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DOI News

[Bernhardt: Don't ask me to fight climate change](#)

Climatewire (Aton)

Newly minted Interior Secretary David Bernhardt doesn't consider it his job to combat climate change.

[Interior secretary met with tribal lawyer attached to Zinke casino dispute](#)

Hill (Green)

Interior Secretary David Bernhardt met with a lawyer linked to a political scandal that in part led to the ousting of his predecessor Ryan Zinke, according to internal documents first reported on by The Guardian Wednesday. Bernhardt, in April 2018, met with Marc Kasowitz, legal counsel for the Schaghticoke Tribal Nation, according to Bernhardt's daily summary cards. The meeting was not divulged in his public calendars.

['Bittersweet': Deputy IG on her impending departure](#)

Greenwire (Doyle)

Mary Kendall will leave behind a large body of work, some crucial ongoing investigations and perhaps a frustration or two when she departs next month from her job as the Interior Department's deputy inspector general.

[Trump brand new Interior chief hit with lawsuits over endangered species](#)

Washington Examiner (Siciliano)

Environmentalists sued Wednesday to force the Interior Department to protect two dozen endangered species, the first major lawsuit against the agency since David Bernhardt took over as head less than a week ago. The lawsuit filed by the Center for Biological Diversity argues

that Bernhardt's agency has slow-walked the listing of 24 species as endangered or threatened after proposing to do so, saying the Trump administration has listed the lowest number of species since Ronald Reagan was president.

Exposing Secretary Bernhardt's Sabotage of Big Game Wildlife Corridors

Center for American Progress (Rowland-Shea, Kustin)

Last Thursday, the Senate confirmed David Bernhardt to head the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI). Already the most conflicted of President Donald Trump's Cabinet nominees, Bernhardt is also now the interior secretary with the lowest level of senatorial approval in history. (see Methodology) And with ongoing investigations into his ethics and record keeping, Bernhardt starts his tenure on a shaky foundation. During the confirmation process, senators confronted Bernhardt about his questionable ethics and suppression of science. And a number of senators sought assurances from Bernhardt that his so-called energy dominance agenda would not irrevocably harm the public lands and waters in their backyard.

Bureau of Indian Affairs

Trump wants to spend more on opioid task force that found 0.2 grams of heroin in week-long sting

Think Progress (Pyke)

A week-long specialized opioid policing operation in Arizona seized 0.2 grams of heroin in March, inadvertently illustrating the shortcomings of the Trump administration's response to the overdose and addiction epidemic. Officers from a half-dozen agencies also netted more meaningful quantities of marijuana and methamphetamine in the eight-day crackdown, which was convened under the aegis of the Interior Department's (DOI) Opioid Reduction Task Force.

Partial government shutdown complicates landslide response in Southeast Alaska

Millbank Monitor

The partial government shutdown that lasted 35 days has complicated efforts to clear a key roadway following a landslide on southeast Alaska's Prince of Wales Island. About 300 people have been affected by the closure, and an old logging road has been a cumbersome detour, the . The city of Thorne Bay said the slide occurred on U.S. Forest Service land.

Seneca Nation stalls on paying \$256m slots tab to New York

Calvin Ayre (Stradbroke)

The Seneca Nation of Indians is challenging an arbitration court ruling that says the tribe owes the state of New York nearly \$256m. In January, the Senecas came out on the losing end of a dispute with New York State over the tribe's refusal to share 25% of its three casinos' slots revenue with the state, as stipulated under their tribal-state gaming compact. At the time, the three-person arbitration panel in a split 2-1 decision estimated the tribe owed the state around \$200m.

Man accused of failing to report murder now charged with the killing

Rapid City Journal (Zionts)

A man charged with failing to report a murder in Pine Ridge last month is now accused of being the person who did the killing. Benjamin Wendell Smoke was indicted Tuesday at the federal courthouse in Rapid City on a charge of second-degree murder for allegedly strangling Dale Ecoffey Sr., on March 17 or 18. If found guilty, he could be sentenced up to life in prison.

Indio homeless encampment evicted

KESQ (TV) (Smith)

Dozens of homeless people who had been living in an encampment on tribal land in Indio are being told to leave. Last week, the people living behind the One Stop Shop shopping center at the intersection of Van Buren Street and Indio Boulevard were given notice Federal Bureau of Indian Affairs officials that they would have to vacate the property this week.

