

Announcement of Senior Appointments to the Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

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WASHINGTON - Today the Department of the Interior announced the addition of 18 individuals to lead and assist the Department during the Trump administration. Hires include key positions including the Chief of Staff to the Secretary, Associate Deputy Secretary, Principal Deputy Solicitor, and two Principal Deputy Assistant Secretaries among others.

"I'm incredibly honored to have so many experienced, capable and energetic individuals on the team at Interior," said Secretary Ryan Zinke. "Whether on a football team, SEAL team, or the Department of the Interior team, I've always said, everyone's job is just as mission-critical as my own in order for the team to operate at its full potential. Together we will work toward modernizing the department and delivering better services and experiences to the taxpayer while cutting costs and protecting our most treasured places. I'm excited to continue the work we've already started."

Office of the Secretary

Scott Hommel - Chief of Staff to the Secretary

Scott Hommel is a decorated Marine veteran who served in the Gulf War. He has two decades of experience in state and federal government as well as work on behalf of military organizations like the National Guard Association of the United States. Most recently, Mr. Hommel served as then-Congressman Zinke's Chief of Staff in the House.

Lori Mashburn - White House Liaison

Lori Mashburn brings with her more than a decade of experience in coalition and team building, business management, and academia. Prior to joining the Trump Administration, Ms. Mashburn helped lead the coalition relations office at the national think tank, The Heritage Foundation. Prior to her move to the nation's capital, she was a community banker and educator in North Carolina. Ms. Mashburn graduated cum laude from North Carolina State University.

Russell Roddy - Director of Scheduling and Advance

Mr. Roddy was previously a Presidential Appointee in the Administrations of Presidents Ronald Reagan, George H.W. Bush, and George W. Bush. In addition to prior work at the U.S. Departments of Interior and Energy and at the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy, Mr. Roddy has also worked for the National Parks Foundation. He is a graduate of Auburn University.

Amanda Kaster-Averill – Advisor

For the past two years, Mrs. Kaster-Averill served as then-Congressman Ryan Zinke's energy and natural resources Legislative Assistant, managing all House Committee on Natural Resources matters. Previously, she worked for the Bipartisan Policy Center and the office of U.S. Senator Olympia J. Snowe (R-ME). Mrs. Kaster-Averill graduated summa cum laude from Wilkes University.

Aaron Thiele - Advance Representative

Before joining Interior, Mr. Thiele worked for then-Congressman Ryan Zinke as his Military Legislative Assistant in the House. From 2012 to 2015, he worked in Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy's office. Born

and raised on the Central Coast of California, Mr. Thiele earned a Bachelor's degree in Political Science from Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo.

Caroline Boulton - Special Assistant to the Secretary

Caroline Boulton previously served as the scheduler in then-Congressman Zinke's Montana Congressional office handling DC and district scheduling. She previously served as his Legislative Correspondent in the House office. She is a graduate of Colgate University.

Natalie Davis - Special Assistant to the Secretary

Natalie Davis was born and raised in Northern California where she was a student at U.C. Berkeley. Before joining the Administration, Ms. Davis worked on the Presidential Inaugural Committee, held various jobs on the Donald J. Trump for President campaign including Director of Ohio's Sportsmen for Trump coalition, and worked for California Assemblyman Brian Dahle.

Office of the Deputy Secretary

James (Jim) Cason - Associate Deputy Secretary

James Cason is a seasoned Department of the Interior professional who previously served as the Associate Deputy Secretary, (acting) Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs, and the (acting) Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management and Budget under President George W. Bush. In addition, Mr. Cason served as the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Land and Minerals Management under Reagan and in various positions with the Bureau of Land Management. Mr. Cason also has extensive experience with the Department of Agriculture and in independent consulting.

Office of Communications

Laura Keehner Rigas - Communications Director

Ms. Rigas brings almost 20 years of communications experience to the U.S. Department of the Interior, having served in senior leadership roles in non-profit organizations, the private sector, and both state government and the federal government. In the George W. Bush administration, her service included roles at the White House, U.S. Department of Justice, and at the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, where she was the Press Secretary. Ms. Rigas is a California native but comes to Interior from Massachusetts. She earned her Bachelor's degree in public policy from the College of William and Mary and her Master's degree in public administration at the Harvard Kennedy School.

