SECRETARY JEWELL’S YEAR OF ACTION
HER PREDECESSORS AND A PATH FORWARD IN 2014
Sally Jewell, who took the reins at the Department of the Interior (DOI) nearly 300 days ago, has spent much of her first year on the job listening, learning, and forming an agenda. Now, in 2014, it is time for Secretary Jewell to implement that agenda and cement a conservation legacy for herself and for President Obama.

Interior Secretaries may not garner as many headlines as some other cabinet members, but the post has a profound impact on the United States. Former Interior Secretary Stewart Udall—who served under Presidents John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson—was a driving force behind historic additions to the National Park System, including Redwood National Park and Guadalupe Mountains National Park. Secretary Udall also played an integral role in the creation of the Wilderness Act and the Land and Water Conservation Fund. More recently, Interior Secretary Ken Salazar oversaw historic oil and gas leasing reforms that ensure drilling on public land proceeds in a carefully planned manner and minimizes resource conflicts.

The actions and successes of former Interior Secretaries can serve as guideposts for Secretary Jewell. As a former petroleum engineer, bank executive, and outdoor industry CEO, Sally Jewell has the pedigree, knowledge and talent to leave her mark on American history. She knows how to run large organizations. She can balance competing interests, and her success in the private sector shows she can make tough decisions.

In her first major policy speech at the National Press Club, Secretary Jewell took a big step by laying out a roadmap for her tenure as Interior Secretary. In the speech, she outlined five conservation goals, detailed later in this report. Her task in 2014 is to drive DOI to act on her goals.

In her speech at the National Press Club, Secretary Jewell synthesized her experiences at DOI to date, and she offered a conservation vision to balance the multiple demands on America’s public lands.

The Secretary made it clear that even as DOI and the Obama Administration pursue an energy strategy that includes oil, gas, and renewable energy, they will also make conserving and protecting public lands a top priority. The Secretary’s conservation goals recognize the critical importance of protected lands to western communities. These lands provide opportunities to hunt, fish, camp and ski. They supply fresh water and clean air to western cities and towns. Also, they attract businesses and talented employees who want to work close to where they can play outdoors.

As Secretary Jewell turns her words into actions in 2014, former Interior Secretaries’ accomplishments can offer her valuable guidance. To that end, the Center for Western Priorities examines the actions of recent Interior Secretaries—and the contributions they made towards Secretary Jewell’s five core conservation goals. The Center also suggests specific paths forward for Secretary Jewell to implement her stated vision for American lands and resources.
SECRETARY JEWELL HAS OUTLINED FIVE CORE CONSERVATION GOALS

Protect Land with High Recreational, Cultural, and Ecological Values
“…Congress needs to get moving to pass dozens of locally supported bills introduced by both Republicans and Democrats, that protect the places that Americans care about most, and places that their constituents have said are important to them… Just as the President has already demonstrated on nine occasions, he’s ready and willing to step up where Congress falls short.”

Ensure Oil and Gas Development is Done Responsibly
“…How do we strike the right balance for development and conservation to ensure that we serve our nation’s needs now and far into the future? So part of this is encouraging development in the right ways and in the right places. Part of that is recognizing there’s some places that are too special to develop.”

Address Climate Change
“…One of the main reasons I took this job is you’ve got to seize an opportunity to make a difference. We have a chance to make a difference at Interior on some of the defining issues of our time, like climate change, being out in the resource in so many places, from 71 degrees north latitude to 7 degrees north latitude in one trip. You see the impacts of climate change everywhere.”

Mitigate Development Impacts and Manage Public Lands at a Landscape Scale
“…Whenever our public lands and resources are impacted by development activity, we’re also considering how to mitigate these impacts at a landscape level, through strategic conservation and restoration.”

Harness America’s Great Outdoors as an Economic Engine
“[Recreation is] a $646 billion dollar driver of economic activity to the United States. That’s huge. It’s bigger than pharmaceuticals. It’s bigger than a number of industries. It would surprise you. And that’s outdoor recreation. So yes, REI is $2 billion. It seems big. But relative to outdoor recreation, it’s not. And that’s a very important part of our economy, and one of the reasons that I enthusiastically answered the President’s call to take this job. Because our public lands are important in so many ways. They drive our economy, but they also drive things that fill the soul and help define who we are as a nation.”

