

From: Sutherland, Ryan
Sent: 2017-06-20T19:01:53-04:00
Importance: Normal
Subject: Daily News Report - June 20
Received: 2017-06-20T19:02:04-04:00
[Daily News Report June 20.docx](#)

Attached is the daily news report for June 20

Ryan Sutherland
Bureau of Land Management Utah
Public Affairs Specialist
rrsutherland@blm.gov
801 539 4089



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

DAILY NEWS REPORT - UTAH

UTAH – TOP STORIES – JUNE 17, 2017

1. Tribes gear up for major legal battle with Trump over Bears Ears National Monument

Think Progress, June 19 | Mark Hand

Native American tribes spent decades trying to get the federal government to protect their historic lands in Utah from desecration and abuse. Their hard work finally paid off when President Barack Obama last year agreed to turn 1.35 million acres of land in the southeastern part of the state into the new Bears Ears National Monument.

2. At Utah's Fantasy Canyon, legends in the wind, natural wonders and natural gas development on the horizon

The Salt Lake Tribune, June 20 | Erin Alberty

Uintah County • Fantasy Canyon is not quite literally a diamond in a coal mine.

It is ... well, an extremely pretty thing in a natural gas field.

3. Crews make headway on Brian Head fire; residents, vacationers still out of homes

KSL News, June 19 | Annie Knox

BRIAN HEAD, Iron County — Winds that swept a wildfire up a canyon and into a resort town over the weekend have died down, allowing firefighters to hold the blaze to roughly 1,000 acres.

4. Op-ed: National parks have more to offer than gas — why won't the government protect them?

The Hill, June 20 | Ashley Korenblat

Making a living off the land used to be limited to taking something away from it, like coal, oil, gas or timber — and the Bureau of Land Management that green lights project on public lands still sees it that way. But today our public lands are bringing long-term sustained growth to rural economies, while simultaneously protecting America's best idea: our national parks.



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

DAILY NEWS REPORT - UTAH

5. 10 tips to help you prepare for your best camping trip

KSL News, June 20 | Emily Long

THE GREAT OUTDOORS — Camping season is in full swing. Time to pack up the car and explore some of Utah's 7,000 campsites—and limitless others if you backpack.

6. Roots run deep for researcher battling invasive grass in Glen Canyon

The Salt Lake Tribune, June 20 | Erin Alberty

In a remote canyon off the northern reaches of Lake Powell, a fourwing saltbush is growing deep roots as part of Ka-Voka Jackson's experimental plots of native plants.

E&E/NATIONAL NEWS – TOP STORIES

1. Interior Does Not Expect to Follow White House Plans on Cuts to Parks

The Morning Consult, June 20 | Jack Fitzpatrick

Department of the Interior officials do not expect to go through with the White House's proposed cuts to national parks throughout the country, a department spokeswoman said Tuesday.

2. NATIONAL MONUMENTS: Zinke says Colo. site might not change, defends tribal talks

E & E News, June 20 | Jennifer Yachnin

Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke said today that he is unlikely to propose any changes to the Canyons of the Ancients National Monument in Colorado as he completes work on a review of dozens of national monuments later this summer.

3. INTERIOR: Zinke envisions cutting 4,000 full-time staff

E & E News, June 20 | Kellie Lunney

Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke indicated today that the department is looking at relocating more resources out West as part of a larger management reorganization.



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

DAILY NEWS REPORT - UTAH

4. REGULATIONS: OMB mulls fracking rollback as Dems slam methane freeze

E & E News, June 20 | Ellen M. Gilmer

The Obama administration's primary effort to address impacts from hydraulic fracturing on public lands is officially on track to be scrapped.

5. PUBLIC LANDS: Green group rallying support for national monuments

E & E News, June 20 | Jennifer Yachnin

The League of Conservation Voters today unveiled a new \$600,000 campaign to rally support for public lands, as the Trump administration conducts a review of dozens of national monuments for potential rescissions.

6. NATIONAL MONUMENTS: Industry ready to pounce if Bears Ears shrinks

E & E News, June 20 | Brian Maffly, Salt Lake Tribune

The oil and gas industry hopes to tap hydrocarbon deposits under parts of Bears Ears National Monument that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke may recommend removing from monument status, according to Bureau of Land Management records.

7. NEVADA STANDOFF: Bundys seek release, claim violation of right to swift trial

E & E News, June 20 | Jennifer Yachnin

Nevada rancher Cliven Bundy and eight co-defendants last week filed an emergency motion seeking their release from federal custody, arguing that their due process rights have been violated as they await trial over charges related to the 2014 armed standoff between ranchers and federal agents.

8. NATIONAL PARKS: Program helps worshippers find God on public lands

E & E News, June 20 | Kelsey Dallas, Salt Lake City Deseret News

Visitors to dozens of national parks can find a unique way to worship on Sunday mornings.



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

DAILY NEWS REPORT - UTAH

UTAH – FULL STORY

1. Tribes gear up for major legal battle with Trump over Bears Ears National Monument

Think Progress, June 19 | Mark Hand

Native American tribes spent decades trying to get the federal government to protect their historic lands in Utah from desecration and abuse. Their hard work finally paid off when President Barack Obama last year agreed to turn 1.35 million acres of land in the southeastern part of the state into the new Bears Ears National Monument.

But President Donald Trump made revoking the designation—or at least reducing the size of the national monument—a top priority upon entering the White House. After years of struggling to gain protections for the land, Native Americans are once again mobilizing a defense of Bears Ears—and if the president chooses to tamper with the national monument designation, they're confident they would win in court.

Simply put, presidents lack the authority to shrink the size of a monument, according to Mark Squillace, a professor of law at the University of Colorado Law School and the former director of its Natural Resources Law Center. When Congress delegated power to the president to reserve land as national monuments under the Antiquities Act, it did not include the power to make modifications to the monument or revoke the monument's status, he told ThinkProgress.

Squillace is not prepared to call a legal challenge to any potential threat to Bears Ears “a slam-dunk case.” But he emphasized that efforts to abolish or diminish national monuments are powers reserved to Congress.

The Trump administration appears to believe otherwise. In an interim report released last week, Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke recommended that Trump significantly reduce the size of Bears Ears National Monument, an area of land that is considered sacred and is home to an estimated 100,000 archaeological sites.

Though Zinke did not say how many acres would be cut from the monument, he did suggest there are “a lot more” landscapes that do not need to be protected as a national monument than there are historical artifacts and sacred sites that warrant protection under the Antiquities Act of 1906.



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

DAILY NEWS REPORT - UTAH

Tribal and conservation groups agree with Squillace's legal interpretation. While the Antiquities Act granted presidents the power to designate national monuments, the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 made it even more explicit that Congress reserved for itself, not the president, the power to modify or revoke the designations, said Dan Hartinger, national monuments campaign manager for the Wilderness Society.