Ice road along Kuskokwim River a 'blessing' for villages

Millbank Monitor

Village residents are once again creating the ice road along the Kuskokwim River after extending it more than 250 miles last year in an unprecedented feat that defied climate change. On their side, they say, is new ice-penetrating radar that helps speed up the work without sacrificing safety, and a plow truck purchased on Craigslist that weighs less than road graders.

Office of Insular and International Affairs

Bryan Asks Carson To Raise USVI's Electric Grid Hardening Funding To \$350 Million. He Also Pushed For Changes In Disaster Funding Drawdown Process.

Virgin Islands Consortium

Governor Albert Bryan has asked U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Secretary Ben Carson to raise from \$67 million to \$350 million the Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery Program (CDBG-DR) funds allocated to the U.S. Virgin Islands for electric grid hardening. The \$67 million is a fraction of the \$2 billion allocated to Puerto Rico and the U.S.V.I. following Hurricanes Irma and Maria, and represents just 3 percent of the \$2 billion, with the rest set aside for Puerto Rico.

American Samoans celebrate US link

Radio New Zealand

American Samoans have today been marking Flag Day, a celebration of the American takeover of the territory in 1900. The keynote speaker at a ceremony in Pago Pago was Rear Admiral Kevin Lunday, who commands the 14th District of the US Coast Guard. Mr Lunday said American Samoa had set an example for the rest of the United States to follow.

Mouth cancer epidemic hits US-affiliated islands

Radio New Zealand (Johnson)

An epidemic of mouth cancer is hitting United States-affiliated islands as use of betel nut combined with tobacco ravages people's health. A cancer presentation at a regional health conference in Palau last month was titled: "Oral cancer in the US-Affiliated Pacific Islands: A rising epidemic." Three years ago, mouth cancer was listed as number 13 in cancer prevalence throughout US-affiliated islands. Now it has moved up to the eighth most prevalent cancer. The report using Palau and Northern Marianas cancer data says this form of cancer has tripled in the under-40 age group and is a "major cause of morbidity (death) which is due to late identification and spread of cancer".

Lawmaker: NMI workforce at 'very critical stage'

Marianas Variety (Erediano)

The CNMI workforce is now at a "very critical stage," House Federal and Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Luis John Castro said. He and other committee members met with Northern Marianas Business Alliance Corp. president Alex Sablan on Tuesday to discuss the concerns of employers who are bracing for the looming exodus of workers on CW-1 permits

that will expire in September.

Marianas Roadshows conducted in north China

Marianas Variety

On the heels of the 2019 Xi'An Silk Road International Tourism Expo on March 29-31 in Shaanxi province, the Marianas Visitors Authority continued its forays into north China with Marianas Roadshows in the cities of Qingdao and Jinan. Both cities are important travel gateways for the region, where the MVA is extending its promotional efforts to build demand and attract direct air service to the Marianas.

'Break silence on NMI finances'

Saipan Tribune (Perez)

With more cuts and belt-tightening measures expected in the coming months, minority leader Rep. Edwin K. Propst (Ind-Saipan) is urging the administration of Gov. Ralph DLG Torres to break its silence about the true financial state of the CNMI and tell the Legislature about it. "The administration should stop the nonsense," Propst said in an interview Tuesday. "It is shameful that they are not discussing how bad things are."

Minimum wage increase proposal 'in a few days'

Guam Daily Post (Ngirairiki)

In a few days, Sen. Joe San Agustin said Friday, he will introduce legislation that seeks to increase Guam's minimum wage by \$1 an hour to \$9.25. He plans to push for the minimum wage hike to take effect in January 2020.

Bureau of Land Management

Environmental groups say Wyoming BLM rushed review of climate change effects

Casper Star-Tribune (Richards)

Thirty-three environmental and public health groups say the Wyoming Bureau of Land Management rushed a court-ordered review of how land leased to oil and gas companies could have contributed to climate change. U.S. District Court Judge Rudolph Contreras ruled last month that the Bureau of Land Management had failed to consider, or attempt to quantify, how

potential fossil fuel development from those leases exacerbates a warming climate when it leased about 500 square miles of land to companies during the Obama years.

County votes against Red Rock development, must get BLM OK

KVUU (TV) (Mlynarek)

In a unanimous vote, Clark County Commissioners voted against changing requirements for a proposed housing development bordering Red Rock Canyon. Gypsum Resources has tried to pass the proposal for several years. Clark County told the company it had to get right-of-way approval from the Bureau of Land Management before it could move forward with its plans.