National Press Club Luncheon with Secretary Jewell—10/31/2013
<table>
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| **Protect Lands with High Recreational, Cultural, and Ecological Values** | Rio Grande del Norte National Monument (Salazar)  
Fort Ord N.M. (Salazar)  
César E. Chávez N.M. (Salazar)  
Chimney Rock N.M. (Salazar)  
San Juan Islands N.M. (Salazar)  
Charles Young Buffalo Soldiers N.M. (Salazar)  
First State N.M. (Salazar)  
Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad (Salazar)  
Papahānaumokuākea Marine N.M. (Kempthorne)  
World War II Valor in the Pacific N.M. (Kempthorne)  
Canyons of the Ancients N.M. (Babbitt)  
Grand Canyon-Parashant N.M. (Babbitt)  
Giant Sequoia N.M. (Babbitt)  
Sonoran Desert N.M. (Babbitt) | ▶ Protect the Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks.  
▶ Protect Browns Canyon.  
▶ Protect the San Gabriel Mountains.  
▶ Establish and expand wildlife refuges. | TBD |
| **Ensure Oil and Gas Development is Done Responsibly** | Oil and gas leasing reforms of 2010 (Salazar)  
Offshore royalty rate reforms (Kempthorne) | ▶ Implement master leasing plans (MLPs)—a planning tool that guides drilling to low conflict areas—by finishing MLPs currently under development and completing new MLPs in areas with a potential for conflict.  
▶ Adopt strong well integrity and hydraulic fracturing rules on public lands.  
▶ Reform oil and gas royalties to provide taxpayers a fair return, in line with Government Accountability Office recommendations. | TBD |
| **Address Climate Change** | Coordinated strategy to address the current and future impacts of climate change on America’s land, water, and wildlife (Salazar)  
Renewable energy development on public lands established as a priority within DOI and created an Energy and Climate Change Task Force to fulfill renewable energy goals (Salazar) | ▶ Address methane emissions from domestic oil and gas production.  
▶ Track the carbon pollution impacts from public lands and create strategies to reduce emissions and increase sequestration. | TBD |
| **Mitigate Development Impacts and Manage Public Lands at a Landscape Scale** | Completion of a solar energy plan that prioritizes solar development in low conflict areas of six Western states (Salazar)  
National Landscape Conservation System (Babbitt) | ▶ Develop a comprehensive policy to avoid and mitigate development impacts through strategic conservation and restoration of critical lands.  
▶ Work with states to develop a science-based approach for protecting western landscapes, wildlife habitat, and the greater sage grouse. | Working on a DOI-wide mitigation strategy to encourage balance on public lands through landscape-scale planning. |
| **Harness America’s Great Outdoors as an Economic Engine** | America’s Great Outdoors Initiative (Salazar) | ▶ Incorporate the economic measures of outdoor recreation into land management decisions.  
▶ Protect and expand outdoor recreation opportunities near population centers. | Raising private money to put 100,000 young people and veterans to work on federal lands. |
Protected lands like national parks, monuments, and wildlife refuges form the backbone of America’s public land system. Every year, hundreds of millions of people visit these lands to spend a night under the stars, fish for trout, ride a bike through wide-open valleys and high mountain passes, or take a scenic drive across America’s impressive outdoor spaces.\textsuperscript{iv}

There is a long tradition of presidents and Congresses—Democratic and Republican alike—conserving America’s culturally and ecologically significant landscapes, and protecting popular outdoor recreation areas for the enjoyment of future generations. For her part, Secretary Jewell has tools available to permanently protect public lands, even if Congress fails to act.

There are a number of lands ready to be designated as national monuments. Secretary Jewell has the opportunity to guarantee that these deserving places receive the protections they merit. And, she can help ensure that the lands we conserve reflect the diversity of American history and culture.

