



Monthly President's Report

Dear AFN Co-Chairs, Board Members & Membership,

June was a month of transitions.

Our Senior Vice President Nelson Angapak officially retired from his position at AFN. We are deeply appreciative of his many years of service to our people. We wish him all the best and many healthy, happy years fishing and enjoying the company of his family. We look forward to his keynote address at this year's AFN Convention in October.

We welcomed Maude Blair to the AFN team. She joins our Anchorage-based staff as vice president, bringing a rich array of talents and experience to our work. Read more in the press release attached. Christopher Liu from Bethel also joined AFN as Special Assistant to the President - Fundraising.

We lost a beloved leader with the passing of Katie John in early June. We will continue to be inspired by Katie's great contributions and will continue to defend our rights and traditions in her name.



Nelson was honoured during last month's meetings in Kotzebue.

June 2013 CONTENTS

AK-HI Roundtable	2
Convention Update	3
DOI & Carcieri	5
Strategy for the Arctic	6
Alaska Veterans	7
Indian Child Welfare	8
Sequestration Response	9



Katie John near her fishwheel on the Copper River, 1994. Erik Hill, ADN

Monthly President's Report



First Annual Alaska-Hawaii Roundtable

NURTURING OUR ONGOING RELATIONSHIP WITH NATIVE HAWAIIANS

On June 4th AFN and the Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement (CNHA) convened an Alaska-Hawaii Roundtable for Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian business, policy and community leaders. The event was intended to honor the rich legacy of collaboration left by the late senators Daniel Inouye (D-Hawaii) and Ted Stevens (R-Alaska) and kick off an ongoing series of annual Roundtables devoted to facilitating ongoing collaboration among Native communities, hosted alternating years in Alaska and Hawaii.

The first hour of this two-hour event was devoted to Native-Native discussions and goal-setting. Native leaders were joined in the second hour by the full-delegations of both states, including:

U.S. Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska)
U.S. Senator Mark Begich (D-Alaska)
U.S. Congressman Don Young
(R-Alaska)
U.S. Senator Mazie Hirono
(D-Hawaii)
U.S. Senator Brian Schatz (D-Hawaii)
U.S. Congresswoman Colleen
Hanabusa (D-Hawaii)
U.S. Congresswoman Tulsi Gabbard
(D-Hawaii)

More than two dozen Native leaders traveled to Washington, D.C. for the event, which was preceded by a reception honoring Congressman Don Young's 40 years of service to our state. The event also garnered significant news coverages in both Alaska and Hawaii, as well as the lower 48.

View video coverage by Honolulu Civil Beat here: <http://www.civilbeat.com/articles/2013/06/07/19227-dc808-on-the-wire-the-alaska-connection/>

See the event programs appended to this report as a PDF document for more details about the attendees and agenda.



Monthly President's Report



Convention Update

NEW PRESIDENT'S AWARD

Last month the AFN board formally announced a new President's Award that will debut at this year's Convention. The GIN'TITH (RICHARD FRANK) MILITARY SERVICE AWARD will recognize an Alaska Native who demonstrates a strong commitment and willingness to serve in the U. S. Armed Forces in the defense of the United States of America. Individuals nominated for this award may be involved in the U. S. Armed Forces in active duty, reserves, National Guard or as a veteran who was honorably discharged from active duty or reserves.

THANKS TO OUR GROWING LIST OF 2013 CONVENTION SPONSORS

Denali (\$50,000)

ExxonMobil
GCI

Katmai (\$25,000)

Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute
Alyeska Pipeline Service Company
Chugach Alaska Corporation
NANA Regional Corporation
Red Dog Mine-Teck Alaska
Shell Exploration & Production Company

Susitna (\$10,000)

Alaska Airlines
Anglo American US (Pebble)
Bristol Bay Native Corporation
BP
ConocoPhillips
Donlin Gold
KeyBank Foundation
Pebble Ltd. Partnership
Statoil
Sam's Club
UIC

Taku (\$5,000)

Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority
Bering Straits Native Corporation
Greater Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce

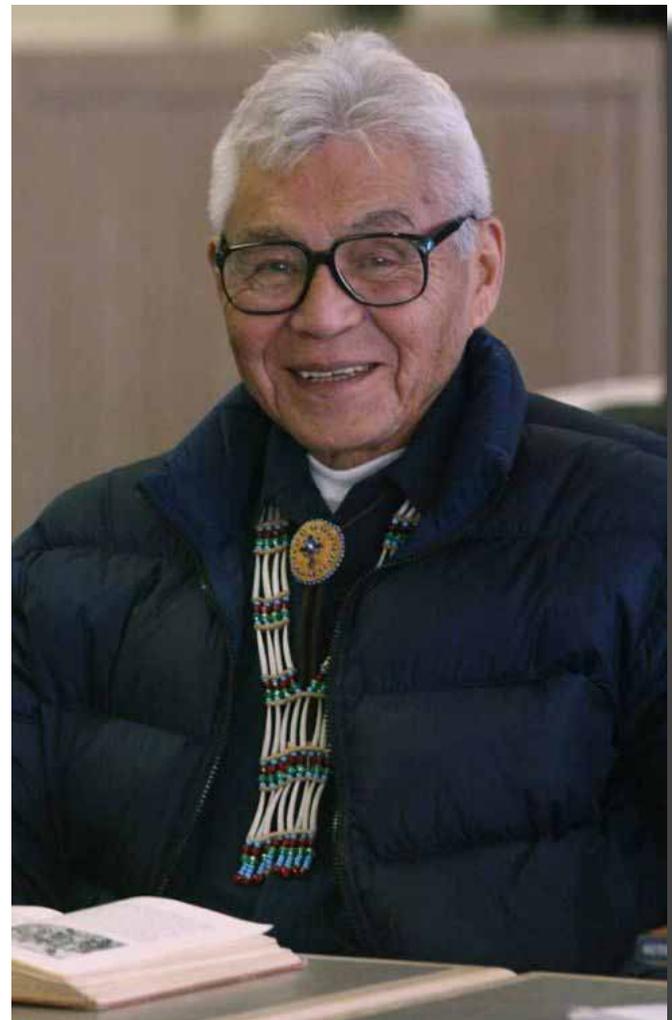


photo: Richard Frank courtesy of newsminer.com

Monthly President's Report



Kobuk (\$2,500)