Zinke "made it pretty clear" he intends to shrink Bears Ears "drastically and carve it up into much smaller postage-stamp sized areas that are separated from each other and managed separately," Hartinger said. A reduction of the size of the Bears Ears national monument that Zinke appears to have proposed would be "akin to a revocation," he argued.

Trump signed an executive order in April that gave the Department of the Interior 120 days to file a report evaluating two decades' worth of national monument designations under the Antiquities Act. The executive order also directed Zinke to submit an interim report on Bears Ears within 45 days.

The recommendations in the interim report, released a week ago, will likely be addressed by Trump later this year. If the president chooses to approve Zinke's recommendations, Squillace predicts tribes will be among the first to go to court to stop them from going into effect.

Trump's decision to target Bears Ears angered Native Americans. Zinke then ratcheted up tensions when he claimed last Monday that Native American leaders supported the decision to shrink the size of the national monument. The Interior secretary told reporters during a conference call that Native leaders were "very happy" about the proposal and "willing to work with us" on co-managing a reduced Bears Ears.

Native leaders immediately issued statements accusing Zinke of misrepresenting their views on Bears Ears. Davis Filfred, a Navajo Nation Council Delegate, blasted Zinke's claim that tribes were "happy" with the proposal. "I haven't been happy with [Zinke] since day one. I don't know what that word happy is," Filfred told the Center for Western Priorities, a conservation and advocacy organization. "We don't want it to be rescinded. We wanted it left alone."

Bears Ears was protected at the request of the Navajo, Hopi, Ute, Ute Mountain Ute, and Zuni tribes, all with strong historical, spiritual, and cultural ties to the monument. The Navajo Nation "does not believe that [Zinke's] statement reflects our position," Katherine Belzowski, an attorney with the Navajo Nation Department of Justice, told ThinkProgress.



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

DAILY NEWS REPORT - UTAH

“We don’t know why he has that impression. We don’t know of anyone who would have spoken to him to give him that idea that this is something that we were satisfied with,” Belzowski said.

Under the Antiquities Act, 16 presidents have proclaimed 157 national monuments. “For more than 100 years, presidents from Teddy Roosevelt to Barack Obama have used the Antiquities Act to protect our historical, scientific, and cultural heritage, often at the very moment when these resources were at risk of exploitation,” Squillace wrote in an article that he co-authored with three other law professors and was published in the June issue of the Virginia Law Review.

“Courts should defer to the choices made by the president proclaiming the monument and the relevant objects designated for protection. Otherwise, a future president could undermine the one-way conservation authority afforded the president under the Antiquities Act and the congressional decision to reserve for itself the authority to abolish or modify national monuments,” Squillace and his co-authors wrote in the article.

Some conservative legal experts believe presidents have the power to revoke and make changes to a national monument. Arguments that limit the president’s authority to significantly reduce prior national monument designations are “based on the erroneous premise that the president lacks authority to revoke monuments,” law professor John Yoo and attorney Todd Gaziano argued in a report published in March by the American Enterprise Institute.

There are past cases when presidents reduced the size of a national monument. But those boundary changes were left intact because they were not challenged in court. If Trump chooses to reduce the size of Bears Ears or another national monument, a court challenge would be guaranteed.

During his review of Bears Ears, Zinke met with tribal leaders in Salt Lake City for about two hours to discuss the national monument, Belzowski said. Zinke spent the bulk of his time getting the input of Utah’s congressional delegation, who opposed the national monument designation, and local officials, including San Juan County Commission leader Phil Lyman, who strenuously opposes the monument designation. Lyman once reportedly declared tribal input wholly irrelevant because they “lost the war.”

Squillace emphasized that a president does not have a legal obligation to consult with tribal leaders—or state and local politicians—when making decisions on national monuments. Under



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

DAILY NEWS REPORT - UTAH

the National Historic Preservation Act, there would normally be an obligation for agencies to allow tribes to participate in the decision-making process through a formal consultation process.

“But a president is not bound by the National Historic Preservation Act because the president is not considered an agency for the purposes of administrative law,” he said.

The same principle held true for Trump’s decision on whether to withdraw from the Paris climate agreement. No law required the president to consult with any outside groups prior to making his decision—and, according to news reports, Trump chose to keep any discussions on the Paris agreement in-house among his closest advisers.

Zinke’s decision to spend more time with Utah officials who oppose the national monument status demonstrated a lack of an evenhanded approach between government, business, and tribal stakeholders, according to tribal officials. “By cherry-picking a few Navajo people from San Juan County, you are undermining the clear position of the Navajo Nation tribal government,” Navajo Nation councilmember LoRenzo Bates said.

Zinke’s report also included several recommendations directed at Congress, including enabling tribal co-management of the monument. The Interior secretary asked Congress to create alternate designations such as national conservation or recreation areas within what is currently Bears Ears National Monument, and to clarify wilderness management practices within national monuments.

But Hartinger contends Congress does have the desire to take up any measures that would weaken the national monument system. “If you look last year, the Utah delegation had a bill called the Public Lands Initiative that, despite having two committee chairman and a very senior member of the Senate in their delegation drafting the bill, they couldn’t even get it through one chamber of Congress, which speaks to how unpopular their legislation was,” he said.

The failed Public Lands Initiative, according to the Grand Canyon Trust, would have transferred 100,000 acres of the Ute Tribe of Utah land to the state of Utah for fossil fuel development, diminished the voice of Native American tribes in management of the Bears Ears cultural landscape, encouraged development of fossil fuels and uranium, prohibited “sensible management” of livestock grazing, and handed over public lands and public roads to the state of Utah to further the state’s “anti-public lands agenda.”



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

DAILY NEWS REPORT - UTAH

The Interior Department's final report, with recommendations for all 27 monuments, including Bears Ears, is scheduled to be sent to the president on August 24.

Public land advocates believe the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument in Utah and the Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument could be next on Zinke's hit list.

"There are several other national monuments where people are already mobilizing and submitting comments," the Navajo Nation's Belzowski said. "All those national monuments in the executive order are on the table for action taken against them."

Hartinger also is on guard for new attacks on national monuments. The Trump administration's willingness "to test dubious legal authority to roll back drastically a national monument that by some common analysis found that 96 percent of public comments supported the continued protection of shows that we can't rule anything out," he said.

"Once you made it clear that you are willing to contravene legal opinions and over a century of use of the Antiquities Act, that's definitely a fear," Hartinger said.

[BACK](#)

2. At Utah's Fantasy Canyon, legends in the wind, natural wonders and natural gas development on the horizon

The Salt Lake Tribune, June 20 | Erin Alberty

Uintah County • Fantasy Canyon is not quite literally a diamond in a coal mine.

