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Attached is the daily news report for June 22.

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DAILY NEWS REPORT - UTAH

UTAH – TOP STORIES – JUNE 22, 2017

1. National wild horse forum planned in Utah; Zinke may attend

The Deseret News, June 21 | Amy Joi O'Donoghue

SALT LAKE CITY — Utah's wildland managers say they plan to take a half-million dollars given to them by state lawmakers to put on a national wild horse forum to address the animal's explosive population growth, plus use the money to carry out rangeland restoration projects.

2. Have federal land management laws gone too far? County attorney says 'yes'

St George News, June 21 | Julie Applegate

WASHINGTON, D.C. – As Washington County wrestles with issues such as the proposed northern corridor and Bureau of Land Management resource management plans, the question arises whether federal natural resource laws go too far.

3. Did Trump election influence Outdoor Retailer decision to leave Utah?

The Deseret News, June 21 | Jasen Lee

PARK CITY — Political discord over the election of President Donald Trump may have influenced the departure of the state's largest annual convention, according to Utah's lieutenant governor.

4. Join a paleontologist to explore the world of dinosaurs

St George News, June 22 | Staff Writer

MOAB — The Bureau of Land Management Moab Field Office is launching its summer series of “Jurassic Walks and Talks.” Every weekend through Labor Day, a BLM paleontologist will lead free tours of dinosaur fossil and tracksites in the Moab area in the morning, with discussions and hands-on activities for kids in the evening.



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5. Fire restrictions ordered for 5 Utah counties

KSL News, June 22 | Carter Williams

SALT LAKE CITY — A fire restriction order for five Utah counties went into effect Thursday as weather forecasts call for extremely dry conditions in the coming weeks.

6. Utah wildfire: Where is the Brian Head blaze heading next?

Newsweek, June 22 | Conor Gaffey

A massive wildfire in Utah has been raging for five days and is causing evacuations across the state as firefighters struggle to get the blaze under control.

E&E/NATIONAL NEWS – TOP STORIES

1. Interior Secretary's desire to privatize federal campgrounds draws concerns

The Aspen Times, June 21 | Kevin Fixler

In lockstep with prior remarks from President Trump regarding the nation's public lands, U.S. Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke floated the idea two weeks ago of privatizing all campgrounds under his watch as a way to offset billions of dollars in deferred maintenance costs.

2. Column: Senate misstep will cost jobs and energy

The Detroit News, June 22 | Jeff Stier

The Senate just failed to roll back an Obama-era regulation that will discourage energy production, cost millions of dollars and kill thousands of American jobs.

3. NATIONAL MONUMENTS: Not every review is a 'deep dive' — Zinke

E & E News, June 22 | Jennifer Yachnin

Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke revealed today that his agency's review of dozens of national monuments is now focused "on just a few" sites, although he did not detail which, if any, have completed assessments.



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4. INTERIOR: Sexual harassment may plague entire department — Zinke

E & E News, June 22 | Kellie Lunney

Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke said today that sexual harassment might be a departmentwide problem, not just within the National Park Service.

5. PUBLIC LANDS: Lawmakers seek to broaden collaborative management

E & E News, June 22 | Nick Sobczyk

Senate Republican lawmakers yesterday touted the success of collaborative land management projects across Western states and criticized bureaucratic hurdles under the National Environmental Policy Act.

6. NATIONAL PARKS: Zinke wants more entrance fees to fill budget gap

E & E News, June 22 | Jennifer Yachnin

Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke wants the National Park Service to increase entrance fees at some of its sites in an effort to address the agency's more than \$11 billion in deferred maintenance needs, he told lawmakers this week.

7. TRIBES: Heinrich revives bill to curb cultural object trafficking

E & E News, June 22 | Nick Sobczyk

Sen. Martin Heinrich (D-N.M.) yesterday reintroduced legislation that aims to curb exports and illegal trafficking of Native American cultural objects, an issue Heinrich has led the way on during his first term in the upper chamber.

8. METHANE: Interior proposes scrapping limits already in effect

E & E News, June 22 | Pamela King

President Trump's Interior Department could soon wipe away the last remnants of an Obama-era regulation to control methane emissions from oil and gas operations on federal and tribal land.



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9. PUBLIC LANDS: Lawmakers seek to broaden collaborative management

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UTAH – FULL STORY

1. National wild horse forum planned in Utah; Zinke may attend

The Deseret News, June 21 | Amy Joi O'Donoghue

SALT LAKE CITY — Utah's wildland managers say they plan to take a half-million dollars given to them by state lawmakers to put on a national wild horse forum to address the animal's explosive population growth, plus use the money to carry out rangeland restoration projects.

The forum, set for three days in August, will seek solutions to tackle the wild horse numbers — now in Utah at more than twice the Bureau of Land Management's targeted levels — and the hope is that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke will accept the invitation to attend.

Nationally, there are 73,000 wild horses roaming in Western states on federal lands managed by the BLM. The targeted management level is 27,000.

An estimated 45,000 animals are in long-term holding pens at an annual cost of \$50 million, or the equivalent of the nation's wildfire fighting budget in an active fire season, said Mike Styler, executive director of the Utah Department of Natural Resources.

Styler briefed members of the Legislature's Natural Resources, Agriculture and Environment Interim Committee on Wednesday, detailing the challenges Utah and other states face when it comes to the animals.

In the last legislative session, Utah lawmakers gave his department \$500,000 to manage wild horses and burros, but his agency lacks the regulatory oversight.

Some of that money will go toward the Aug. 22-24 forum to look at the science behind the problem and potential solutions, while the majority will be used in watershed and rangeland restoration efforts to help land impacted by the animals.

Ben Nadolski, the state department's legislative liaison, said the agency will be able to take legislative appropriation and leverage it to bring in additional funds for eight projects scattered throughout the state.



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Agencies sifted through needed restoration projects and settled on that list that comes with a \$2.4 million price tag to treat more than 15,000 acres of rangeland in the state, he said.

Some of that work includes fencing off school trust lands property denuded of vegetation or removing pinion and juniper through a variety of methods.

Utah and its rural county leaders have been ramping up the pressure on the BLM to control the wild horse population in the state, which is at 5,215 wild horses and 313 burros as of March. The targeted level by the BLM is 1,956 animals.