Afognak Native Corporation
Central Council of the Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska
Kenai Peninsula College
KPMG
Lynden
Mikunda, Cottrell & Company
Southwest Alaska Vocational & Educational Center
The Tatitlek Corporation
TDL Staffing
Fairbanks Convention and Visitors Bureau
Fairbanks Memorial Hospital/Denali Center
MAC Federal Credit Union

Friends of AFN

Plumbers & Pipefitters Local 375
Teamsters Local 959
Grace Berg Schaible
Cook & Haugeberg LLC
Fairbanks Economic Development Corporation
Mt. McKinley Bank
Power and Transmission, Inc.
Schneider & Shilling, CPAs
The Pumphouse Rest
The Turtle Club
Usibelli Foundation
Norton Sound Economic Development Corporation
AlasConnect, Inc.
Fairbanks Printers & Office Equipment
Frontier Supply Company
Gana-A'Yoo, Ltd.
Jolly Roger Designs
Lemongrass Thai Cuisine
Spirit of Alaska FCU
Sourdough Express, Inc.
Zimmerman and Wallace
Alaska Rare Coins
Tammy Randolph, State Farm Ins.

JOIN US

Become a Convention Sponsor
Today!

Contact AFN at 907-274-3611
or visit our online sponsorship form:
<http://www.nativefederation.org/2013-sponsorship-form-page/>

Monthly President's Report



Secretary Jewell's Direction for DOI

TESTIMONY OFFERS GLIMPSE OF PRIORITIES

Secretary of Interior Sally Jewell offered testimony before the U. S. Senate Committee on Indian Affairs on May 15. She offered far-reaching views on a variety of subjects, providing some new insight into how she will likely shape DOI's priorities during her tenure.

We are pleased to see Secretary Jewell begin her testimony by recalling her work for NANA and emphasizing her respect for, and understanding of, the "government-to-government relationship with, and obligations to, American Indian tribes and Alaska Natives." She promises that she is committed to "... upholding the Federal government's obligations to Native Americans and to strengthening the United States' government-to-government relationship with Indian tribes and Alaska Natives."

Her remarks related to *Carcieri v. Salazar* will be perhaps most significant for Alaska Natives. She indicates that she may have had conversations with DOI's solicitor regarding this case. DOI currently supports a legislative fix to *Carcieri v. Salazar*.

Secretary Jewell states that "... the *Carcieri* decision creates uncertainty and adversely affects the tribes' ability to progress as a government." She indicated that she will carry forward the Administration's position in support of a legislative solution to address the "negative impacts and increased burdens on the Department and on Indian Country resulting from this decision."

The full text of Secretary Jewell's testimony is appended to this report in PDF format.



photo: Secretary Sally Jewell courtesy of csmonitor.com

Monthly President's Report



Arctic Policy

WHITE HOUSE ANNOUNCES NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR THE ARCTIC REGION

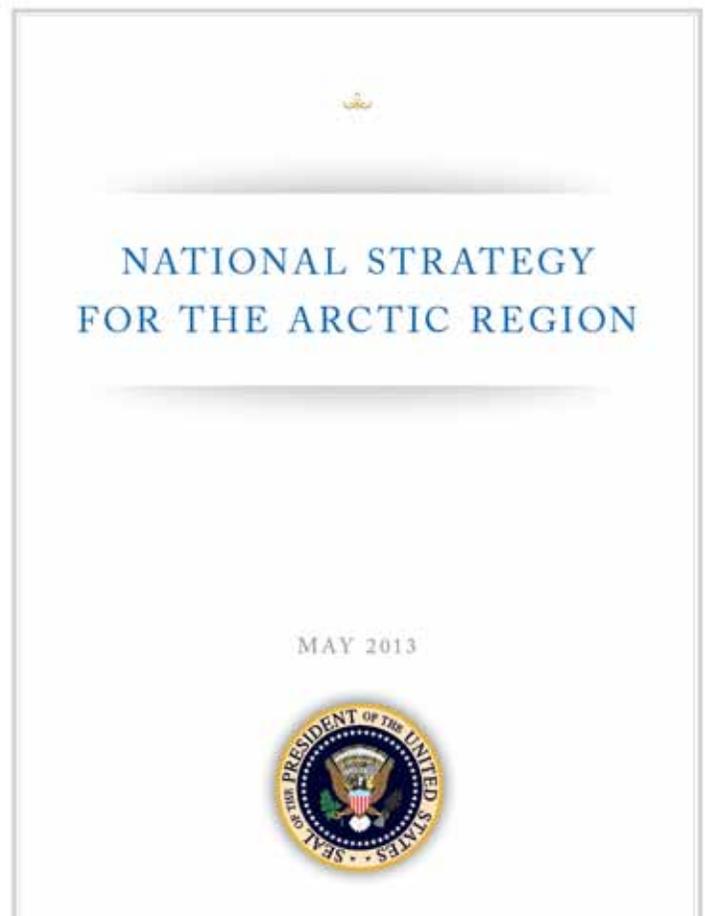
In late May, President Obama signed a National Strategy for the Arctic Region. With his signing of this document, the United States joined the Arctic Council members Canada, Norway, Denmark, Iceland, Finland, Russia, and Sweden in articulating our nation's strategic priorities for the arctic region.

The Administration solicited input from Alaska Natives, the State of Alaska and others as it was developing the National Strategy for the Arctic.

In a statement from the White House, the Administration stated that "Successful implementation of the high-level lines of effort identified in the National Strategy will depend upon active engagement with Alaska Natives, the State of Alaska and other key stakeholders. In particular, proceeding with the stewardship of Arctic resources under an Integrated Arctic Management approach requires, by its terms, meaningful, up-front input by the State, Alaska Natives, and others."

The Administration hosted a roundtable discussion for state and local officials in Alaska on June 14th to discuss how best to move forward with the implementation. Read more about the first meeting here: <http://www.alaskajournal.com/Alaska-Journal-of-Commerce/June-Issue-4-2013/Feds-visit-Alaska-for-input-on-Arctic-policy/>

A PDF of the full strategy document accompanies this report.



Monthly President's Report



Honoring Native Veterans

VETERANS SPOTLIGHT IN THE CAPITAL

Senator Lisa Murkowski's "Veteran Spotlight" was recognized last month at a Library of Congress event as a model of the 'Best Practices' for its Veterans History Project – an effort to share the oral accounts of war from America's veteran community and inform future generations of their bravery and valor.

