Santa Ana sucker will not only protect a native California fish, but benefit people and countless other wildlife species by ensuring clean, healthy watersheds in southern California. Target for delivery to the Federal Register is February 17. Outreach planned. R8 (Pacific Southwest Region)

Giant garter snake draft recovery plan: In February, FWS will publish a Notice of Availability

for the second revised draft recovery plan for the giant garter snake. Target to the *Federal Register* is February 17. Outreach planned. HQ

Red wolf notice: In February, FWS will publish a notice of intent that the bureau will prepare an Environmental Impact Statement in conjunction with a proposed rule to revise the existing nonessential experimental population designation of red wolves in North Carolina. This notice announces FWS' intention to revise the designation under section 10(j) of the ESA and the initiation of a public scoping process to identify issues and concerns, potential impacts, and possible alternatives to the proposed action. Controversial. Outreach planned upon Reading Room publication. R4 (Southeast Region)

North Cascades Grizzly Bear Recovery: In February, the National Park Service and FWS will hold eight open houses across the state of Washington on the proposed alternatives for the restoration of grizzly bears to the North Cascades Ecosystem. The alternatives are described in the draft Grizzly Bear Restoration Plan and Environmental Impact Statement, released in January 2017. R1 (Pacific Northwest Region)

Endangered Species Act Listing Actions:

Two Australian Parrots delisting: In February, FWS will publish a final rule to delist two Australian parrot species (scarlet-chested parakeet and the turquoise parrot) due to recovery. Both parrots are native to Australia. Target to the *Federal Register* is February 17. Outreach is planned. HQ

90-day Batched Petition Finding: FWS will publish 90-day petition findings for five species: Florida black bear, desert tortoise (Mojave population), sturgeon chub, sicklefin chub, and tricolored bat. Target to the *Federal Register* is February 17. Outreach planned upon Reading Room publication. HQ

Endangered Species Act Critical Habitat Actions:

Western Glacier Stonefly and Meltwater Lednian Stonefly proposed critical habitat: Once cleared, FWS will send to the *Federal Register* a proposal to designate critical habitat for approximately 36 stream miles of occupied habitat and 3,100 acres of unoccupied habitat in Montana for the meltwater lednian stonefly and approximately 1.5 stream miles of occupied habitat and 204 acres of unoccupied habitat for the western glacier stonefly. FWS will also reopen the public comment period for the proposed listing of western glacier stonefly and meltwater lednian stonefly as threatened species. Target to the *Federal Register* is February 10. Outreach planned upon Reading Room publication. R6 (Mountain-Prairie Region)

National Wildlife Refuge Management Actions:

Valle de Oro EA: In February, FWS anticipates making a draft Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Valle de Oro NWR in Albuquerque, NM, available for public comment. Currently FWS is consulting with vested partners to develop the draft EA. As the urban refuge is in close proximity to the Kirtland Air Force Base (KAFB) flight path, KAFB has concerns about potential bird strikes on aircraft. Of primary concern are proposed habitat restoration plans for

seasonal wetlands. KAFB believes restored habitat may attract more large-bodied birds (geese, cranes and ducks) and increase collision risks. FWS intends to continue coordinating with the Federal Aviation Administration and KAFB throughout this process to minimize these concerns. Of interest to Senator Heinrich (D-NM) and Representative Michelle Lujan-Grisham (D-NM-1) and potentially to Senator Udall (D-NM). R2 (Southwest Region)

National Park Service

Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel

On February 14, Acting Director Michael Reynolds will speak at the Friends Alliance meeting in Washington, DC, a gathering of local nonprofit philanthropic partners.

On February 15, Acting Director Michael Reynolds will make brief remarks at the Alliance of National Heritage Areas Congressional Reception at the Capitol Visitor Center in Washington, DC. National Heritage Areas (NHA) are designated by Congress for their unique nationally significant qualities and resources around a theme, industry and/or geographical feature and are managed through a partnership approach. NHAs are not national park units, rather the NPS partners with, provides technical assistance, and distributes federal funds from Congress to NHA entities which must be matched by non-federal funds.

Week Ahead Announcements and Actions

On February 4 - 24, Yukon-Charley Rivers National Preserve and Denali National Park are assisting with the 34th running of the Yukon Quest International Sled Dog Race. The 10-20 day Quest is a 1,000-mile race that includes 127 miles of the Yukon River within the preserve. Staff from the parks will provide race support hosting Quest officials and veterinarians, and providing care and keeping supplies available for mushers and their dogs.

Between February 6 and February 27, the elevators at Carlsbad Caverns National Park will periodically be out of service. During this time, the park will conduct scheduled elevator safety maintenance and inspections. While elevator service is temporarily suspended, visitors may still access the cavern by hiking in and out of the Natural Entrance on a self-guided tour. Due to the steep grade, the Natural Entrance is not accessible by people with mobility impairments; the park website has been updated to reflect the closure and its impact..

The week of February 6, a congressional delegation from the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee, Subcommittee on the Interior, will be visiting sites in New Mexico including White Sands National Monument to understand the relationship between the park and the White Sands Missile Range. The Legislative Liaison Division of the U.S. Army is coordinating the visit.

The week of February 6, NPS anticipates publication of a New Yorker Magazine featuring Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area's mountain lion research program. Additional media coverage is anticipated within the next 1-2 weeks, including a Los Angeles Times feature on a week in the life of P-22, the Griffith Park mountain lion. The BBC is also publishing a story in the next few weeks about a depredation permit that was issued for P-45, after the mountain

lion killed a dozen head of livestock. The BBC has been following the story since late 2016 when the attack happened.

On February 8, the NPS will announce a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the Arlington Memorial Bridge Environmental Assessment (EA). The EA evaluates the proposed repair of the bridge by rehabilitating or replacing the steel draw span, repairing deteriorated support structures and resurfacing vehicle travel lanes. The project cost is estimated at up to \$262 million if completed in two phases. The NPS is working with Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration to conduct inspections and proceed with design and implementation of the project, and seek funding through the USDOT FASTLANE grant program.

On February 7 and 8, San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park will host San Francisco-area public meetings on a project to improve accessibility on the museum ship *Balclutha*. Possibilities include a new gangway, lifts to multiple decks, audio descriptive tours and tactile models.

On February 8, Yellowstone National Park will begin processing and shipping bison to slaughter as part of the Interagency Bison Management Plan (IBMP) which calls for the reduction of the park's current population of 5,500 bison (900 to 1,300 animals are targeted for removal). The park anticipates approximately 100 bison being transported by Friday, February 10. These transfers are occurring as a result of agreements reached last week between the State of Montana, Yellowstone, and the USDA Animal Plant and Health Inspection Service. The park also anticipates transferring 25 bison (held since last March) for further isolation and potential transfer to the Fort Peck Tribe. State and tribal hunters are actively hunting bison outside the park in Gardiner and West Yellowstone.

On or about February 9, Glen Canyon National Recreation Area will begin public scoping on a plan to protect native, special status fish species (Humpback Chub) in the Lees Ferry Reach of the Colorado River downstream to Grand Canyon National Park. These recurring management actions on non-native fish are outside the scope of the Comprehensive Fisheries Management Plan/Environmental Assessment. Internal scoping has already begun between Glen Canyon NRA, Grand Canyon National Park, Arizona Game and Fish, and other partners to develop preliminary alternatives.

On February 9, the NPS will host public meetings in Atlanta as part of the special resource study of the historic former West Hunter Street Baptist Church where 1960s-era civil rights activity occurred. The study, which was authorized by Congress in 2014, will evaluate the site's potential for addition to the National Park System, as well as, other options for preservation and interpretation of the resource.

On February 11-12, the NPS anticipates upwards of 20,000 "Trump Must Go – Now" protesters at Ocean Beach in Golden Gate National Recreation Area. This is a First Amendment permit event.

On February 12 - 15, trail advocates will gather in Washington, DC for their annual Hike the Hill event organized by the American Hiking Society and the Partnership for the National Trails

System. The National Trails System includes 11 national scenic trails and 19 national historic trails established pursuant to the National Trails System Act of 1968. The Partnership for the National Trails System represents a coalition of nonprofit trails advocacy and protection organizations, such as the Appalachian Trail Conservancy and the Pacific Coast Trail Association.

On February 12 -15, The Corps Network, a coalition of over 130 Service and Conservation Corps youth employment organizations across the country, will be hosting their 2017 national conference in Washington, DC. Invitations have been extended to leadership of the Department of the Interior. Panel discussions will explore the importance of public-private partnerships, public lands stewardship, and engaging the next generation of outdoor enthusiasts. The NPS provides over 10,000 employment opportunities to young people under the age of 35 annually, many of which are employed through Service and Conservation Corps organizations.

On February 12 -16, the Friends Alliance (approx. 100 attendees) and the Public Lands Alliance (approx. 200 attendees) will be holding a joint conference in Washington, D.C. The Friends Alliance is comprised of the 200+ nonprofit philanthropic organizations that support parks locally across the country. The Public Lands Alliance membership includes educational, cooperating and interpretive associations and partners.

On or about February 13, the NPS will announce a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for AT&T's installation of fiber optic cable and conduit on Soda Lake at Mojave National Preserve. The FONSI and final Environmental Assessment will be made available to the public, and a special use permit will be issued to implement the selected alternative.

On February 13 and 14, Grand Canyon National Park will hold public meetings in Flagstaff, AZ regarding planning for the park's communication infrastructure. The communication infrastructure plan will guide decision making and management of cellular telephone and internet communications infrastructure for the foreseeable future. Time slots will be available for current right-of-way holders and past applicants to present infrastructure needs to the plan's developers.

On February 13-14, Jean Lafitte National Park will host a delegation of academic and private sector scientists from Vietnam on a State Department International Visitor Leadership Program tour. The itinerary is designed to explore the congruence of the Mekong and Mississippi Rivers' Deltas and includes courtesy visits to Jean Lafitte, Barataria Preserve, and Chalmette Battlefield and National Cemetery. The delegation will be accompanied by State Department, USGS, and US Army Corps of Engineers officials.

On February 13 - 17, Blue Ridge Parkway Superintendent Mark Woods will provide courtesy updates to congressional members and staff regarding parkway operations, projects and issues. Members include: Senator Mark Warner (D-VA), Senator Tim Kaine (D-VA), Congressman Morgan Griffith (R-VA-9), Congressman Bob Goodlatte (R-VA-6), Congressman Thomas Garrett (R-VA-5), Senator Richard Burr (R-NC), Senator Thom Tillis (R-NC), Congresswoman Virginia Foxx (R-NC-5), Congressman Patrick McHenry (R-NC-10), Congressman Mark Meadows (R-NC-11), and Congressman Mark Walker (R-NC-6). He will be accompanied by staff from the headquarters Office of Legislative and Congressional Affairs.

On February 14-15, The Alliance of National Heritage Areas' (NHA) annual meeting and

congressional reception will take place in Washington, DC. Congressman Dent and Congressman Tonko, co-founders of the National Heritage Areas Congressional Caucus, will be honored and NPS Acting Director Michael Reynolds will make brief remarks. NHAs are not national park units, rather, the NPS partners with, provides technical assistance, and distributes federal funds from Congress to NHA entities which must be matched by non-federal funds.