They have some hope due to Zinke's newly unveiled budget for the Interior Department, which proposes to remove language that constrains the federal agency from using "management tools," that could include eliminating restrictions on shipping the horses to slaughterhouses or euthanasia.

But Scott Beckstead, the rural outreach director for the Humane Society of the United States, said the only publicly acceptable way to combat the problem of too many horses is with birth control.

"Any proposal that includes sending these horses to slaughter for human consumption is going to be a nonstarter for the American public," he stressed, emphasizing that 80 percent of Americans don't want to see horses hanging from meat hooks in French butcher shops.

"The outcry will be massive," he said.

Horsemeat is considered a delicacy in France and other parts of Europe.

Sen. Margaret Dayton, R-Provo, took offense at his words.

"I didn't hear anything about slaughter" in the committee's discussion, she said. "I guess that was just for a talking point. ... We are concerned about the numbers that are being slaughtered by overgrazing and lack of food. And that is a slow death, not a fast death."

Beckstead countered that any discussion that turns on broadening the "management tools" for wild horses implies slaughter or euthanasia as an answer, when politicians and land managers should be looking at the number of privately owned cattle on public land.



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In Utah, he pointed out, there are 22 million acres set aside for cattle for forage, while wild horses graze on 2 million acres.

Rep. Derrin Owens, R-Fountain Green, criticized Beckstead's comments on how Americans feel regarding the ways to manage wild horse populations.

"I don't know where you get the authority to speak on behalf of all the American people," he said. "I resent that. You don't have the authority to speak for all American people."

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2. Have federal land management laws gone too far? County attorney says 'yes'

St George News, June 21 | Julie Applegate

WASHINGTON, D.C. – As Washington County wrestles with issues such as the proposed northern corridor and Bureau of Land Management resource management plans, the question arises whether federal natural resource laws go too far.

Many in the conservation community would say “no.” However, many local government officials would answer a resounding “yes” to the question.

“I regularly interact with federal agencies on the challenges that face a rapidly growing county where half of our land is managed by the Department of the Interior and only 16 percent is privately owned,” Deputy Washington County Attorney Celeste Maloy said in testimony before a U.S. House of Representatives natural resources subcommittee.

The May 25 hearing was titled “Examining Impacts of Federal Natural Resources Laws Gone Astray.”

Maloy’s primary focus in her work for the county is public lands law and policy.

“My experience in interacting with land management agencies, particularly the Bureau of Land Management, is that administrative processes overshadow the agency mission given by Congress,” Maloy said.



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“We routinely see federal agency employees treat their manuals and handbooks as if they are the ultimate law. When those manuals don’t align with directly relevant statutory guidance, the manuals still prevail.”

Maloy focused on the problems she sees with the Wilderness Act and the Federal Lands Policy and Management Act, or FLPMA.

Wilderness

Washington County undertook participation in the Omnibus Public Lands Management Act of 2009 in part to settle the question of what land would be designated as wilderness, Maloy said.

“In exchange for roughly a quarter of a million acres of declared wilderness within the county, we got an end to the endless (wilderness) inventory process and a Congressional release of WSAs (wilderness study areas),” she said.

“We were surprised and upset when the new resource management plans (RMPs) still required inventory for wilderness.”

The local BLM office insisted that they were following their manuals, but Maloy said the BLM’s wilderness manual states that when Congress releases land from wilderness study, the BLM will “take into serious consideration the Congressional action.”

“When Congress speaks, the agencies should act accordingly, not just take it into serious consideration,” she said.

Under the Wilderness Act, if Congress designates public land as a wilderness study area, federal land management agencies are required to preserve the “wilderness character” of the area until Congress either designates the land as wilderness or releases it.

FLPMA

The Federal Lands Policy and Management Act, or FLPMA, clearly instructed the Secretary of Interior to consider alternatives for a planned roadway that Washington County and local municipalities have known for years would be necessary to meet future transportation needs, Maloy said.

“That road was a major part of the “balancing” quid pro quo that led us to support the bill.”



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After the bill was enacted, however, the BLM's draft RMP eliminated the possibility of any road with an "exclusion area," which prohibits new rights of way.

"The statute says to consider route alternatives in the travel management plan, but that isn't how BLM does things, and they couldn't allow a road in that area."

In addition, Maloy said, the multiple use mandate from FLPMA is being eclipsed by the exceptions. FLPMA says that lands are to be managed for multiple use, unless otherwise specified by law.

"Despite that language, WSAs (wilderness study areas), lands with wilderness characteristics, mineral withdrawals, exclusion areas, visual resource management areas, buffers around rock outcrops, and other restrictions on multiple use activities are more common than multiple use management.

"The elimination of uses seems to stem from a philosophy that all human impacts are negative impacts. Congress, by including multiple use management in the BLM's organic act, clearly did not espouse the idea that humans should be forced off of public land," Maloy said. "Multiple use was intended to be the rule, not the exception."

Opposing interpretation

Lisa Rutherford, founding board member of Conserve Southwest Utah and current advisory board member, has a different take on the issues.

The BLM's resource management plans are clearly in line with what the law says and with Sen. Bob Bennett's comments as part of Congressional testimony leading up to the passage of the 2008 Washington County Growth and Conservation Act, now part of OPLMA, Rutherford said.

From the U.S. Senate hearing record of April 22, 2008, on S.2834:

"Congressman Matheson and I have made significant changes to the previous proposal. We have permanently protected large amounts of biologically significant public land in Washington County, including additional wilderness and a new national conservation area. We have removed the corridor designations for the Lake Powell Pipeline Corridor and the Northern Corridor that bisected the Red Cliffs Desert Reserve." (page 8).



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The resource management plans are also a good example of multiple use in Washington County, Rutherford said.

“There exists a balance satisfactory to all interests, including hiking, ATVing, off-road biking, horseback riding, camping, wildlife reserves and many more.”

“The Washington County Land Bill stands as a model for the rest of Utah and has been so acknowledged publicly by everyone from the Governor and Legislature to local cities, towns and counties.”

Ed. note: Clarified language regarding wilderness study areas.

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3. **Did Trump election influence Outdoor Retailer decision to leave Utah?**

The Deseret News, June 21 | Jasen Lee

PARK CITY — Political discord over the election of President Donald Trump may have influenced the departure of the state's largest annual convention, according to Utah's lieutenant governor.

