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Underwater Wild West

From the Indy

Comcast Internship

The fix for parched western states: Recycled toilet water

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Trump orders agencies to ‘sunset’ environmental protections

Trump hits delete for energy, environment regs

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Preserve America Summit

Last Branding for Kip Davis



The Wild West is alive and well — it just moved underwater. As nations and companies race to stake their claim in the deep sea, industry is moving faster than regulation can keep up.

<https://katiecouric.com/news/sustainability/deep-sea-mining/>

from the Indy

In the nation's driest state, two bills seek to buy back and [retire unused water rights](#)
Trump's anti-DEI push [suspends \\$20M grant](#) for a Nevada tribe's water infrastructure

Seeking a seat at the table — Gov. Joe Lombardo is requesting a representative from Nevada be appointed to the newly created federal Joint Task Force on Federal Land for Housing.

The Interior Department is studying selling about [400,000 acres](#) of public land. Across the nation, there are 650 million acres of federal land, including 61 million in Nevada.

Lombardo made a [similar pitch](#) to former President Joe Biden in 2024 and in his 2023 and 2025 State of the State addresses.

Leaving No Trace — Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area has been given a nod by the [Leave No Trace](#) organization for incorporating its practices, which include traveling on durable surfaces; leaving rocks, flowers and other items in place; respecting wildlife; and disposing properly of waste, into the park's management.

The organization recognized Red Rock with its Gold Standard site designation, making it the first Leave No Trace Gold Standard site in Nevada.

Rediscovering Cave Lake — A rehabilitation project at Cave Creek Reservoir at Cave Lake State Park outside Ely is complete and the lake has since been refilled.

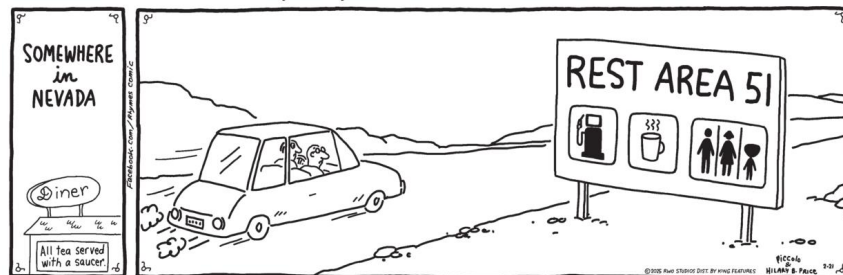
The lake was drained in 2019 so that work could be done on its nearly 100-year-old dam. During the project, the lake's water was diverted and its fish were relocated to nearby [Comins Lake](#). Now that the reservoir has been refilled, reaching capacity in March, the Nevada Department of Wildlife is restocking the lake with 17,000 fish. A [celebration](#) of the reservoir's refilling will be held June 7

Nevada wildlife crossing construction halted by federal funding freeze, [Forbes](#) reports.

The [Las Vegas Sun](#) looks at how much water is worth as lawmakers weigh continued funding for Desert Research Institute's cloud seeding program.

[National Geographic](#) compiled a collection of images that give insight into what our national parks looked like well before the days of posing for the 'Gram and park reservations.

RHYMES WITH ORANGE: By Hilary Price



The application deadline for the **2025 Comcast Fellowship** is around the corner — Thursday, April 17! The fellowship offers six undergraduate students hands-on experience in policy-making and issue-based organizing while working closely with legislative offices in Sacramento, California.

APPLY NOW

Generously supported by the Comcast Foundation and in partnership with the California Legislative LGBTQ Caucus, the fellowship will run from **June 23–July 25 and includes a \$5,000 stipend.**

It's vital to have LGBTQ+ voices in spaces where key decisions are made, ensuring that our communities are properly represented. This fellowship gives students a unique opportunity to get involved in that process, expand their professional network, and build their resume.

Please share this email with students who you think would be a great fit! For more information, visit eqca.org/comcast-fellowship.