For instance, protecting the Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks near Las Cruces, New Mexico as a national monument has received broad support from local governments, tribal leaders, businesses, the Hispano community, and sportsmen’s groups. This 500,000-acre area holds impressive historical and cultural significance: It is home to prehistoric rock art and ancient archaeological sites, the Butterfield Stagecoach Trail traversed the proposed monument, and the rugged landscape served as a training ground for the Apollo moon missions.\textsuperscript{v} The area is a draw for hunters, cyclists, wildlife enthusiasts, and hikers. Designating the Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument is expected to generate $7.4 million in new economic activity for the region each year.\textsuperscript{vi}

Secretary Jewell also has the opportunity—and responsibility—to work closely with congressional allies and local communities to help move bipartisan land conservation bills. Both Republicans and Democrats have introduced locally supported public land bills into the current Congress, but not a single new acre has been protected by the U.S. Congress in nearly five years. The last Congress, which came to a close in January 2013, was the first in decades not to protect a single new acre of land. The current Congress is quickly following in those infamous footsteps.

Past Interior Secretaries have played an instrumental role in winning congressional land protections by working with senators, representatives, and communities—and demonstrating their willingness to use their own authority when Congress was unwilling to act. Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt, for example, partnered with Oregon’s governor and its congressional delegation to pass legislation to permanently protect Steens Mountain.\textsuperscript{vii} He was also instrumental in legislation to expand and re-designate Colorado’s Great Sand Dunes National Monument as a national park.\textsuperscript{viii}
Secretary Jewell rightly acknowledged that we must “strike the right balance” between drilling and the protection of our communities, air and water resources, and public lands. Fortunately, the Secretary has several tools at her disposal to ensure that oil and gas drilling is done responsibly.

One important tool is master leasing plans (MLPs). A zoning mechanism that guides development to low conflict areas, MLPs ensure that the right protections are in place for national parks, community watersheds, clean air, popular hiking trails and other sensitive resources, prior to drilling. Several MLPs are already underway, including around Utah’s Arches and Canyonlands National Parks and within the remote, wildlife-rich Bighorn Basin of Wyoming. Over the next year, Secretary Jewell has the opportunity to finalize those MLPs, as well as move forward on several others that are currently in progress.

Finally, by updating federal royalty rates, Secretary Jewell can guarantee that the oil and gas industry is fairly compensating the American public for the resources it extracts and the impacts associated with drilling on public lands. President George W. Bush’s Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, oversaw two royalty rate increases on offshore leases: from 12.5 percent to 16.67 percent, then to today’s rate of 18.75 percent. Onshore oil and gas royalty rates have not changed since the 1920s and are well below the royalty rates set by several western states. In December 2013, the General Accountability Office issued a report asserting that DOI is forgoing significant revenues because of its failure to modernize onshore oil and gas lease terms, including charging a market-based royalty rate.
Sally Jewell has described climate change as a defining issue of our time. As Interior Secretary, she has the unique opportunity to establish policies at DOI that mitigate the amount of climate warming gases emitted from public lands—namely carbon dioxide and methane—and increase the capacity of public lands to naturally absorb carbon. Despite their natural qualities, public lands on the whole are currently a major source of carbon pollution, rather than a sink. According to one analysis, public lands in the continental United States contribute nearly 4.5 times more carbon into the atmosphere than they can absorb each year. The imbalance is primarily thanks to the coal, oil, and natural gas extracted from public lands, and the ultimate combustion of those fuels.

Ken Salazar was the first Interior Secretary to take concrete actions to address climate change. First, Secretary Salazar issued a Secretarial Order creating a coordinated response to climate change within DOI. The Order established the Climate Change Response Council that oversees DOI’s Carbon Storage Project—to create methods for storing carbon on public lands—and Carbon Footprint Project—to create benchmarks for reducing greenhouse gas emissions from public lands. He also signed a Secretarial Order making renewable energy development on public lands one of DOI’s top priorities.