It is ... well, an extremely pretty thing in a natural gas field.

Ghoulish formations of sandstone are caught in writhing poses like still frames from a 50-million-year-old reel of film. That's about how long ago sandstone, siltstone and shale began to form at the shore of the ancient Lake Uinta, according to geologists with the U.S. Bureau of Land Management. Some of the sandstone was harder than the surrounding rock, which weathered at various rates and produced the squiggly formations of Fantasy Canyon.

Fantasy Canyon is often compared to Goblin Valley, though the area is more compact and the rock at Fantasy is badlands gray rather than the warm orange of southern Utah. I think the rock



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

DAILY NEWS REPORT - UTAH

formations at Fantasy are even more intricate and beautiful. A map at the trailhead puts image-in-the-clouds labels on various rocks — such as "diving otter," "Mickey Mouse" and "yawning lady" — and corresponding numbered markers can be found along the trail.

Another difference between Fantasy Canyon and Goblin Valley: the scores of drilling operations in the immediate vicinity. The landscape is strewn with wellheads and pipes, and while the BLM appears to have kept them out of direct sight-lines from of the canyon itself, the hike to the top offers a vista that is mostly industrial.

There is so much there — trucks, production tanks, warning signs — that it is hard to even envision the place as wild, and that blunts the grief I normally feel when I see human activity blighting natural beauty. Oil and gas extraction is the long-established (if somewhat unstable) center of the Uintah Basin's economy. Our modern world exacts some losses; the land around Fantasy Canyon is one of them. Other hikers have reported noise during the day and bright lights through the night. The development here is overwhelming, with roads criss-crossing each other in city-like density. If all industry were to suddenly stop in its tracks, this patch of desert would bear its marks for a very long time. The wilderness is long gone.

But I think Fantasy Canyon can be instructive as we look at potential development on other sensitive sites around Utah. One of the wells here was the first one. It always starts with just one hole in the ground.

A Ute legend about Fantasy Canyon, told in 1972 by Muse Harris (aka Chief Red Moose) and printed for display on the trailhead kiosk, was either brilliantly prescient or a masterwork in shade:

"One day, the story goes, the evil creatures of the nether regions, tired of living in the dark and dank, decided to dig up to the surface and take over everything above and below the earth. They dug and the ground trembled and rumbled in their work."

The story, as written out by interviewer George E. Stewart, goes on to explain that the coyotes, eagles, wild horses and other spiritual forces summoned the North God, who froze the evil creatures: "The Devil Chief, the Great Mother Witch, the magician and all the rest stand there just as they stood at the instant the cold struck long ago."



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

DAILY NEWS REPORT - UTAH

"When the warmth came back, again the West Wind blew and as the ice melted, the dust took its place and now the monsters stand in the pit they dug all of them turned to stone. It is a warning to the evil ones down in hell to leave the good green earth alone."

[BACK](#)

3. Crews make headway on Brian Head fire; residents, vacationers still out of homes

KSL News, June 19 | Annie Knox

BRIAN HEAD, Iron County — Winds that swept a wildfire up a canyon and into a resort town over the weekend have died down, allowing firefighters to hold the blaze to roughly 1,000 acres.

"Weather is on our side today," Erin Darboven, spokeswoman for the Bureau of Land Management's West Desert District, said Monday.

The milder gusts allowed helicopters to more easily spray orange clouds of fire retardant over burning pines near Brian Head, Darboven said. Crews also were on foot with chainsaws and hoses, and had 4 percent of the fire contained late Monday.

Despite the improved outlook, evacuations remained in place for roughly 750 visitors and residents.

The emergency evacuations on Saturday supplied more adrenaline than some vacationers had bargained for.

Jennifer Violand, who was visiting from South Jordan on a weekend mountain biking trip with her family, heard a knock and opened her cabin door to find a fire marshal telling her group to hurry down the canyon road.

"It was kind of a weird, panicky feeling," Violand said. On Monday, she returned temporarily for their bikes and belongings.

The 15-mile stretch of state Route 143 from Parowan to Cedar Breaks National Monument remained closed, but the Utah Highway Patrol permitted some people like Violand to enter with an officer and retrieve medications or other essentials.



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

DAILY NEWS REPORT - UTAH

The evacuations were more than just a precaution.

One home was destroyed and three cabins were damaged in the village that is a five-minute drive from Cedar Breaks National Monument's sweeping vistas and sandstone cliffs.

The U.S. Forest Service reported that someone started the blaze about 12:15 p.m. Saturday. No other details about what sparked the fire were available Monday.

The flames spread quickly, racing up the canyon and consuming 500 acres within hours. Plumes of smoke were seen above the ski village of 86 full-time residents as helicopters sprayed orange chemicals to douse the flames.

The fire, which reached 976 acres Monday, was "still very active." Some 420 firefighters were working on the ground or by air, and none sustained any injuries, Darboven said.

Federal disaster relief managers pledged to help pay for recovery costs on public property over the weekend, but business owners and homeowners aren't eligible for the help.

The fire torched land belonging to the town and threatened to move into the Dixie National Forest as the mercury was expected to rise to 98 degrees Monday.

And the potential for more fires will grow as the temperatures climb this summer, fire officials warn.

Darboven cautions Utah campers over the Fourth of July weekend to be careful with fireworks and check local fire restrictions.

Gov. Gary Herbert is set to touch down in Brian Head on Tuesday to get a firsthand look at the damage, speak with local and state officials there, and urge wildfire-prevention measures.

Snowfield fire

A new fire started burning Monday morning on the west side of I-15 just north of Pintura, which is about 25 miles north of St. George.

Fire managers said the blaze was 100 percent contained Monday night, having burned 140 acres.



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

DAILY NEWS REPORT - UTAH

The frontage road near the fire remained closed as crews mop up the fire. It is believed to be human-caused.

Choke Cherry fire

The Choke Cherry fire burning 5 to 6 miles southwest of Circleville in Piute County was 50 percent contained Monday, according to a news release from the Central Utah Fire Agency.

It has burned about 157 acres and the cause is under investigation.

Forest Road 121 at Birch Creek remained closed as crews worked on the fire Monday.

Bonanza fire

In Uintah County, a fire near the town of Bonanza was 25 percent contained Monday morning. It has burned 2,453 acres. State Route 45 near that fire reopened Sunday.

[BACK](#)

4. Op-ed: National parks have more to offer than gas — why won't the government protect them?

The Hill, June 20 | Ashley Korenblat

Making a living off the land used to be limited to taking something away from it, like coal, oil, gas or timber — and the Bureau of Land Management that green lights project on public lands still sees it that way. But today our public lands are bringing long-term sustained growth to rural economies, while simultaneously protecting America's best idea: our national parks.