Senator Murkowski launched her "Veteran Spotlight" series last Memorial Day, and Alaskans from the Alaska Territorial Guard to veterans of our present military conflicts have shared their stories.

The full Veterans Spotlight Project can be viewed here:
<http://www.murkowski.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?p=spotlight-veterans>

ACTION ITEM

Thank Senator Murkowski for her great work on behalf of our veterans:

By email form: <http://www.murkowski.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?p=EMailLisa>
By mail: 709 Hart Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510
By phone: 202-224-666-55301



Monthly President's Report



Supreme Court Decision

INDIAN CHILD WELFARE

Native Village of Tununak v. State, Office of Children's Services Decision

The Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) establishes adoptive placement preferences for placing an Indian child with a member of the child's extended family, with other members of the child's tribe, or with other Indian families. A court may deviate from these preferences only upon a showing of good cause. ICWA does not state what standard of proof applies to the good cause determination, nor does it state what factors a court must consider in determining whether there is good cause to deviate from the preferences. The Superior Court in this case placed an Indian child with a non-Native family.

On appeal, the Alaska Supreme Court overturned a long line of prior cases, and held that ICWA requires the lower courts to find good cause to deviate from the ICWA placement preferences by "clear and convincing evidence" rather than the lower "preponderance of the evidence standard." In reaching this decision, the Court gave substantial deference to the policies underlying ICWA. It held that "ICWA implicitly mandates that good cause to deviate from ICWA's adoptive placement preferences be proved by clear and convincing evidence. To the extent our prior cases hold otherwise, they are overruled." A link to the decision is pasted below.

No. 6788 S-14562 Native Village of Tununak v.
State, Office of Children's Services

<http://www.courtrecords.alaska.gov/webdocs/opinions/ops/sp-6788.pdf>



Monthly President's Report



Fighting Sequestration

FORMING A NATIONAL COALITION TO PROTECT TRIBAL PROGRAMS FROM IMPACTS OF SEQUESTRATION THROUGH LEGISLATION

AFN's Human Resources Committee has taken the lead on a far-reaching response to Sequestration that will be driven by a national coalition of Native organizations and allies. One of our primary goals is to raise the visibility of importance of tribal programs and funding, highlighting the devastating impacts that a 5% across the board cut will have in Alaska and across Indian Country. We will also highlight the unique political relationship that we have with the federal government and its associated non-discretionary fiduciary trust obligation to tribal nations.

We will seek passage of legislation that immediately exempts all tribal programs from current and future sequestration of appropriations.

The HRC is in the process of crafting a draft resolution that, once passed, will be presented to our Alaska Delegation in Washington DC. AFN will work with our Delegation to introduce legislation based on the resolution, likely through a Dear Colleague Letter, and to shop for support.

AFN staff and HRC committee members are working closely with NCAI to make our coalition truly national in scope, while also concurrently working in-state to ensure the unique Alaska perspective is preserved. We expect to finalize the draft resolution by early July.

AFN staff and board members continue to concurrently work with Appropriations Committee staff to raise the designated budgets for programs affected by sequestration. We are now looking ahead to influence the budgeting process for FY2014 and beyond.



Monthly President's Report



Thank You

In May, we had the pleasure of visiting our friends in Kotzebue for our May Board and Committee Meetings. NANA and Maniilaq were wonderfully generous hosts. Everyone who was able to attend the meetings left with a renewed sense of connection and appreciation for our many versions of “paradise” we enjoy here in Alaska. Our thanks again to our Northern hosts - for the beautiful hotel accommodations, delicious meals, precious time at the Utuqqanaat Inaat Elder Care Center in Kotzebue, dancing, ice fishing and sledding with our favorite Iditorod winner John Baker.

Sincerely,

Julie Kitka



Alaska Federation of Natives

1577 C Street, Suite 300 | Anchorage, Alaska | 99501 | 907.274.3611 | afninfo@nativefederation.org





FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE | June 10, 2013

CONTACT

Ben Mallott - 907.274.3611

bmallott@nativefederation.org

AFN Welcomes Maude Blair as New Vice President

Blair will assume new position on June 17th

Anchorage, AK - The Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) announced today that Maude Blair, formerly of NANA Development Corporation, will join AFN's Anchorage-based staff as the organization's new vice president.

"Maude is extremely talented and will bring valuable knowledge and experience to the staff leadership of AFN," said AFN President Julie Kitka. "We are very much looking forward to welcoming her to the team. "

Ms. Blair most recently served as a staff attorney at NANA Development Corporation, where she provided legal support to the NANA Regional Corporation Board of Directors and senior management, including advising on corporate governance, Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act ("ANCSA"), and general business issues. At NANA she worked with both internal and external stakeholders on issues ranging from corporate structure to shareholder relations. Ms. Blair also created the NANA Elders' Settlement Trust.

Ms. Blair worked as a reporter before joining NANA in 1998, initially in Communications. She also served as the Kellogg/NARF Education Grant Coordinator for Alaska with the Native American Rights Fund.

She sits on an array of volunteer boards of directors, including the Anchorage Neighborhood Health Center Inc., Alaska Native Heritage Center, and LifeCenter Northwest.

ABOUT AFN

The Alaska Federation of Natives was formed in October 1966, when more than 400 Alaska Natives representing 17 Native organizations gathered for a three-day conference to address Alaska Native aboriginal land rights. It is now the largest statewide Native organization in Alaska. Its membership includes 178 villages (both federally-recognized tribes and village corporations), 13 regional Native corporations and 12 regional nonprofit and tribal consortiums that contract and run federal and state programs. AFN is governed by a 37-member Board, which is elected by its membership at the annual convention held each October. The mission of AFN is to enhance and promote the cultural, economic and political voice of the entire Alaska Native community. Learn more at www.nativefederation.org.

Alaska~Hawaii Roundtable

The Legacy Continues:
Achieving Results Through Long-Term Strategic Partnerships

2 PM to 4 PM

Tuesday, June 4, 2013

Washington, D.C.

Dirksen Senate Office Building, Room 628
U.S. Senate Committee on Indian Affairs Hearing Room





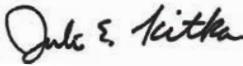
WELCOME ROUNDTABLE PARTICIPANTS!

For many years, the leadership at the Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) and at the Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement (CNHA) have worked together to promote the interests of Alaska Natives and Native Hawaiians. The ongoing partnership has been a rewarding experience resulting in collaboration on policies important to both peoples.

