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INTERIOR
WASHINGTON
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DAILY COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

TO: White House Cabinet Affairs Communications

FROM: Department of the Interior Communications Team

SUBJECT: Communications Update

Press Inquiries:

- E&E News: (Brittany Patterson)—**REQUEST**—Various questions about the future of the coal power plant Navajo Generating Station and a meeting the Secretary had with Patrick Soon-Shiong.—**RESPONSE**—TBD

- POLITICO (Esther Whieldon)—**REQUEST**--I'm writing a short story on how the Interior appears to be moving forward with a number of Murkowski's/Alaska's priorities despite Zinke's call with Murkowski in July over her vote on the healthcare bill. Examples include Sweeney nomination, movement to allow seismic testing on ANWR, work on the land swap for Izembek, the call for nominations on the NPR-A and work on the five-year offshore drilling plan. To what extent are these actions meant to butter up Murkowski to win her support on key issues on the hill vs the extent to which the priorities of the admin and Murkowski align? A response today by 5 would be appreciated. —**RESPONSE**-- The Secretary works with a number of Senators on both sides of the aisle to advance shared priorities, such as the restoration of the Everglades (Sen. Rubio), ensuring Swayne County received long-overdue funds from the Department (Sen. Tillis), and opening access to the Sabinoso Wilderness Area (Senator Udall).

- POLITICO (Esther Whieldon) – **REQUEST** – Update on USFWS seismic work on drilling in ANWR – **RESPONSE** – Nothing new to report on ANWR

□ POLITICO (Ben Lefebvre) & E&E – **REQUEST** - I saw this letter from Louisiana Gov. Edwards that raises the question of whether GOMESA disbursements for FY 2017 may be about half of what the state originally expected. Can anyone at Interior discuss whether those estimates are correct and, if so, why? – **RESPONSE** – TBD

□ POLITICO (Ben Lefebvre) – **REQUEST** - Chief of Staff Scott Hommel indicated on his OGE form 278 that his wife makes no income over \$1,000 a year, correct? How much money does Lucretia Hommel make, if any, from doing interior design work for Kimberly Bellissimo’s homes in New Jersey and downtown Washington D.C.? Is it a non-profit, or does she make more than \$1,000 a year from this business? How much money does Lucretia Hommel make a year overall doing interior design for her business, Snobz? How much does she make selling furniture from her Web site, snobz.co? Is there a way to break that down to see how much money she makes, if any, selling Bellissimo’s furniture on the Web site? Did anyone in Interior’s ethics office discuss with Hommel how to fill out OGE form 278? Official DOI business would be to see whether the DOI Chief of Staff has a false statement on his OGE form. - **RESPONSE** – The Department cannot comment on personal or business matters. No, he didn’t (referring to allegations of false statements).

□ NBC (Clark Dartunorro) – **REQUEST** - I want to know about the process regarding the program and what and where exactly those resources have been dispersed fooling the President’s Aug. 28 executive order on the department’s program (<https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2017/08/28/presidential-executive-order-restoring-state-tribal-and-local-law>) that provides resources to local law enforcement agencies. Also, I wanted to know how many applications, if any, have been received total and how many approved and rejected and background on the application process. – **RESPONSE** – TBD

Top Stories

- **Washington Examiner:** [Trump administration scrambles to save largest coal plant in the West](#)
- **NY Times:** [Where Did The Napa Fire Begin? Investigators Scour The Ashes.](#)
- **KQED-FM:** [Federal Agency Promoted Ranger Five Months After His Gun Was Stolen And Used In Steinle Killing.](#)

Top Issues and Accomplishments

- This week, Interior will announce oil and gas lease sale #250. This will be the largest acreage sale in the history of the Gulf of Mexico
- This week, Interior will release the Energy Burdens Report
- This week, Interior will announce an oil and gas lease sale in Alaska at the National Petroleum Reserve
- Tuesday Secretary Zinke will host two hour-long meetings with the House Natural Resources Committee Rs and Ds
- Tuesday Secretary Zinke will join conservative reporters for an off the record dinner
- Thursday Interior will host an event with VSOs to improve coordination with and services for veterans (open press)
- Friday the Secretary meets with POTUS

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