



Toward a Bright Future: The Interior Department's Record of Progress

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Introduction

The Department of the Interior has a vast and varied portfolio. We are stewards of 20 percent of the nation's lands, including national parks, national wildlife refuges, and other public lands that belong to all Americans. We provide access to public lands and offshore waters for renewable and conventional energy; uphold federal trust responsibilities to Native Americans and Alaska Natives; and are the largest supplier and manager of water in the 17 western states. We are responsible for migratory wildlife and endangered species conservation; historic preservation; surface-mined lands protection and restoration; mapping, geological, hydrological, and biological science for the nation; and financial and technical assistance for the insular areas in the Pacific and the Caribbean.

In short, at the Department, we have both the ability and the moral imperative to positively impact the American economy, communities and, ultimately, the well-being of our planet.

Over the past eight years, under President Obama's leadership, we have undertaken a forward-looking reform agenda and made unprecedented progress to:

- implement a bold agenda for American land and water conservation;
- spur a renewable energy revolution and set a path for a safe and secure energy future;
- restore our nation-to-nation relationships with tribes;
- ensure healthy watersheds and sustainable, secure water supplies;
- launch science-based strategies to address current and future impacts of climate change;
- engage and empower young people; and
- modernize the Department for the 21st century.

Below I will lay out our shared record of progress on these issues, as well as a vision for how we, as a nation, can carry forward this positive momentum in the years to come.

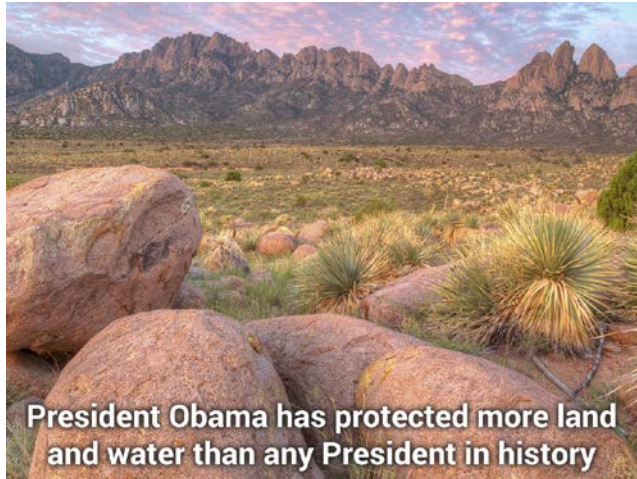
Record of Progress

Launching a Second Century of Conservation

More than 100 years ago, Teddy Roosevelt said that a nation "behaves well if it treats the natural resources as assets which it must turn over to the next generation increased, and not impaired, in value." He was right, of course, and we have worked hard to honor Roosevelt's maxim through wise stewardship of our nation's land, water, and wildlife.

During the Obama Administration, the Department has emerged as a leader in science-based, landscape-level, collaborative natural resource management. This approach – one that always, always takes the long view – should continue in the nation's second century of conservation.

Since taking office, President Obama has protected hundreds of millions of acres of land and water, more than any U.S. President in history. This includes the world's largest marine protected area, new national parks and monuments, and spectacular additions to America's newest conservation system, the National Conservation Lands.



National Parks and Public Lands

In expanding our system of national parks and public lands, we have honored a more diverse America. From César E. Chávez National Monument in California, to Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park in Maryland, to Stonewall National Monument in New York, these new national parks ensure that we pass on a more inclusive and complete story of our nation to the next generation.

Of course, America's story is still being written. We should continue to protect places that recognize the contributions of women, communities of color, tribes, and other underrepresented groups. To that end, over the past eight years, the National Park Service has completed studies on LGBTQ Americans; Latino Americans; women; and Asian American and Pacific Islanders to help shed light on what additional sites merit inclusion in the greatest system of public lands in the world.

More people than ever before are visiting our public lands, in part thanks to an innovative campaign to celebrate the 100th birthday of the National Park Service in 2016. The public-private "Find Your Park" campaign has helped connect new audiences – Americans from all backgrounds – to their public lands and waters.