Environmental groups sue over potential strip mine expansion near Bryce Canyon

Salt Lake Tribune (Alberty)

A coalition of environmental groups is suing the Trump administration to halt a coal mining lease near Bryce Canyon National Park.

Lawsuit Filed In A Bid To Halt Expansion Of Coal Mine Near Bryce Canyon National Park

National Parks Traveler

Two months after the Trump administration allowed a coal mine not far from Bryce Canyon National Park in Utah to expand, a lawsuit was filed on grounds the expansion plan wasn't rigorously analyzed for its impact on the environment. The Interior Department in mid-February approved the Alton Coal Co.'s operations at the Coal Hollow Mine, which opened in 2010, to expand to nearly 3,500 acres roughly ten miles west of Bryce Canyon.

Super bloom coincides with super invasive species boom

KSBW (TV) (Conrad)

California is alive with color this spring but the super bloom isn't limited to wildflowers, it's also bringing with it a super boom in invasive species. The wet winter made for optimal growing conditions for all plants but experts say unfortunately the natives are still being choked out.

State Patrol looking for Jeep involved in hit-and-run

Grand Junction Daily Sentinel (Vaccarelli)

Colorado State Patrol is looking for a late 1990s, early 2000s Jeep that was involved in a hit and run accident earlier today. The accident occurred at 12:24 p.m. at V 2/10 Road and S Road. According to Trooper Lucas Johnson, the Jeep struck an ATV head on and fled the scene. The Jeep was last seen in De Beque and may be around Bureau of Land Management property or desert areas.

Water conservation efforts in Bozeman could save millions of gallons

KBZK (TV) (Babb)

Bozeman has started construction at the base of Pect's Hill that will save the city around \$25,000 and more than 350 million gallons of water each year. The water conservation project will be worked on until September. Commissioner Terry Cunningham said it is crucial the city finds a way to conserve water because Bozeman relies solely on snowpack.

Local snow surveys aid in state-wide water calculations

Crested Butte News (Nettles)

Data collected from recent snowpack surveys suggest a much wetter spring than last year, according to local and state water officials. A late-March survey of local snowpack, both manually through snow course sites and automatically through snowpack telemetry (SNOTEL) sites, has indicated a major change in snow water equivalent (SWE) from this winter compared to that of 2018. The survey is taken monthly each winter and spring by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Cooperative Snow Survey Program in the Upper Gunnison River Basin, which includes a partnership with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the NRCS, the Gunnison Conservation District, Trout Unlimited, the Crested Butte Land Trust, the Wildbird Community, Freeport-McMoRan (owner of the Keystone mine on Mt. Emmons), Upper Gunnison River Watershed Conservation District, Colorado Parks and Wildlife, Colorado Department of Natural Resources, HCCA and Crested Butte Nordic.

Boise River Levels Rise Again

Boise State Public Radio (Gunning)

For the second week in a row the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Bureau of Reclamation are increasing the outflow from Lucky Peak Dam by 60% to a rate of 5,450 cubic

feet per second by Friday evening. The Boise river is deep, cold and fast. The Boise Parks Department urges caution to those who walk, run or ride along the Greenbelt. In many areas, especially from the east end of Eagle Island and further downstream, Ada County emergency management warns the river will seep beyond its banks.

Wild horses find home in Glastonbury

Journal Inquirer (Frazer)

After an almost 3,000-mile journey from northern California to Connecticut, five mustangs have arrived at their new home. Hidden Meadow Equestrian Center, a horse farm and care facility at 1757 Main St. in Glastonbury, welcomed the five horses from the Devil's Garden Plateau Wild Horse Territory in California this weekend after a grueling six-day trek across the country. The trip across the Midwest was interrupted because of a snowstorm in Nebraska, but the horses are now situated and ready to get acclimated to human interaction.

BLM: Keep a Safe Distance From Wild Horses

The Horse

As part of its commitment to manage healthy herds of wild horses on public lands, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Wyoming's Cody Field Office is reminding the public to always maintain a safe distance from wild horses. "It's the time of year when we start to see new foals in the McCullough Peaks Herd Management Area," said BLM Supervisory Range Management Specialist Tricia Hatle. "It's imperative that people give the horses their space, move back if they approach and never follow pregnant mares."