Speaking to a panel of outdoor recreation journalists during the Outdoor Press Camp at Deer Valley Wednesday, Lt. Gov. Spencer Cox said the outcome of the presidential election may have been at least partly responsible for the communication breakdown between the state and the Outdoor Industry Association that eventually led to the Outdoor Retailer show pulling out of the Beehive State.

"We had been having these (negotiations) for years. Every year, we would get to the 'same page' and we moved forward," Cox explained. "The only thing that changed this year was that Donald Trump got elected."

He believes the outdoor association was concerned that the new administration would repeal national monument designations that would protect government lands in favor of business interests that might be detrimental to land use and the environment.

"Suddenly, you had Bears Ears and now Bears Ears could go away," he continued. "It was just 'a bridge too far' for a lot of people."



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He added that in a private discussion with one of the leaders of the effort to take the trade show out of Utah, he was told that the industry "lit a fire and we thought we could put it out, and it turned into a raging brush fire."

Cox said the unnamed leader also said he really didn't want to pull out of Utah but admitted, "I couldn't stop it. It's a runaway fire."

Cox called the entire situation "sad" and said that it should never have gotten to such an acrimonious point that their differences could not have been resolved like they had been so many times before.

In February, organizers of the Outdoor Retailer Winter and Summer Markets announced after a conference call with Gov. Gary Herbert and others they would end their 20-year relationship with Utah after next year's shows. The move was in response to the outdoor industry's frustrations with state officials' efforts to reverse the Obama administration's newly designated Bears Ears National Monument and stated goals to reduce federal control of lands in Utah.

At the time, Cox said state leaders were "surprised and dumbfounded" by the show organizers' unwillingness to continue discussions, calling it a disappointing end to what had for so long been a cordial business relationship. Noting that industry organizers released a two-page statement just minutes after the call ended, Cox accused some industry advocates of conspiring against a potential resolution.

On Wednesday, he said one of the saddest results of the decision to leave the state was the fact that some Utahns were pleased about the separation.

"There were a lot of people who were really happy that Outdoor Retailer was leaving, because now 'we don't have to listen to them anymore,'" he said. "It set things back a decade because the outdoor recreation industry had fought so long for a seat at the (political) table, now the extreme voices on the (right) feel like it was a win."

Fellow panelist Tom Adams, director of the Utah Office of Outdoor Recreation, recalled the conference call with similar disappointment.

"It was the toughest moment in my career," Adams said. "To know that we had all these amazing minds at the table and everybody (was consumed by the Trump effect). Heels were dug in and



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they said, 'We don't hear (from you) what we want you to say and we are going to part our ways.'"

He noted that despite the decision to move to another location, the entities involved are still maintaining cordial relationships because at some point "they might want to come back to Salt Lake."

Kenji Haroutunian, Outdoor Press Camp director and former show director for Outdoor Retailer, said the divide between state leaders and outdoor industry advocates could eventually be closed if both sides are willing to address their differences with open minds and willing spirits.

"There have been some misunderstandings, like so many things, the solutions rest in the middle where there is conversation, compromise and creativity — back and forth," he said. "That is how we're going to get to where we need to get to."

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4. **Join a paleontologist to explore the world of dinosaurs**

St George News, June 22 | Staff Writer

MOAB — The Bureau of Land Management Moab Field Office is launching its summer series of “Jurassic Walks and Talks.” Every weekend through Labor Day, a BLM paleontologist will lead free tours of dinosaur fossil and tracksites in the Moab area in the morning, with discussions and hands-on activities for kids in the evening.

Millions of dinosaur tracks and several new dinosaur species, including Utahraptor, have been found in the Moab area over the last twenty years. Featured sites for the walks include the Mill Canyon Tracksite, the Mill Canyon Bone Trail, the Copper Ridge Tracks, the Dinosaur Stomping Ground Tracks and the Poison Spider Tracks.

These sites range in age from about 112 million years old to about 190 million years old. Some of the unique features of these sites include the first Utahraptor-like tracks in North America, a giant meat-eating dinosaur with a limp and real dinosaur bones embedded in Jurassic-aged rocks.

These walks and talks are supported by the BLM and Tread Lightly! “Respect and Protect” campaign – connecting families to America’s natural and cultural heritage and instilling a sense



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of pride and stewardship for our amazing paleontological and natural resources. These events are all free and everyone is invited.

The tours take place in the mornings, Friday through Sunday, and involve short hikes with lots of time to ask questions. Different tracksites are featured each day on a rotating schedule.

Attendees are asked to meet at the tracksites at the times listed on the schedule. Maps and driving directions can be found on the Discover Moab website.

The weekend evening “Jurassic Talks” will take place at 6 p.m. outside the Moab Information Center, located at 25 E. Center St. Friday evenings will involve hands-on educational activities for kids. Saturday and Sunday evenings will consist of discussions about Moab’s world-class dinosaurs and trackways.

Maps and schedules are available at the Moab Information Center. You can also view a complete schedule of the Jurassic Walks and Talks, including information about each of the hikes and evening activities [here](#).

For further information, please contact the BLM Field Office 435-259-2100 and ask for Nathan Ong or ReBecca Hunt-Foster. Persons who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Relay Service (FRS) at 1-800-877-8339 to contact the above individuals during normal business hours. The FRS is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to leave a message or question with the above individuals. Replies are provided during normal business hours.

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5. **Fire restrictions ordered for 5 Utah counties**

KSL News, June 22 | Carter Williams

SALT LAKE CITY — A fire restriction order for five Utah counties went into effect Thursday as weather forecasts call for extremely dry conditions in the coming weeks.

The order, signed by Utah State Forester Brian Cottam, calls for restrictions to all unincorporated private and all state lands within Davis, Morgan, Salt Lake, Tooele and Utah counties.



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The order prohibits any open fires of any kind except within the facilities designated for them in improved campgrounds, picnic areas or home sites where running water is present.

Smoking is prohibited except within an enclosed vehicle, trailer or building, a developed recreation site or on a paved area free from dry vegetation.

Discharging or any use of fireworks, tracer ammunition or other pyrotechnic devices, including exploding targets, is prohibited.