On February 14 – 21, Isle Royale National Park will host two public meetings in Duluth and Houghton, Michigan to discuss a draft plan and Environmental Impact Statement to address the recently declining population of wolves on Isle Royale and the possible need to supplement this population. In conjunction with the meetings, Isle Royale will conduct tribal consultations with Lake Superior Ojibwa tribes.

On February 14, the Sitka Tribe of Alaska and Sitka National Historical Park will meet to discuss the tribe's interest in compacting (e.g. the tribal self-governance right to provide services in lieu of the U.S. federal government) to provide resource management, interpretive and maintenance functions at the park. In late 2016, the park responded to a tribal request for budget and policy documents that could inform a formal compacting request later in 2017. The meeting will be the first formal opportunity to review those documents with the tribe and discuss potential next steps.

On February 14, Kaloko-Honokōhau National Historical Park staff will appear before the Hawaii Commission on Water Resource Management to discuss its petition to designate the Keauhou aquifer as a Water Management Area. The park filed the petition over three years ago to protect freshwater resources that provide habitat to threatened and endangered species. The Commission has twice voted to continue the process, but has not yet made a final decision. The Congressional delegation is very interested in the issue and the topic is the subject of local media attention.

On February 15, the Lake Clark National Park Subsistence Resource Commission will hold a public meeting in Pedro Bay, Alaska. The commission is authorized under Section 808 of the Alaska Lands Act and advises the NPS and the Secretary on subsistence program requirements. The meetings do not typically yield media coverage or congressional delegation interest.

On or about February 15, escrow is set to close on 96 tracts of vacant land, totaling 3,065 acres, at Mojave National Preserve. A Land and Water Conservation Fund appropriation in FY 2015 is being used to purchase the land from the Mojave Desert Land Trust. The proceeds of the sale will be used by the trust to acquire additional conservation lands within the preserve.

On or about February 15, Glacier National Park anticipates easing current watercraft restrictions to allow non-motorized watercraft with inspections only on NPS-managed waters for summer 2017. All park waters are currently closed to boating due to the detection of invasive mussels in Montana. The announcement includes a continued prohibition on private motorized watercraft. The park's ability to safely allow any boats on NPS-managed waters is tied to the availability of seasonal boat inspectors. Depending on state issuance additional wash station protocols, and state water testing efforts this summer, the NPS may revisit motorized watercraft prohibition on some/all lakes. The NPS will be scheduling a briefing for the DOI leadership on this issue.

On February 15 - 16, Natchez National Historical Park Superintendent Kathleen Bond will visit the offices of Sen. Cochran (R-MS), Sen. Roger Wicker (R-MS), and Rep. Gregg Harper (R-3-MS) to provide them with an update on issues at the park as a courtesy visit. She will be accompanied by staff from the headquarters Office of Legislative and Congressional Affairs.

ASSISTANT SECRETARY–INDIAN AFFAIRS AND THE BUREAUS OF INDIAN AFFAIRS AND INDIAN EDUCATION

Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel

On February 8, Acting AS-IA Black will speak at the United South and Eastern Tribes (USET) Sovereignty Protection Fund Impact Week Meeting in Arlington, VA.

Week Ahead Announcements and Actions

Indian Affairs has made selections for the 2017 Indian Affairs Student Leadership Summer Institute. Launched in summer 2016, the 10 week paid internship placed 17 Native undergraduate and graduate students in leadership offices across Indian Affairs. The program's mission is to engage and support the next generation of Native leaders in the federal government through an introduction to the government-to-government relationship between tribal nations and the United States. Indian Affairs received more than 60 applications for summer 2017. Hiring of the interns is currently on hold during the hiring freeze.

On Wednesday, February 8, 2017 at 2:30 PM in room 628 in the Dirksen Senate Office Building the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs will hold a Business Meeting to consider the following bills:

- S. 39, a bill to extend the Federal recognition of the Little Shell Tribe of Chippewa Indians of Montana, and for other purposes;
- S. 63, a bill to clarify the rights of Indians and Indian tribes on Indian lands under the National Labor Relations Act;
- S. 91, a bill to amend the Indian Employment, Training and Related Services Demonstration Act of 1992 to facilitate the ability of Indian tribes to integrate the employment, training, and related services from diverse Federal sources, and for other purposes;
- S. 140, a bill to amend the White Mountain Apache Tribe Water Rights Quantification Act of 2010 to clarify the use of amounts in the WMAT Settlement Fund;
- S. 245, a bill to amend the Indian Tribal Energy Development and Self Determination Act of 2005, and for other purposes;
- S. 249, a bill to provide that the pueblo of Santa Clara may lease for 99 years certain restricted land, and for other purposes;
- S. 254, a bill to amend the Native American Programs Act of 1974 to provide flexibility and reauthorization to ensure the survival and continuing vitality of Native American languages;
- S. 269, a bill to provide for the conveyance of certain property to the Tanana Tribal Council located in Tanana, Alaska, and to the Bristol Bay Area Health Corporation located in Dillingham, Alaska, and for other purposes; and
- S. 302, The John Smith Act, or the Tribal Infrastructure and Roads Enhancement and Safety Act (TIRES Act).

On February 6-15, BIA will be consulting across the country and by teleconference with Tribes and meeting with members of the public to discuss implementation of the dam safety and

irrigation provisions of the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation (WIIN), which passed in December 2016.

On February 13-16, the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) will hold its 2017 Executive Council Winter Session in Washington, DC.

On February 15, the National Indian Education Association will hold their annual legislative summit in Washington, DC.

On February 16, 2017, the Tribal Interior Budget Council (TIBC) meeting will be held in Washington, DC 20036. TIBC provides a forum and process for tribes and federal officials to work together in developing annual budget requests for Indian programs in the Department of the Interior.

OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL TRUSTEE FOR AMERICAN INDIANS (OST)

Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel

Who: Acting Special Trustee, Deb DuMontier will be in Washington, D.C. February 13-15, 2017, attending the NCAI Conference and February 16, 2016 attending the Tribal Interior Budget Council Meeting and meeting with OST senior leadership to prioritize initiatives.

Who: Deputy Special Trustee-Field Operations (DST-FO), Jim James will be in Washington, D.C. February 6-15, 2017, attending the United South & Eastern Tribes (USET) meeting, NCAI Conference, and Financial Literacy and Education Commission meeting. OST's Office of Appraisal Services will be showcasing its accomplishments at the USET meeting.

Who: Deputy Director-Land Buy Back Valuations will be in Bayfield, Wisconsin February 8-10, 2017, presenting the appraisal process to the Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa tribal leaders at the Land Buy Back outreach meeting.

Week Ahead Announcements - Presidential and Department/Agency Priorities

OST continues to communicate with both Gila River and San Carlos Tribes and other federal officials to discuss the next steps in the tribes' trust withdrawal request. OST notified both tribes by letter of the additional information needed in order to continue the processing of their respective withdrawal requests pursuant to the American Indian Trust Fund Management Reform Act of 1994.

ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR LAND AND MINERALS MANAGEMENT

Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel

Acting ASLM Rich Cardinale will be in Washington, DC attending regularly scheduled meetings.

ASLM Special Assistant Kate MacGregor will be in Washington, DC attending regularly scheduled meetings.

BLM Acting Director Kristin Bail will be in Washington, DC attending regularly scheduled meetings.

BLM Acting Deputy Director Jerry Perez will participate in the BLM's Pathways Program at the National Training Center in Phoenix on February 8 - 10.

OSMRE Acting Director Glenda Owens will be in Washington, DC attending regularly scheduled meetings.

BSEE Acting Director Margaret Schneider will be in Washington, DC attending regularly scheduled meetings.

BOEM Acting Director Walter Cruickshank will be in Washington, DC attending regularly scheduled meetings.

Week Ahead Announcements and Actions

Upon review and approval by the Department, the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSMRE) plans to provide a report to Congress on the results of the Abandoned Mine Land Economic Revitalization (AMLER) Pilot Projects. OSMRE made \$30 million available each to KY, PA and WV to use for pilot projects designed to help develop local economies while also reclaiming abandoned mine lands. Congress provided the AMLER Pilot Project funding and required the development of information to help inform future policy decisions.

Upon review and approval by the Department, BOEM plans to publish a *Federal Register* Notice announcing three revised Supplemental Official Block Diagrams along with the two associated revised Official Protraction Diagrams that reflect the lateral boundaries through state waters that divide the Commonwealth of Virginia from North Carolina and Maryland.

On February 3 - 11, the 2017 King of the Hammers Ultra Race is underway at the Johnson Valley Off Highway Vehicle (OHV) Area in San Bernardino County, CA. This event, authorized under a BLM special recreation permit, draws thousands of participants and spectators and has received national and international attention for its unique OHV and rock crawling competitions.

On February 8, a hearing will take place in DC Federal District Court to consider a Motion for a Preliminary Injunction filed by commercial fisheries-related entities following BOEM's sixth

commercial offshore wind lease sale. The Plaintiffs challenged the decision to lease the New York Wind Energy Area and seek injunctive relief to prevent BOEM from executing the lease. The Plaintiffs agreed to drop their Temporary Restraining Order in exchange for BOEM agreeing to give the court at least 14-days' notice prior to executing the lease.

On February 8 - 9, BLM subject matter experts Rich Estabrook (Petroleum Engineer) and Tim Spisak (Senior Advisor, Energy, Minerals and Realty Management) will discuss the new fluid and waste prevention regulations at the Annual Production Accountants Society of Oklahoma for Federal/Indian Royalties workshop in Tulsa. Representatives of the Office of Natural Resources Revenue will also participate.

On February 12 - 15, the Corps Network National Conference will be held in Washington, DC. The Corps Network leads and supports more than 130 of America's Service and Conservation Corps. Presentations will include introduction and overview of the national program while highlighting the mutual benefits to the BLM and partners. Senior leadership from the BLM's National Conservation Lands and Community Partnerships Directorate will attend the conference.

On February 12 - 16, the BLM will participate in the Public Lands Alliance Convention and Trade Show in Arlington, VA. The event provides an opportunity to engage in high level conversations and community discussion with peers and leaders from land management agencies, public land nonprofits and exhibitors who work together to improve public lands and enhance the visitor experience. Nikki Moore, Deputy Division Chief for BLM's National Landscape Conservation System and Janey Ady of BLM's Education, Interpretation and Partnerships will present on the mutual benefits of partnerships.

On February 13 - 14, BOEM and the State of California tentatively plan to hold a meeting with tribes along the Central Coast of California regarding offshore wind development. This is part of an effort by BOEM and the State to hold a series of regional outreach meetings. Additional stakeholder outreach being organized by BOEM and the California Energy Commission (CEC) will consist of monthly stakeholder sub-teams to coordinate outreach related to data collection and science, fishing, and coastal communities. BOEM also plans to attend a public meeting conducted by the CEC with the San Luis Obispo Council of Governments in March 2017.