Bureau of Ocean Energy Management

Offshore Wind Farms Are Spinning Up in the US—At Last

Wired (Niiler)

On June 1, the Pilgrim nuclear plant in Massachusetts will shut down, a victim of rising costs and a technology that is struggling to remain economically viable in the United States. But the electricity generated by the aging nuclear station soon will be replaced by another carbon-free source: a fleet of 84 offshore wind turbines rising nearly 650 feet above the ocean's surface.

In Northeast, more research needed on offshore wind's impact on fishing

Energy News Network (Dalton)

As plans for wind farms across New England's waters progress, fishermen continue to express concerns about the impact of the burgeoning offshore wind industry on their livelihoods. And while wind development is moving rapidly, scientific research on the impacts on fisheries has struggled to keep up. But the tides may soon be turning, thanks to the collaborative efforts of the fishing industry, offshore wind developers, and government agencies.

North County mayors, supervisors speak against offshore oil drilling

Del Mar Times (Williams)

Opening California's coastal waters to offshore oil and gas exploration as proposed by the Trump administration would be disastrous for this region, North County mayors and county supervisors said in a news conference Monday, April 15. "The results of a spill would be devastating to our coast. We already know from history what can happen," said District 3 County Supervisor Kristin Gaspar, referring to the explosion and sinking in 2010 of the Deepwater Horizon rig in the Gulf of Mexico.

How California's Worst Oil Spill Turned Beaches Black And The Nation Green

Milbank Monitor

On January 28, 1969, an oil well off the coast of Santa Barbara, Calif., experienced a blowout. The result was an oil spill that at the time ranked as the largest in U.S. history. The disaster, which made headlines across the nation, helped create the modern environmental movement. It also led to restrictions on offshore drilling — restrictions the Trump Administration is trying to loosen.

Bureau of Reclamation

Colorado River's biggest champion: Walmart heirs

Greenwire (Jacobs)

A \$3.65 billion foundation launched by Walmart founder Sam Walton has become ubiquitous in the Colorado River basin, dishing out \$100 million in the last five years alone. Its reach is dizzying, raising questions of influence.

Trump signs drought plan: 'Big deal for Arizona!'

Greenwire

President Trump yesterday signed a plan to cut back on the use of water from the Colorado River, which serves 40 million people in the U.S. West.

Water district sues over drought plan

E&E News PM (Jacobs)

A Southern California water district took a recently ratified drought plan for the Colorado River to court today, alleging violations of state environmental laws.

IID sues to halt Colorado River drought plan signed by Trump, says officials ignored Salton Sea

Palm Springs Desert Sun (Wilson)

It's not over yet. The Imperial Irrigation District has sued to halt a sweeping Colorado River drought plan that was signed in to law by President Trump on Tuesday. Officials with the sprawling, sparsely populated rural water district in southeastern California say the Salton Sea was wrongly left out of the plan. IID holds among the oldest and largest rights to water from the river.

West-Side Water Ticks Up to 65% of Allocation. Will It Hit 100%?

GV Wire

The heavy rains and snow falling on California this year are enabling the Bureau of Reclamation to boost water deliveries to growers on the west side of Fresno County. The Bureau of Reclamation announced Wednesday that it will supply South-of-Delta growers with 65% of their contracted water total. "This has been a great year for California's water supply," said Mid-Pacific Regional Director Ernest Conant. "The increased precipitation has allowed us to increase the amount of water we allocate to our South-of-Delta contractors.

Above-Average Snowpack Improves Colorado River Reservoir Levels

Arizona Public Media (Brocius)

Above-average snowpack in the upper Colorado River basin means good news this year for the reservoirs that supply Arizona's water.

Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement

Trump policy of less safety and more offshore drilling is 'a recipe for disaster'

Guardian (Milman)

Offshore oil and gas drilling in the US is plagued by “systemic failures” in oversight that are being worsened by Trump administration attempts to expand drilling and roll back safety requirements, a new report has warned. The analysis of public documents by the conservation group Oceana found that while some minor improvements have been made since the BP Deepwater Horizon disaster in 2010, a system of lax oversight, paltry fines and overstretched inspectors risks further major oil spills.

Fish and Wildlife Service

Lawsuit: Bernhardt, FWS failing to address backlog

E&E News PM (Streater)

An environmental group has sued Interior Secretary David Bernhardt and the Fish and Wildlife Service for failing to address a "growing backlog" of plant and animal species waiting to be protected under the Endangered Species Act.