Any cutting, welding or grinding metal in areas of dry vegetation is prohibited.

Any operating of a motorcycle, chainsaw, ATV or any other small internal combustion engine without an approved and working spark arrestor is also prohibited.

Any violations may be punishable by up to six months in jail and a fine up to \$1,000. Persons with a permit or waiver specifically authorizing the use of one of the prohibited items or an on-duty firefighter in the performance of an official duty are exempt from the prohibitions.

The order does not apply to private lands within incorporated towns or city limits.

It was issued after several wildfires have sparked throughout the state this month. The largest of those is a wildfire burning at Brian Head in Beaver County, which burned 10,950 acres of land as of Thursday morning, according to Utah Fire Info. Gov. Gary Herbert said that fire started from a weed burner.

Weather forecasts project that current land conditions will worsen in the areas where the fire restriction order applies to. The National Weather Service projects temperatures throughout the areas of the restriction to range from the 80s and 90s, with no rain in the foreseeable future.

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6. **Utah wildfire: Where is the Brian Head blaze heading next?**

Newsweek, June 22 | Conor Gaffey

A massive wildfire in Utah has been raging for five days and is causing evacuations across the state as firefighters struggle to get the blaze under control.



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The fire started on Saturday afternoon in Brian Head, Utah Governor Gary Herbert said on Tuesday, likely by a weed torch, a device used by gardeners or agriculturalists to kill weeds with heat.

No lives have been lost in the fire, but the blaze has grown to some 5,000 acres (eight square miles) and is being fought by nine helicopters, 27 fire engines and 10 crews that number 500 people, local station KUTV reported on Thursday. The fire was just 15 percent under control.

The fire's reach has been aided by high winds and temperatures, though the heat is expected to ease off in the coming days. The local county sheriff in Garfield began urgent evacuations of three localities on Wednesday evening—Clear Creek, Beaver Dam, and Horse Valley—which all lie northeast of Brian Head. The American Red Cross is on hand in Utah to help any evacuees or displaced people requiring assistance.

The Great Basin Incident Management Team, which is tackling the fire, estimates that the blaze will continue to burn for another week and will not be contained until July 5. The fire is expected to continue moving northeast from its original site.

The Dixie National Forest, a two-million acre site popular with campers, has issued road and trail closures to keep the public away from areas potentially affected by the fire. A major highway also remains closed for a 13-mile stretch from Parowan to Cedar Breaks National Monument.

Utah's fire authorities have urged members of the public to only collect essential items—such as prescriptions and identification documents—during evacuations and have also issued fresh fire restrictions in several counties across the state.

These include a ban on smoking in certain dry areas, using fireworks and building open fires unless in designated recreation sites; violations can result in a six-month jail sentence and maximum \$1,000 fine.

Humans are the biggest cause of wildfires in the United States. A February study published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences found that 84 percent of the blazes firefighters were called to between 1992 and 2012 were caused by humans, including by the discarding of cigarettes and leaving campfires unattended.

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E&E/NATIONAL NEWS – FULL STORY

1. Interior Secretary's desire to privatize federal campgrounds draws concerns

The Aspen Times, June 21 | Kevin Fixler

In lockstep with prior remarks from President Trump regarding the nation's public lands, U.S. Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke floated the idea two weeks ago of privatizing all campgrounds under his watch as a way to offset billions of dollars in deferred maintenance costs.

This week, the cabinet member tasked with overseeing the National Park Service and Bureau of Land Management doubled down on the plan, stating he planned to reduce the federal department by 4,000 full-time employees. The National Park Service can anticipate losing 1,200 of those positions and BLM 1,000 jobs by the end of 2017.

Zinke's original comments, made to a recreational vehicle trade group at a meeting in Salt Lake City, left much for interpretation.

"I don't want to be in the business of running campgrounds," the website Utah Policy reported he said. "We are going to have more public-private partnerships soon. I think that's where the industry should be going."

It remains unclear if he envisions a federal lands selloff or employing more administrative companies to maintain and supervise these popular summer areas. Due to constricted annual budgets — and the postponed but rising repairs to critical infrastructure and other amenities valued at \$141 million in Colorado alone — many National Parks and BLM campsites are already being managed by private enterprise.

"It raises concerns and people should be skeptical," said Jeremy Nichols of WildEarth Guardians, a nonprofit focused on protecting the health of the American West. "Getting private industry in the mix is a recipe to get somebody rich and the American camper pushed to the wayside. Companies are there to make money and collect fees, but are not necessarily investing in the campground, customer service is not the No. 1 priority and it's not about the camper."

Meanwhile, faced with declining federal budgets as well, the U.S. Forest Service — under the umbrella of the Department of Agriculture — has also been calling on private industry to assist



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with management of established campgrounds. Presently, approximately half of all forestlands in Colorado are presided over by a third-party concessionaire.

On the White River National Forest, there are roughly 50 such recreational sites from the towns of Dillon to Meeker. Within the Dillon Ranger District, a private company has overseen many of the large- and medium-sized camping areas such as those at Dillon Reservoir dating to around 1990.

“As our federal appropriations have been reduced for recreation, so we have to prioritize where we spend our appropriated dollars,” said Bill Jackson, Dillon District ranger. “Our trail-based recreation is where most of the population is, so that’s where we spend a lot of it.”

In many instances, he said, the nightly fees charged at some developed sites were not even covering the cost of running and maintaining them, so the district was forced to dip into discretionary funds or locate grants to assist with the expenses. As payrolls shrink, too, it’s the Forest Service’s belief that the public receives an improved experience — not from privatization, but rather permits on public lands — from the increased presence of hosts who offer more routine upkeep and companies able to reinvest capital into the campground.

“Under current conditions we do our best, but we could do better,” said Jackson. “It really is a seven-day operation, but we’re not staffed up to that level, so we’re cleaning restrooms and not much else. We don’t have time or the resources to do all of the day-to-day management at Lake Dillon.”

Sonny Perdue, U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, became one of the last cabinet posts in the Trump administration filled when he was confirmed on April 24. The former Republican governor of Georgia for eight years until 2011 has yet to weigh in on whether outsourcing more forest campsites is a specific charge.