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### **The fix for parched western states: Recycled toilet water**

“If you were to drink improperly recycled toilet water, it could really hurt you — but probably not in the way you’re thinking. Advanced purification technology so thoroughly cleans wastewater of feces and other contaminants that it also strips out natural minerals, which the treatment facility then has to add back in. If it didn’t, that purified water would imperil you by sucking those minerals out of your body as it moves through your internal plumbing. So if it’s perfectly safe to consume recycled toilet water, why aren’t Americans living in parched western states drinking more of it? A new report from researchers at the University of California, Los Angeles, and the Natural Resources Defense Council finds that seven western states that rely on the Colorado River are on average recycling just a quarter of their water, even as they fight each other and Indigenous tribes for access to the river amid worsening droughts. ...”  
[Read more from Grist.](#)

### **New Trump administration directives to repeal environmental regulations en masse make ‘no sense,’ legal experts say**

“Environmental lawyers say two new White House directives—designed to greatly expand executive power to strike down federal energy and environmental regulations—are not likely to hold up in court and represent an attempt to move far beyond the established boundaries of presidential authority. “I do not think this even comes close to passing the test for legality,” said Andres Restrepo, a senior attorney in the Sierra Club’s Environmental Law Program, of the April 9 executive order, “Zero-Based Regulatory Budgeting to Unleash American Energy.” This executive order directs the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Energy and other key federal agencies to “incorporate a sunset provision into their regulations governing energy production.” Once inserted, the provision would repeal that regulation within one year unless an extension is granted. Among those targeted are rules authorized under the Endangered Species Act. ...” [Read more from Inside Climate News.](#)

## Banning book banning? A bill in the Nevada Legislature would do just that

AB416 would prohibit school boards, the governing body of a charter school, a school employee, or public library from limiting access to or removing certain books based on the characteristics of the author or the content of the book, or because of the subject, or intended audience of the book.

@NEVADANNEWS

In the 2023-2024 school year, nonprofit [PEN America](#) counted more than 10,000 book bans in public schools nationwide. And everywhere, it is the books that have long fought for a place on the shelf that are being targeted - books by authors of color, LGBTQ+ authors, and women.

AB416 would make it a felony crime to use force, threats, or pressure to stop a student from using library materials, or to try to make school officials ignore the rules in this bill.

The bill received its first hearing in the Assembly Judiciary Committee on April 8. If passed by the legislature, it would still need the governor's approval to become law.

The bill would prohibit library and school staff from being fired, punished, or transferred just for sharing or displaying certain books.

It also makes it illegal to share personal information of staff or students to retaliate because of book-related disagreements.

@NEVADANNEWS

**Discover Nevada's best hot springs:** A guide to unique soaks and local hideaways. Nevada is home to more than 300 naturally occurring hot springs, the most found in the U.S. While some are too hot to enjoy, if you know the right spot, a day of soaking and relaxation is as easy as a quick drive. If you're planning to take a dip, consider pairing your trip with another unique Nevada experience. ([Via Las Vegas Weekly](#))

## **RFK Jr. wants to target chronic disease in US tribes. A key program to do that was gutted**

By [DEVNA BOSE](#), [GRAHAM LEE BREWER](#) and [BECKY BOHRER](#)

CHANDLER, Ariz. (AP) — [Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr.](#) spent time in tribal communities in Arizona and New Mexico this week highlighting ways they are trying to prevent [chronic disease](#) among Native Americans and Alaska Natives, something he has said is one of his top priorities.

But Kennedy didn't appear to publicly address a Native health program using traditional medicine and foods to tackle disproportionate rates of conditions like diabetes and liver disease. The program, called Healthy Tribes, was gutted in this month's [federal health layoffs](#).

Some Native leaders say they are having trouble grasping the dissonance between Kennedy's words and his actions. With little information, they wonder if Healthy Tribes is part of the Trump administration's push to end diversity, equity and inclusion efforts. There also is confusion about [what and who is left](#) at the 11-year-old program, which was part of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, under Kennedy's agency, and doled out \$32.5 million a year.

Tribal leaders and health officials told The Associated Press that cuts to the Healthy Tribes program are another [violation of the federal government's legal obligation](#), or trust responsibility, to tribal nations under treaties, law and other acts. That includes funding for health care through the Indian Health Service, as well as education and public safety for citizens of the 574 federally recognized tribes.

"So many layers of communications of collaboration and partnerships have just been turned off," said Onawa Miller, a Quechan Indian Nation citizen and director of tribal public health for United South and Eastern Tribes, which serves 33 tribes in those regions of the U.S. She said her organization already has received its annual \$2 million in Healthy Tribes funding.

Several tribal facilities received an email from a CDC employee April 1 notifying them that the positions of many people who staffed the Healthy Tribes program had been eliminated "as part of the reduction in force efforts at CDC."

The American Federation of Government Employees union, which represents thousands of workers at the CDC in Atlanta, said more than 30 civil servant jobs were or are being eliminated. That includes 11 positions in the Healthy Tribes program and others in the larger Division of Population Health.