Trump Additions to Endangered-Species List Are Lowest Since Reagan, Lawsuit Says

Bloomberg (Larson)

The Trump administration has failed to tackle a backlog of hundreds of requests to add species to the federal endangered or threatened list, approving the fewest since Ronald Reagan was president, an environmental conservation group alleged in a lawsuit. Interior Secretary David Bernhardt and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service have added 16 plants and animals to the list under the landmark Endangered Species Act -- the lowest figure since 1982, according to a lawsuit filed Wednesday in Washington by the Center for Biological Diversity.

Removal of deadly Jordan's Point dam in Lexington to start soon

Roanoke Times (Graham)

Crews have started preparations to remove the dam at Jordan's Point Park in Lexington after

two years of negotiations, public meetings and weather delays. The Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries is working with the city and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on the project. Last week, workers secured the area and brought in heavy equipment before constructing a causeway to reach the dam. They also improved the access road leading to the water's edge, according to a news release from the state agency.

GE still faces federal damages claim over Hudson River PCBs

Times Union (Nearing)

While state officials and environmentalists were disappointed at last week's federal decision not to require General Electric Co. to resume PCB dredging of the Hudson River, there is another shoe to drop that could lead to court. It is called a Natural Resources Damages Assessment, and is a federal process to measure impacts of environmental damages, and determine the best way to restore conditions and compensate the public for losses.

Illegal 600-foot trail cuts through Newport's Buck Gully Reserve

Los Angeles Times (Davis)

Newport Beach is assessing the damage from an illegal trail in the protected Buck Gully Reserve. The 600-foot path, which the city discovered in late March, splits off from the main trail near the Poppy Avenue trailhead and slices down the south-facing slope, cutting a couple of short switchbacks before terminating not far from residential backyards off Isabella Terrace.

ODFW releases draft of updated wolf management plan

Capital Press (Plaven)

A long-awaited update of Oregon's Wolf Conservation and Management Plan could finally be adopted in June, though not without controversy. The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife released its latest draft of the revised plan April 15, about four years after it was first due. The Fish and Wildlife Commission is expected to vote on the proposal at its June 7 meeting in Salem, which will include public testimony. One major conflict remains the ability of wildlife managers to kill wolves that repeatedly prey on livestock. Wolves in Eastern Oregon are managed under Phase III of the current plan, which defines "chronic depredation" as two confirmed attacks in any period of time.

Gunnison Sage Grouse recovery plan

Crested Butte News (Vidmar)

After losing their case in federal district court to remove the Gunnison sage grouse from the federal endangered species list, Gunnison County and its litigation partners decided not to pursue an appeal, and instead are focusing efforts on a recovery plan the public process for which begins next week in Delta. The county has worked for more than 20 years to foster a healthy population of Gunnison sage grouse in the area, but in 2014, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife service added the Gunnison sage grouse to the list of endangered wildlife as threatened, and designated 1.4 million acres in Colorado and Utah as critical habitat for the bird.

Interstate 25 expansion south of Denver shows need for wildlife tunnels as officials track carnage

Denver Post (Finley)

Bears, deer, bobcats, mountain lions and other animals are dying, picked off at the rate of at least one a day by vehicles, as Colorado contractors widen Interstate 25 south of Denver to six lanes through wetlands and other wildlife habitat.

National Park Service

NPS accused of violating law in moving former nominee

Greenwire (Hotakainen)

An advocacy group today accused the National Park Service of acting illegally by naming former Grand Teton National Park Superintendent David Vela to the position of acting deputy director of operations in its Washington headquarters.

Group says Vela's reassignment illegal

Jackson Hole News and Guide (Koshmrl)

A federal government watchdog group is challenging the legality of David Vela's reassignment to the National Park Service's acting deputy director of operations role in Washington, D.C. Superintendent of Grand Teton National Park since 2014, Vela was nominated to direct the Park Service last summer, but U.S. Senate never confirmed him, and he has not been renominated under the new Congress. Longtime Park Service employee Dan Smith, another deputy director who has been "exercising the authority of director", announced Vela's reassignment to the deputy job. The group Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility is arguing that Smith lacks the authority to appoint Vela.

Remains found in American Fork Canyon identified as missing Utah woman

KSL (TV) (Imlay)

Spontaneous and adventurous, Jerika Binks "could pack bails of hay, just like any of us boys could," her brother said. "She would make you laugh, and some of the things that she would do, it would just drive you nuts to know how wild she was, very athletic, very strong," Jed Alvey, one of Binks' seven siblings, recalled Wednesday. He met with sheriff's officials, who announced the remains found in a ravine on American Fork Canyon were positively identified as Jerika Binks. On Sunday, a hiker discovered them in the rugged area and alerted police.