On February 13, BLM-AK leadership and project staff will meet with ConocoPhillips Alaska, Inc. (CPAI) to provide an update on permitting for the Greater Mooses Tooth 2 (GMT2) project. GMT2 is a development project within the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska (NPR-A). The GMT2 project would be a continuation of the development within the Federal Oil and Gas Greater Mooses Tooth Unit (GMTU). The proposed project would include a 14-acre pad and up to 48 wells. CPAI would like to begin construction of GMT2 during the winter of 2018-2019.

On February 13 - 17, the National Native Seed Conference is being held in Washington, D.C. This is a bi-annual conference. This year's conference is focused on implementing the National Seed Strategy, which is part of a comprehensive, science-based strategy to address the threat of wildfire across the west. Twelve Federal agencies, including BLM, are engaged in development of this strategy.

On February 13-25, the Mineral Resources Report of the Sagebrush Focal Areas in ID, MT, NV,

OR, UT, and WY will be available. BLM received 600 copies of the report from the USGS, and plans to distribute the report at eight public meetings in February. Public meetings will be held for the proposed SFA Withdrawal EIS at 8 locations: Malta, MT; Salt Lake City, UT; Rock Springs, WY; Idaho Falls, ID; Reno, NV; Lake View, OR; Elko, NV, and Boise, ID from 2/13-2/16 and 2/21-2/24. This topic is controversial.

In mid-February, the final National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA) Report on BSEE's organization is expected. NAPA conducted an assessment of BSEE's organization, strategic direction, policy and process, infrastructure, systems, and technology. NAPA has already submitted to BSEE the draft Detailed Report and Findings and Recommendations and Roadmap Implementation. A communication strategy is being developed and BSEE is preparing to brief on the report.

On or about February 15, the GAO will issue its biennial High Risk Report. Based on a meeting that took place on February 6 that included AS-PMB, AS-LM, BOEM, BSEE, and BLM representatives and GAO Director Frank Rusco, the Department anticipates remaining on the report due to certain aspects of its oil and gas program. Mr. Rusco recognized improvements in various areas, including expanding the use of available authorities and tools to strengthen hiring and retention for certain key onshore and offshore oil and gas positions and improvements in assuring revenue accountability, but identified concerns related to communication and coordination between headquarters and field offices as among the reasons for DOI remaining on the report.

On February 15, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will hold its monthly cooperating agency meeting for the proposed Donlin Gold mine in the Kuskokwim River Valley, AK. The Corps of Engineers is the lead agency. The project would include a natural gas pipeline crossing approximately 97 miles of BLM-managed public lands. One of the primary purposes of the meeting is to obtain an update from the Corps on the project. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement issued in November 2015 will also be discussed. Laurie Thorpe, the BLM Donlin Project Manager, will be attend as well as staff from the Anchorage Field Office.

On February 15, BLM-OR/WA will hold the Blue Mule Timber Sale, which will make available 5,500 MBF of thinning harvest on 324 acres. The BLM will also hold the Quarry 5 Timber Sale, which will make available 7,358 MBF of regeneration and thinning harvest on 283 acres.

On February 15-19, the 41st Annual National Wild Turkey Federation Convention and Sport Show will be held in Nashville, TN. The event includes a National Technical Committee meeting and partner awards ceremony. The BLM, U.S. Forest Service, and state agency partners will participate. The organization focuses on enhancing wild turkey populations and also the continuation of hunting and quality wildlife habitat for other species.

On February 16, BSEE is scheduled to brief the Acting ASLM and Special Assistant Kate MacGregor on the agreement and trust fund for site remediation following destruction of a Taylor Energy platform in the Gulf of Mexico during Hurricane Ivan in 2004.

On February 17, BLM-OR/WA will hold the Six One Timber Sale, which will make available 68 acres of regeneration harvest and one acre of right-of-way clearing. This project is expected to be controversial as it is a regeneration harvest.

On February 17, Ocean Energy Safety Institute (OESI), in conjunction with BSEE, will hold a public forum in Houston, TX to discuss recently completed BSEE research projects. The Technology Assessment Program Forum will highlight issues related to offshore research and best industry practices, with opportunities for questions from industry, government, and the public.

In February, the BLM-UT Moab FO will release for public review an Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Needles and Anticline Overlook (Canyon Rims) Road Improvement Project to improve public access and safety. The area is near the Bears Ears National Monument.

ASSISTANT SECRETARY POLICY, MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET

Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel

Who: Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance (OEPC) Director and Anchorage Regional staff, government agencies, schools and universities, non-profit organizations, businesses, and community and tribal leaders from Alaska and elsewhere

What: 2017 Alaska Forum on the Environment

When: February 6-10, 2017

Where: Anchorage, Alaska

Press: Open

Topic: The agenda includes keynotes and sessions on energy, sustainability, oil spill prevention and response, contaminated sites, mining, rural and tribal issues, and fish, wildlife, and habitat.

Who: Borderlands Coordinator Jon Andrew

What: Good Neighbor Environmental Board (a Federal Advisory Committee Act Board) Meeting

When: February 8-10, 2017

Where: San Diego, California

Press: Closed

Topic: The meeting will begin work on a report dealing with border security and the environment.

Who: Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance (OEPC)/Regional Environmental Officer (REO) Anchorage and Federal and state government agencies, including the Alaskan Command and Environmental Protection Agency, among others

What: Statement of Cooperation (SOC) Executive Steering Committee Meeting

When: February 10, 2017

Where: Anchorage, Alaska

Press: Closed

Topic: The SOC is a federal-state cooperative effort in Alaska focused on partnering to protect human health and the environment in Alaska.

Who: Office of Wildland Fire (OWF), Director Bryan Rice

What: ESRI Federal Geographic Information Systems Conference

When: February 13-14, 2017

Where: Washington, DC

Press: Open

Topic: Director Rice will participate and engage in informal discussions with other participants to explore ways all levels of government can use geospatial technology to solve the natural resource challenges.

Who: National Congress of American Indians (NCAI)

What: Executive Council Winter Session

When: February 13-17, 2017

Where: Washington DC

Press: Some sessions may be open to press

Topic: Issues important for Alaska Native and American Indians during this next administration

Who: Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance (OEPC) Deputy Director and senior executive representatives from DOI, EPA, USDA, USFS, DOE, BLM, and NPS

What: Federal Mining Dialogue (FMD) Steering Committee Meeting

When: February 14, 2017

Where: MIB, Washington, DC

Press: Closed

Topic: Senior executive representatives from DOI, EPA, USDA, USFS, DOE, BLM, and NPS will meet to review the progress of the FMD workgroups and evaluate any future directions that the FMD should take in addressing abandoned mines on Federal lands.

Who: Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance (OEPC)/Portland Regional Staff, FWS, BIA, BOR, SOL, EPA, NOAA, and USFS

What: Columbia River Treaty - Regional Federal Resource Agency Partners

When: February 16, 2017

Where: Webinar/Conference Call

Press: Closed

Topic: Representatives will brief out on February 14 meeting with Columbia Basin Tribes and prepare for the February 27 Collaborative Modeling Workgroup meeting.

Congressional Travel:

Who: House Interior Appropriations Subcommittee staff (majority) Betsy Bina; Adrienne Moss, Deputy Director, Office of Budget, will accompany her on the trip.

What: Site Visit

When: February 21-23, 2017

Where: FWS and NPS sites in New Jersey

Press: None

Topic: The Office of Budget is working with the Bureaus on the details of the trip.

Week Ahead Announcements and Actions

Dakota Access Pipeline and Keystone Pipelines. Office of Law Enforcement and Security (OLES) is working closely with Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and other stakeholders to prepare for anticipated demonstrations on Federal lands, as a result of recent Administration's decision regarding the Dakota Access Pipeline and Keystone Pipelines. Demonstrators remain encamped at Standing Rock in North Dakota and additional participants are expected.

Year 2017 Small Business Accomplishments to Date: As of February 1, 2017, the Department has awarded 53.45% of its contract award dollars to small businesses. The Department-wide small business goal, which was negotiated with the small business administration, is 53.5%. The Department awarded 22.00% of its contract award dollars to small disadvantaged businesses and 15.19% of its contract award dollars to women-owned small businesses, exceeding the statutory goal of 5% for each. The Department awarded 2.90% of its contract award dollars to historically underutilized business zone small businesses and 2.97% of its contract award dollars to service-disabled veteran-owned small businesses. The statutory goal is 3% for each of these categories.

DOI OSDBU Information Technology (IT) Outreach Event. The Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU) will host a small business outreach event geared towards IT small businesses on Tuesday, February 14, 2017, at the Main Interior Building in the Bison Bistro. We have 150 IT small businesses confirmed to attend and have encouraged all Bureaus to participate in an effort to increase our Department small business numbers.

New Government Accountability Office (GAO) Audits: Federal Heavy Equipment (Job Code 101212). Per request made by the Chair and Ranking Member of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, GAO will review: (1) what is known about the heavy equipment that federal agencies have acquired; (2) how selected Federal agencies decide whether to purchase, lease, or rent heavy equipment; (3) how selected federal agencies ensure appropriate utilization of their heavy equipment; and (4) what challenges, if any, agencies face with respect to managing the costs of their heavy equipment. The entrance has not been scheduled.

GAO Entrance Conferences: Compliance with Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) Spending and Certain Requirements for FY 2015 (Job Code 101004). Section 5136(a) of Public Law 112-81, December 31, 2011, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year (FY) 2012, mandated a study on compliance with SBIR and STTR to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship of the Senate and the Committee on Small Business and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives. In response, GAO will review: (1) extent to which participating agencies comply with the SBIR and STTR spending requirements for FY 2015; (2) extent to which the participating agencies and the Small Business Administration complied with reporting requirements in FY 2015; (3) amount participating agencies spent to administer the SBIR and STTR programs in FY 2015; and (4) potential effects of basing the FY 2015 spending requirements for the SBIR and STTR programs on an agency's total research or research and development (R&D) budget rather than its extramural R&D budget. The entrance conference was February 3.

GAO Entrance Conferences:

U.S. Agency Collaboration and Import Restrictions on Iraqi and Syrian Cultural Property (Job Code 101085). PAM, PFM and representatives from the National Park Service will attend an entrance conference with GAO on February 7. This engagement was initiated at the request of the Chair and Ranking Members of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs; Chair of the Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights and International Organizations Subcommittee, House Committee on Foreign Affairs; and Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation and Trade, House Committee on Foreign Affairs. The objectives of the engagement are to evaluate (1) how the U.S. Government has monitored and enforced import restrictions on Iraqi and Syrian cultural property; and (2) the extent to which the Cultural Heritage Coordinating Committee participants collaborate to protect Iraqi and Syrian cultural property.

Long Island Sound Restoration (Job Code 101350). At the request of the Chair and Ranking Member of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, GAO will examine (1) the roles that Federal, State, and other groups play in restoring the Long Island Sound; (2) the Federal funds that have been spent to date; and (3) the progress that has been made in restoring

the Long Island Sound, and what remains to be done. DOI participants in this engagement will include the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and U.S. Geological Survey. An entrance conference has not been scheduled.