Last year alone, 330 million visitors experienced the wonder of our parks and historic sites, contributing nearly \$35 billion to the U.S. economy. Outdoor recreation, in general, has hit \$887 billion, and will now be counted as a portion of the nation's gross domestic product.

The outdoor recreation industry is changing the way America does business. Recreation assets play an increasingly important role in mainstream business development and economic renewal in cities and rural areas. Proximity to protected open spaces makes for desirable places to live and work. In the 2016 Deloitte Millennial Survey, work/life balance outranked career progression for the majority of millennials.



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

DAILY NEWS REPORT - UTAH

Corporations are using the quality of life that results from access to the outdoors as a key tool for recruiting and retaining staff. Entrepreneurs who can be located wherever they please are doing just that, and retirees are bringing significant non-labor income to communities with high-quality outdoor amenities.

Communities that used to depend on the coal, oil, gas and timber now have an opportunity to supplement those revenue sources by investing in access to recreation assets. The opposite of a commodity is a branded product — a name, a feeling, a lifestyle. Communities who have created brands for themselves are attracting both visitors and businesses, who in turn use the town's brand to attract key talent. And those communities next to national parks or a monument are finding themselves with a built-in brand.

But poorly planned energy development could threaten these communities. Just last month in Utah, Zion National Park was being threatened by oil and gas leases on its doorstep. Local voices including the Washington County commissioners, the governor and some 40,000 members of the public convinced the Bureau of Land Management to pull these leases. Really they should never have been offered in the first place.

We are at a key moment in the evolution of public lands. There was a time when cheap energy was the best way to attract business investment, but in the 21st century attracting and retaining residents and employees is what keeps economies healthy. Allowing industrial development to mar the iconic landscapes of our national parks is like burning the Mona Lisa to heat the house for an hour.

Drilling outside of Zion would threaten Utah's \$12 billion outdoor recreation economy, not to mention inhibit recruitment of businesses like Goldman Sachs and Adobe, who have chosen Utah because of the opportunities to get into the great outdoors.

On June 22 the bureau will decide whether to allow oil and gas development at the entrance to Dinosaur National Monument in Uintah County, Utah. This region is working hard to recover from today's low oil and gas prices and has all kinds of opportunities to diversify its economy through attracting both visitors and new businesses. But leasing parcels right up to the edge of Dinosaur National Monument will only discourage investment in needed recreation infrastructure and make business recruitment that much harder. If we aren't protecting the national park experience, how can we hope to protect the various bike trails, ATV routes and river sections that are bringing new revenue to the region?



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

DAILY NEWS REPORT - UTAH

But it doesn't end with Dinosaur National Monument — Canyonlands, Chaco Canyon, Capitol Reef, Carlsbad Caverns, Mesa Verde and Zion National Parks are all threatened by oil and gas leases on adjacent lands. Those lands that contain recreation opportunities that are critical to local economies. These parks and the lands around them are economic drivers that can help communities weather the boom and bust of oil and gas.

In the West, we lose a football field's worth of natural areas to human development every two and a half minutes. There are over 14 million acres of undrilled lands already leased for oil and gas across our country. As local governments and businesses increasingly benefit from land in its natural state, the Bureau of Land Management needs to acknowledge that resource extraction is no longer the only way to make a living off the land. Tying up more land in oil and gas leases inhibits diversification and threatens both our national parks and the communities that depend on them.

Ashley Korenblat is CEO of cycling tour company Western Spirit Cycling and managing director of Public Land Solutions a recreation planning advocacy group.

[BACK](#)

5. **10 tips to help you prepare for your best camping trip**

KSL News, June 20 | Emily Long

THE GREAT OUTDOORS — Camping season is in full swing. Time to pack up the car and explore some of Utah's 7,000 campsites—and limitless others if you backpack.

You probably know basic camping safety and have your camping packing lists down pat, but to ensure you're ready to embark on your best camping season yet in Utah, here are some tips to remember.

1. Tell people where you're going

Whether you're venturing into the high Uintas or the southern Utah desert, your cellphone reception might ditch you along the way. That's why you should always tell friends and family where you're going, how long you're camping and when to expect your return.

You can also purchase a Utah Search and Rescue Assistance (USARA) card in case you get lost or injured while camping. These cards support the volunteer search and rescue efforts that are



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

DAILY NEWS REPORT - UTAH

responsible for saving hundreds of people in Utah each year. Plus, these cards prepay the cost of a rescue, sparing you thousands of dollars in bills.

2. Pack enough water

Utah is semiarid, and you can quickly become dehydrated in the dry desert air. If you're camping in the backcountry and can't haul the amount of water you'll need on your trip, bring a water purifier. Utah has tons of mountain streams thanks to snow melt, but many of these can still be unsafe to drink from without proper purification.

3. Be wary of wildfires

Utah gets really hot and dry — the perfect recipe for wildfires. If you go camping and a wildfire breaks out in your area, here are some tips from the National Geographic:

Don't try to outrun the blaze. Instead, look for a body of water such as a pond or river to crouch in.

If there is no water nearby, find a depressed, cleared area with little vegetation, lie low to the ground, and cover your body with wet clothing, a blanket or soil. Stay low and covered until the fire passes.

Also, be very careful to not cause a wildfire. Put fires out with water and make sure the ashes are cool before you leave the area. Be sure to always check for fire restrictions in the area you go camping and never light fireworks in wilderness areas — they're forbidden in Utah's parks.

4. Do not enter mines

Utah is mining country, and abandoned mines pose a danger to campers. The Bureau of Land Management says, "The best advice we can give you is stay out and stay alive!" If you see mines, don't go inside.

5. Watch for wildlife

Luckily, rattlesnakes are the only venomous snakes in Utah. However, there are also black bears, mountain lions, moose, and plenty of other critters that can do you harm if they feel threatened. Black bears are most commonly spotted in the Uintas and higher elevations, while rattlesnakes stay below 8,000 feet and love rocky, dry, sunny spots.



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

DAILY NEWS REPORT - UTAH

Stay alert, make noise, and tread lightly when you're in the backcountry. Bring pepper spray and antivenom with you if you camp somewhere without access to immediate emergency response. Also, keep your food in bear-proof containers to be safe.

6. Read the weather report

Flash floods are the top cause of weather-related deaths in America. Unfortunately, more than 100 people drown each year in flash floods, including 18 in Utah in 2015. Flash floods are common in Utah because the ground is dry and often too compact to absorb sudden rain. Flash floods typically happen within six hours of precipitation and can have the force to move large boulders.

If there's a chance of thunder or rain (or there has been in the past six hours), do not enter slot canyons or low-lying trails.