An email sent to the account of Healthy Tribes director Dr. Julianna Reece, an enrolled member of the Navajo Nation, was met with an automated reply: "Due to the recent HHS reduction in force, I have been placed on administrative leave and will be separated from the agency on June 2nd." Reece did not respond to requests for comment sent to her federal and personal email accounts.

### **Native leaders call change ‘a violation of trust’**

Part of the government upheaval in the past several weeks includes top officials at the National Institutes of Health being offered transfers to Indian Health Service offices far from Washington, D.C. The National Indian Health Board also has said the government eliminated key staff and programs at the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health’s Center for Indigenous Innovation and Health.

The government is required to consult with tribes on decisions impacting them, like mass layoffs in February at the Indian Health Service that were rescinded hours later, and tribal leaders have warned the Trump administration that such consultations are not happening. In some cases tribes can take legal action against the U.S. for failing to meet its trust responsibilities.

“It is a violation of trust, without a doubt,” said W. Ron Allen, chairman of the Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe in Washington state.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services did not answer questions related to the Healthy Tribes cuts but told the AP in an email that the Indian Health Service was not impacted by this month’s workforce reductions and there are no plans to consolidate any of its offices.

Kennedy’s swing through the Southwest included a visit to a community health center in metro Phoenix that provides physical and mental health care to Native people and a hike with the Navajo Nation president. He also moderated a panel at the Tribal Self-Governance Conference, held on the Gila River Indian Reservation in Arizona, but didn’t take questions from the audience, tribal leaders on stage or journalists.

Allen said he had a constructive conversation with Kennedy, reminding him IHS is already underfunded and understaffed and that tribes rely on additional federal grants and programs.

“Your issue is to reduce the central office, and so we’re OK with that, but move the functions that serve the tribes out to the tribes,” Allen said he told Kennedy. “Because if we don’t have those resources, how are we gonna make our communities healthy? He agrees.”

### **Grants fund traditional medicine practices**

Research shows Native Americans have shorter life expectancies than other ethnic groups, and the Indian Health Service says they face higher mortality rates from chronic conditions like diabetes and liver disease.

In Seattle, Healthy Tribes money pays for a program called GATHER, which focuses on integrating traditional tribal medicine practices into health care. Providers at the Seattle Indian Health Board can use medicine made from plants grown in a community garden. A traditional Native medicine apprentice or healer is a part of a patient’s care team.

Seattle Indian Health Board President Esther Lucero, a descendant of the Navajo Nation, said her staff meets with people from the CDC and other Healthy Tribes grantees bimonthly to discuss project updates and ensure compliance with grants. But after last week’s layoffs, they are having trouble contacting anyone.

“If you can’t actually administer the dollars, how are you going to actually get them out to the programs?” she said. “With this current administration, it’s almost like every day we receive an unexpected notice, and then we will get a follow-up notice that says ... you need to move forward as usual.”

Lycia Ortega, interim CEO of Los Angeles-based United American Indian Involvement, echoed concerns about the ambiguous and somewhat confusing messages. Her organization uses Healthy Tribes money to foster connections between younger people and elders in Native American and Alaska Native communities.

Native communities have had to push back against the Trump administration’s efforts to cut programs that might be considered DEI initiatives, she said, with the help of lawyers, policy experts and watchdogs who point out areas where the government might not be honoring the trust responsibility.

Native people “have a distinct political power,” said Ortega, a citizen of the Fort Yuma Quechan Indian Tribe, but “there are policymakers who see tribes as a threat rather than a partner.”

Stephen Roe Lewis, governor of the Gila River Indian Community, said he told Kennedy privately that consulting with and engaging in respectful partnerships with tribes is key to fulfilling the federal government’s trust responsibilities.

Since the Trump administration began making massive cuts to the federal workforce, many tribal leaders have had to clarify with newly appointed federal officials that services to tribes are not based on race but rather on the political status of tribal nations.

“I made it very clear, we are not DEI — as tribal nations, as a political entity,” he said.

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Bose reported from Jackson, Mississippi, and Bohrer from Juneau, Alaska. Associated Press writers Terry Tang in Phoenix and Mike Stobbe in New York contributed.

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DEVNA BOSE Bose is a public health reporter for The Associated Press, based in Jackson, Mississippi. She covers hospitals, rural health access and disparities, public health funding and other topics that broadly intersect with the health of communities.

GRAHAM LEE BREWER Brewer reports for the AP’s Race and Ethnicity team, focusing on Indigenous communities and tribal nations. He is a citizen of the Cherokee Nation and is based in Oklahoma.