Recent Draft GAO Reports (Per GAO, distribution is highly restricted.): Federal Real Property: Government-wide Building Disposal Data Generally Reliable, but Opportunities for Further Improvements Exist (GAO-17-321, Job Code 100807). Per request from Chairman and Ranking Member of the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, the Chairman and Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Regulatory Affairs and Federal Management, and the Chairman of the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, GAO reviewed and assessed the reliability and reporting of government-wide disposal data for FYs 2014 and 2015 and the steps the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), the General Services Administration (GSA), and three selected agencies (including Interior), have taken to improve disposal data. GAO issued the draft report on January 27 with recommendations to GSA and OMB. The Department's comments are due to GAO by Feb. 16.

New Office of Inspector General (OIG) Audits: 2017-EAU-017: Verification Review for U.S. Department of the Interior's Underground Injection Control Activities (CR-EV-MOA-0006-2012). The Office of Inspector General (OIG) is starting a review to verify the implementation of 10 recommendations issued in their March 2014 evaluation report. The OIG will review the available documentation and follow up with the Office of Insular Affairs (OIA), Bureau of Land Management (BLM), National Parks Service (NPS), Bureau of Reclamation (USBR), and FWS for any additional supporting information needed. An entrance conference is not required on a verification review.

OIG Exit Conference/Pending Reports: Inspection of the BLM Idle Well Program (2016-EAU-061). The OIG completed this inspection to determine whether the BLM Instruction Memorandum 2012-181, entitled *Idle Well Review and Data Entry into the Automated Fluid Minerals Support System* resolved the issues it was created to address. The OIG will be issuing 12 recommendations to BLM to address their findings regarding the need for additional and updated guidance to manage idle wells thereby minimizing the risk to Federal government and taxpayers. The report is currently being finalized for issuance by late February.

ASSISTANT SECRETARY - WATER & SCIENCE

Week Ahead Schedule of Meetings, Hearings, and Travel

Kerry Rae - From February 8-17, Acting Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary Kerry Rae will be in Washington, DC, and participating in routine internal briefings, and transition-related meetings.

Scott Cameron - From February 8-17, Special Assistant to the Secretary Scott Cameron will be in Washington, DC, and participating in routine internal briefings, and transition-related meetings. On February 13, he will attend an Executive Breakfast at the annual ESRI Federal Users Conference in Washington, DC, to learn about the latest applications of GIS technology.

Week Ahead Announcements and Actions

Ongoing hazard response: Bogoslof volcano, in the Aleutian Island chain, remains at a heightened state of unrest and in an unpredictable condition. Additional explosive eruptions producing high-elevation ash clouds could occur at any time. No significant activity has been detected in seismic or infrasound data over the past 24 hours. The volcano is not actively monitored, but USGS scientists are using remote sensing technologies to provide data informing NOAA ash advisories for air traffic safety.

On **February 9**, W&S will join The Conservation Fund, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and other city, county, and NGO partners for a Greater Baltimore Wilderness meeting. Greater Baltimore was launched two years ago to create and enhance connected greenspace for public health, ecological, and economic objectives.

As early as **February 10**, the USGS will install two temporary rapid deployment streamgages on the Cannonball River south of Bismarck, North Dakota, at the request of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The installations may be postponed a week or more pending security clearance since the installations will occur near the Dakota Access Pipeline protest camps. The USGS will send a public affairs specialist to the event to assist with media, address science-specific questions. The Morton County, ND Sheriff Department will distribute a news release during the week of the installations and USGS will issue a local media advisory.

In the matter *Hoopa Valley Tribe and Yurok vs. Reclamation/National Marine Fisheries Service*, before United States District Court, Northern District of California, San Francisco Division, Reclamation anticipates an order to be issued by **February 10**, requiring Reclamation, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and National Marine Fisheries Service to coordinate and identify how to increase releases to the Klamath River to address salmonid disease issues without impacting suckers in the Upper Klamath Basin, within 30 days of receipt of the order. Media interest is expected. The anticipated order stems from a hearing held January 27.

On **February 10**, USGS will announce a new critical review and expert analysis of existing data conducted by the USGS and the University of Rochester showing that the breakdown of methane hydrates due to warming climate is unlikely to lead to massive amounts of methane being

released to the atmosphere. The review concludes that current warming of ocean waters is likely causing gas hydrate deposits to break down at some locations. However, not only are the annual emissions of methane to the ocean from degrading gas hydrates far smaller than greenhouse gas emissions to the atmosphere from human activities, but most of the methane released by gas hydrates never reaches the atmosphere. The paper is published in *Reviews of Geophysics* and a news release is planned.

On **February 13**, USGS will announce a new scientific investigation map documenting water-level changes in the High Plains aquifer, Republican River Basin in Colorado, Kansas, and Nebraska, from 2002 to 2015. During this period, water-level changes, by well, ranged from an increase of 9.4 feet to a decline of 43.2 feet. The area-weighted, average water-level change from 2002 to 2015 in this part of the aquifer was a decline of 4.5 feet. The report is available on the USGS website and a technical announcement is planned.

On **February 13**, the Department of Justice has requested Reclamation's Great Plains Regional Director Mike Ryan appear as a witness on behalf of the Government in the case of *US vs. Kevin McGovern and MC Equipment Holdings, LLC*. This request dates back to a December 16, 2013, OIG report which identified questions on costs related to the Rocky Boy's/North Central Montana Regional Water Authority Project.

On **February 14**, USGS will announce a new USGS Circular titled, "Restoration Handbook for Sagebrush Steppe Ecosystems with Emphasis on Greater Sage-Grouse Habitat—Part 3. Site Level Restoration Decisions." Part 3 of the handbook introduces habitat managers and restoration practitioners to a site-specific restoration decision tool to assist them in selecting sites and matching techniques to meet project objectives and improve the potential for restoration success. Part 1 of the handbook, published October 26, 2015, introduced basic concepts about sagebrush ecosystems, landscape ecology and restoration science. Part 2, published December 7, 2015, helps guide selection of potential sites for restoration from a landscape perspective. Part three helps guide restoration decisions at a selected site.

On or before **February 15**, Reclamation's Mid-Pacific Region is contractually bound to announce whether Reclamation anticipates a "critical" water year in 2017 based on in-flows to Shasta Reservoir. A positive "critical year" designation would trigger the shortage provisions of senior water rights contractors and refuges served by the Central Valley Project. Fortunately, it is *not* looking likely that there will be a "critical year" designation in 2017.

On **February 15-16**, a meeting of the Glen Canyon Dam Adaptive Management Work Group federal advisory committee is planned in Tempe, AZ. Major topics will include the Long-Term Experimental and Management Plan Record of Decision and implementation; current basin hydrology, operations, and the 2018 hydrograph; progress in revitalizing the Science Advisors Program; science results from the USGS Grand Canyon Monitoring and Research Center; and progress on the Fiscal Year 2018-20 Budget and Work Plan.

In mid-February, Reclamation's Albuquerque Area Office expects to announce the award of a Design/Build contract on the Pojoaque Basin Regional Water System. The contract for the project, which is part of the Aamodt Indian Water Rights Settlement, will be between \$75 and \$100 million.

30-60 DAY LOOK-AHEAD

Office of the Solicitor

Significant Litigation Deadlines reported separately in the 100-day report.

Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks

On or about February 15, Glacier National Park anticipates easing current watercraft restrictions to allow non-motorized watercraft with inspections only on NPS-managed waters for summer 2017. All park waters are currently closed to boating due to the detection of invasive mussels in Montana. The announcement includes a continued prohibition on private motorized watercraft. The park's ability to safely allow any boats on NPS-managed waters is tied to the availability of seasonal boat inspectors. Depending on state issuance additional wash station protocols, and state water testing efforts this summer, the NPS may revisit motorized watercraft prohibition on some/all lakes. The NPS will be scheduling a briefing for the DOI leadership on this issue.

By February 16, the FWS will send to the *Federal Register* a notice of the U.S.-Russia Polar Bear Commission Determination on Annual Taking Limit for the Alaska-Chukotka Polar Bear Population to maintain the harvest limit adopted in 2010. The commission notified the Secretary of its determination on December 19, 2016; therefore, as required by the Marine Mammal Protection Act, the notice must publish no later than February 16.

In mid-February, FWS will distribute \$1.1 billion in revenues generated by the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration and Dingell-Johnson Sport Fish Restoration acts to states, territories and District of Columbia. The funding, which supports critical state wildlife conservation and recreation projects throughout the nation, is generated by excise taxes on firearms, ammunition, fishing equipment and motorboat fuels paid by the hunting, shooting, boating and angling industries. Outreach is planned.

In February, FWS will publish a notice of intent that the bureau will prepare an Environmental Impact Statement in conjunction with a proposed rule to revise the existing nonessential experimental population designation of red wolves in North Carolina. This notice announces FWS' intention to revise the designation under section 10(j) of the ESA and the initiation of a public scoping process to identify issues and concerns, potential impacts, and possible alternatives to the proposed action. Controversial. Outreach planned upon Reading Room publication.

In late February or March, Cape Lookout National Seashore anticipates publishing a Final Rule for Off-Road Vehicle Use in the Federal Register. The park's Off-Road Vehicle Use Management Plan Record of Decision was signed on January 10. The NPS will be scheduling a briefing for the DOI leadership and Office of Executive Secretariat and Regulatory Affairs on this Final Rule.

In late February or March, Glen Canyon National Recreation Area anticipates signing the Record of Decision for the Off-Road Vehicle Plan Final Environmental Impact Statement. The NPS will

be scheduling a briefing for the DOI leadership and Office of Executive Secretariat and Regulatory Affairs on this Record of Decision.

In March, the NPS anticipates awarding \$623,038 in Battlefield Land Acquisition Grants funded through the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) to government sponsors in partnership with nonprofits for battlefield protection through fee simple and easement purchase, pending NPS review and approval of a proposed grant apportionment package. Grants will be used to protect 145 acres of Civil War battlefields in Virginia, West Virginia and Maryland. The NPS works with private landowners, battlefield friends groups, interested community groups, non-profit organizations, academic institutions, local, state, and tribal governments and Federal agencies for preservation projects and local acquisition of Revolutionary War, War of 1812, and Civil War battlefield land. Grants are awarded several times throughout the year.

In early March, FWS will release the conservation strategy on the monarch butterfly. The conservation strategy is separate from the ongoing species status assessment for the monarch, which will inform FWS' determination on whether to propose the monarch for listing under the ESA. The strategy includes target acreages for habitat needed to reverse the downward trend in monarch numbers for eastern and western populations. The strategy's preliminary estimate for suitable new or restored habitat needed to reverse the decline of monarchs is 29 million acres in the eastern population. It also defines monarch habitat, which includes overwintering habitat in Mexico and California. Outreach is planned.

In early March, the NPS anticipates publishing the annual report on the Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives Program (HTC). The HTC provides a 20 percent federal tax credit to property owners who undertake a substantial rehabilitation of income-producing historic buildings, while maintaining historic character. The report includes summary information about the program and projects reviewed (e.g., total number of projects broken down by state and rehabilitation cost, by new use, and by project size), as well as photos and short descriptions of some representative projects. This year a total of 1,039 certified projects were completed - the highest in recent program history – and an estimated 108,528 jobs were created as a result.