U.S. Senator Daniel K. Inouye (D-Hawaii) and U.S. Senator Ted Stevens (R-Alaska) have always encouraged our respective Native leaders to work together to identify our commonalities, to support the needs of the other and to work hard to expand the economic opportunities of our respective peoples.

Today, we recommit our leadership, our advocacy organizations and ourselves to the legacies of Senator Inouye and Senator Stevens, since they modeled through their actions the power of friendship, the power of partnerships and the power of bipartisanship. While today's inaugural Alaska-Hawaii Roundtable takes place in our nation's capitol, the event will be hosted alternately in Hawaii and Alaska in future years to perpetuate the collaborative spirit of our senators, and to ensure that Alaska and Hawaii are better served for generations to come.

We welcome our senators and representatives and thank them for taking the time to meet with us while we share our collective progress and our hopes for the future.



Julie Kitka
President, AFN

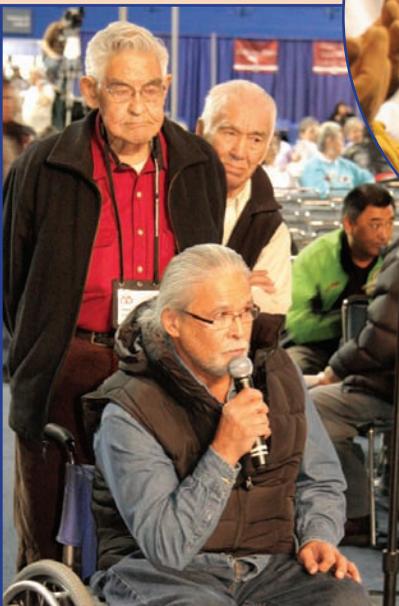


Robin Puanani Danner
President and CEO, CNHA



AGENDA

- 2:00 PM Welcome and Opening Remarks
- 2:05 PM Introductions
- 2:20 PM Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian Leadership Discussion and Sharing
- 3:00 PM Congressional Delegation Discussion and Sharing
- 3:45 PM Wrap-up and Closing Remarks



ROUNDTABLE PARTICIPANTS

Alaska Congressional Delegation

U.S. Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska)
U.S. Senator Mark Begich (D-Alaska)
U.S. Congressman Don Young (R-Alaska)

Hawaii Congressional Delegation

U.S. Senator Brian Schatz (D-Hawaii)
U.S. Senator Mazie Hirono (D-Hawaii)
U.S. Congresswoman Colleen Hanabusa (D-Hawaii)
U.S. Congresswoman Tulsi Gabbard (D-Hawaii)

Native Leaders

AFN Co-Chair Albert Kookesh
AFN Co-Chair Ralph Anderson
AFN President Julie Kitka
CNHA Chairman Alvin Parker
CNHA President Robin Puanani Danner
CNHA Senior Vice President Michelle Kauhane



PARTICIPANT BIOGRAPHIES

U.S. Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska)

Senator Lisa Murkowski is the first Alaskan-born Senator and only the sixth United States Senator to serve Alaska. Senator Murkowski is a third-generation Alaskan who was born in Ketchikan and raised in towns across the state, including Wrangell, Juneau, Fairbanks and Anchorage. As the state's senior Senator, Lisa Murkowski has been a strong advocate for Alaska on important issues facing the state, including energy, health care, education, military/veterans' affairs and infrastructure development. She was elected to a full six-year U.S. Senate term in 2004 and was re-elected in 2010 in a historic write-in campaign that was the first successful write-in effort to the U.S. Senate since 1954.

U.S. Senator Mark Begich (D-Alaska)

Senator Mark Begich is representing Alaska in his fifth year in the U.S. Senate, where his primary focus is on building a strong Alaska economy. In his short time in the Senate, Senator Begich has risen to key leadership positions. He was named Chairman of the Commerce Committee's Subcommittee on Oceans, Atmosphere, Fisheries and Coast Guard, which has broad jurisdiction over important Alaska and Hawaii issues. He works on behalf of servicemen and women on the Armed Services Committee and is also a member of the Veterans, Homeland Security and Budget committees. As Chairman of the Senate Democratic Steering and Outreach Committee, Senator Begich holds the number five position in leadership for the Senate majority.

U.S. Senator Brian Schatz (D-Hawaii)

Senator Brian Schatz was sworn into office on December 27, 2012, filling the seat left vacant by the late Senator Daniel Inouye. He previously served as the Lieutenant Governor of the State of Hawaii, where he turned the Office of Lieutenant Governor into a flexible and dynamic force for the State of Hawaii's economic turnaround. From 1998 to 2006, Senator Schatz was a member of the State House of Representatives, representing the 25th district. During this time, he served as the House Majority Whip, Chair of the Economic Development Committee, Vice-Chair of Water, Land and Ocean Resources, Vice-Chair of Consumer Protection and Commerce, and as a member of the Hawaiian Affairs, Higher Education, Energy and Environmental Protection, and Agriculture Committees.

U.S. Senator Mazie Hirono (D-Hawaii)

Elected in 2012, Senator Mazie Hirono is the first female senator from Hawaii and the first Asian American woman elected to the U.S. Senate. Previously, Mazie Hirono served three terms in the U.S. House of Representatives, from 2007 through 2012, and eight years as Lieutenant Governor of Hawaii, from 1994 through 2002. She was a member of the Hawaii Legislature from 1981 to 1994. Senator Hirono is deeply concerned about protecting the environment and preserving the natural beauty and resources of Hawaii and the U.S. She firmly believes that "curbing emissions of the greenhouse gasses responsible for global warming" must be a national priority.

U.S. Congressman Don Young (R-Alaska)

Congressman Don Young is Alaska's only member of the United State House of Representatives. A former schoolteacher and state legislator, Congressman Young was sworn in as a freshman to the 93rd Congress after winning a special election on March 6, 1973. Today, Congressman Young is the second ranking Republican member and the sixth most senior member of the House of Representatives. Congressman Young proudly serves as the "Congressman for All Alaska" and loves his role as the only Alaskan member of the House.