In mid-May, though, the White River National Forest issued a prospectus soliciting concessionaire applications for additional campsites and other day-use facilities in both the Dillon and Eagle-Holy Cross ranger districts. Some of the available locations include those adjacent to Green Mountain Reservoir north of Silverthorne and other popular destinations like Blue River and Cataract Creek campgrounds.



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On-site visits are scheduled for the week of July 10 for all interested parties and applications due in September for 10-year permits starting Jan. 1, 2018, and up for review after the first five-year term. The full prospectus is available at:

[FS.usda.gov/goto/whiteriver/CampgroundConcessionProspectus](https://fs.usda.gov/goto/whiteriver/CampgroundConcessionProspectus).

“Developed recreation is really one of the smaller programs we oversee,” said Rich Doak, White River National Forest recreation and lands staff officer. “We have about 3.4 million hikers each year compared to developed camping at a few hundred thousand. With limited dollars as we’re moving forward and continuing to tighten our belts, doing this allows us to keep them all open and still serve the public.”

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2. **Column: Senate misstep will cost jobs and energy**

The Detroit News, June 22 | Jeff Stier

The Senate just failed to roll back an Obama-era regulation that will discourage energy production, cost millions of dollars and kill thousands of American jobs.

The rule, issued in the 11th hour of the Obama presidency by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), was designed to limit already decreasing methane emissions from oil and natural gas wells on federal lands. The Republican-led Senate was expected to kill the regulation before it had a chance to take effect. But instead, three Republicans broke with their party to keep the rule in place.

That move was shocking. Although some speculated Sen. John McCain’s surprise break from his party was to retaliate for the firing of FBI Director James Comey.

McCain stated that undoing the rule, which he called “onerous,” through Senate action would have procedurally restricted the BLM from improving the rule. He added, “I believe that the public interest is best served if the Interior Department issues a new rule to revise and improve the BLM methane rule.”

McCain is only partially right. The BLM overstepped its authority by issuing the rule in the first place. The only federal agency tasked with regulating air quality is the Environmental Protection Agency.



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But he's correct that the rule is onerous. Worse, the environmental impact of the rule is essentially negligible. Methane only accounts for 10 percent of greenhouse gas emissions — and federal lands host only 15 percent of natural gas production. Indeed, the rule would only trim CO2 emissions by less than 1/100th of 1 percent.

What's more, the industry already has a financial incentive to capture methane emissions — and has been making great strides to reduce them. Between 1990 and 2015, according to the EPA, petroleum-related methane emissions fell more than 28 percent.

But Americans will have to pay a hefty price for this needless rule. One analysis predicts it could cost over \$1.2 billion a year. Small businesses will feel the brunt of this financial burden. Small oil and gas producers are expected to dish out upwards of \$64,000 each year to comply with the rule.

Some companies — especially those operating a single well — won't be able to handle such costs and may end up shutting down. In fact, according to consulting firm Environmental Resources Management, the methane rule could wipe out 40 percent of flaring wells on federal lands. When energy firms fold, Americans lose their jobs. Indeed, regulatory constraints on oil and natural gas production, like this methane rule, could put 800,000 Americans out of work by 2020.

The rule will also reduce tax revenues. By discouraging natural gas production on federal land, it could pull \$114 million out of federal and state coffers.

Western states, which host vast swaths of federal land, are particularly concerned about the rule's costs.

Utah's Public Lands Policy Coordinating Office says the rule "gives BLM authority without accountability and lacks proper cooperation with existing state regulatory agencies."

New Mexico Gov. Susana Martinez maintains that, "Absent a repeal (of the methane rule), funding for New Mexico's schools, roads and healthcare will be dramatically reduced on account of the reduction in revenue generated by the oil and gas industry."

Her concern is warranted. New Mexico, which has energy development to thank for 30 percent of its state budget, could see 70 percent of its northwestern wells shut down.



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In Rio Blanco, Colorado, where 85 percent of revenue is powered by oil and gas, market constraints on energy production have recently caused a 30 percent revenue dip. The methane rule will only worsen this financial blow.

All told, the methane rule could cost western America \$9 million in economic output, royalties and wages.

Luckily, Kate MacGregor, the Interior Department's Acting Secretary, has stated that the agency is working to "suspend, revise, or rescind" the rule altogether.

It should. Doing away with the methane rule will protect American jobs and energy production. The sooner the Interior Department corrects the Senate's mistake, the better.

Jeff Stier is a senior fellow at the National Center for Public Policy Research in Washington, D.C., and heads its Risk Analysis Division.

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3. **NATIONAL MONUMENTS: Not every review is a 'deep dive' — Zinke**

E & E News, June 22 | Jennifer Yachnin

Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke revealed today that his agency's review of dozens of national monuments is now focused "on just a few" sites, although he did not detail which, if any, have completed assessments.

During testimony today before the House Natural Resources Committee on the fiscal 2018 budget, Zinke reiterated his assertion that the review of 27 national monuments is not aimed at "settled" sites but those he believes either failed to gather sufficient public input or remain areas of contention for local communities.

"My intent on the monument review is to ensure that the — some of them monuments are settled — my intent was not, and I've said before, to rip off Band-Aids and then create wounds were there [are] none," Zinke said.

The Interior Department is reviewing the boundaries of dozens of protected areas, including five marine monuments, under an executive order issued by President Trump in late April.



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The review is focused on sites created since 1996 that include more than 100,000 acres of public land or water. Zinke has already issued an interim report recommending significant cuts to the Bears Ears monument in Utah, although he has not provided details about how many acres would be included in the reduction (E&E News PM, June 12).

Interior must issue its final recommendations by Aug. 24. But Zinke revealed today that his department will not make detailed inquiries into each of the monuments on its list.

"I think we're focusing on just a few," Zinke told Rep. Scott Tipton (R-Colo.).

Asked for clarification following his testimony, Zinke told reporters that he would talk to lawmakers and constituents with ties to the sites under review but, "We're not taking a deep dive in all of them."

Earlier this week, Zinke told Sen. Cory Gardner (R-Colo.) that the Canyons of the Ancients National Monument was among those sites not on his agency's "priority review list" (E&E News PM, June 20).

But he declined to offer similar assurances to Sen. Tom Udall (D-N.M.) yesterday when asked about the Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks and Rio Grande del Norte monuments (Greenwire, June 21).