BECKY BOHRER Bohrer is a statehouse and political reporter based in Juneau, Alaska.

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Surprise as sealskin is discovered to be cover material of ‘hairy’ medieval books

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Education Department withdraws from plan to address discipline disparities for Native students



[The Education Department has withdrawn from an agreement to address disparities in discipline for Native American students at a South Dakota school system, saying it was wrongly rooted in efforts to promote diversity, equity and inclusion. The decision reflects a shift in interpretation of anti-discrimination laws under President Donald Trump’s administration, which is planning to review other agreements the department's Office for Civil Rights has struck with school systems around the U.S. At issue in the Rapid City Area School District were questions of harsh discipline and access to advanced coursework for Native students, who have been less likely than their white peers to be in high-level classes.](#)

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UNR Med graduate programs receive national rankings (unr.edu) — The University of Nevada, Reno School of Medicine has received national recognition for its graduate programs in Physician Assistant Studies and Speech-Language Pathology. These programs are highly ranked, highlighting UNR Med's commitment to addressing Nevada's healthcare needs.

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**[Intern Spotlight: The Post-Conquest Life of Hernando Cortés in the Spanish Foreign Copying Program Records at the Library of Congress](#)**

The Hospital de Jesús series in the Manuscript Division’s Spanish Foreign Copying Program Records hides a wealth of sources in plain sight due to its misleading title. Instead of medical documentation, the series consists of twenty-nine volumes on the Marquisate of the Valley of Oaxaca, the title and estates granted to the conquistador Hernando Cortés in 1529, after the fall of Tenochtitlán.

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That’s how much data-center electricity consumption is expected to increase globally by 2030, to around 945 terawatt-hours, according to a [report](#) by the International Energy Agency. Reliance on fossil fuels for power generation may threaten global decarbonization goals, and data centers aren’t the only culprits in the AI supply chain. Last year, emissions generated by chip manufacturing [increased fourfold](#), a Greenpeace analysis says.

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**Arizona facility to process cobalt, a critical mineral for tech, is about to launch**

Extract:

**A cobalt processing facility that would boost the U.S. supply of the critical mineral is on track to begin construction in late 2025.**

Once built, the facility in Yuma County would be the only cobalt processing facility in the U.S.

Jobs at the plant would include security and administrative personnel, electricians, welders, machinists and processors, Michel-Garcia said.

“Our goal is to make every effort that we can to hire local residents and to allow this opportunity to retiring veterans from the nearby bases,” he said.

<https://www.rgj.com/story/news/local/arizona-environment/2025/04/11/evelution-energy-cobalt-processing-plant-coming-to-yuma/83028563007/>

**History Bits**



- 1644 Apr 18** Ninety-nine year old **Opechancanough** of the Powhatan Confederacy led tribal forces against Virginia, twenty-two years after his first attack on Jamestown and killed almost 400 English.
- 1818 Apr 17** Native Americans and African American freedom fighters lost to a white force led Andrew Jackson in the battle of Suwanee (Florida).
- 1875 Apr 19** *Nevada's Silver State* reported, "**Prince Naches** who does not consider it beneath the dignity of a royal Paiute to peddle fish, is doing a thriving business in that line."
- 1877 Apr 16** An Executive Order provided additional land for the Duck Valley Reservation.
- 1878 Apr 16** In a former Russian barrack on Baranof Island (Sitka, AK), the Sheldon Jackson School (now college) opened for members of the Tlingit Tribe.
- 1879 Apr 15** **The Paiute Shoshone of Duck Valley** were taking large quantities of fish from the Owyhee River selling them in the Tuscarora mining boom.
- 1882 Apr 19** *The Territorial Enterprise* was complaining that the installation of fish ladders in the Truckee made it possible for whites and Native Americans to fish not by the usual methods but by spearing the fish using the ladders.
- 1886 Apr 15** *The Nevada State Journal* reported a statement by unidentified Indian agent who said the population of Native Americans was dying out at such a rapid rate that the survivors who gained tribal assets would be millionaires.
- 1934 Apr 16** Secretary of Interior Ickes said he would oppose Sen. McCarran's legislation to forgive \$500,000 owed by the Newlands Reclamation Project to the BLM.
- 1935 Apr 13** **Goshute** acquired 3493.5 acres
- 1936 Apr 15** President Roosevelt signed moratorium on debts owed by Native American irrigation projects.
- 1942 Apr 14** *The Nevada State Journal* editorialized in support of establishment of a Navy training center at Pyramid Lake.
- 1961 Apr 13** Leaders representing tribes in Utah, California and Reno met with Kennedy administration officials at Reno's state building on proposals for reform of the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