Yellowstone project dealt another blow

Greenwire (Brown)

A Canadian mining company keeps fighting to mine north of Yellowstone National Park even after a Montana judge last week torpedoed its last means of hitting pay dirt.

Thousands of glass shards found strewn along beach

Greenwire

Officials at Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore say large quantities of broken glass have been strewn along a Lake Michigan beach.

Mining project near Bryce Canyon National Park draws lawsuit

Greenwire

Environmental organizations are suing the Trump administration over the approval a coal mining project near a national park in southern Utah.

Wolf shooter in park walked right by sign

Jackson Hole News and Guide (Koshmrl)

A Kelly big-game outfitter and avid wolf hunter trudged through the snow right past a

boundary sign on his way to illegally shooting a female wolf inside Grand Teton National Park. Gros Ventre Wilderness Outfitters owner Brian Taylor was pursuing wolves on closing day of the 2018 hunting season during a period when the federal government was shut down and some rangers were furloughed. It was a bitterly cold late afternoon in the Spread Creek drainage, Taylor told investigating park ranger Nick Armitage, when he led two hunting partners past one of the boundary sign posts while following wolf tracks that ascended from a bison hunter's left-behind gut pile.

Elon Musk's D.C.-to-Baltimore 'loop' leaps an early milestone

Politico (Snyder)

Elon Musk's Boring Company is one step closer to being able to construct an underground "loop" between Washington, D.C. and Baltimore, Maryland, that would be served by driverless cars through a tunnel, the Transportation Department announced Wednesday. On Wednesday DOT announced that the loop project has completed its environmental assessment, a draft of which is available for public comment for the next 45 days. The agency will then determine if a full environmental impact statement is needed.

Free entry at Everglades National Park and Shark Valley on Saturday

Sun-Sentinel (Christensen)

Cool weather during the dry season is the best time to explore South Florida's stunning River of Grass. Get in free at Everglades National Park (and all U.S. National Parks) on April 20 for the first day of National Park Week. That's a deal since the fee recently increased to \$30 per car.

The Friendship of Salem, fingers crossed, comes home Monday

Swampscott Reporter (Dowd)

The Friendship of Salem, the iconic tall-ship replica, will return to the Derby Wharf dock - fingers crossed - on Monday afternoon. "Friendship of Salem is out of dry dock and back afloat. We have now turned our attention to her imminent return to Salem," wrote Gavin Gardner, chief of resources for the Salem Maritime National Historic Site, in an emailed statement to the Salem Gazette Wednesday. "The goal is to bring the ship back to Derby Wharf on Monday, April 22." The Friendship, a reconstruction of a 171-foot, three-mast Salem East Indiaman built in 1797, has called the Derby Wharf home since 1998. It's a tourist magnet and beloved Salem landmark, and many locals are lamenting its protracted absence.

Pollution and national parks — why it's an issue

KSL (TV) (O'Donoghue)

Critics of Utah's proposed regional haze plan say it does not go far enough to cut emissions from a pair of power plants and want state regulators to require upgrades to significantly reduce the pollutant nitrogen oxide. The plan with its proposed revisions is up for public comment through May 15 and will be reviewed this summer by the Utah Air Quality Board. Comments can be emailed to thomasgunter@utah.gov

Grand Canyon celebrates Earth Day with free entry April 20

Daily Courier

Grand Canyon National Park invites the public to celebrate the 49th anniversary of Earth Day during National Park Week with free entrance April 20. All Earth Day activities are free and open to the public and will take place at the Grand Canyon Visitor Center Plaza on the South Rim between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.

Christine Lehnertz Picked To Lead The Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy

National Parks Traveler (Repanshek)

Christine Lehnertz, who last month abruptly ended her National Park Service career rather than return to Grand Canyon National Park and a subordinate who made false allegations against her, is heading back to San Francisco to lead the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy. The Conservancy's Board of Trustees on Wednesday announced that Lehnertz would become the organization's president and CEO beginning on May 13. At that time, Greg Moore will become CEO Emeritus and transition into a new role as special advisor with the Conservancy.