7. Check before you bring your dog

Before you bring your furry friend camping, check online to make sure dogs are allowed in that area. While dogs are allowed to hike and camp in Mill Creek and Emigration Canyons, the Uintas and some national park trails, they are not allowed in Big and Little Cottonwood Canyons and most southern parks.

8. Prepare for extreme temperatures

High elevation and desert temperatures fluctuate drastically from day to night, sometimes going from below freezing to over 100 degrees Fahrenheit in one 24-hour period. Pack for warmth and heat so you're prepared for both extremes.

9. Bring cash

Most parks have an entry fee ranging from \$2 to \$25. While some allow credit cards, others require check or cash to pay for parking or camping spots. Either bring money or buy a Utah State Parks pass, which at \$75, will save you a lot of money if you're a frequent camper.

10. Clean up



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

DAILY NEWS REPORT - UTAH

Utahns and guests can currently access millions of acres of diverse and awe-inspiring wilderness. Don't jeopardize this privilege! Clean up your campsite before you pack up to go home. Trash won't only upset the park rangers, but may also potentially hurt wildlife.

Utah is one of the few places on earth where you can work at a corporate office by day and bike, hike or climb by happy hour. While you're enjoying nature, remember these tips to make your Utah camping season successful, safe and fun.

[BACK](#)

6. **Roots run deep for researcher battling invasive grass in Glen Canyon**

The Salt Lake Tribune, June 20 | Erin Alberty

In a remote canyon off the northern reaches of Lake Powell, a fourwing saltbush is growing deep roots as part of Ka-Voka Jackson's experimental plots of native plants.

The silvery, sea-green shrub is joining grasses and succulents in Jackson's efforts to remedy ravenna grass infestations that threaten native flora and fauna in the sacred ancestral lands of her tribe and others around the Colorado River.

"Glen Canyon ... was and still is a very important place for a lot of tribes, including my own," said Jackson, a University of Nevada, Las Vegas graduate student in ecology and evolutionary biology, and member of the Hualapai tribe.

Jackson and her team of researchers have joined National Park Service biologists to identify side canyons of Lake Powell where the enormous, ornamental ravenna grass — up to 18 feet tall — has taken hold, test means of removing it and study how well native plants reclaim the space.

The group traveled by boat and on foot to Slickrock and Cottonwood canyons, Pollywog Bench, and Llewellyn and Cottonwood gulches to dig up and spray the ravenna grass and choose nearby plants to transplant.

With their scents, colors and textures, the plants engage Jackson's memory in ways that are personally and culturally meaningful.

"We're trying to use traditional plants — though it's kind of hard to find plants that weren't used for agricultural or traditional purposes," she said. White sage, bundled into smudge sticks,



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

DAILY NEWS REPORT - UTAH

remains a household mainstay for daily use and ceremonies. Willow baccharis, which Jackson is planting in riparian areas, was used for thatching. Cacti and Indian rice grass were important food sources.

As Jackson moved the plants back to the sites where ravenna grass, from southern Europe and western Asia, had crowded out everything else, she said she was reminded of her childhood, when she picnicked and played along the Colorado River; her family even spent an entire summer camped along the banks.

"I grew up around these plants all the time, and here I am transplanting them, and dealing with them in a scientific way," Jackson said. "It's just a new perspective."

Planting them at Glen Canyon is also significant, she said. The Grand Canyon is widely understood to be sacred to Southwest tribes, but Glen Canyon isn't always given the same reverence outside tribal culture — especially since it was dammed and became Lake Powell.

"My tribe's traditional territory extended out toward Page, Ariz., and Glen Canyon," Jackson said of the Hualapai. "We have done a couple of trips before where we have taken elders back there for cultural ceremonies. Before Lake Powell was there, there was no big difference between the Grand Canyon and Glen Canyon. It was one. People lived there. There are a lot of ruins there, a lot of artifacts. There are a lot of rock writings. ... That whole area is known to be sacred."

Now that Jackson's plants are in the ground, she'll begin observation. In July she'll return to collect the first data that will help show which planting techniques were most successful and whether digging or spraying was most effective in removing the ravenna grass. She also is helping the NPS to map infestations elsewhere in Glen Canyon National Recreation Area.

"As far as we know, it's not continuous from one end of the park to the other," said Lonnie Pilkington, biologist at Glen Canyon NRA.

Infestations in riparian zones are of special concern, Pilkington said.

"They provide food, water and shelter for a number of different wildlife species," he said.

"Ravenna grass is threatening seeps and springs and hanging gardens, where we have a number of endemic species."



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

DAILY NEWS REPORT - UTAH

It also is hurting hikers' legs and adding to wildfire dangers, he said. The large grasses are growing at higher elevations, where stretches of sparse plants previously created firebreaks between canyons.

"There's somewhat of a concern carrying fire into some of these habitats," he said.

Jackson, who earned her bachelor's degree in biology at the University of Utah, is set to continue her project until May 2019.

[BACK](#)

E&E/NATIONAL NEWS – FULL STORY

1. Interior Does Not Expect to Follow White House Plans on Cuts to Parks

The Morning Consult, June 20 | Jack Fitzpatrick

Department of the Interior officials do not expect to go through with the White House's proposed cuts to national parks throughout the country, a department spokeswoman said Tuesday.

The department's ongoing efforts to reorganize its workforce should allow it to "push more funding and resources to local parks" in fiscal year 2018, spokeswoman Heather Swift said in an email Tuesday. That would eliminate the need for the proposed \$90.6 million, or 6.9 percent, in operational budget cuts to lands managed by the National Park Service, compared to annualized levels in the fiscal year 2017 continuing resolution, she said.

The budget proposal called for the 6.9 percent cut to be spread across nearly every Park Service-managed area, including Yellowstone, Grand Canyon, and Redwood national parks, among others.

Overall, the president's blueprint proposed cutting the 2018 National Park Service budget by \$296.6 million to \$2.6 billion. It was not immediately clear what funding level Congress is likely to approve.

Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee Chairman Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska) said she appreciated the administration's focus on cutting spending, but said some of the suggestions might not be realistic.



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

DAILY NEWS REPORT - UTAH

"Know that we're going to be reviewing all of the cuts that this budget proposes very, very carefully," she said at a hearing on Interior's budget on Tuesday. "I don't expect many of them to become a reality, especially those that target popular programs."

Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke downplayed the proposed cuts to individual parks during the hearing, saying the department is continuing its efforts to reorganize so more resources go to parks rather than to Washington, D.C., or regional offices.

"We have too many [employees] in middle management and above, and too few in the parks," Zinke said.

When pressed by Sen. Angus King (I-Maine), Zinke said it is "very doubtful" that there will be cuts to the operational budget of individual parks.