On March 7, the NPS and the Boy Scouts of America will participate in an event in President's Park (the White House) at the Boy Scout Memorial celebrating the renewal of the two organizations' partnership. Acting Director Michael Reynolds and Chief Scout Executive Michael Surbaugh will give remarks. Invitations will also be extended to the incoming Secretary and members of Congress.

By March 8, FWS will publish a final determination on a proposed rule that published January 8, 2016, to reclassify the West Indian manatee from endangered to threatened under the Endangered Species Act. A notice of intent to sue was filed by the Pacific Legal Foundation January 9 for failure to finalize the proposal to reclassify the manatee from endangered to threatened. Target to the *Federal Register* is March 3. To avoid litigation, the rule should be delivered to the *Federal Register* by March 8.

In March, the NPS will begin a 30-day internal review period on a draft Policy Memorandum to develop and communicate guidance on conducting body-worn camera programs. The goal is to enhance transparency in police-community contacts, to provide evidence, and to document the

actions of officers while performing their duties.

U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Endangered Species Act Listing Actions:

Final rule to reclassify manatee: FWS will publish a final determination on a proposed rule that published January 8, 2016, to reclassify the West Indian manatee from endangered to threatened under the Endangered Species Act. A notice of intent to sue was filed by the Pacific Legal Foundation January 9 for failure to finalize the proposal to reclassify the manatee from endangered to threatened. Target to the *Federal Register* is March 3. To avoid litigation, the rule should be delivered to the *Federal Register* by March 8. Outreach planned. R4 (Southeast Region)

Proposed rule to delist the Deseret milkvetch: FWS will publish a proposal to delist the Deseret milkvetch, found in Utah, due to recovery. Target to the *Federal Register* is March 3. Outreach planned. R6 (Mountain-Prairie Region)

Final delisting of the Hualapai Mexican vole: FWS will publish a final rule to delist the Hualapai Mexican vole, located in Arizona, due to the fact that the original classification is no longer appropriate. Target to the *Federal Register* is March 15. Outreach planned. R2 (Southwest Region)

Eastern cougar final delisting: FWS will publish a final rule to delist the eastern cougar (historically known to exist in southeastern Ontario, southern Quebec, and New Brunswick in Canada, and a region bounded from Maine to Michigan, Illinois, Kentucky and South Carolina in the eastern United States) due to extinction. Target to the *Federal Register* is March 15. Outreach planned. R5 (Northeast Region)

Bone Cave harvestman petition finding: By the end of March, FWS will publish a revised 90-day finding on a petition to delist the Bone Cave harvestman (a cave invertebrate) found in Texas. In June 2015, FWS published a not-substantial 90-day finding on the petition to delist the Bone Cave harvestman. A disc of supplemental information submitted with the petition was overlooked and not considered in that finding. This revised finding results from a voluntary court-ordered remand and settlement agreement; the court-ordered date is March 31. Outreach is planned. R2 (Southwest Region)

Southern Selkirk Mountains population of woodland caribou: FWS will publish a notice amending the current listing of the southern Selkirk Mountains population of woodland caribou to include the entire Southern Mountain Caribou population as a Distinct Population Segment (DPS). The revised DPS includes the currently listed southern Selkirk Mountains population of woodland caribou, which is a transboundary species between British Columbia, Canada, and northern Idaho and northeastern Washington. The revised DPS would remain listed as endangered under the ESA. Target to the *Federal Register* is March 30. Outreach planned. R1 (Pacific Region)

Island Marble Butterfly proposed listing: FWS will publish a proposal to list the island marble

butterfly as endangered. Target to the *Federal Register* is March 31. Outreach planned. R1 (Pacific Region)

Southwest willow flycatcher 12-month finding: FWS will publish a 12-month finding on a petition to delist the southwest willow flycatcher from the list of threatened and endangered wildlife. Target to the *Federal Register* is March 31. R2 (Southwest Region)

Yellow Lance and Atlantic Pigtoe petition findings: FWS will publish a 12-month finding on the status of two freshwater mussel species, yellow lance, and Atlantic pigtoe. The species are located in North Carolina and Virginia. Target to the *Federal Register* is March 31. Outreach planned. R4 (Southeast Region)

Two Lower Colorado River fishes final listing determination: By April 7, FWS will publish a final listing determination on the Headwater Chub and Roundtail Chub, both native to Arizona and New Mexico. Target to the *Federal Register* is March 23. Outreach planned. FWS has a court-ordered settlement agreement to publish the final determination by April 7. R2 (Southwest Region)

Peary and Dolphin and Union Caribou proposed listing: FWS will publish a proposal to list the Peary caribou subspecies as threatened, and make a determination that listing the Dolphin and Union subspecies is not warranted. FWS has a court ordered settlement agreement to submit the finding to the *Federal Register* by April 1. R7 (Alaska Region)

Endangered Species Act Critical Habitat Actions:

Slickspot Peppergrass revised proposed critical habitat: As a result of new information available, FWS will publish a revision of the April 5, 2014 revised proposed critical habitat rule, and will request new information regarding population status, trends or threats, and on additional areas that meet FWS criteria for critical habitat. Target to the *Federal Register* is March 10. Outreach planned. R1 (Pacific Region)

Black Pine Snake proposed critical habitat: FWS will publish a notice reopening the comment period on a proposed critical habitat designation for the black pine snake. FWS will also hold two public information meetings during the open comment period. Target to the *Federal Register* is March 31. Outreach planned. R4 (Southeast Region)

Texas Hornshell proposed critical habitat: FWS will publish a proposal to designate 463 river miles of critical habitat for the Texas hornshell (a freshwater mussel) in New Mexico and Texas. Target to the *Federal Register* is March 31. Outreach planned. R2 (Southwest Region)

Florida Bristle Fern proposed critical habitat: FWS will publish a proposal to designate critical habitat for the Florida bristle fern in Florida. The proposed designation includes approximately 10,937 acres. Target to the *Federal Register* is March 31. Outreach planned. R4 (Southeast Region)

Sonoyta Mud Turtle proposed critical habitat: FWS will publish a proposal to designate 12.28 acres as critical habitat for the Sonoyta mud turtle in Arizona. Target to the *Federal Register* is

April 14. Outreach planned. R2 (Southwest Region)

National Wildlife Refuge Management Actions:

Silvio O. Conte Refuge final Comprehensive Conservation Plan: By the end of March, FWS will publish a notice in the *Federal Register* announcing the Record of Decision for the final CCP and Environmental Impact Statement for the Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge in Vermont. Local outreach is planned. R5 (Northeast Region)

Massasoit Refuge draft CCP: In the next 30-60 days, FWS will publish a Notice of Availability in the *Federal Register* to announce the release of Massasoit NWR (part of the Eastern Massachusetts Complex) draft Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Environmental Assessment for public comment. Local outreach planned. R5 (Northeast Region)

Other Issues:

Honeywell Natural Resource Damage Assessment and Restoration (NRDAR) case: In the next 30-60 days, DOI, DOJ and the State of New York expect to announce a settlement with Honeywell for the Onondaga Lake Natural Resource Damage Assessment and Restoration case. The trustees plan to release a draft restoration plan for a 30-day public comment period and hold a public meeting. Hazardous substances (primarily mercury) were discharged into the lake for decades by Honeywell and its predecessor companies, impacting fish and wildlife resources. Coordinated outreach planned. R5 (Northeast Region)

Tuggle Hill visits: In the next 30-60 days, FWS Southwest Regional Director Benjamin Tuggle will conduct annual courtesy Hill visits with Congress members from Arizona, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas. R2 (Southwest Region)

Fever tick: In April or May, FWS Southwest Regional Director Benjamin Tuggle is tentatively set to meet with Senator John Cornyn (R-TX) on the fever tick issue in South Texas. The fever tick is detrimental to the Texas cattle industry. It can be spread by cattle and deer but also potentially by an invasive exotic species (the nilgai, an Asian antelope). Currently the Laguna Atascosa NWR is under quarantine for the fever tick because the nilgai is present on the refuge. FWS is consulting with USDA on potential effects on ocelots, jaguarundis, and aplomado falcons from use of Ivermectin-laced corn in deer feeders to treat ticks on deer on private property. FWS continues to work with USDA to develop a biological opinion on the use of Ivermectin-laced corn. Local media interest is high. R2 (Southwest Region)

National Park Service

In late February or March, Cape Lookout National Seashore anticipates publishing a Final Rule for Off-Road Vehicle Use in the Federal Register. The park's Off-Road Vehicle Use Management Plan Record of Decision was signed on January 10. The NPS will be scheduling a briefing for the DOI leadership and Office of Executive Secretariat and Regulatory Affairs on this Final Rule.

In late February or March, Glen Canyon National Recreation Area anticipates signing the Record

of Decision for the Off-Road Vehicle Plan Final Environmental Impact Statement. The NPS will be scheduling a briefing for the DOI leadership and Office of Executive Secretariat and Regulatory Affairs on this Record of Decision.

On February 19, Manzanar National Historic Site will offer a special program for the 75th Anniversary of President FDR signing Executive Order 9066. This annual Day of Remembrance marks incarceration of more than 120,000 Japanese Americans during World War II.

On February 19, St. Croix National Scenic Riverway will grant an extension until September 1, 2017, for 15 property owners to remove personal property and improvements (i.e. boat docks and ramps, sheds, and gardens) from and across federal land. NPS acquired the waterfront property in 1992 and the following year began purchasing scenic easements from willing landowners; however, nine landowners refused to sell their scenic easements. In 1996, the court extended exclusive waterfront access rights to the nine property owners until 2002, followed by non-exclusive access rights until February 18, 2017.

On or about February 21, Glacier Bay National Park will hold a preliminary meeting with State of Alaska fisheries biologists and the state employees focused on ANILCA compliance to explore a cooperative fisheries management plan. The meeting is in line with the legislative requirement (PL-105-277 Sec. 123) to develop a plan focused on avoiding future conflict.

On February 23, the NPS will host an opening event for the Selma Interpretive Center, a part of the Selma to Montgomery National Historic Trail. The Selma Interpretive Center has been expanded to include two additional floors and new exhibits. Congresswoman Terri Sewell (D-AL-7) and Mayor Darrio Melton are expected to attend.

Week of February 23, San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park Superintendent Kevin Hendricks will be meeting with local congressional staffers to brief them on the Municipal Pier project and legislative updates for the park. The historic pier is a local landmark and requires reconstruction with an estimated cost of \$68 million. NPS and local leaders are working to identify joint funding opportunities for the future. Planning and design have not yet been initiated. The project is not controversial, but of strong local interest. The Superintendent will also be meeting with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Headquarters staff on the Municipal Pier project.

On February 23, Lake Roosevelt National Recreation Area will sign a sister park agreement with Spioenkop Nature Reserve of Ezemvelo KwaZulu Natal (KZN) Wildlife in South Africa. Superintendent Dan Foster will travel to South Africa for the signing event. The purpose of this agreement is to promote work on common issues, sharing of information, and the possibility of exchange of staff for training and education purposes.

On February 23, Golden Gate National Recreation Area will open the new Presidio Visitor Center in partnership with the Presidio Trust and Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy. Rep. Nancy Pelosi has tentatively accepted an invitation from the Presidio Trust to speak at the ribbon-cutting that morning.