Office of the Solicitor

Daniel Jorjani - Principal Deputy Solicitor

Dan Jorjani is a veteran Department of the Interior official who served as the Counselor to the Deputy Secretary and Counselor and Chief of Staff to the Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management and Budget in the George W. Bush Administration. In addition, Jorjani brings with him nearly three decades of corporate, nonprofit and legal experience. He received his undergraduate degree from Vanderbilt University, his Master's degree from Columbia University, and his Juris Doctor from Cornell Law School. He is a member of the New York and District of Columbia bars.

Joshua Campbell - Advisor, Office of the Solicitor

Josh Campbell has been a civil and criminal trial litigator in state and federal courts for the past ten years. He earned his Juris Doctorate from the Cumberland School of Law in 2007, and has a B.S. in Communications from Liberty University. Mr. Campbell has won oral arguments before the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals, has published legal articles on the trial court process, has represented clients before the Supreme Court of the United States, and worked with Congressman Buddy Carter, a member of the Energy & Commerce Committee, before joining the National Advance and Election Law teams for now President Trump.

Office of External Affairs

Timothy Williams - Deputy Director, Office of External Affairs

Tim Williams joins the Department from Nevada, where he served as Deputy Director of the Donald J. Trump for President campaign. Prior to that, he was a partner at a political consulting firm, managing local, state and Congressional races, and he served on the Policy and By-laws committees for the Greater Las Vegas Association of Realtor and the Nevada Association of Realtors. A lifelong Nevada resident, Tim is an avid sportsman and accomplished hunter and fisherman.

Steven Smith - Advisor, Intergovernmental Affairs

Steven Smith joined the Department after almost a decade working in government and campaigns. Most recently, Mr. Smith served as a Special Assistant to the Co-Chair of the Republican National Committee. He also spent three years as a legislative aide in the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government. A native of Kentucky, Mr. Smith graduated from the University of Kentucky with a Bachelor of Arts in political science.

Jason Funes - Assistant, Office of External Affairs

Immediately prior to joining the Department, Jason Funes worked in the Florida office of Donald J. Trump for President. He has also worked in a Sarasota area emergency room as an EMT, was a teaching assistant for Hispanic migrant workers, and also did medical sales. He attended the University of South Florida, and comes from 3 generations of ranchers/cattle runners from Central America. Mr. Funes was born in New York, and raised in Sarasota, Florida.

Office of Congressional and Legislative Affairs

Micah Chambers - Deputy Director

Prior to joining Interior, Micah Chambers served in Secretary Zinke's congressional office as his Legislative Director and Deputy Chief of Staff. He is originally from Ohio, but lived overseas in Africa and Asia. He is a graduate of Cedarville University.

Office of the Assistant Secretary – Fish and Wildlife, and Parks

Virginia Johnson - Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary

Virginia Johnson is an attorney with more than 30 years of experience including private practice, nonprofit and public service. She has most recently served as Director of Federal Relations for North Carolina Governor Pat McCrory. She has served as a Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, Executive Director of the American Red Cross National Headquarters, and Counsel to the House Armed Services Committee, the House Natural Resources Committee and the House Ethics Committee. Ms. Johnson earned a Bachelor of Arts from Duke University, graduating cum laude, and a Juris Doctor from Wake Forest University School of Law.

Marshall Critchfield – Advisor

Marshall Critchfield comes to Interior with nearly twenty years of experience in project management and public affairs and is a lifelong sportsman - growing up on the edge of the game-rich Florida Everglades. He has worked with many non-profits over the years to conserve habitat and educate young people about the value of conservation and the thrill of the chase. He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from Florida Atlantic University in History and a Master in Business Administration from Palm Beach Atlantic University.

Brian Pavlik - Special Assistant, National Park Service

Prior to joining the National Park Service, Brian Pavlik served as Concession Program Manager for Indiana State Parks and General Manager of the Washington Sailing Marina, a NPS concessionaire. Mr. Pavlik received his Bachelor of Science degree in Communications at George Mason University in 2004.

Office of the Assistant Secretary - Policy, Management, and Budget

Scott Cameron - Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary

Scott Cameron has more than 30 years of experience working on natural resource policy from the perspectives of federal and state government, conservation organizations, and the private sector. With twenty years of federal government experience as both a political appointee and career civil servant, as well as service as a Congressional staffer, he has developed exceptional expertise in the federal budget process.