National Park Service Cites Four Skiers Who Required Rescue

National Parks Traveler

Four individuals who ventured into Grand Teton National Park from a nearby ski area when it was illegal to do so because of avalanche conditions not only needed to be rescued, but could each be assessed a hefty \$5,000 fine and face some jail time. Andrew Richards, 24, of Jackson, Wyoming; Ruth Schwietert, 28 of Jackson, Wyoming; Natalie Burns, 32, of Breckenridge, Colorado, and; Joseph Higgins, 25 of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, each received two citations requiring a mandatory court appearance. Citations are for violation of an emergency boundary closure and disorderly conduct with creation of a hazardous condition. Each citation

carries a maximum penalty of up to \$5,000 fine and/or six months in jail.

Experts question Wyoming quest to run environmental reviews

Gillette News Record (Thuermer Jr.)

Experts in federal environmental law are raising questions about Wyoming officials' quest to "assume primacy" over analyzing the potential impacts of projects on federal lands, like drilling for oil and gas. Federal laws are clear that agencies such as the U.S. Forest Service and U.S. Bureau of Land Management and the National Park Service are responsible for stewarding their respective holdings, a former national park superintendent, a scholar, and a veteran conservation advocate told WyoFile. They responded to a conversation between Gov. Mark Gordon and Secretary of the Interior David Bernhardt about how Wyoming could assume a role that's now the purview of federal agencies.

Wisconsin bill seeks to elevate status of Ice Age and North Country trails

Associated Press

Wisconsin lawmakers have introduced a bill that seeks to elevate the status of two trails, therefore providing access to more funding to expand and maintain the routes. The legislation seeks to designate the Ice Age and North Country national scenic trails as units of the National Park Service, Wisconsin Public Radio reported. Democratic U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin and Republican Rep. Jim Sensenbrenner are sponsoring the bill.

New park acting superintendent named

Gettysburg Times

Kristina Heister has assumed the helm as acting superintendent of Gettysburg National Military Park and Eisenhower National Historic Site. She will serve in this position until approximately Aug.10.

Desert View Inter-Tribal Cultural Heritage Site Plan Gets Go-Ahead At Grand Canyon National Park

National Parks Traveler

A Finding of No Significant Impact was signed by Kate Hammond, acting Regional Director for the Intermountain Region of the National Park Service, for a site plan to both transform

Desert View in Grand Canyon National Park into an Inter-tribal Cultural Heritage Site and share a unifying message from the park's traditionally associated tribes: "we are still here." The National Park Service is committed to honoring the cultural, historic, and spiritual connections that each tribe holds to the Grand Canyon.

Meet Gracie: The Resident 'Bark Ranger' at Montana's Glacier National Park

Mental Floss (Petsko)

Gracie isn't like the other park rangers at Glacier National Park in Montana: She's not afraid to run after bighorn sheep and mountain goats in order to keep them at a safe distance from visitors. And while she doesn't earn a salary, she's content to work for belly rubs.

Catoctin Mountain Park shares 'hidden gems' in new visitor center displays

Frederick News-Post (Hogan)

Catoctin Mountain Park is not the average national park — having been home to both U.S. presidents and spies — and new exhibits now open to the public are ready to tell it all. The National Park Service opened new displays this month at the park's visitor center off Foxville Road. The intent is for the new displays to be a "launching point" for visitors to then venture into the park and connect the history to the location.

U.S. Geological Survey

Jay earthquakes prompt calls for fracking ban, halt to more drilling

Pensacola News Journal (Gabriel)

Environmental groups are calling on Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis to cease issuing new oil drilling permits and to ban fracking and related processes after a series of recent earthquakes in the Jay area. "We are very worried about these earthquakes that may be linked to oil and gas operations," Jorge Aguilar of St. Petersburg-based Food & Water Watch said at a downtown Pensacola news conference on Wednesday. Joining Aguilar were representatives of Pensacola-based Earth Action, League of Women Voters, Earth Ethics and Physicians for Social Responsibility.

Westmoreland County could be region's first to get water wells tested by feds

Pittsburgh Tribune-Review (Thomas)

Westmoreland County could become the first one in Western Pennsylvania to have large-scale, baseline testing done on the water quality of private wells by the federal government. The Westmoreland Conservation District is applying for a \$250,000 grant to pay the U.S. Geological Survey to do baseline testing on 40 to 70 private wells across the county.