King expressed concern over suggested cuts to Acadia National Park in his home state. Sen. Steve Daines (R), said he was worried about the proposed cuts to Yellowstone and Glacier national parks in his and Zinke's home state of Montana, ahead of what he said could be a "record season" for park visitors. And Sen. Maria Cantwell (D) criticized the suggestion of cuts at the Mount Rainier and Olympic national parks in Washington.

Zinke said the budget proposal adds a total of \$38 million in infrastructure spending in parks, through funding for construction, land remediation and other programs. He also said an eventual reorganization of the department would put more employees in the parks themselves.

Zinke hinted that he would find a middle ground with his eventual recommendation on Maine's Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument, which former President Barack Obama created in August and President Donald Trump ordered reviewed.

"I'm sure you're going to be enthusiastic about the recommendation," Zinke told King. "As well as the governor. I've talked to the governor, so I think we have a reasonable approach and recommendation that all parties will be satisfied with."

King and Maine Gov. Paul LePage (R) do not entirely agree on the fate of the national monument. King initially expressed reservations about its creation but has since said the positives outweigh the negatives. LePage has called on Trump to revoke the monument's designation.



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

DAILY NEWS REPORT - UTAH

[BACK](#)

2. NATIONAL MONUMENTS: Zinke says Colo. site might not change, defends tribal talks

E & E News, June 20 | Jennifer Yachnin

Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke said today that he is unlikely to propose any changes to the Canyons of the Ancients National Monument in Colorado as he completes work on a review of dozens of national monuments later this summer.

The revelation came during a Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee hearing today, when Colorado Sen. Cory Gardner (R) pressed Zinke to "protect this monument ... as it stands."

In response, Zinke said: "It's currently not on our priority review list."

Last month, Gardner and Rep. Scott Tipton (R-Colo.) sent a letter to Zinke urging him to refrain from recommending any changes to the 175,000-acre site in southwestern Colorado (E&E Daily, May 24).

President Trump issued an executive order in late April instructing Zinke to review monuments created since 1996, with a focus on those that include more than 100,000 acres.

Earlier this month, Zinke submitted his interim report, which included a recommendation for Bears Ears National Monument in Utah to be significantly reduced from its current 1.35-million-acre size.

He is slated to submit a final report with additional recommendations for other sites on Aug. 24.

Gardner praised Zinke for indicating he would not call for changes to the Colorado site, adding: "I hope eventually you'll clear up the fact that it's going to remain as is."

In an exchange with Nevada Sen. Catherine Cortez Masto (D), Zinke also revealed that he has additional travel planned to view Gold Butte National Monument in the Silver State as early as next month.



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

DAILY NEWS REPORT - UTAH

Zinke said he also plans to travel to Oregon and New Mexico during that period. Although there are monuments in both states currently under review, Interior declined to confirm the purpose of Zinke's travel there.

Cortez Masto urged Zinke to consider the "economic benefits and widespread support" for the Gold Butte monument when he visits her state.

Zinke responded that he is attempting to take many aspects into consideration.

"The way that I've looked at the monuments: One is does it follow the law? Is it settled? Is the community happy with it?" he said.

Pushback over tribal views

Minnesota Sen. Al Franken (D) criticized Zinke over his recommendation to sharply reduce the Bears Ears monument, however, arguing that the secretary has mischaracterized the support of Native American groups for the changes.

"When it comes to the Department of the Interior's status review of the Bears Ears National Monument, you said that tribes are 'very happy' with your recommendation to reduce the boundaries of the monument, but this isn't really the case," Franken said.

The Democratic lawmaker repeatedly pointed to criticism leveled by the Bears Ears Inter-Tribal Coalition — which represents the Hopi, Navajo, Ute, Ute Mountain Ute and Zuni tribes and urges the creation of the monument — that characterized the decision as a "slap in the face."

"That doesn't sound very happy to me," Franken added.

Zinke defended his remarks, saying that Franken had failed to distinguish between members of the Utah Navajo and Arizona Navajo tribes.

"The monument itself is split on whether tribes agree. I talked to them all," Zinke said, pointing in particular to his discussions with San Juan County Commissioner Rebecca Benally, who opposes the Bears Ears designation and is a member of the Navajo tribe.

Zinke went on to say that what the tribal leaders "really want is co-management, above all is co-management."



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

DAILY NEWS REPORT - UTAH

In his interim report, Zinke asked for Congress to take up legislation that would ensure tribal co-management of the smaller national monument, as well as designations for national recreation or conservation areas.

N.M. push

New Mexico's Democratic lawmakers also appealed to Zinke today to preserve a pair of sites in their state that are included in the review: the Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks and Rio Grande del Norte national monuments.

In a letter, Sens. Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and Reps. Ben Ray Luján and Michelle Lujan Grisham pointed to "overwhelming support" for the "irreplaceable national monuments."

"Rescinding or shrinking to New Mexico's national monuments will cause irrevocable harm to our treasured places, would jeopardize the objects and special values that are protected through the Antiquities Act, and impact positive economic growth in local communities," the lawmakers wrote.

The letter also touched on the expected Bears Ears monument reductions and urged Zinke to reverse his initial assessment before finalizing his recommendations in August.

"In your final report, you have an opportunity to change course and restore cooperation, respect, and trust with the sovereign tribes of the Bears Ears InterTribal Coalition and all of Indian Country by preserving the existing boundaries of all these important national monuments," the letter said.

[BACK](#)

3. INTERIOR: Zinke envisions cutting 4,000 full-time staff

E & E News, June 20 | Kellie Lunney

Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke indicated today that the department is looking at relocating more resources out West as part of a larger management reorganization.

"We're looking at appropriately moving assets where they should be," and that's where the "preponderance of land is," Zinke told the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

DAILY NEWS REPORT - UTAH

during a hearing on the administration's proposed fiscal 2018 budget. He noted that most of the acreage managed by the Bureau of Land Management is out West.

"We're going to push the assets where the land is," said Zinke, adding that he'll need Congress' help to carry out certain aspects of the reorganization, though he did not elaborate.

"The way we are organized currently is, we're all different bureaus reporting to different regions," Zinke said. "We're not very good at joint operations," he added. He gave an example of a river with both trout and salmon, meaning different agencies inside and outside of Interior could have jurisdiction.

Sen. Cory Gardner (R-Colo.) and Rep. Scott Tipton (R-Colo.) have introduced legislation that would shift BLM's headquarters from Washington to one of 12 Western states.

Zinke, who fielded a range of questions today about programs facing cuts under President Trump's fiscal 2018 budget request for Interior, said he's continuing to freeze hiring in Washington and Denver, "prioritizing filling field positions rather than office positions." The secretary said he wanted to "shore up and expand" the front lines of employees at national parks and is looking at returning scientists at the U.S. Geological Survey to the field.