Continuing to encourage renewable energy development is necessary, but not sufficient for Secretary Jewell and DOI to seriously address climate change. DOI should set a goal to significantly reduce emissions on public lands. Getting to that point requires increasing public lands’ capacity to naturally store carbon, while simultaneously decreasing the greenhouse gases produced on public lands. Secretary Jewell can begin by taking the lead in addressing methane leakage from natural gas development. Natural gas is playing an ever larger role in the nation’s energy strategy, but it can lead to the discharge of methane, a potent greenhouse gas 34 times stronger than carbon dioxide. While natural gas has the potential to be significantly less carbon polluting than other fossil fuels, the greenhouse gas benefits are wiped out when methane leaks during production, delivery, and use. DOI should establish rules to ensure oil and gas operators capture fugitive methane, and take all possible steps to reduce and eliminate methane leaks and releases. This will help bring the President’s energy strategy in line with his climate change goals.
Over the next twenty years, millions of acres of public lands will be targeted for energy development. Already, this has led to conflicts and concerns about drilling in important wildlife habitats, agricultural areas and outdoor spaces. A comprehensive policy is needed to avoid and mitigate the impacts of development and conserve critical landscapes.

In October 2013, Secretary Jewell issued an order requiring the Interior Department to review its mitigation strategies and provide recommendations on additional policies and practices that are needed “to incorporate landscape-scale planning into mitigation-related decisions…” This is an important first step. However, for the initiative to succeed, additional actions from the Secretary are necessary.

For starters, the Secretary should adopt a set of clearly defined principles to evaluate current and needed departmental policies and provide guidance to effectively implement her order across the department, including:

- Ensuring that mitigation measures are durable and will stand the test of time;
- Managing not just against impacts, but also for conservation by designating high-value conservation areas with additional protections; and
- Prioritizing projects that avoid impacts or include comprehensive mitigation and conservation commitments.

With those principles in hand, the Secretary can then develop a comprehensive strategy to guide landscape-level mitigation and conservation across the department. New policies, such as developing “conservation management plans” that outline the conservation priorities across landscapes, will be needed. However, the Secretary can also rely heavily on existing policies and plans, including the innovative mitigation and project-siting framework established by BLM’s solar energy program.
Outdoor recreation is a major economic driver for the United States. Secretary Jewell, who spent eight years as the CEO of REI—a retailer that sells technical clothing and equipment for outdoor recreation, much of which occurs on public lands—understands this fact more than any previous Interior Secretary.

Protected public lands are a boon to local economies. National parks, monuments, and wildlife refuges attract visitors into gateway communities who fill hotel rooms, eat in restaurants, and stimulate local economies. Alongside travel and tourism, protected lands are a draw for entrepreneurs and provide a valuable recruitment tool for businesses to attract top talent. One study found that non-metro counties in the West with significant protected lands create jobs more than four times faster than counties without protected lands. Companies are increasingly locating to towns with a high quality of life and access to natural amenities and outdoor-recreation opportunities afforded by parks, forests, and monuments.

To promote conservation and outdoor recreation as an important economic driver for local communities, President Obama, alongside Secretary Salazar, established America’s Great Outdoors (AGO) Initiative within DOI. The sweeping program strives to reconnect Americans with their public lands, to conserve and restore America’s great outdoors, and to encourage collaboration between the public and private sector, and throughout all levels of government. During the first few years of its existence, the AGO Initiative has begun to lay out a vision for conservation and recreation in the 21st century, identifying the many community-supported projects that enhance the public’s access onto public lands. The initiative also established a Federal Interagency Council on Outdoor Recreation (FICOR) to better coordinate and promote outdoor recreation opportunities on public lands across federal, state, local, and tribal agencies.

Secretary Jewell has the opportunity to build upon America’s Great Outdoors Initiative and create lasting policies to bolster outdoor recreation as an economic powerhouse. She can work with FICOR to enhance outdoor recreation access and opportunities, particularly around populated urban areas where over 80 percent of Americans live. The Secretary and FICOR can lead the efforts to identify recreation hotspots and expand access onto public lands near urban centers with a growing demand for open space. By finding ways to encourage Americans from diverse backgrounds to experience public lands, Secretary Jewell can help create a new generation of conservationists and outdoor enthusiasts who will spend their time and income enjoying America’s great outdoors.
REFERENCES