PARTICIPANT BIOGRAPHIES

U.S. Congresswoman Colleen Hanabusa (D-Hawaii)

Congresswoman Colleen Hanabusa proudly represents Hawaii's 1st Congressional District. She brings to Washington a passionate, hardworking and fearless approach to advocacy, honed by more than three decades spent fighting for the rights of her clients in the halls of justice and her constituents on the floor of the Hawaii State Legislature. Congresswoman Hanabusa, a Yonsei, or fourth-generation American of Japanese ancestry whose grandparents were interned during World War II, has dedicated her life to service and is committed to providing for the people of Hawaii while preserving the unique values and traditions that define the Aloha spirit. In 2007, Congresswoman Hanabusa served as president of the Hawaii State Senate, making her the first-ever woman to lead either house of the Hawaii State Legislature.

U.S. Congresswoman Tulsi Gabbard (D-Hawaii)

Elected in 2012 to represent Hawaii's 2nd Congressional District, Congresswoman Tulsi Gabbard is one of the first two female combat veterans, the first Hindu and the first female of Samoan ancestry to ever serve as a member of the U.S. Congress. An advocate for environmental policy, she previously served as a member of the Hawaii House of Representatives (the youngest representative ever elected), the Honolulu City Council and the Hawaii National Guard. In 2004, Congresswoman Gabbard voluntarily deployed to Iraq with her fellow soldiers of the 29th Brigade, eventually serving two tours of combat duty in the Middle East. She was awarded the Meritorious Service Medal during Operation Iraqi Freedom, was the first female Distinguished Honor Graduate at Fort McClellan's Officer Candidate School, and was the first woman to ever receive an award of appreciation from the Kuwaiti military on her second overseas tour. Congresswoman Gabbard continues to serve as a Captain in the Hawaii National Guard's 29th Brigade Combat Team.

AFN President Julie Kitka

Julie Kitka is a Chugach Eskimo and shareholder of Chugach Alaska Corporation. She currently serves as President of the Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN).

CNHA President Robin Puanani Danner

Robin Puanani Danner is Native Hawaiian and the founding president of the Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement (CNHA). Formed in 2001, CNHA works to enhance the cultural, economic, political and community development of Native Hawaiians. She is a former financial institution executive, a municipal housing director, and a national advocate and expert on Native communities, having dedicated 26 years to Native Hawaiian, Alaska Native and American Indian peoples. CNHA operates the Native Hawaiian Policy Center, administers the Hawaiian Way Fund (a fund dedicated to capacity building among cultural and community practitioners), and engages a Lending & Investment Services program to provide financial education, capital and tax credits in Hawaiian areas.

CNHA Senior Vice President Michelle Kauhane

Michelle Kauhane is Hawaiian and a homesteader from Kapolei, Oahu. She is a graduate of Kamehameha Schools and earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Public Relations from Gonzaga University. She has over 20 years of management experience in both the private and nonprofit sectors with extensive knowledge in affordable housing, lending, financial education and community development. In her capacity as the Deputy Director at the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL), Ms. Kauhane was responsible for the management and oversight of the DHHL loan portfolio totaling more than \$500 million in direct loans, federally insured mortgages and loans guaranteed by DHHL. Ms. Kauhane is the Senior Vice President at CNHA who oversees Lending & Investment Services and the Native Hawaiian Policy Center. Effective July 1, 2013, Ms. Kauhane will serve as the Chief Executive Officer of the Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement.



The Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement (CNHA) is one of the largest statewide and national member-based Native Hawaiian organizations representing a membership of over 160 businesses, nonprofits, and trust agencies. Founded in 2001, CNHA's mission is to enhance the cultural, economic, political and community development of Native Hawaiians. CNHA achieves its mission through the delivery of four primary program areas: Lending & Investment Services, the Hawaiian Way Fund, the coordination of an Annual Native Hawaiian Convention and the Native Hawaiian Policy Center. The Council envisions an active Hawaiian community strengthened by self-determination, cultural knowledge and identity, that advances the well-being of the Hawaiian islands and its people. Comparable to the Alaska Federation of Natives and the National Congress of American Indians, CNHA works to educate Congress and the federal government on solutions most important to Native Hawaiians.

Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement
2149 Lauwiliwili Street, Suite 200 Kapolei, HI 96707
TOLL FREE 800-709-CNHA (2642) www.hawaiiancouncil.org



The Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) is the largest statewide Native organization in Alaska. Its membership includes 178 villages (both federally-recognized tribes and village corporations), 13 regional Native corporations and 12 regional nonprofit and tribal consortiums that contract and run federal and state programs. AFN is governed by a 37-member Board, which is elected by its membership at the annual convention held each October. The mission of AFN is to enhance and promote the cultural, economic and political voice of the entire Alaska Native community.

Alaska Federation of Natives
1577 C Street, Suite 300 Anchorage, AK 99501
TEL 907-274-3611 www.nativefederation.org



COUNCIL FOR NATIVE HAWAIIAN ADVANCEMENT

2149 Lauwiliwili Street, Suite 200, Kapolei, Hawaii 96707
Tel: 808.596.8155/800.709.2642 • Fax: 808.596.8156/800.710.2642
www.hawaiiancouncil.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

June 05, 2013

Hawaiians and Alaskans Convene in the Nations Capitol

Washington, D.C. - Two dozen Native Hawaiian leaders traveled to Washington, D.C. to meet with Alaska Native leaders on a variety of policy issues and partnerships this week. "A number of our member organizations traveled to D.C. to meet with lawmakers, officials in the administration and with our national partners," said Alvin Parker, Chairman of the Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement (CNHA). "One of the key events we hosted with our counterpart, the Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN), is an Alaska – Hawaii Roundtable to bring our respective congressional delegations and our Native leaders together."



The Alaska-Hawaii Roundtable launches a collaborative effort between Native Hawaiians and Alaska Native leaders to share federal policy priorities with one another, and to keep members of both delegations briefed and informed.

"It's great to be able to work with our four members from Hawaii, two Senators and two Representatives, and add to that, two more Senators and a Representative from Alaska," said Robin Puanani Danner, CNHA President and CEO. "Our two states share so much in common, especially our Native peoples -- with a history of trade and commerce for centuries."

The Alaska-Hawaii Roundtable celebrates the 50-year legacy of the late U.S. Senator Daniel K. Inouye (D-Hawaii) and the late U.S. Senator Ted Stevens (R-Alaska), two lawmakers, one from Hawaii, one from Alaska, one a Democrat, the other a Republican.

"These senators held one of the most admired bi-partisan partnerships that grew into an incredible friendship of brothers," said Danner. "They worked together to advance the interests of the 49th and 50th states for five decades, and it included our respective Native peoples whether through passage of our education, health and housing acts, or small business initiatives."