Why Southern California Is Ripe For A Large Earthquake

KPBS Public Media (Lacy, Hindmon)

Easter Sunday marks nine years since the last major earthquake shook the San Diego region. The magnitude 7.2 Baja California earthquake caused significant damage in Mexicali in 2010. Nearly five years have passed since an earthquake of magnitude 6 or stronger occurred in California. Researchers with the U.S. Geological Survey recently published a study detailing how the state is in the midst of an earthquake drought, defined as a span of 100 years with no major, ground-rupturing earthquakes.

Opinion

An Inside Job at Interior

New York Times (Editorial Board)

Last Thursday, the Senate voted 56-to-41 to confirm David Bernhardt, President Trump's pick for secretary of the interior. Four days later, the department's inspector general opened an ethics investigation into the new chief for potential "conflict of interest and other violations." Even by the standards of the ethically elastic Trump administration, this is impressive.

COLUMN: Wrong to make hunters carry bear spray

Cody Enterprise (Meinicke)

To quote the Cody Enterprise, Tuesday, April 9: "We're going to take it one step further as an association and come up with some sort of standard protocol for the industry and possibly the hunting public," said Lee Livingston, outfitter, Park County commissioner and currently serving as a board member of the Wyoming Outfitters and Guide Association. This concerning the mandatory carrying of bear spray for guides and average citizens while hunting in Cody's backcountry.

Guest column Mary McKittrick: US Fish & Wildlife: 'Leave well enough alone'

Daily Hampshire Gazette (McKittrick)

“If it ain’t broke, don’t fix it.” Bert Lance, director of the Office of Management and Budget under President Jimmy Carter, likely didn’t coin this idiom, but he is credited with popularizing it in a 1977 quote followed by: “That’s the trouble with government: fixing things that aren’t broken ...”

And Then The Illegal Bridge Becomes Legal

High Plains Journal (Fuglie)

It seems like the threats to North Dakota’s Badlands never cease. Let’s go back and revisit Wylie Bice. He’s the rogue, rich, rancher up in Dunn County, on the eastern edge of the Badlands, who’s built himself a private bridge on public land, without permission, over the Little Missouri State Scenic River. Now it appears he is going to get away with nothing more than a slap on the hands and a little dip into his very big pocketbook.

Report of death for Lone Bear needs to be made public

Bismarck Tribune

The Tribune Editorial Board is disappointed with a recent opinion by Attorney General Wayne Stenehjem. The Tribune asked the attorney general’s office whether the report of death for Olivia Lone Bear was a public record and had to be released. In his opinion, Stenehjem said because the Lone Bear case is an ongoing investigation the report isn’t a public record and can be withheld.

Yellowstone ride: battling wind, cars and bison

Post Register (Painter)

So full disclosure: I didn’t get a full 100 miles on my Saturday ride in Yellowstone National Park. It came to 96.4 miles. My friend Scott Hurst, and I rode to Mammoth Hot Springs from West Yellowstone, Mont., and back again. When we limped back to the visitor center in West Yellowstone where we parked the car, he said if we continued to the other end of town and back we’ll have our 100 miles. We had been battling a cold, demoralizing headwind for the past 40 miles. My legs were turning to jelly, and I had been ready to be done 20 miles earlier.

Top National News

North Korea tests 'tactical' weapon, report says

CNN (Kwon, McKirdy)

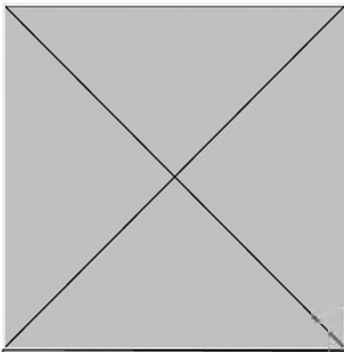
North Korean leader Kim Jong Un inspected and directed a "new tactical guided weapons firing test" Wednesday, according to a report from the country's state media. The report, published Thursday morning local time (Wednesday evening ET) by news agency KCNA, did not state exactly what kind of weapon was tested, nor its potential range. However, the description provided by KCNA suggests that it does not represent a return to missile testing for the regime -- a tactical weapon is designed to be used on the battlefield, and is typically not a long-range armament.

U.S., China Set Tentative Timeline for Next Round of Trade Talks

Wall Street Journal (Zumbrun)

The U.S. and China are planning two rounds of face-to-face meetings as they seek to wrap up a trade deal, with negotiators aiming for a signing ceremony in late May or early June, according to people familiar with the situation.

Date	Host	Title
4/23-26	NatureServe	Core Methodology Training
6/28 -7/2	American Society of Mammalogists	99th Annual Meeting of the American Society of Mammalogists



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