In addition to creating new national monuments, we have taken decisive actions to protect some of our nation's most pristine landscapes from development. From withdrawing one million acres around the Grand Canyon from mineral development; to placing Alaska's Bristol Bay and its world-class fisheries off limits to oil and gas development; to recommending permanent protection as wilderness for the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, this thoughtful – and often courageous – approach to conservation has set the standard for future Administrations.

Another hallmark of this Administration is the innovative approach to land conservation through which federal agencies have partnered with private landowners to conserve millions of acres of public and private lands across entire ecosystems. From the tallgrass prairie of Kansas's Flint Hills, to the Everglades Headwaters, to the vast "sagebrush sea" that spans the West, this landscape-level conservation has produced remarkable results that benefit both wildlife and the many Americans – ranchers, hunters, and outdoor enthusiasts – who want to pass on these working lands to the next generation.

The Department should continue to put resources toward building these public-private partnerships, including investing in easements and other programs to expand wildlife habitat and migration corridors to landscapes beyond those protected as public lands.

Increasingly, we're seeing our land management agencies rely on philanthropy and volunteers to provide basic services and make ends meet. Private donations should be the margin of excellence, not the margin of survival. The President recently signed legislation that provides new opportunities for leveraging appropriations, fees and philanthropy to address the backlog of needs for the National Park Service. Congress has a continued role to play here to ensure we have adequate resources and tools to fulfill our missions.

It's worth noting that nearly two-thirds of the wilderness Congress has protected since 2000 has been on Bureau of Land Management lands. With more than 500 wilderness study areas still available for Congressional action, and as a primary manager of large national monuments, the Bureau of Land Management needs a budget and a public-private foundation that match its increasingly important role in conserving our nation's landscapes.

Congress should act to permanently authorize and fully fund the Land and Water Conservation Fund, supporting an effective conservation tool that has done everything from expanding public land access for hunters and anglers, to building urban parks, to preserving Civil War battlefields. This action would fulfill a promise made to the American people in 1965 to support our nation's natural, historical, and cultural resources with a small amount of revenue generated from development of offshore oil and gas resources.

Protecting Species

Our conservation efforts also have extended to creatures and plants. This Administration has led the global fight against wildlife trafficking, helping to disrupt trade and reduce demand for products that threaten to wipe out entire species, like elephants and rhinos.

In addition, the Obama Administration has achieved more successful wildlife recoveries of endangered species than all other Administrations combined. Thanks to public-private partnerships, species like the Louisiana black bear and the New England cottontail no longer require the protection of the Endangered Species Act (ESA). We've also strengthened the ESA by working to engage states, promoting the use of the best-available science and transparency, incentivizing voluntary conservation efforts, and focusing resources in ways that will generate even more successes under the ESA.

An endangered species can be the so-called canary in the coal mine, because its decline often signals an ecosystem that itself is out of balance. With more than 2,250 species listed under the ESA, the nation must remain committed to helping recover wildlife near the brink of extinction. In addition, we can and should place greater emphasis on conserving species and their habitats *before* they need the help of the ESA. As we saw with the successful greater sage-grouse conservation effort, putting attention on at-risk species can catalyze voluntary, state, and federal efforts to conserve the species' habitats and avoid the need for protection through the ESA.

As we look to the next 100 years of conservation, we face immense challenges. Climate change threatens our lands and waters in existential ways. A growing population, coupled with stretched budgets, puts more demand on our natural, cultural, and human resources. We have laid a solid foundation to meet these challenges, and encourage our successors to continue to ensure the sustainability of our land, water, and wildlife for the next century and beyond.