AFN and CNHA have engaged in a long-term collaboration to host the Alaska-Hawaii Roundtable every year, through coordinating the convening between D.C., Alaska and Hawaii. Its mission is to conduct an annual briefing of policy priorities important to each group and to host evening receptions to foster and grow friendships among Native leaders.

"Both Senator Inouye and Senator Stevens always encouraged us as Native leaders to reach out to each other, and to work together where our priorities compliment the other," said Billy Ornellas, CNHA's Board Vice Chairman. "We are dedicating the Alaska-Hawaii Roundtable to both senators and recommitting ourselves as leaders to the legacy of friendship and aloha, between our two states and between our Native peoples."



The roundtable was held in the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs Hearing Room in Washington, D.C. Senator Brian Schatz (D-Hawaii), Senator Mazie Hirono (D-Hawaii), Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska), Senator Mark Begich (D-Alaska), Congresswoman Colleen Hanabusa (D-Hawaii), Congresswoman Tulsi Gabbard (D-Hawaii), and Congressman Don Young (R-Alaska) all attended, and engaged in the policy dialogue of Native leaders from both states.

Senator Begich said at the roundtable that "Alaska and Hawaii will always be able to sit down and talk out our issues and find common ground, especially on issues that are unique to just Alaska or Hawaii." Senator Schatz agreed saying that "the solidarity between Alaska Natives and Native Hawaiians is what moves us to work together. This roundtable among your leaders formalizes and memorializes your relationship and we are happy to continue that good work and climb hills with all of you."

Native leaders brought forward a half dozen issues, including the appointment of Native judges, protecting important Native programs in the budgetary work, and taking care of the country's veterans understanding the fact that Native veterans have served to defend the country and democracy in higher numbers per capita than any other group.

Senator Hirono expressed to the packed room that "it helps very much when you are at the table with us, especially at the hearings, it helps when we are making decisions that affect you, and its good to see this unity among the Native leaders of Hawaii and Alaska." Likewise, Senator Murkowski shared that "building solutions, reminds us of what Senators Inouye and Stevens built generations before and we must and will continue their legacy."

To the applause of participants, Rosita Worl, a Tlingit Haida leader from Southeast Alaska shared that AFN and the Alaska Native people will stand with Hawaiians and the right to self governance. She told Hawaiian leaders and the entire congressional delegation that "we have stood with you in the past, we stand with



you today, and we will stand with you tomorrow. We will teach our children and the next generation of our Native leaders to continue the support, until you have achieved your right to control your own future.” CNHA member Vaughn Vasconcellos raised the importance of strengthening the Native 8(a) program and highlighted the program as one of the most successful in achieving economic sovereignty.

As leaders shared priorities and members of the Alaska and Hawaii Congressional delegations



commented on them, the energy in the room was extremely high, excited even. As Albert Kookesh said to the seven congressional members from both states, “we know that we as Native leaders must work together for you to work together, it’s what our Senior Senators taught us and we know that continuing their legacy is up to us to do.” Congresswoman Hanabusa agreed saying that “the country is great when we are able to acknowledge its Native people.”

"Alaska Natives and Native Hawaiians share indigenous values deeply connected to our respective ancestral lands," said Michelle Kauhane, CNHA Senior Vice President and soon to be President of CNHA. "And as a result, we share many of the same solutions to the challenges faced by our young leaders, by our families, our business owners and our subsistence providers and cultural practitioners. There is so much we can do together."

AFN and CNHA invited a diverse group of Native Hawaiians and Alaska Native leaders to the inaugural roundtable, which was followed by a Reception honoring Congressman Don Young (R-Alaska) to welcome his 80th birthday. "We mahalo Congressman Young for his friendship and work with Senator Hirono when she was in the U.S. House of Representatives, and also for his work with Congresswoman Hanabusa," said retired Judge William Fernandez, CNHA Policy Chairman, "When it comes to the issues of Alaska or Hawaii's Native groups, there are no party lines."

At his 80th birthday reception that followed the roundtable, Congressman Young said “The working relationship between Hawaii and Alaska is historic. We have proven we can do good work and we are going to continue that.”



CNHA is a national network of Native Hawaiian Organizations, providing assistance in accessing capital and technical resources, and is a policy voice on issues important to Native

Hawaiian communities. Its mission is to enhance the cultural, economic, political, and community development of Native Hawaiians. For more information about CNHA please contact us at 808.596.8155, toll-free at 1.800.709.2642, by e-mail at info@hawaiiancouncil.org, or at www.hawaiiancouncil.org.

###

Native NewsClips is a Member Service of CNHA - Distributing Information Received from Our Members. For More Information on this Release or the Member Organization, email nativenewsclips@hawaiiancouncil.org.

**TESTIMONY
OF
SALLY JEWELL
SECRETARY
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BEFORE THE
UNITED STATES SENATE
COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS**

MAY 15, 2013

Good afternoon, Chairwoman Cantwell, Vice-Chairman Barrasso, and Members of the Committee. I would like to thank my friend and fellow Washingtonian Senator Cantwell for inviting me to be here today. It is a pleasure to appear before your Committee to discuss my views and priorities relating to Indian Affairs at the Department of the Interior.

Introduction

As I have become more familiar with the details of the Department's many missions and programs over these past few weeks, I have come to see the truly astonishing breadth of the issues and responsibilities located within this one agency. As I said at my confirmation hearing, it is with deep humility that I acknowledge the scale of the duties entrusted to the office, from upholding our solemn trust responsibilities to American Indians and Alaska Natives to making wise decisions about the use and conservation of the resources with which we have been blessed. Almost all of these duties and responsibilities are applicable to the Indian Affairs programs.

As Secretary of the Interior I have the responsibility to oversee the work of all components of the Department that intersect with Indian Country, including the important work performed by the Office of the Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Bureau of Indian Education, and the Office of the Special Trustee.

My familiarity with Native American issues developed through my 19 years in commercial banking from 1981 to 2000. During that time, I worked with a number of Indian tribes in the Northwest, and served for several years as the lead banker for NANA, an Alaska Regional Corporation. I learned that, through treaties, the Constitution, Federal law, and court decisions, the United States has a government-to-government relationship with, and obligations to, American Indian tribes and Alaska Natives. I also learned that American Indian tribes and Alaska Native groups are governments with inherent sovereignty.