Rep. Steve Pearce (R-N.M.) today pushed Zinke to shrink Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks, calling it "a very highly volatile issue in the district" and suggesting it should be reduced to 60,000 acres from 497,000 acres. Zinke did not have an opportunity to respond to Pearce's comments during the hearing.

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4. **INTERIOR: Sexual harassment may plague entire department — Zinke**

E & E News, June 22 | Kellie Lunney

Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke said today that sexual harassment might be a departmentwide problem, not just within the National Park Service.



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"It's not just the Park Service," Zinke said in response to a question from Rep. Niki Tsongas (D-Mass.) during a House Natural Resources Committee hearing on the administration's fiscal 2018 budget proposal.

When Tsongas followed up and asked if he was suggesting sexual harassment was a "broader issue" through the department, Zinke agreed.

"It may be departmentwide, I think that is a fair assessment," he said, specifically mentioning the Bureau of Land Management as another trouble spot.

Zinke, who reiterated that he has "zero tolerance" for sexual harassment, which he witnessed in the military, told lawmakers he may need legislative help in combatting the problem.

"I want to make sure we have an environment free of harassment and free of intimidation," said the secretary.

One area where Zinke might seek help from Congress is getting bad apples out of the department faster. It's notoriously difficult to fire career federal employees, something Zinke alluded to in response to a question from Rep. Don McEachin (D-Va.).

McEachin today asked the full panel and the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee to hold a hearing to investigate the pervasive sexual harassment at agencies, including the NPS (E&E Daily, June 8).

The Virginia Democrat asked Zinke why Interior hasn't hired more lawyers in response. Zinke said some of the problem is structural and that he "couldn't fire" those who engaged in misconduct because of red tape.

"I need some help from Congress," he said. Lawmakers recently passed legislation to make it easier to fire employees at the Veterans Affairs Department.

Subcommittee Chairman Raúl Labrador (R-Idaho) said he was open to McEachin's request to holding a hearing on sexual harassment at NPS.

'No gag order'



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Zinke today also committed to meeting Democrats "in person" to discuss department issues, after hearing complaints from the minority over the department's failure to respond to several formal information requests.

"There is no gag order," Zinke said, responding to questions from House Natural Resources Committee ranking member Raúl Grijalva (D-Ariz.). "I have met with the minority in person; I committed to meeting with the minority."

Zinke, who sat on the Natural Resources panel when he was a Montana congressman, added that he would give Grijalva his phone number as a professional courtesy. Zinke also said he has pledged to meet quarterly with members.

"While I appreciate the gesture, the fact remains these responses for the record need to occur," Grijalva said, referring to letters from Democrats to Interior.

Grijalva has sent Interior several missives since January on various issues, including the department's wide-ranging review of 27 national monuments, and has not yet received any response, said Adam Sarvana, communications director for the Democrats on Natural Resources.

The Justice Department earlier this month concluded that the executive branch's constitutional duty to respond to information requests is largely limited to committee chairs (Greenwire, June 9).

Senate Judiciary Chairman Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa) later dismissed DOJ's interpretation as "nonsense," joining Democrats in their criticism.

Offshore drilling

Zinke largely stuck to his script during his appearance, one of several this week, pointing out that the budget proposal was a "starting point" and that it represented a "balanced" approach.

Members once again outlined concerns about the \$11.7 billion request and proposed cuts affecting a host of programs, including the Land and Water Conservation Fund, payments in lieu of taxes program, and the administration's Atlantic and Pacific offshore drilling push.



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"All of a sudden, the talk is doing more with less, everyone tightening their belts, making sacrifices," said Grijalva, who complained about the 85 percent proposed cut to LWCF in particular.

He added: "But I don't see the oil and gas industry making sacrifices in this budget. I don't see polluters setting up any new cleanup fund to pay for their actions."

The Natural Resources panel boasts several members from California, and a couple of them took an opportunity this morning to grill Zinke over President Trump's April 28 executive order directing Interior to review offshore oil and gas drilling in the Atlantic and Pacific outer continental shelf regions, which President Obama declared off-limits under a five-year plan.

"We do not want new leasing off our coastline," said Rep. Jared Huffman (D-Calif.). "The people of California are simply not going to allow it to happen. You will be doing less with less if you attempt to drill for oil off the coast of California."

Zinke told Huffman the department plans to publish a request for information on the five-year plan. "I want to say in the next 30 days, if not sooner," said Zinke. "We think the whole five-year plan will be done in two to three years."

'I don't have a director of anything'

Zinke today complained, as he has previously, that he is the only confirmed official in place at his department. "I've got about 70 appointments, not one that has gone through Senate confirmation yet," he told lawmakers, during the exchange with McEachin.

"I have five solicitors that are pending confirmation," Zinke said. "I don't have a deputy. I don't have a director of Fish and Wildlife. I don't have a director of parks. I don't have a director of anything."

Zinke has frozen hiring in Washington, D.C., and Denver, but told McEachin that he might be open to an exception to that if necessary.

Monuments review

Natural Resources Chairman Rob Bishop (R-Utah) praised Zinke for his "inclusive process" in the department's review of 27 national monuments, including two in Utah.



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"After eight years, it is a breath of fresh air to have someone leading the department who understands the reason why it was created in the first place, and just how far its core statutory functions have strayed since that time," Bishop said.

The Utah Republican said he was committed to introducing legislation to help Zinke clean up ambiguities in the management of monuments, including Bears Ears.

Zinke has said previously that while the 1906 Antiquities Act gives the president authority to proclaim monuments, managing those properties — especially when they conflict with other designations such as wilderness areas that have separate federal restrictions — is challenging. And in those cases, it's Congress, not the president, with the authority to sort that out.

"The committee is ready to do any kind of legislation to succeed in any of those broader reforms you would like to do," Bishop said.

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5. **PUBLIC LANDS: Lawmakers seek to broaden collaborative management**

E & E News, June 22 | Nick Sobczyk

Senate Republican lawmakers yesterday touted the success of collaborative land management projects across Western states and criticized bureaucratic hurdles under the National Environmental Policy Act.

The Senate Energy and Natural Resources Subcommittee on Public Lands, Forests and Mining heard testimony from federal and state leaders at an oversight hearing to examine projects aimed at restoring forests and watersheds that cross boundaries among federal, state and private land.