**Oil company fined record \$18 million for defying state orders to stop work on pipeline** "The California Coastal Commission today fined an oil company a record \$18 million for repeatedly

defying orders to stop work on a corroded pipeline in Santa Barbara County that caused a major oil spill nearly a decade ago. The vote sets the stage for a potentially high-stakes test of the state's power to police oil development along the coast. The onshore pipeline in Gaviota gushed more than 100,000 gallons of crude oil onto coastal land and ocean waters, shutting down fisheries, closing beaches and harming marine life and coastal habitats in 2015. Sable Offshore Corp., a Houston-based company, purchased the pipeline from the previous owners, Exxon Mobil, last year, and is seeking to restart the Santa Ynez offshore oil operation. The Coastal Commission said Sable has done something no alleged violator has ever done before: ignoring the agency's multiple cease-and-desist orders and continuing its work. ... ” [Read more from Cal Matters](#).**SEE ALSO: California Coastal Commission orders Central Coast oil pipeline to stop unpermitted development, from the Courthouse News Service**

### **Trump orders agencies to ‘sunset’ environmental protections**

“President Trump directed agencies that regulate energy and the environment to sunset a wide array of environmental protections in an executive order issued Wednesday night. He ordered agencies including the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Energy Department, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement and Fish and Wildlife Service to amend regulations so that they expire by October 2026. The order applies to all regulations issued under laws governing things like energy appliance standards, mining and offshore drilling — as well as regulations issued under the Endangered Species Act. It's not yet clear whether the order will also apply to regulations at the EPA under laws like the Clean Air Act, Clean Water Act or Safe Drinking Water Act because the order directs that particular agency to provide the White House with a list of statutes that should be subject to the order. ... ” [Read more from The Hill](#).

### **Trump hits delete for energy, environment regs**

“President Donald Trump issued a series of directives late Wednesday aimed at scaling back regulations covering everything from showerheads to endangered species as part of his pledge to enact the “most aggressive regulatory reduction” in the country's history. Trump's deregulatory moves this week included an executive order on showerhead regulations, an order directing energy and environmental agencies to “sunset” certain regulations, an order aimed at eliminating “anti-competitive regulations” and a memo directing agencies to repeal existing rules that don't align with a series of recent Supreme Court decisions. The White House budget office is also soliciting calls from the public for ideas about how to slash regulations. “Today, OMB sent to the Federal Register a call for your ideas on how to deregulate, so please send them in!” Jeff Clark, the acting head of the White House Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, posted on the social media platform X on Wednesday. ... ” [Read more from E&E News](#).

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nieman.harvard.edu

[Mark Trahant wins the 2025 I.F. Stone Medal for Journalistic Independence - Nieman Foundation](#)

[Mark Trahant, who for more than five decades has worked for and led newsrooms in the American West, has been selected for the 2025 I.F. Stone Medal for Journalistic Independence in](#)

[recognition of his lifelong dedication to journalism and commitment to Native American storytelling. A member of the...](#)

Preserve America Youth Summit Step into history and shape its future!

The 2025 Preserve America Youth Summit: Next Generation Stewards is headed to Northern Arizona, June 2–5, and YOU could be part ... See more



preservationyouthsummit.org

[Homepage | Preserve America Youth Summit](#)

[The Preserve America Youth Summits are dedicated to supporting locally based conservation, preservation and educational service programs that empower individuals.](#)



[Janet Davis](#) is with [Tyler Sumpter](#) and

It fills my heart with gratitude to everyone who came to pay their respects to my dad, at the “Last Branding.” I fondly remember the days when cattlemen would gather to help each other, brand their cattle together, and strengthen their community bonds. Growing up, I was a part of these gatherings, often times as a kid, holding cattle with horses for the branding because there were no panels, witnessing the cowboys working together to get the branding done. It was a heartwarming sight to see all the cattlemen, young and old, proudly bringing their brands, with some even bringing back old, cherished brands. The number of brands in the fire was truly remarkable, as one of the young cowboys remarked, “Everyone showed up with their brands, and

there aren’t enough ropers!” 🤠 These past few days have been a whirlwind, and we are truly grateful to everyone who offered their support in any way they could. The heartfelt hugs and kind words have been a source of comfort and strength during this difficult time. Thank you all;

we love you. Bless you! ❤️ 🙏