As Secretary of the Interior, I am committed to upholding the Federal government's obligations to Native Americans and to strengthening the United States' government-to-government relationship with Indian tribes and Alaska Natives. I realize that the Federal government has not always honored its trust responsibilities or fully recognized the sovereign status of tribes. I acknowledge this before discussing my broad goals and the challenges that we face.

American Indians and Alaska Natives are survivors of efforts to assimilate indigenous people, terminate tribal governments, and wipe out native languages and cultures. The emotional, spiritual, psychological, and physical violence perpetrated on continues to haunt Native American communities today. American Indians and Alaska Natives consistently rank near the bottom of every economic, social and health indicator. While nothing can undo this tragic history, I am learning that this Administration, including my predecessor Secretary Ken Salazar, has taken action to address these disparities in Native American communities.

That effort began with a promise by then presidential candidate Barack Obama to hold a yearly summit with tribal leaders from all Federally-recognized tribes. Beginning with his first address to the first gathering of tribal leaders in 2009, President Obama told these tribal leaders that this time would be different and that he would begin a lasting conversation – one that would be crucial to our shared future. He also committed to forging a new and better future together where those in Indian Country could be full partners in pursuing the American Dream. As you can imagine, Indian Country was skeptical. But with the passage of the Tribal Law and Order Act, the settlement of the *Cobell* case and tribal trust litigation and, more recently, the passage of the tribal criminal jurisdiction provisions in the Violence Against Women Act, all with the full support of the Obama Administration, we have made great progress in showing that it is indeed a new day.

As Secretary, I intend to carry on the Obama Administration's policy with respect to Indian Affairs. The cornerstone of that policy continues to be promoting tribal self-governance and self-determination and recognizing the inherent right of tribal governments to make their own decisions to strengthen their communities. Over the past few weeks, I have reviewed the various programs and issues at the Department and have identified a number of important priorities with regard to Indian Affairs programs. Those priorities generally fall within several broad issue areas: honoring the trust relationship by restoring tribal homelands; upholding treaty obligations and protecting trust and natural resources; strengthening tribal nations; and promoting self-governance.

Successful management of all of these priorities is important to Indian Country. At the end of our tenure here, I hope that Indian Country will have no doubt that the Federal Government can be a respectful and productive partner.

Working Toward the Promise: Departmental Goals and Priorities

Honoring the Trust Relationship

Restoring Tribal Homelands

One way that the Obama Administration has sought to advance a nation-to-nation relationship with tribal governments and the long-standing policy goals established in the Indian Reorganization Act (IRA) is by protecting and restoring tribal homelands. We must never forget that through the destructive federal policies of allotment and assimilation, Tribes lost tens of millions of acres of tribal lands. At the present time, tribes use lands acquired in trust for housing, schools, hospitals, tribal government administrative offices and economic development projects. More generally, tribes use trust lands to promote the health, safety, social, and economic welfare of tribal members and tribal governments. Over the last four years, Indian Affairs has processed more than 1,100 separate applications and acquired over 205,000 acres of land in trust on behalf of Indian tribes

and individuals. Nonetheless, efforts to restore tribal homelands have been hindered by the United States Supreme Court decisions in *Carciere v. Salazar* and *Salazar v. Patchak*.

In *Carciere v. Salazar*, 555 U.S. 379 (2009), the Supreme Court held that land could not be taken into trust for the Narragansett Tribe of Rhode Island under Section 5 of the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 because the Tribe was not under Federal jurisdiction in 1934. The *Carciere* decision represents a step back toward misguided policies of a century ago and is wholly inconsistent with the United States long-standing policy of self-governance and self-determination for all Federally-recognized tribes.

The decision has placed unnecessary and substantial administrative burdens on the Department and tribes, and has significantly increased litigation risks. The historical inquiry into whether an Indian tribe was “under federal jurisdiction” in 1934 is often fact-intensive and can make the Department’s review process for acquiring land in trust pursuant to Section 5 of the IRA both time consuming and costly for tribes and the Department.

Then, after the Department’s decision is complete, it is not atypical for suits to be filed challenging the acquisition. The Department is currently engaged in both Federal court and administrative litigation regarding the Secretary’s authority to acquire land in trust pursuant to the IRA following the *Carciere* decision. The increase in litigation results in years of delay and significant additional cost to the Department, tribes, and also the Department of Justice. These litigation costs have real life consequences – including the unwarranted diversion of time and resources that could be expended on services and programs in tribal communities. Overall, the *Carciere* decision creates uncertainty and adversely affects the tribes’ ability to progress as a government.

The Administration continues to support a legislative solution to address the negative impacts and increased burdens on the Department and on Indian Country resulting from this decision. The President’s Fiscal Year 2014 Budget includes language that, if enacted, would resolve this issue.

The Supreme Court’s decision in *Salazar v. Patchak*, or *Match-E-Be-Nash-She-Wish Band of Pottawatomis Indians v. Patchak*, 132 S. Ct. 2199 (2012), has exacerbated the problems created by the *Carciere* decision. In *Patchak*, the Court held that, despite the Quiet Title Act, the decisions of the Secretary to acquire land in trust for tribes could be challenged even if the land at issue was already held in trust by the United States. The Supreme Court rejected the Government’s argument that there was a widely-held understanding that once land was held in trust by the United States for the benefit of a tribe, the Quiet Title Act prevented a litigant from seeking to divest the United States of such trust title.

The Administration could support a legislative solution to the *Patchak* decision that allows for judicial review of the Secretary’s decisions to acquire land in trust while also protecting the tribal land base after title to the land transfers to the United States in trust for a tribe.

Cobell Settlement Implementation

Congress approved the *Cobell* Settlement Agreement in the Claims Resolution Act of 2010, Pub. L. No. 111-291 (Dec. 8, 2010). The Settlement was finalized on November 24, 2012, following the end of the appeal process. The \$3.4 billion Settlement addresses the Federal Government’s

responsibility for trust accounts and trust assets maintained by the United States on behalf of more than 300,000 individual Indians.

I know that Secretary Salazar, Deputy Secretary Hayes, and Solicitor Tompkins were major proponents of that settlement. Its implementation will ultimately serve to strengthen the relationship between Native Americans and the Federal Government. I am pleased to continue to make implementation of this historic settlement a priority at the Department.