Sen. Mike Lee (R-Utah) pointed to successful examples of collaboration in his home state, where the Watershed Restoration Initiative brought federal and state regulators together with private landowners to address Utah's deteriorating watersheds.

The initiative has completed more than 1,500 restoration projects spanning more than 1 million acres, according to its website.



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But despite collaborative efforts to preserve forests and watersheds in Utah, many land management policies still get bogged down in jurisdictional disputes, Lee said.

"Too often, federal, state and local lands are managed independently of one another — as if they were in separate universes — with little or no coordination between neighboring land managers," he said.

"This patchwork of management strategies tends to breed confusion, it tends to create a certain amount of distrust, and it tends to produce less-than-ideal and even bad outcomes with the land itself."

Lee, alongside state officials and other Republican lawmakers at the hearing, was also critical of NEPA processes that hinder collaborative land management practices that cross state lines.

"The use of federal processes — in particular NEPA — to stall, delay or interfere with what have been well-thought-out collaboratives is an issue that has to be taken up," said Idaho Department of Fish and Game Director Virgil Moore.

Preventive measures to clear underbrush, prevent forest fires and protect wildlife often get stalled by NEPA standards and compliance, Moore said.

'Tools other than hammers'

Lee sees NEPA as just one tool in an arsenal used to preserve public lands. "I have a friend who's fond of saying that when you're holding a hammer and only a hammer, everything looks like a nail," he said.

"If people were willing to recognize that there are tools other than hammers that one can use, then one's willing to keep an open mind. And if you can keep those people involved in the process, then you can find more collaborative solutions."

Sen. Steve Daines (R-Mont.) also lamented that NEPA-related lawsuits from environmental groups often hinder collaborative forest management efforts from state and local officials.

"In my home state of Montana, our forests used to have loggers in there responsibly managing our forests," Daines said. "Now our forests are crawling with lawyers."



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Democrats often question GOP complaints about NEPA, accusing the party of wanting to weaken environmental regulations at every turn.

Still, Democratic and Republican lawmakers agreed that collaborative projects could be expanded to better manage recreational areas and sage grouse populations, and to combat the spread of invasive plant species like cheatgrass, which burns easily.

Forest and watershed projects are most effective when leaders in Washington listen to local and state collaborators on the ground, said Sen. Catherine Cortez Masto (D-Nev.), echoing sentiments expressed by Lee and Daines earlier in the hearing.

But lack of funding is one of the biggest hurdles preventing collaborative management projects from doing more, state officials said.

Daines earlier this year introduced [S. 962](#), the "Empowering State Forestry to Improve Forest Health Act of 2017," alongside Sen. Amy Klobuchar (D-Minn.).

The proposal, which private forest groups say could become part of the next five-year farm bill, would provide \$30 million per year for projects that involve a combination of federal, state and private forests (E&E Daily, May 2).

Even without legislation from Congress, federal agencies are working to expand collaborative efforts into new areas, said Forest Service Deputy Chief Leslie Weldon.

"We want to make sure as we get confident and good examples early on that we're actively expanding that to other areas where we have a shared interest in serving the public through conservation," she said. "Every penny and every bit of skill and expertise counts."

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6. **NATIONAL PARKS: Zinke wants more entrance fees to fill budget gap**

E & E News, June 22 | Jennifer Yachnin

Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke wants the National Park Service to increase entrance fees at some of its sites in an effort to address the agency's more than \$11 billion in deferred maintenance needs, he told lawmakers this week.



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In testimony before the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee this week to discuss his agency's fiscal 2018 budget request, Zinke lamented the fact that less than a third of NPS units charge entrance fees.

"The best funds for the parks are through the door: tickets to the door. We've had 330 million visitors through our parks last year. Half our parks didn't charge," Zinke said Tuesday.

Interior spokeswoman Heather Swift clarified that Zinke isn't proposing new fees at parks that do not currently charge admission. Instead, he wants to see each eligible NPS site adhere to the four-tier system of fees established in 2006.

"Many parks do not charge according to their tier, which shortchanges the park and shortchanges the visitor on experience," she said.

NPS spokesman Tom Crosson said that of the 417 NPS units, 118 currently collect fees. Among those sites that charge fees, 74 parks do not currently follow the four-tier fee model — which charges users based on a per-vehicle, motorcycle or per-person model, or by annual park passes — including 57 that adhere partially to the tier system.

"The National Park Service is working with regional offices and individual parks to enhance public engagement efforts and to continue to work towards appropriate fee collection across the service," Crosson said.

The fee structure created in 2006 groups NPS sites into four levels. The lowest tier includes national historic sites, national military parks, national battlefield parks, national memorials and shrines, national preserves and parkways. The second tier is reserved for national seashores, national recreation areas, national monuments, national lakeshores and national historic parks.

The third and fourth tiers include national parks.

Fees range from \$30 per vehicle or \$15 per person at the top tier to \$15 per vehicle and \$7 per person at the lowest end.

According to Crosson, 90 percent of NPS's fee revenue comes from its top 50 fee-collecting facilities.



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A Government Accountability Office report from late 2015 showed that Yosemite National Park brought in more than \$15 million and Grand Canyon National Park brought in more than \$16 million in entrance fees in fiscal 2014, for example, while San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park brought in \$58,000 in entrance fees.

But NPS also faced a moratorium on raising its fees between 2008 and 2014. When that moratorium was lifted in 2015, Crosson noted, 93 percent of the parks that collect fees began the steps to increase their rates.

Each NPS unit sets its own fees under the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act and must allow public input into the process.

Zinke did not indicate how much could be added to the NPS budget by increasing fees at those parks that do not currently charge the maximum rates allowed.

But a 2015 report from Interior's Office of Inspector General estimated that NPS could raise an additional \$28 million annually by "fully implementing the current fee model."

Still, National Parks Conservation Association Director of Budget and Appropriations John Garder questioned Zinke's desire to "second-guess" the decisions made by local NPS units on their entrance fees.

"It's unrealistic to think that appropriate fee increases in any way make a significant difference in the funding shortfall the Park Service currently faces," Garder said, adding that it would be "more meaningful" for the administration to "offer a proper budget."