In his submitted testimony, Zinke said the proposed budget envisions a reduction of about 4,000 full-time department staff from 2017 levels.

"To accomplish this, the department will rely on a combination of attrition, reassignments, and separation incentives," he said. "Actual attrition rates and acceptance of separation incentives will determine the need for further action to reduce staffing."

Last week, The Washington Post reported that Zinke had notified dozens of career officials — members of the Senior Executive Service — that they will be reassigned at the end of this month (Greenwire, June 16).

Agencies have the authority to reassign senior executives, though many of them haven't used that authority liberally over the years. The Obama administration proposed making the governmentwide SES more mobile and reassigning them more frequently to different jobs and geographic regions.



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

DAILY NEWS REPORT - UTAH

Zinke said Interior has "good people" but is really "heavy on the bureaucracy," especially in Washington.

Senators, like their House counterparts who questioned Zinke earlier this month, outlined concerns about the department's \$11.7 billion budget request and its proposed cuts affecting a host of programs, including the Land and Water Conservation Fund, the payments in lieu of taxes program, offshore revenue-sharing, and American Indian health and education — not to mention programs specific to lawmakers' districts.

Sen. Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska), Energy and Natural Resources chairwoman, said the panel will review "all of the cuts this budget proposes very carefully" and that she doesn't "expect many of them to become reality." For example, recommendations to end offshore revenue-sharing for Gulf Coast states is a proposal she doesn't see "going anywhere."

The Alaskan, who praised the budget proposal for supporting oil and gas drilling in a portion of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, said she believed the budget's positives outweigh the negatives. "For every item that many of us will not be able to support, there is another that we can. And I haven't been able to make that statement for quite some time."

Several senators of both parties asked about the department's review of 27 national monuments, since many of those sites are in committee members' states.

Sen. Maria Cantwell (D-Wash.), the panel's ranking member, pressed Zinke on the department's move to pump the brakes on the BLM methane rule (see related story). Congress defeated a resolution in May that would have overturned the Obama-era rule. Cantwell asked if Zinke was going to "drag his feet" in implementing the rule and flout the 1946 Administrative Procedure Act.

The Interior secretary reiterated that he believed "flaring is a waste" and that the department was looking at ways to incentivize the capture of methane as well as assessing how to implement the rule.

"I don't drag my feet," Zinke said, sighing a bit. "I don't operate that way. As far as the law goes, I support the law; that's my obligation to do so."

[BACK](#)



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

DAILY NEWS REPORT - UTAH

4. **REGULATIONS: OMB mulls fracking rollback as Dems slam methane freeze**

E & E News, June 20 | Ellen M. Gilmer

The Obama administration's primary effort to address impacts from hydraulic fracturing on public lands is officially on track to be scrapped.

The White House Office of Management and Budget is reviewing a plan to rescind the previous administration's fracking rule. OMB's website indicates that the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs received the proposal from the Interior Department's Bureau of Land Management on Friday.

The fracking rule rollback has been in the works for months, since Trump administration lawyers notified a federal court in March that it would seek revision or elimination.

The rule — which was designed to govern well construction, wastewater management and chemical disclosure for fracked wells on public and tribal lands — has been mired in litigation since its March 2015 unveiling and has never taken effect.

A Wyoming district court struck it down in a sweeping decision last summer that found the federal government has no authority to regulate fracking.

The Obama administration promptly appealed, and the 10th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals was due to consider the case this year.

The Trump administration has maintained that the federal government does have authority over fracking but has backed away from the appeal, citing plans to rethink the rule (Energywire, May 8).

Interior has already fallen behind a rulemaking timeline it outlined in court filings last month. Justice Department lawyers representing the agency said a proposed rulemaking would appear in the Federal Register by June 13. No such notice has been published (Energywire, June 15).

Western Energy Alliance President Kathleen Sgamma, whose group challenged the rule in court, said the proposal's arrival at OMB is "an important step," and her group is "glad to see that rulemaking progressing."



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

DAILY NEWS REPORT - UTAH

Earthjustice attorney Mike Freeman, who has been defending the rule, said the latest move is "just another case of the Trump administration sacrificing our public health and the environment to pad the industry's bottom line."

While the OMB entry is classified as a proposed "rescission" of the fracking rule, agency lawyers have noted in court filings that BLM will consider revisions as part of that process.

BLM did not immediately respond to requests today for more information about the rollback plans. A spokeswoman said last week she did not know a time frame for the rulemaking process.

The administration is due to file a brief with the 10th Circuit today to argue for freezing litigation over the rule while the reconsideration process moves forward.

Methane rule

Democrats on Capitol Hill, meanwhile, are setting their sights on another Interior rule sidelined by the new administration.

In a [letter](#) this week to Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke, Democratic Sens. Maria Cantwell of Washington and Tom Udall of New Mexico criticized the agency's decision to freeze major provisions of an Obama-era rule to cut methane emissions from oil and gas development on public and tribal lands.

The delay applies to parts of the Methane And Waste Prevention Rule that takes effect in January 2018 and comes at the urging of several industry groups that consider the rule costly and duplicative. Separate efforts to kill the standards using the Congressional Review Act failed last month.

In last week's announcement, Interior cited Administrative Procedure Act authority that allows agencies to postpone challenged rules pending judicial review. But critics say the agency is stretching that authority far beyond the APA's intent.

Cantwell and Udall noted that the APA provision, Section 705, allows agencies to postpone the effective date of regulations being litigated. They say that does not extend to rules that are already in effect. The first phase of Interior's methane rule kicked in five months ago, and the next phase begins next year.



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

DAILY NEWS REPORT - UTAH

"This claim equates the 'effective date' of a rule as a whole with a 'compliance date' by which an industry must comply with individual requirements established by the rule," the letter says.

"The effect of this claim is to allow the Department, according to its whim, to suspend properly promulgated regulations with no public notice and comment nor any legal reasoning beyond an unsubstantiated claim that 'justice requires' suspension of a rule that has already gone into effect."

Cantwell sent a similar [letter](#) to Zinke in March challenging Interior's use of the APA provision to stall compliance requirements for the agency's valuation rule for calculating royalties on fossil fuels produced on federal lands.

Environmental groups are already suing over the delay of the valuation rule and have signaled plans to sue over the methane rule freeze (Energywire, June 15).

The rollbacks are part of a broader effort by the Trump administration to prioritize domestic energy production and unwind Obama-era environmental regulations.

[BACK](#)

5. **PUBLIC LANDS: Green group rallying support for national monuments**

E & E News, June 20 | Jennifer Yachnin

The League of Conservation Voters today unveiled a new \$600,000 campaign to rally support for public lands, as the Trump administration conducts a review of dozens of national monuments for potential rescissions.