On February 23, Galápagos and Joshua Tree National Parks will enter into a sister park

agreement. In addition to similar resource issues related to tortoises and desert ecosystems, the two parks are dealing with capacity issues, the effects of climate change, and the effects of ecotourism on park resources and visitor enjoyment. Local and national conservation groups will be on hand for the ceremony as well as staff from Representatives Cook and Ruiz's offices.

On February 24, Charles Young Buffalo Soldiers National Monument will host an annual Black History Month event at Kiser Elementary School in Dayton, Ohio. Former NFL player Darryl Haley is a featured participant, as are members of the ROTC program at Central State University that is named after Colonel Young. Congresswoman Joyce Beatty (D-3-OH) will attend and a representative from Congressman Turner's (R-10-OH) office will attend.

On February 26, Denali National Park marks its 100th anniversary. Events will be held throughout the year, and statewide media coverage is anticipated. The Alaska Congressional Delegation and media are being kept apprised of events and opportunities for participation. About February 27, the National Park Service will announce a Prospectus for concession operations opportunity at Carlsbad Caverns National Park. The current concession operation is located in the Visitor Center and underground in the Cavern, which includes food services and a gift shop. The gift shop offers clothing, a variety of small gifts, and Native American jewelry and pottery. The concession contract will be awarded for a 10-year period starting January 1, 2018.

On February 28, the National Park Service will participate in the annual meeting of the Garden Club of America (GCA). The GCA and the NPS recently signed an MOU to work together on conservation and education programs. Discussions at the meeting will include background on the history of cooperation between GCA and the NPS, the value of volunteer efforts such as GCA's Partners for Plants program, and projects that illustrate progress on addressing invasive species or assist with habitat restoration.

On February 28, Stones River National Battlefield Superintendent Brenda Waters will visit the offices of Sen. Lamar Alexander (R-TN), Sen. Bob Corker (R-TN), and Rep. Scott DeJarlais (R-TN-4) to provide them with an update on issues at the park as a courtesy visit. She will be accompanied by staff from the headquarters Office of Legislative and Congressional Affairs.

On February 28, Rock Creek Park will host a tour for a Special American Business Internship Training (SABIT) group at the request of the Department of Commerce. The NPS will provide an orientation to the rehabilitation project on Beach Drive for a delegation of international road construction executives from Russia, the Ukraine and several other countries.

In early March, the National Park Service and U.S. Forest Service Learning Review Board will release the Strawberry Fire Fatality and Safety Review Report. The Strawberry Fire was started by lightning strike and burned 4,700+ acres in Great Basin National Park in August of 2016. The Fatality and Safety Review Report is scheduled for review on February 15 by the Board. In March, the NPS anticipates awarding \$623,038 in Battlefield Land Acquisition Grants funded through the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) to government sponsors in partnership with nonprofits for battlefield protection through fee simple and easement purchase, pending NPS review and approval of a proposed grant apportionment package. Grants will be used to protect 145 acres of Civil War battlefields in Virginia, West Virginia and Maryland. The NPS works with private landowners, battlefield friends groups, interested community groups, non-

profit organizations, academic institutions, local, state, and tribal governments and Federal agencies for preservation projects and local acquisition of Revolutionary War, War of 1812, and Civil War battlefield land. Grants are awarded several times throughout the year.

On or about March 1, Wrangell-St. Elias will release an Environmental Assessment (EA) for the proposed Snag Creek/Kuskulana Land Exchange. A private land owner within the park boundaries proposes a land exchange for the purposes of expanding an airstrip for non-public use.

On March 2, the Wrangell-St. Elias National Park Subsistence Resource Commission will meet in Mentasta Lake Village, Alaska. The commission is authorized under Section 808 of the Alaska Lands Act and advises the NPS and the Secretary on subsistence program requirements. The meetings do not typically yield media coverage or congressional delegation interest.

On March 4 and 5, Selma to Montgomery National Historical Trail staff will participate in annual commemorations for Bloody Sunday – the 1965 march led by Rep. John Lewis when protesters were attacked by law enforcement. Events are scheduled at the NPS Selma Interpretive Center and Brown Chapel AME Church in Selma, and at the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery. Previous events included marches across the Edmund Pettus Bridge. Approximately 100 - 175 members of Congress have been invited by local organizers to attend.

On March 6, Golden Gate National Recreation Area will begin a repair project of the Crissy Field Promenade, one of the most highly-trafficked trails in the State of California. The \$5 million project will close sections of the waterfront trail in phases over six months.

On or about March 8, the NPS anticipates issuing a Finding of No Significant Impact for the Crystal Cave Redevelopment and Rehabilitation Plan at Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks. The project has widespread support and is a partnership effort with the Sequoia Parks Conservancy, which oversees the cave interpretation and public tours. The project includes updated interpretive media and a redesigned tour introduction area in one of the most popular areas of the park.

On March 9, Visit Philadelphia will hold a media lunch in Philadelphia that will cover the opening of the Museum of the American Revolution and other topics related to Philadelphia's Historic District. Both Independence National Historical Park and Valley Forge National Historical Park will attend and speak.

On March 10, the NPS and partners will hold the grand opening of the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Visitor Center in Church Creek, MD. The event will be public and open to media. The Maryland Congressional Delegation, leaders in the African American community, Department of the Interior leadership and many partners will be invited.

During the week of March 19, and in April, five Kentucky superintendents will participate in meet-and-greets with all of their consulting Tribal Nations. The five superintendents represent Mammoth Cave National Park, Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historical Park, Fort Donelson National Battlefield, Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area, Obed Wild and Scenic River, Cumberland Gap National Historical Park, and the Manhattan Site at Oak

Ridge. The First Nations they are meeting with are: Absentee-Shawnee Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma, The Chickasaw Nation, Eastern Shawnee Tribe, United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians in Oklahoma, Cherokee Nation, Shawnee Tribe, and the Eastern Band of the Cherokee Nation. These are not formal consultation meetings about specific projects.

On March 31, the Virgin Islands will celebrate the 100th anniversary of the sale and transfer of the islands from Denmark to the United States for \$25 million in gold. On March 31, 1917, the sale and transfer took place at the site now designated as Christiansted National Historic Site. The NPS anticipates invitations for the Secretary and NPS leadership from the Governor of the Virgin Islands, the Honorable Kenneth E. Mapp through the Virgin Islands Centennial Commission,

In March, North Cascades National Park Service Complex anticipates starting a pilot reservation program for backcountry camping permits for a percentage of the campsites in some of the most popular areas of the park complex. The permit reservation system, which was proposed in the 2012 Ross Lake General Management Plan, is in response to increased visitation and visitor comments and requests for a reservation system. A cost recovery application fee of \$20 will be charged for the permit reservation application. Public engagement on the reservation system was conducted as part of the GMP planning process.

On and about April 15, the NPS will issue a Solicitation of Request for Proposals to modernize the primary elevator system at Carlsbad Caverns National Park. The modernization will replace the motors and controllers, hoistway equipment, elevator cars, guide rails and steel hoist cables. In addition, an emergency rescue apparatus, which includes an auxiliary motor, auxiliary battery backup and a single car rescue system, will be installed to improve elevator safety operations. The contract is expected to be awarded in May 2017 and be completed in May 2018.

On April 19 - 21, San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park will host the Council of American Maritime Museums (CAMM) annual conference. CAMM is an organization of 88 institutions across the United States working toward the preservation and interpretation of North America's maritime heritage.

ASSISTANT SECRETARY–INDIAN AFFAIRS AND THE BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS AND INDIAN EDUCATION

The Bureau's National Tiwahe Coordinator (NTC) will host a conference call with all Tiwahe tribes to discuss the upcoming Tiwahe conference. The conference is tentatively set to take place in Tucson, AZ at the Pascua Yaqui Reservation, one of the Tiwahe Initiative sites, on Feb. 28 – March 2. The NTC will confirm agenda items and, once the date is finalized, extend invitations to federal partners from the Indian Health Service (IHS), Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF), and Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration (SAMHSA). The NTC will also coordinate with partners from New Zealand's Te Whanau O Waipareira Trust to confirm John Tamihere, Chief Executive Officer for the Te Whanau O Waipareira Trust, as keynote speaker for the conference.

February 17, 2017 is the deadline for nominations and comments on proposed tribal nominees to the Bureau of Indian Education's Accountability Negotiated Rulemaking Committee under the

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), per the Federal Register notice dated 1/18/17.

On February 23, 2017, the Interior Department will hold the first of seven tribal consultation sessions on its advanced notice of proposed rulemaking (ANPRM) to solicit oral and written comments on whether to propose an administrative rule that would comprehensively update 25 CFR Part 140 (Licensed Indian Traders), 8:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. PST, Anacortes, WA at Swinomish Casino & Lodge, per the Federal Register notices dated 12/9/16 and 2/8/17.

On March 21-24, the Midwest Alliance of Sovereign Tribes (MAST) Impact Week Meeting will be held in Washington, DC.

The Division of Energy and Mineral Development (DEMD) has partnered with the American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES) on the 2017 Energy Challenge (EC) for American Indian/Alaskan Native youth which was launched November 2016. It is an energy-specific science fair designed to engage and encourage high school students grades 9-12 to participate in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) education through a creative, hands-on, problem solving and engineering process in an environment similar to a science fair. The deadline for submission of built designs will be the end of April. The Grand Prize winning team will be notified in May, and will travel to Washington D.C. to present their final design and results in June.

BIE Leasing and Fundraising (25 CFR 48): This final rule would implement authority for the Director of BIE to enter into agreements with third parties to lease the land or facilities of a Bureau-operated school in exchange for funding that benefits the school. The comment period on this proposed rule ended August 22; the Office of Regulatory Affairs and Collaborative Action (RACA) is continuing to work with Solicitors Office (SOL) and BIE on the necessary Privacy Act documentation in preparation for publication of the final rule.

Appraisals and Valuations Regulation (CFR part TBD): This rule establishes minimum qualifications for appraisers of Indian trust property, as required by the Indian Trust Asset Reform Act of 2016 (ITARA). The comment period on the proposed rule ended on November 21, 2016. RACA continues to host workgroup sessions to review the comments and prepare the final rule.

Indian Electric Power Utilities (25 CFR 175): This proposed rule would not make any substantive changes to the regulations, but would revise the regulations to be in plain language. The regulations affect only a limited number of Tribes because there are only three BIA electric power utilities: Colorado River (serving the Colorado River Indian Tribes Reservation), Mission Valley Power (serving the Salish & Kootenai Tribes, Flathead Indian Reservation), and San Carlos Irrigation Project (serving Gila River Indian Community). The proposed rule is awaiting AS-IA signature.

Indian Trader Regulations (25 CFR 140): This rule would comprehensively update Part 140 to modernize the implementation of the Indian Trader statutes consistent with the Federal policies of Tribal self-determination and self-governance. The advance notice of proposed rulemaking to solicit comments on potential regulatory revisions and announcing consultation for February and March 2017 published on Friday, December 9. A notice with details on the

venues for Tribal consultations will publish in the Federal Register February 8.