Powering Our Future

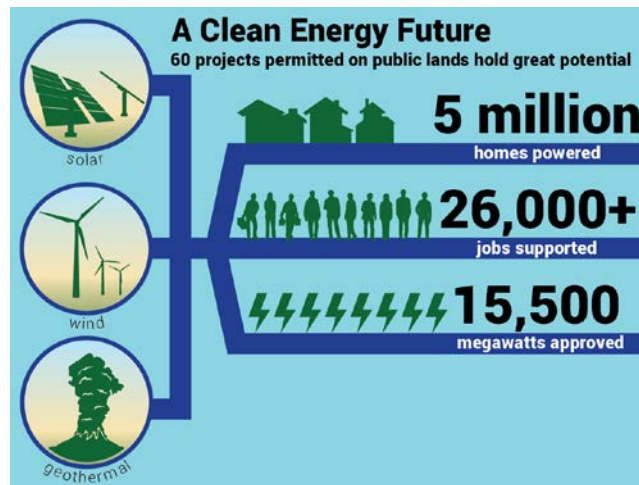
Since 2009, the profile of how America produces and uses energy has changed. Our dependence on foreign oil is down, renewable energy production is up, and our carbon emissions have dropped. The Department has played an important role in setting this path for a safe and secure energy future. To start, we applied a landscape-level, science-based approach to onshore and offshore energy development to ensure we're developing in the right places and in the right ways. Through smarter planning, we're seeing reduced conflict and litigation; more certainty for industry; and better outcomes for people, land, water, and wildlife.

Both onshore and offshore, we put in place common-sense reforms that promote good government and help define the rules of the road for America's energy future on our public lands and waters. We've modernized our programs to reflect new technology, deliver a fair return to the American taxpayer, and begin to meet our climate change objectives.

Renewable Energy Development

We have established an enduring renewable energy program at the Department. In 2009, there were no solar projects built on public lands and no method to address industry's growing interest in developing renewable energy projects onshore or offshore.

Today, some of the world's largest solar projects are powering the grid from public and tribal lands; we have a blueprint for responsible solar development in the West; and we've institutionalized a competitive renewable energy leasing program within the Bureau of Land Management. In a span of eight years, we approved 60 commercial-scale renewable energy projects on public lands that have the potential to produce 15,500 megawatts, enough to power approximately five million American homes. That's progress.



We also established the nation's first program for offshore wind leasing and permitting. We identified wind energy areas that will allow our nation to capture substantial energy potential, without compromising fishing, recreation, national security, or the environment. Today, the nation's first offshore wind farm is operational off the coast of Rhode Island, and we have awarded eleven commercial leases along the Atlantic seaboard, covering over one million acres in federal waters. The National Offshore Wind Strategy provides a roadmap for how the next Administration can facilitate additional development of up to 86 gigawatts of offshore wind in the U.S. by 2050.

Conventional Energy Development

To promote safe and responsible conventional energy development, we updated regulations that were more than 30-years-old to protect our nation's groundwater during hydraulic fracturing, cut methane emissions and wasted gas from venting and flaring, and make sure companies restore streams and forests to a healthy condition after coal mining operations.

Offshore, in the wake of the devastating *Deepwater Horizon* oil spill, the Department overhauled our nation's offshore energy program. We raised the bar at every stage of oil and gas development through new standards for safety and environmental systems, well design, production systems, blowout prevention, well control equipment and emergency response. And we strengthened federal oversight by restructuring to create three independent regulatory agencies that have clear missions and better resources to keep pace with a rapidly evolving industry.

In the Arctic, we made sure that any oil and gas exploration offshore Alaska is subject to strong standards specifically tailored to the region's challenging and unforgiving conditions. We've also acted to withdraw certain areas from development. We know the Arctic is a sensitive environment that has sustained Alaska Natives and their culture for thousands of years, and we can't afford to get it wrong.

When it comes to the federal coal program, it's imperative that we deliver a fair return to American taxpayers and take into account coal's contribution to climate change. That's why we launched a programmatic review of the federal coal program – the first in over 30 years – and instituted a pause in issuing new coal leases while the review is underway. The Department will release an interim report by the end of this Administration with conclusions from the scoping process, and we believe that it is imperative this work be carried forward to ensure that our coal program is best equipped to serve taxpayers' best interests and account for environmental impacts.