The environmental group's new "Our Lands Our Vote" campaign will aim in part to submit 250,000 comments to the Interior Department ahead of the July 10 deadline for public remarks.

"These lands — and the natural and cultural heritage they hold — belong to all of us and generations to come," LCV President Gene Karpinski said in a statement. "This campaign will mobilize the public to hold Trump and members of Congress accountable for putting corporate polluter interests ahead of people."



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

DAILY NEWS REPORT - UTAH

Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke is set to submit a report to President Trump by Aug. 24 with recommendations for reductions, revocations or changes to land management plans for monuments from Maine to California, as well as for marine monuments in the Atlantic and Pacific oceans.

In an interim report earlier this month, Zinke called for unspecified reductions to the 1.35-million-acre Bears Ears National Monument in southeast Utah. He said the administration should also ask lawmakers to establish co-management of the site with tribal nations and use legislation to protect portions of the monument as national recreation or conservation areas (E&E News PM, June 12).

The LCV campaign will also include digital content highlighting various monuments and will purchase online advertising, as well as contacting lawmakers directly. In addition, the campaign will urge Congress not to amend the Antiquities Act of 1906, the law that allows presidents to designate federal lands as monuments to protect areas of historic, cultural or scientific value.

"This administration has picked the wrong fight with the American people," Arizona Rep. Raúl Grijalva, the top Democrat on the House Natural Resources Committee, said in a statement.

"Secretary Zinke and the White House keep forgetting the 'public' in our public lands. The longer they treat our national monuments as problems to be solved rather than the popular successes they are, the more resistance they'll face."

[BACK](#)

6. **NATIONAL MONUMENTS: Industry ready to pounce if Bears Ears shrinks**

E & E News, June 20 | Brian Maffly, Salt Lake Tribune

The oil and gas industry hopes to tap hydrocarbon deposits under parts of Bears Ears National Monument that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke may recommend removing from monument status, according to Bureau of Land Management records.

Some of the parcels that are currently part of the 1.3-million-acre monument could be leased for drilling. Since 2013, energy companies have asked BLM to lease more than 100,000 acres for oil and gas development within or near the public lands that were designated as a monument by President Obama late last year.



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

DAILY NEWS REPORT - UTAH

The 88 requested parcels are clustered along the eastern fringes of the land.

"Opening this area for more oil and gas drilling and fracking is going to harm the reasons this monument was established," said Randi Spivak, public lands director for the Center for Biological Diversity. "This is a clear and present danger. It's not theoretical, and the only thing staying in the way is monument status."

A BLM spokeswoman said that if the monument's boundaries are contracted, the agency would "carefully consider all nominated parcels to determine if they are appropriate for leasing and continue to conduct an environmental review before offering any leases for potential oil and gas development."

The region is home to the Navajo, Ute and Puebloan tribes, who consider the lands sacred.

"These lands are worth more than the minerals beneath them," said Natalie Landreth, an attorney with the Native American Rights Fund. "The only correct decision is to keep Bears Ears as is" (Brian Maffly, Salt Lake Tribune, June 17). — SM

[BACK](#)

7. NEVADA STANDOFF: Bundys seek release, claim violation of right to swift trial

E & E News, June 20 | Jennifer Yachnin

Nevada rancher Cliven Bundy and eight co-defendants last week filed an emergency motion seeking their release from federal custody, arguing that their due process rights have been violated as they await trial over charges related to the 2014 armed standoff between ranchers and federal agents.

Attorneys for Bundy and his co-defendants, including his sons Ammon, Melvin and David, asserted that their clients' detention has become "excessively prolonged, and therefore punitive," following 15 months in federal custody.

"Collectively, the defendants have already lost more than a decade of their lives to pretrial incarceration. Their continued detention strains due process and the presumption of innocence



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

DAILY NEWS REPORT - UTAH

past its breaking point. The defendants should be released," attorneys for the nine defendants wrote to U.S. District Judge Gloria Navarro.

Although Bundy and his co-defendants had been expected to face trial next week — in the second of three trials related to the 2014 standoff near Bunkerville, Nev., when federal agents attempted to seize Bundy's cattle over unpaid grazing fees — a mistrial in the first case has delayed the subsequent trials.

Federal prosecutors are now set to retry four of the six defendants in that first case in a trial that is scheduled to begin July 10 (Greenwire, May 18).

The second trial is slated to begin 30 days after the conclusion of that trial, which Cliven Bundy's attorneys note could push that case to a September or October start date, with an even later trial for defendants in the third group.

"Despite repeatedly invoking their rights to a speedy trial, these defendants do not have a set trial date, and even under the best case scenario in the court's sequential trial order, many of the defendants do not have a prospect of a trial until sometime in the year 2018," the motion states.

The motion also argues that the Bundys, along with defendants Ryan Payne, Pete Santilli, Brian Cavalier, Joseph O'Shaughnessy and Jason Woods, are not flight risks and should therefore be freed ahead of their trial dates.

"This Court has already found that Cliven Bundy has 'significant family ties in the community, steady employment, ownership of property in the community, and no criminal history,'" the motion states. "Cliven Bundy's health has begun to decline during his long incarceration."

But Navarro has previously rejected motions to release the defendants, and in May rejected a motion by Cliven Bundy to be tried along with the defendants in the retrial (Greenwire, May 22).

[BACK](#)

8. **NATIONAL PARKS: Program helps worshippers find God on public lands**

E & E News, June 20 | Kelsey Dallas, Salt Lake City Deseret News

Visitors to dozens of national parks can find a unique way to worship on Sunday mornings.



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

DAILY NEWS REPORT - UTAH

The organization A Christian Ministry in the National Parks hosts worship services in more than 25 parks across the country each summer from Memorial Day to Labor Day.

The program serves Christian believers far from their churches at home and provides its volunteers a chance for a spiritual awakening in the parks, said Amy Kennedy, the group's director of placement and park relations.

"The national parks and their beauty attract people from all over the world for excitement and adventure, but also people who are searching for something," Kennedy said.

The program, founded in 1951, has volunteers and attendees from a variety of Christian denominations.

Once volunteers are accepted into the program and assigned a park, they find jobs at their assigned locations, normally working around 40 hours a week for minimum wage. Participants say they enjoy the unconventional religious experience offered in the parks.

"My friends and family are incredibly surprised. They're proud and they love me, but this doesn't look like the career they expected," said Alyssa Sherman, 29, who is working for the organization this year at Mount Rainier National Park.

"I don't know that it would fit my personality very well to go down the expected track. Living in a dorm, working in a restaurant — I love it," she said (Kelsey Dallas, Salt Lake City Deseret News, June 20). — NS

[BACK](#)