School Facilities Design Handbook Updates (25 CFR 36): The IA Office of Facilities Property and Safety Management (OFPSM) will be conducting four consultation sessions to obtain comments on the revision of the “School Facilities Design Handbook,” dated March 30, 2007, which has been incorporated by reference into 25 CFR 36. This proposed rule would update the incorporation by reference and allow for the 120-day comment period. The handbook updates are highly technical as they merely bring design standards to current industry standards. A proposed rule to incorporate the new Handbook version by reference is in surname. The Federal Register document also announces four Tribal consultation on the Handbook updates to be held across the country.

Revisions to Leasing of Osage Lands for Oil & Gas Mining (25 CFR 226): BIA published a final rule in 2015 that it voluntarily withdrew pending completion of a Regulatory Impact Analysis as a result of litigation. BIA is currently undertaking a Regulatory Impact Analysis at this time in anticipation of proposing revisions to this regulation. A Tribal consultation was held October 27 in Oklahoma regarding whether to revise the regulations; BIA and SOL are developing an initial draft of the regulations for distribution to the Osage Nation as soon as possible.

Potential Revisions to Probate Regulations (25 CFR 15, 25 CFR 40): BIA and SOL identified some discrete revisions to probate regulations that may help streamline processes. Consultation on these revisions were completed in August. The comment period ended on January 4, 2017. BIA and SOL are examining whether a proposed rule is appropriate.

Update to O&M Formula for School Facilities: The current allocation formula for O&M funding was implemented in 1990 and relies upon very granular, up-to-date and accurate inventory for each site, but many sites have not had resources to update their data. This update would instead rely on accepted industry standard benchmarks to allocate O&M funds across all sites and buildings based on actual functional use and program needs. The IA Office of Facilities Property and Safety Management (OFPSM) will be conducting four consultation sessions to obtain comments on the new O&M Formula in conjunction with consultations on the School Facilities Design Handbook revisions. A Federal Register notice announcing the consultation is in surname.

OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL TRUSTEE FOR AMERICAN INDIANS (OST)

March 8-9: Indian Energy and Minerals Steering Committee Meeting, Denver, CO

March 21: BIA Regional Directors Meeting, Washington, DC

ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR LAND AND MINERALS MANAGEMENT

On February 21, the public comment period will end for the scoping period for a natural gas development proposal located approximately 12 miles north of Paonia, CO. Gunnison Energy, LLC’s North Fork Mancos Master Development Plan proposal is adjacent to the BLM Bull Mountain Master Development Plan and includes drilling up to 35 horizontal wells from four new well pads and one existing well pad over the next three years. Three new well pads would

be on National Forest System lands and one on private land. The existing pad is on private land drilling into Federal minerals. As of February 6, 2017, the BLM granted a request by Gunnison County to extend the scoping period by 30 days. All affected counties and interested parties have been notified. BLM will run an ad in the local newspaper as well.

On February 21, BLM-UT State Director Ed Roberson is tentatively scheduled to meet with Sen. Hatch in Washington, D.C. This will be a general meeting, with no specific topics, at the request of the Senator.

On February 23, staff from the office of Rep. Doug LaMalfa (R-CA) will meet with the BLM, U.S. Forest Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to discuss efforts to combat illegal marijuana cultivation on public lands. This meeting follows a request from Rep. LaMalfa for detailed budget information about illegal marijuana eradication, enforcement and environmental cleanup on public lands.

On February 25 – March 1, the National Association of Counties (NACo) Annual Legislative Conference will be held in Washington, DC. More than 2,000 elected and appointed county officials attend the conference, which will focus on Federal policy issues that impact counties and local residents. County attendees participate in educational sessions and meet with Federal officials and members and staff to discuss county perspectives on Federal policies that matter to local communities. Individual counties also request individual meetings with officials throughout DOI. Cynthia Moses-Nedd, Acting Division Chief, BLM Intergovernmental and External Affairs, will attend the meeting.

On February 25 - March 6, Brian St. George, BLM Colorado DSD for Resources and Fire, will travel to Kenya to participate in a Department of the Interior- International Technical Assistance Program project to combat wildlife trafficking. Discussion topics will include governance and peace, security and illegal wildlife trade, rangelands, marine and forest management, wildlife, and enterprise development.

Beginning the week of February 26, the BLM-ID Challis Field Office plans to capture up to 150 wild horses through bait trapping and remove up to 50 within the Challis Herd Management Area (HMA) to reach the Appropriate Management Level (AML) of 185-253. The current population estimate is 285. The gather is expected to be completed by mid-April.

By February 28, the BLM-UT Price Field Office will release for public review an EA analyzing a recreation management plan for the Joe's Valley Bouldering Area. The Joe's Valley Extensive Resource Management Area (ERMA) encompasses 24,930 acres located in north-central Emery County, Utah). Over one million people live within driving distance of Joe's Valley, and the area receives many visitors.

On February 28, BOEM plans to publish the Proposed Notice of Sale for the Cook Inlet Lease Sale 244. The lease sale is tentatively scheduled for June 21, 2017.

In late February, BLM-NV plans to issue the final Dixie Meadows Geothermal Project Environmental Assessment (EA) and Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). The project area consists of approximately 22,021 acres of public land. The project proponent (Ormat) seeks

approval to drill several types of wells (temperature gradient wells, test observation wells, and production wells) at up to 20 specific locations.

In late February, OSMRE's Western Region plans to forward a Mining Plan Decision Document to OSMRE Headquarters for Canyon Fuel Company's Skyline Mine, Flat Canyon Lease Modification for review and submission to the Acting ASLM for signature. Skyline is an underground longwall mining complex located in Carbon County, UT. Canyon Fuels employs 320 people, producing 3 to 4.5 million tons of coal per year at the Skyline Mine.

In late February, OSMRE's Western Region anticipates releasing for public review and comment a determination of NEPA adequacy and unsigned finding of no significant impact for the Twentymile Coal Company's Foidel Creek Mine, CO, prior to making a recommendation on the mining plan modification. This mine has approximately 300 employees. Continued operation of the Foidel Creek Mine is of importance to the local and regional community.

On March 1, BOEM tentatively plans to sign a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) authorizing the use of Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) sand for the Mississippi Coastal Improvements Program Comprehensive Barrier Island Restoration Project (MsCIP) in the Gulf of Mexico. BOEM was a cooperating agency during the preparation of the 2009 Programmatic EIS and the 2016 Supplemental EIS. BOEM independently reviewed the SEIS and found that it adequately evaluates the environmental effects of the proposed action.

On March 3, BOEM plans to publish the Proposed Notice of Sale and Notice of Availability of the Final Environmental Impact Statement for Gulf of Mexico (GOM) Lease Sale 249. The lease sale is scheduled to occur on August 16, 2017, and will be the first sale under the 2017-2022 OCS Oil and Gas Program.

On March 3, BOEM plans to publish the Notice of Availability of the Final GOM Multi-sale Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for 2017-2022 Lease Sales. The Final EIS analyzes 10 region-wide lease sales scheduled in the GOM.

In early March, OSMRE's Western Region (WR) is planning to publish a notice of availability in local newspapers for the Bridger Mine (WY) Mining Plan Modification Draft Environmental Assessment (EA). OSMRE will receive comment on the EA for 30 days.

In early March, OSMRE's WR is planning to publish a notice of availability in local newspapers for the Dry Fork Mine (WY) Mining Plan Modification Draft EA. OSMRE will receive comment on the EA for 30 days.

By March 5, BSEE must file its response to a draft management report it received from the GAO on February 3 entitled, *Oil and Gas Management – Stronger Leadership Commitment Needed at Interior to Improve Offshore Oversight and Internal Management*. BSEE is currently reviewing the report and plans to discuss the findings and recommendations with ASLM.

On March 7 - 9, BOEM plans to host a three-day "Best Management Practices Workshop for Atlantic Offshore Wind Facilities." The workshop will discuss best management practices for preventing, reducing, and monitoring impacts to marine protected species from the development

of offshore wind on the Atlantic OCS.

On March 9, BLM-CO will hold an on-line oil and gas lease sale, offering 16,449.68 acres in the Archuleta, Dolores, Montezuma, and San Miguel counties (SW Colorado).

On March 10, BOEM plans to publish the Notice of Availability of the Draft Supplemental Environmental for GOM Lease Sales 250-251. The Draft Supplemental EIS will analyze two region-wide lease sales scheduled for 2018 in the GOM.

On March 14, BLM-NV will hold an on-line oil and gas lease sale. BLM-NV will offer 67 parcels totaling almost 116,000 acres in the Elko District.

On March 16, BOEM will hold a commercial wind lease sale offshore NC. Nine companies have qualified to participate in the auction. The lease sale area is 24 nautical miles (nm) offshore Kitty Hawk, NC and extends 25.7 nm in a southeasterly direction. BOEM announced the publication of the Final Sale Notice on January 17; a mock auction will be held on March 14.

On or before March 17, Congress may respond to a proposed donation of private land to a BLM wilderness area in NM. On January 17, then-ASLM Janice M. Schneider signed letters notifying Senate and House leadership that DOI intends to accept a gift of approximately 3,590 acres from The Wilderness Land Trust and add those acres to the adjacent Sabinoso Wilderness, consistent with Section 6 of the Wilderness Act.

On March 22, BOEM will hold Lease Sale 247 for the Central Planning Area (CPA) in the Gulf of Mexico (GOM) in New Orleans, LA via livestream. CPA Lease Sale 247 will make 9,118 blocks in the GOM available for leasing; approximately 48.53 million acres.

On March 21 - 23, the BSEE National Inspector's Meeting will be held in Lafayette, LA. This is an annual meeting of all BSEE inspectors from three regions. Training and other items of interest are discussed. BSEE Director opens the 3-day meeting with a presentation to the inspectors.

On March 23, BLM-Eastern States Office (ESO) and UT will hold an on-line oil and gas lease sale. BLM-ESO will offer 1,186.06 acres in Monroe County (within the Wayne National Forest) and BLM-UT will offer 4,174.46 acres in San Juan County.

On March 25 - 26, the Arizona Outdoor Expo will be held in Phoenix. Staff from BLM-AZ's Phoenix District Office will host a booth with Firewise information, an Off-Highway Vehicle trailer and other recreation information. District staff will likely participate in the Expo's Youth Day activities, with specific details yet to be planned.

On March 29 - April 1, the Project Archaeology National Meeting/Society for American Archaeology Annual Meeting will take place in Vancouver, B.C. Project Archaeology focuses on teaching scientific and historical inquiry, cultural understanding, and the importance of protecting America's cultural resources. The Society for American Archaeology is dedicated to the research, interpretation, and protection of the archaeological heritage of the Americas. Various BLM Archaeologists are tentatively scheduled to attend. BLM Archaeologist Jeanne

Moe will chair a research symposium on archaeology education.

In March, the BLM plans to issue the Boardman to Hemingway Record of Decision (ROD). The Biological Opinion (BO), which is being drafted by the National Marine Fisheries Service, is a necessary precursor to the ROD. The BO is targeted for completion on February 28. Oregon Plan amendments are being handled concurrently and that decision will be issued simultaneously with the ROD for the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Approval to issue a grant.