The Department must continue to manage our nation's energy resources with taxpayers, climate change, the environment, and communities all in mind. This mandate includes devoting resources and expertise to ensure the coal program review is comprehensive, on time, and provides answers to complex questions – while also working across the government to provide assistance to coal communities. This includes extending similar analysis and reforms to other fossil fuels. This includes ensuring American taxpayers are getting the maximum benefit from development of their resources by continuing to take a hard look at royalty rates. And it includes picking up the mantle on bonding requirements for industry, ensuring that companies can't walk away from their reclamation obligations.

With high-level engagement and additional resources, the Department will be well-equipped to continue our progress toward a sustainable and self-reliant energy future.

Strengthening Tribal Nations

From the beginning of this Administration, we have made it a top priority to restore the integrity of the nation-to-nation relationships with tribes. And, in close consultation with Native Americans, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians, we have opened a new chapter with First Americans based on self-determination and self-governance.

Foundational to this effort was the adoption of a tribal consultation policy for the Department that emphasizes trust, respect, and a shared responsibility to meaningfully engage with tribal governments on federal policies and actions that impact Indian Country. We must continue to improve on obtaining

timely and thoughtful tribal input, especially as it relates to large infrastructure projects and their impacts on tribal lands, resources, and treaty rights.

We also created new avenues to honor our government-to-government relationships. The White House Council on Native American Affairs – on which I served as chair – has proven to be a vital tool in coordinating across the government on complex, inter-related issues that impact Indian Country – including public safety, education, climate change, health, and economic development. Too often, tribes have been an afterthought when it comes to federal policy and programs, and the Council has brought to the forefront that upholding our trust and treaty obligations is incumbent upon every single agency.

It is absolutely critical that high-level engagement continue beyond the Obama Administration – including through an annual White House Tribal Nations Conference – in order to break down silos and ensure that tribes have seats at the table.

This Administration should be proud of the historic progress made to restore tribal homelands and strengthen tribal economies. We broke the logjam on trust land acquisitions and exceeded our ambitious goal of restoring half a million acres of tribal homelands in trust for tribes.

Tribal Land Restoration

Through the Land Buy-Back Program, facilitated by the *Cobell* settlement, the equivalent of nearly 1.7 million acres of land has been restored to tribal governments, allowing tribes to advance important economic development projects like water infrastructure and housing.



The headway made to reduce land fractionation should not end with the Land Buy-Back Program's funding authorization expiration in 2022 – a time when we estimate more than four million acres may still be eligible for purchase. The Department should work closely with Indian Country and Congress to extend the life of the program so that tribes can have more efficient and effective use of their lands for the benefit of tribal communities.

This Administration has embraced its trust responsibility to tribes, ending decades of litigation and long-standing disputes through fair trust settlements. With the help of the Department of Justice, we settled a record number of lawsuits or claims with more than 100 tribes related to assets and natural resources held in trust, with some of the claims dating back more than a century.

With self-determination as our North Star, we overhauled our leasing regulations to recognize tribal authority over how their lands are used. And we took steps to ensure existing laws, like the Violence Against Women Act, the Indian Child Welfare Act, and other programs and laws are implemented as intended through clear rules, policies, and training.

Opportunities for Native Youth

Perhaps the area that demands the most attention from the next Administration and Congress with respect to tribal issues relates to Native youth. It is not acceptable that Native youth continue to have the lowest high school graduation rate of students across all schools, or that Bureau of Indian Education schools are some of the lowest performing in the country. This Administration has begun to remove the barriers between Native youth and opportunities to succeed, but critical work remains across the Administration to address the often interrelated and systemic issues facing Native families, such as poverty, substance abuse, suicide, and incarceration.

We've made critical investments in education and are in the midst of instituting a transformation at the Bureau of Indian Education, with the goal of supporting tribal control of student education and turning the bureau from a direct operator of schools into a support system for student achievement, school improvement, and administrative effectiveness.