The Trump administration is seeking \$11.7 billion for the Interior Department in fiscal 2018, a reduction of \$600 million from what the agency received from Congress in the omnibus spending bill this year.

Garder also noted that many parks are either statutorily prohibited from collecting fees — like Great Smoky Mountains National Park — or simply aren't equipped to do so, because of either numerous remote entrances or low visitation rates.

"It would be inappropriate to create a fee system that would price families of lesser means out of parks. These are public lands. It would be inappropriate to charge as much as private-sector amenities," Garder said.



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7. **TRIBES: Heinrich revives bill to curb cultural object trafficking**

E & E News, June 22 | Nick Sobczyk

Sen. Martin Heinrich (D-N.M.) yesterday reintroduced legislation that aims to curb exports and illegal trafficking of Native American cultural objects, an issue Heinrich has led the way on during his first term in the upper chamber.

The "Safeguarding Tribal Objects of Patrimony Act," or "STOP Act," would specifically prohibit exporting cultural objects and human remains obtained in violation of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act.

The [bill](#) would also increase criminal penalties under NAGPRA and direct the departments of the Interior, Homeland Security and State to appoint liaisons to aid tribes in the return of cultural property.

"We all recognize the incredible beauty of American Indian art — from the remnants of ancient wonders that we can explore and admire in places like Chaco Canyon and the Gila Cliff Dwellings to the traditional and modern art masterpieces created by Native artists to this day," Heinrich said in a statement.

"But we can also recognize a clear difference between supporting tribal artists or collecting artifacts ethically and legally as opposed to dealing or exporting items that tribes have identified as essential and sacred pieces of their cultural heritage," he added.

The issue came into the public eye last year when a sacred shield — stolen from the Acoma Pueblo reservation in the 1970s — was posted for sale at a French auction house (Greenwire, May 27, 2016).

The shield was eventually withdrawn from auction after pressure from Heinrich and then-Interior Secretary Sally Jewell, but it was never returned to the tribe.

Heinrich introduced a similar bill last year in the wake of the incident, but the legislation never made it out of committee (E&E Daily, July 7, 2016).



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This year's version may also face an uphill path to the floor in a Senate schedule packed with big-ticket issues like health care and tax reform. But it has gained a bipartisan roster of co-sponsors, including Sens. Jeff Flake (R-Ariz.), Tom Udall (D-N.M.), John McCain (R-Ariz.), Brian Schatz (D-Hawaii), Steve Daines (R-Mont.), Jon Tester (D-Mont.) and Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska).

The bill also has the support of tribal groups across the country that have long struggled to repatriate cultural items sent abroad by smugglers and auctioneers (Greenwire, Jan. 4).

Several tribes and the National Congress of American Indians have endorsed the bill, and the Acoma Pueblo worked with Heinrich's office to develop the legislation, Acoma Pueblo Gov. Kurt Riley said in a statement.

"Unfortunately, Acoma has firsthand experience with the illegal removal and trafficking of our cultural objects. It has been an uphill battle to secure their return," Riley said, adding, "However, we continue to fight for their return as their loss threatens the ability of our children to continue our cultural practices and thus threatens our identity as a people."

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8. **METHANE: Interior proposes scrapping limits already in effect**

E & E News, June 22 | Pamela King

President Trump's Interior Department could soon wipe away the last remnants of an Obama-era regulation to control methane emissions from oil and gas operations on federal and tribal land.

In a motion filed Tuesday, Justice Department attorneys shared Interior's three-pronged plan to revise or rescind the Bureau of Land Management's [Methane and Waste Prevention Rule](#). Part two is a proposal to suspend provisions of the rule that have already taken effect.

BLM intends to open its proposal to public notice and comment before the end of August, according to the motion, which supports a request to extend briefing deadlines in litigation concerning the current rule (Energywire, May 9).

"Even if the portions of the Rule currently in effect are harmful to Petitioners, BLM is in the process of developing a proposed rule to suspend those provisions, and anticipates finalizing



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such a rule by this coming fall," federal attorneys wrote. "If the parties were to proceed with the briefing deadlines currently in place, it is unlikely the merits would be resolved prior to this fall."

BLM last week announced the postponement of the rule's upcoming compliance deadlines but left intact provisions that went into effect earlier this year (Greenwire, June 14). Those elements include requirements related to waste minimization plans and flare volume measurements.

In hearings this week to discuss his department's proposed fiscal 2018 budget, Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke confirmed that BLM would rewrite the methane rule (Energywire, June 21). Until then, he said, his agency will continue to enforce the rule as it stands.

Those statements appear "disingenuous" in light of this week's filing, said Earthjustice attorney Robin Cooley. The motion indicates there may soon be nothing left of the rule to implement, she said.

"The reality is, the whole rule went into effect January 2017, and it says that on the front page of the Federal Register notice," Cooley said. "If they want to change anything, if they want to move compliance dates, they have to go through a public process."

In response to a request for comment, Interior directed questions to DOJ.

Zinke this week fielded criticisms from two Democratic senators for failing to include public notice and comment on BLM's first round of postponements (Greenwire, June 20).

He pledged that in rewriting the rule, he would adhere to the Administrative Procedure Act.

Cooley, who is representing environmental intervenors in the methane rule litigation, said she is trying to keep an open mind about the regulatory redo.

"We support the rule as it is currently written. We think it's reasonable, and it makes a lot of sense to prevent waste and protect public resources and air quality," she said. "We'll see what they have in mind, but I can't imagine it will be something we think is sufficient to prevent waste and protect public health."

Holland & Hart LLP attorney Eric Waeckerlin, representing the Independent Petroleum Association of America and the Western Energy Alliance, said while his clients appreciate



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BLM's recognition of the difficulty of compliance, he is still requesting an expedited briefing schedule.

"The administrative process is uncertain with respect to timing and outcome," Waeckerlin said. "The best strategy for our clients is to get the briefs on the record and get a decision from the court."

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9. **PUBLIC LANDS: Lawmakers seek to broaden collaborative management**

E & E News, June 22 | Nick Sobczyk

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"This patchwork of management strategies tends to breed confusion, it tends to create a certain amount of distrust, and it tends to produce less-than-ideal and even bad outcomes with the land itself."

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