In early April, OSMRE's WR plans to publish a Notice of Availability in local newspapers for the Cordero Rojo Mine (WY) Mining Plan Modification "draft" Environmental Assessment. OSMRE will receive comment on the EA for 30 days.

ASSISTANT SECRETARY POLICY, MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET

Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill Settlement. On April 4, 2017, per the terms of the 2016 Deepwater Horizon Consent Decree, BP is scheduled to make the first of 15 annual payments to the DOI Natural Resource Damage Assessment and Restoration (NRDAR) Fund. This \$489,655,172 payment will be allocated among seven sub-accounts - Open Ocean, Region-wide, and one for each affected State (AL, FL, LA, MS, and TX). These and all future settlement funds will be disbursed as directed by the co-trustees in accordance with publicly-reviewed restoration plans.

Third DATA Act Letter from Senator Warner. The Department received a third letter from Senator Mark Warner regarding DATA Act implementation on January 18, 2017. The letter urges DOI to continue to prioritize DATA Act efforts and move forward with deliberate speed. A response to the letter has been drafted and is being reviewed.

DATA Act Implementation Progress Reporting. DOI's monthly report on progress toward full DATA Act implementation is in the final stages of review and will be transmitted to OMB and Treasury on Tuesday, February 7, 2017. Report components include: (1) updated assessment of what specific files, data elements and/or approximate dollar amounts will not be reported to the DATA Act broker, as of May 2017, and projected reporting dates; (2) updated challenges and mitigation strategy for outlined challenges; (3) updated timeline for implementing mitigation strategies, including estimated completion dates; and (4) summary of steps taken in previous month narrative.

Internal Control and Audit Follow-up. The Department has an annual goal of closing 85% of corrective actions scheduled for closure in the current FY to address issues raised in OIG and GAO engagements. As of January 31, 2017, the Department has closed 17 percent of open audit recommendations scheduled for closure in FY 2017.

DOI National Preparedness Report. In March of 2017, the DOI National Preparedness Report (NPR) will be shared with the President. The Office of Emergency Management (OEM) coordinated a department-wide review of the draft NPR on January 28 with the expectation of receiving the final draft for review in late February from the National Security Council – Disaster Resilience Group.

Launch of an Online Museum Exhibit on the American Bison. The Interior Museum

Program in the Office of Acquisition and Property Management (PAM) plans to launch an online museum exhibit entitled "The American Bison: A National Symbol" on the Google Arts and Culture platform in late February. The exhibit will showcase approximately 30 museum objects and archives from DOI Bureaus, the Interior Museum, and the Indian Arts and Crafts Board. The artifacts relate to the bison through the fossil record, archaeological excavations, historical events, Native American reliance on the bison, artworks, and the symbolic use of the bison by DOI.

The USGS Natural Value Resource Center. The USGS Natural Value Resource Center (NVRC) website was launched. The site is intended to improve the efficiency of natural resource management in two ways: helping understand the tradeoffs associated with land management decisions; and foster interagency engagement, thereby facilitating the transfer of relevant expertise across bureaus.

Wildland Fire Leadership Council (WFLC), March 2, 2017. Deputy Assistant Secretary Public Safety, Resource Protection and Emergency Services (PRE) Harry Humbert and Office of Wildland Fire (OWF) Director Rice will host the Wildland Fire Leadership Council (WFLC) meeting at the Interior Operations Center. The meeting will provide awareness of ongoing transition activities and pre-fire season readiness.

Indian Energy Minerals Steering Committee, March 8-9, 2017. The Indian Energy Minerals Steering Committee (IEMSC) meeting provides agencies the opportunity to address energy issues, concerns, challenges, and opportunities in Indian Country. The meeting will be held in Denver, with attendees from: the Office of the Special Trustee (OST), Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Office of Natural Resources Revenue (ONRR), and the Solicitor's Office (SOL).

Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) 36th Board Meeting, March 8-9, 2017. The Office of Natural Resources Revenue (ONRR) Deputy Director and the USEITI Secretariat will travel to attend the EITI Board Meeting in Bogota, Columbia. Report-outs of the Board Finance, Validation, and Governance and Oversight Committees are of particular interest to all Implementing Countries for this meeting. USEITI also expects feedback on the USEITI 2017 Work Plan, the Beneficial Ownership Roadmap, and the USEITI Request to Extend Partial Adapted Implementation for USEITI Subnational Revenues.

National Invasive Species Awareness Week, February 27-March 3, 2017. The National Invasive Species Council (NISC) Secretariat will participate in National Invasive Species Awareness Week (NISAW). The NISC Secretariat will provide an informational booth and event speakers during the Congressional Fair on March 1.

Arctic Council's Senior Arctic Officials (SAO) Meeting, March 7-9, 2017. The last SAO meeting of the U.S. Chairmanship of the Arctic Council will take place in Juneau, Alaska. Several U.S. Chairmanship deliverables will be put forth for approval, including the Arctic Resilience Action Framework.

DOI Economics Conference, April 5-7, 2017. This conference, organized by the Office of Policy Analysis (PPA), is an opportunity for the Interior economics community to convene on

current issues of interest, collaborate across bureaus, identify key economics research challenges that are important to DOI's programs and activities, and build community. This meeting is not open to the press.

National Adaptation Forum, May 9-11, 2017. Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and Office of Policy Analysis (PPA) staff are organizing a session showcasing a BIA natural resources program across the 12 regions at the National Adaptation Forum.

UCLA Indian Data Governance Workshop, May 18-19, Los Angeles. The Office of Policy Analysis (PPA) is working with UCLA and others to develop an agenda and invitation list for a workshop to address Indian data issues.

Rules and Regulations for Publication in 2017

OMB CN 1012-0005: 30 CFR Parts 1202, 1204, and 1206, Federal Oil and Gas Valuation. To comply with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA), ONRR is notifying the public, via a 30-day *Federal Register* notice (FRN), that we will submit to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) an Information Collection Request (ICR) for a renewal approval of paperwork requirements in ONRR's regulations under title 30, *Code of Federal Regulations* (CFR), parts 1202, 1204, and 1206. This ICR pertains to (1) Federal oil and gas valuation regulations, which include transportation and processing regulatory allowance limits; and (2) accounting and auditing relief for marginal properties. Also, there is one form (ONRR-4393 [*Request to Exceed Regulatory Allowance Limitation*]) associated with this information collection. To ensure industry's continuing ability to claim and support Federal oil and gas transportation and processing deductions and ONRR's continuing ability to verify those deductions, ONRR prepared and industry commented on a proposed information collection renewal. As a matter of routine business, spurred by the existing information collection's January 31, 2017 expiration date, and not as a part of any new rulemaking, ONRR sent the final OMB-approved renewal notice to the *Federal Register* earlier this month for publication before month's end. With the change in Presidential Administrations, all DOI agencies were instructed to recall any documents at the *Federal Register* awaiting publication so that the new Administration's officials may review the planned publications. ONRR recalled the above-described information collection renewal notice, as requested. ONRR submitted the renewal notice to DOI's Executive Secretariat with a new request for approval for publication so that ONRR can continue its routine business and industry can justify their deductions. On January 27, 2017, ONRR received notice that the Department approved the publication. On January 31, 2017, OMB uploaded the ICR to ROCIS, and ONRR sent the 30-day FRN to the Office of the Federal Register for publication [scheduled date is Monday, February 6, 2017].

AA17: Calendar Year 2017 Civil Monetary Penalties Inflation Adjustments. Under the Federal Civil Penalties Inflation Adjustment Act of 1990 (Act), codified as amended at 28 U.S.C. 2461 note, and recent Office of Management and Budget (OMB) guidance, ONRR is publishing this interim final rule to adjust the amount of our Civil Monetary Penalties (CMPs) for calendar year 2017 and to announce the process by which we will adjust and announce the amount of our CMPs in future calendar years. In the future, ONRR intends to use the guidance provided by OMB by December 15 of each calendar year, as required by § 7 of the Act, to calculate the maximum CMPs for the following calendar year. Before January 15 of each year, ONRR will

publish in the Federal Register and post on its publicly accessible website a simple notice of the maximum CMPs for that year. This rule is currently in the Departmental review and surname clearance process.

ASSISTANT SECRETARY - WATER & SCIENCE

As soon as **February 20**, the USGS will announce a new study analyzing livestock grazing records from Wyoming that found broad-scale responses of greater sage-grouse populations to livestock management. Scientists used 11 years of annual population counts of greater sage-grouse coupled with grazing records from BLM allotments across Wyoming to assess sage-grouse population trends relative to differences in livestock management. Researchers discovered that grazing can have both positive and negative effects on greater sage-grouse population trends, depending on the level of grazing and when it occurred during the growing season. The paper will be published in *Ecological Applications* and a news release is planned.

In February, Reclamation plans to release a new WaterSMART Water Marketing funding opportunity for collaborative planning efforts that use water marketing to proactively address water supply shortages and increase water management flexibility. Reclamation will provide funding on a 50/50 cost-shared basis.

In the coming weeks, Reclamation and Sites Project Authority anticipate releasing a press release recognizing Sites Project Authority as the new partner for the North-of-the-Delta Offstream Storage (NODOS) Investigation. The press release will also announce Sites Project Authority's Notice of Preparation and upcoming scoping meetings to be conducted in February. Reclamation issued a 2013 Progress Report, but will not issue a new Notice of Intent, and will be present at the scoping meetings to inform the public of Reclamation's role in the NODOS Investigation. Media interest is anticipated.

In the coming weeks, a USGS-authored paper will be released about the potential release of mercury into the environment from thawing permafrost. The embargoed paper will be published in the journal *Nature*, and a news release is planned. *Nature* may also issue a news release.

In the coming weeks, USGS will announce a new paper examining the effects of the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill on marine invertebrate animals in sediments near deep sea corals in the Gulf of Mexico. The results show a complex pattern of changes consistent with known biological effects of exposure to oil. The study is the first to look at the effects of Deepwater Horizon oil in sediments at multiple sites near deep coral reefs. The paper will be published in *Marine Ecology Progress Series* and a news release is planned.

In the coming weeks, USGS will announce a new Scientific Investigation Report which explores drought frequency and intensity in the U.S. over the past half century. Responding to concerns that climate change will lead to deeper or longer droughts, and perceptions of worsening droughts in the western U.S., scientists compared streamgage data from 1951-1982 with data from the same gages in 1983-2014. Changes in drought frequency, duration or severity were identified in 4 of 9 ecoregions. Parts of the Southeastern U.S., Texas and California had more frequent droughts from the 1980s onward, while the Central Plains and the Northeast had less frequent droughts. A news release is planned.

On **March 21-22**, a meeting of the National Geospatial Advisory Committee federal advisory committee is planned at Main Interior. This meeting will be followed by a March 23 meeting of the Federal Geographic Data Committee Steering Committee, also at Main Interior.

In the first two weeks of April, Reclamation and the National Park Service will have a reopening ceremony at Glen Canyon Dam Carl Hayden Visitor Center to highlight all new museum exhibits in the visitor center, which were completed late last fall. Reclamation is preparing an event invitation for the Department.