The Administration's Blueprint for Reform provides a guide for how the next Administration can and must continue to improve the delivery of an academically rigorous, culturally rich education to Native youth. This includes building the capacity of tribes to operate schools, recruiting and retaining effective teachers and principals, reducing bureaucracy, and addressing infrastructure needs. We've increased broadband capability in schools and obtained funding to rebuild and improve Bureau of Indian Education schools in the most dilapidated conditions; however, with more than 60 schools in poor physical condition, need continues to outpace resources.

All this underscores the acute need for Congress to provide the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Bureau of Indian Education with adequate resources to serve American Indians and Alaska Natives.

In my nearly four years in office, I met with countless tribal leaders and visited more than 40 tribes across the country. Without a doubt, I consider upholding trust and treaty obligations with tribal nations to pursue a future of their choosing some of the most significant work I will ever do, and I encourage my successor to continue this important progress.

Ensuring Healthy Watersheds and Sustainable Water Supplies

Across the country – most devastatingly in the arid West – we are experiencing historic droughts that pose major threats to the well-being of America's families, businesses, farms, and natural heritage. At the Department, we are meeting this challenge by pursuing new, creative ideas and solutions that address the effects of climate change on water resources, improve drought resiliency, and help to ensure stable and secure water supplies for future generations.

We established the WaterSMART program in 2010 to stretch limited water supplies by improving water conservation, and helping water-resource managers develop scientific information and tools they need to make sound decisions. For example, the program has provided grants to increase water recycling and reuse efforts in Southern California, offsetting the demand for imported water. To date, our efforts have increased the West's average available water supply by more than one million acre-feet annually, an amount sufficient to supply the needs of Los Angeles for one year.



We also helped communities better prepare for future droughts. In the Colorado River Basin, which is in the midst of the most significant long-term drought in centuries, we reached a historic binational agreement with Mexico in 2012 to enhance water infrastructure and promote sharing, storing, and conserving water during times of both shortages and surpluses. With the agreement set to expire in 2017, we need a longer-term agreement that would enhance collaboration on the over-allocated river and provide both nations additional water security in the face of drought.

Restoration of degraded watersheds has also been a high priority. For example, this Administration revitalized the Everglades restoration effort, making significant progress to bridge the Tamiami Trail roadway to restore natural water flows the ecosystem. We also forged an innovative approach to reduce the impacts of Glen Canyon Dam in the Colorado River Basin. High-flow releases that mimic seasonal floods work to move nutrient-rich sediment downstream to improve habitat for wildlife and fish. The science-based, collaborative framework in the Colorado River Basin serves as a model for how water resource management can create certainty and predictability for water and power users, while protecting environmental and cultural resources.

We have also worked closely with the State of California to address the immediate impacts of a devastating drought, while also looking to restore the Bay-Delta's ecosystem and fix the state's aging water infrastructure. This is a massive, complex effort that has, at times, felt like two steps forward and one step back. We have completed numerous conservation actions and habitat improvement projects within the State over the past eight years and continue work to finalize environmental review of Governor Brown's Cal WaterFix proposal; however, this torch will be passed to the next Administration. With California's water system at constant risk, it is critical that all of us continue to forge a path forward that supports a reliable water supply for California and a healthy ecosystem.

Restoration is also moving forward in the Klamath River Basin. In the absence of Congressional action to codify historic agreements reached by this Administration and our partners, there is now a proposal before the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to remove four dams and re-connect over 400 river miles. We believe dam removal is a critical step, but only one piece of the overall puzzle. A comprehensive suite of federal actions is needed to restore the Klamath Basin, advance recovery of its fisheries, and uphold trust responsibilities to tribes.

When it comes to dams, we believe there is a need to act on the tens of thousands of aging, abandoned dams that no longer serve their intended purpose and are a threat to public health, safety and the

environment. Since 2009, the Fish and Wildlife Service has removed more than 1,600 barriers, including nearly 500 dams. In the Northeast Region, the Service and partners have reconnected nearly 4,000 miles and 15,000 acres of rivers and wetlands, and improved the safety of communities. What's more, the Department has led multi-party dam removals – like the one on the Penobscot River in Maine – that have contributed more than \$4 billion in economic value to the nation through improved water quality and increased tourism and recreation. Of note, the largest dam removal and restoration effort to date was successfully completed during the Obama Administration on the Elwha River in Olympic National Park.

The Department has an opportunity to build on efforts already in place to partner with local communities, private dam owners, and tribal, local, and state governments to advance removal of obsolete dams and allow nature to take its course in restoring the rivers and watersheds.

Without a doubt, the Obama Administration has made great progress on Indian water rights, completing and enacting 12 tribal water settlements in eight years – more than any previous administration. The total funding authorized for these settlements is close to \$3 billion, an enormous commitment that will improve the quality of life for tribal members on several Indian reservations by bringing critical infrastructure to provide safe drinking water and support economic development activities, such as the development of hydroelectric power, agriculture improvements, and water marketing.

The next Administration should explore how to strengthen its capacity to meet its trust responsibilities and effectively partner with tribes on water issues, which can provide certainty for all water users across a river basin.

It is my hope the Department continues to embrace the transformation toward understanding water challenges on a landscape-level, rather than reacting to crises or taking a project-by-project approach. Given the immense threats to our finite water resources, we must maintain our efforts to solve the water challenges that are so critical to sustaining a healthy nation.

Building Climate Resilient Landscapes

Climate change is the most pressing issue of our time, and President Obama's leadership to address and slow the impacts of climate change will be one of his lasting legacies. I'm proud of what we've done at the Department to contribute to the all-of-government approach that this issue demands.

We developed cutting-edge, independent science to shed light on our changing climate, and made that data accessible through efforts like the President's Open Data Initiative. We also significantly expanded efforts to understand our climate vulnerabilities and the related risks to our mission, programs, and infrastructure; and mainstreamed resilience and climate adaptation into everything we do.

A new resilience infrastructure

Today, the U.S. Geological Survey manages a network of eight regional Climate Science Centers that are helping natural and cultural resource managers, communities, and businesses assess and adapt to climate change. Through locally driven partnerships, these entities are leveraging their collective science and management capacity to conduct hundreds of climate science studies and climate vulnerability assessments for numerous species, ecosystems, and other resources.

We have woven climate resilience into the Department's activities and decision-making in order to help communities adapt in the face of more frequent and intense droughts, wildfires, and super-storms. For example, through the Tribal Climate Resilience Program, we are prioritizing limited funding to help those on the front lines of climate change prepare, plan, and build capacity. This program helps Alaska

Native Villages, such as Kivalina, where coastal erosion threatens to erase entire communities and their way of life.

Additionally, our rangeland fire management strategy is already helping reduce the size, severity, and cost of rangeland fires across the West and stem the spread of cheatgrass and other invasive species. Congress can help greatly in dealing with the ever-increasing threat of wildfires by making a simple change in the budget to treat large-scale fires like the disasters they are, supporting suppression of these fires from an emergency fund. This will help the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management avoid borrowing money from other programs and facilitate healthy land management practices that reduce the risk of fire over the long term.

Public Lands in the Forefront

I want to emphasize that public lands play a pivotal role here. When it comes to climate change, public lands can provide the first signs of distress or serve as the last lines of defense. Healthy, intact ecosystems serve as carbon sinks, filter our air and water, and form natural barriers against sea-level rise or flooding. Thus, one of the most important things the Department can do is continue to manage our public lands with a view to how they can help mitigate or reverse the impacts of climate change.

This approach includes advancing the landscape-level approach we have taken to conservation, energy development, and permitting. The Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan, for example, took a holistic view of nearly 11 million acres managed by the Bureau of Land Management in the California desert to determine where we should streamline renewable energy development, and where it made sense to set aside land for conservation.

A valuable tool for building climate resilience is mitigation – the policy to avoid, minimize, or compensate for harm to the environment. Our new Departmental policy on mitigation – as well as the new Bureau of Land Management and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service mitigation policies – help balance the inherent tensions that can exist with development and conservation. Whether used with oil and gas or renewable energy projects, mitigation can provide more certainty and clarity for project proponents, while supporting conservation and resilience objectives over the long term. The Department's newly established Natural Resources Investment Center will help develop opportunities for conservation investments through public-private partnerships that make use of the new mitigation policies.

Continuing to leverage the federal family's resources, expertise, and convening power will ensure the United States will remain a leader in climate science and building climate change resilience in communities and on public lands.

Engaging the Next Generation

For the long-term health of our economy and our nation's public lands, we need to establish deep, meaningful connections between young people – from every background and every community – and America's great outdoors. In order to bridge the growing disconnect between children and nature, we launched an ambitious initiative to inspire millions of young people to play, learn, serve, and work outside.

Leveraging public and private funds, we put America's youth and veterans to work protecting, restoring, and enhancing public lands. These conservation corps complement the goals of the President's My Brother's Keeper initiative by providing work and training opportunities to young people. In

partnership with the YMCA, we also brought the First Lady's *Let's Move! Outside* campaign to 51 cities across the country. This effort will result in outdoor recreation opportunities for more than ten million young people.

We know that the best classrooms are ones with no walls, so we launched the Every Kid in a Park initiative that provides all fourth-graders and their families with one year of free access to all federally managed lands and waters and provides transportation assistance to those with the most need. Thanks to a combination of philanthropic and existing federal funding, we have provided free trips for half a million fourth graders, and many more families, schools, and youth groups have organized trips on their own. For the 2015-2016 school year, more than two million free park passes were downloaded. This successful program should continue so that, twelve years from now, we'll have a whole generation of students whose love for public lands was sparked in fourth grade.

Building a Department for the 21st Century

As a businesswoman, it has been important to me to leave the Department a stronger, more efficient agency built to thrive in the 21st century.

We are in the midst of a multi-year effort to consolidate our facilities and improve energy efficiency and sustainability. We have also transformed how we manage all aspects of information and technology to improve services and lower costs. It is clear that continued improvements and vigilance will be necessary to improve our cybersecurity posture and better manage and protect the agency's assets.

With approximately one-third of the Department's more than 70,000 employees eligible to retire within five years, workforce development must continue to be a priority. We need to ensure a new generation of wildlife biologists, park rangers, tribal experts, scientists, and other professionals are ready to care for our nation's public lands and waters.

We recognize the need to ensure our workforce reflects the diversity of the country we serve. We have made sincere efforts to do so, but the unfortunate reality is that we have barely moved the needle. A redoubled effort to recruit and retain employees from all backgrounds is absolutely critical. We must also further our work to create an inclusive and respectful workplace that is free of discrimination, harassment, and retaliation.

Unfortunately, another issue that will outlast my tenure is employee safety. For every high-profile clash in Nevada or Oregon involving armed militants, there have been dozens of lesser-known acts of aggression or intimidation aimed at federal employees. Our employees must feel safe and supported as they carry out their duties.

Some of this tension can and will be resolved through the justice system. But real and lasting solutions also lie in the relationships that public servants build with members of the community over the years. Positive, trusting partnerships – ones that can bridge disputes – take time and resources to develop. Congress and the next Administration should provide our land management agencies with the support they need to enable people on the ground to develop these critical relationships.

Conclusion

As I prepare to leave this office, I'm thankful for the incredible, dedicated career employees at the Department who serve the American public day in and day out and will carry this work forward. I'm

grateful for the political appointees who have brought their talents from many places to serve the Department. Collectively, we take pride in the opportunity we have had to make a difference on some of the most pressing issues of our time.

This experience has taught me that public service is the highest calling. The compass that has guided me during my time as Secretary and will continue to motivate me long after I leave this position is the proverb:

"We do not inherit the earth from our ancestors; we borrow it from our children."

It has been an honor to serve President Obama, this great country, and the American people.