Individual Compensation

Of the Settlement funds, \$1.5 billion compensates class members for their historical accounting, trust fund, and asset mismanagement claims regarding the Individual Indian Money accounts held in trust by the Federal Government. The Department's involvement in this phase of the settlement is limited to supplying the "best and most current" contact information for each beneficiary class member and indicating if the class member is a minor; non-compos mentis; an individual under legal disability; in need of assistance; or whose whereabouts is unknown. Settlement payments to the Historical Accounting Class members began on December 17, 2012 for Stage 1. Payments to Trust Administration Class (Stage 2) members may occur before the end of 2013.

OST's Trust Beneficiary Call Center has increased its capacity to address the increased number of calls that occurred following Stage 1 payments, and we expect even more capacity will be needed to meet the volume increase expected with the Stage 2 payments.

Land Buy-Back Program

The remaining part of the Settlement establishes a \$1.9 billion fund to consolidate fractionated ownership of land interests in Indian Country. The Land Buy-Back Program provides for voluntary purchases of fractionated interests in trust or restricted parcels from willing Individual Indian Money Account holders. The Settlement gives the Department ten years to consolidate such fractional interests under the program for beneficial use by tribal communities.

Given the Land Buy-Back Program's size, limited duration, and importance, the Department established an office within the Office of the Secretary, subject to the oversight of the Deputy Secretary, to facilitate coordinated engagement and accountability within the Department and to streamline projects and the prioritization of resources. The Department hopes to make offers to purchase fractional interests at initial locations by December 2013.

Indian Education Scholarship Fund

As an additional incentive to participate in the Land Buy-Back Program, the Settlement authorizes up to \$60.0 million to be set aside for an Indian Education Scholarship Fund for American Indian and Alaska Native students when individuals sell fractional interests under the Land Buy-Back Program. On March 12, 2013, Secretary Salazar announced the selection of the American Indian College Fund to administer the student scholarship fund, with a fifth of the annual scholarships to be awarded by the American Indian Graduate Center.

Indian Trust Commission

One of the many outcomes of the *Cobell* Settlement was the creation of the Secretarial Commission on Indian Trust Administration and Reform. This five-member Commission is charged with

conducting a comprehensive evaluation of the Department's management of nearly \$4 billion in American Indian trust assets and offering recommendations for improvement. The Commission is expected to deliver a report at the end of November 2013.

Honoring Treaty Commitments

The Obama Administration has made it a high priority to honor our treaty obligations and trust responsibility to Native Americans and Alaska Natives, and I intend to carry out that commitment.

One important way the Department honors its commitments is through the Rights Protection Implementation program, which supports the implementation of Federal court orders that resulted from decisions in complex, *off-reservation* treaty rights litigation. Generally speaking, these cases involved treaties in which the signatory tribes conveyed significant amounts of land to the United States and reserved the right to hunt, fish, and gather within the ceded territory. The rights involved are shared among multiple tribes and involve co-management with other jurisdictions.

There are 49 tribes whose off-reservation hunting, fishing and gathering rights in the Pacific Northwest and Great Lakes regions are supported by this program. Five umbrella intertribal organizations assist the tribes in implementing relevant court orders and carrying out co-management responsibilities. The court decisions and orders implemented through this program include *U.S. v. Washington*, *U.S. v. Michigan*, *Lac Courte Oreilles v. Voigt*, *U.S. v. Oregon*, *Minnesota v. Mille Lacs* and *Grand Portage v. Minnesota*. In addition, this program supports implementation of the US/Canada Pacific Salmon Treaty.

Settling Indian Water Rights Disputes

With respect to Indian water rights, I am committed to continuing and enhancing the Department's longstanding initiative of settling Indian water rights disputes whenever possible. Indian water settlements help fulfill the United States' general trust responsibility to tribes and ensure that Indian people have safe, reliable, and accessible water supplies. Indian water settlements also end decades of controversy and contention among tribes and neighboring communities and promote cooperation in the management of water resources.

The Administration is committed to resolving Indian water rights claims and ensuring that Native American communities can use and manage water to meet domestic, economic, cultural, and ecological needs, as demonstrated by the six Indian water rights settlements that have been enacted into law during this Administration. These settlements include the four enacted under the Claims Resolution Act of 2010, Pub. L. No. 111-291 (Dec. 8, 2010), benefitting seven tribes in three different states at a total Federal cost of more than \$1 billion: White Mountain Apache Tribe in Arizona, the Crow Tribe in Montana, and the Pueblo of Taos, Pueblo of Nambe, Pueblo of Pojoaque, Pueblo of San Ildefonso, and Pueblo of Tesuque in New Mexico; and the two settlements enacted under the Omnibus Public Lands Act, Pub. L. No. 111-11, 123 Stat. 991 (2009), including the Shoshone-Paiute Tribes of the Duck Valley Reservation Water Rights Settlement (Nevada), and the Navajo-San Juan River Indian Water Rights Settlement Agreement (New Mexico).

To help the Department more effectively partner with tribes on water issues, the Department assists tribes during the assessment, litigation, negotiation and implementation phases of establishing and

enforcing tribal water rights. Currently, there are 17 appointed Federal Indian Water Rights Negotiation Teams active in negotiating water rights claims in the western United States. An additional 21 Federal Indian Water Rights Implementation Teams work on implementing congressionally enacted settlements, including the four enacted in 2010. With increasing drought conditions in the United States and pressure from an expanding population, the number of requests for the appointment of new negotiation teams continues to grow.

Strengthening Tribal Communities

Increasing Renewable and Conventional Energy Development on Indian Lands

A stronger America depends on a growing economy that creates jobs. No area holds more promise than investments in American energy. As the President has stated many times, our success depends in significant part on pursuing an all-of-the-above energy strategy. As a part of this strategy, the Department is committed to assisting tribes in expanding on Indian lands renewable, low cost, reliable, and secure energy supplies as well as and safe and responsible oil and gas development in accordance with tribal objectives. Implementing the President's all-of-the-above energy strategy in Indian Country will contribute to the goals of increasing our nation's domestic energy supplies and of improving the economies of many Indian tribes and Alaska Native villages.

Under the Assistant Secretary, the BIA is responsible for developing, implementing and reviewing bureau-wide policies, plans, processes, environmental impact studies, industry leasing and development activities, and other functions related to development and production of energy and mineral resources on Indian lands. In addition, the Office of Indian Energy and Economic Development (IEED), within the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs, provides financial and technical assistance to tribes, supporting development and management of their energy resources. This includes resource assessments, geologic studies, economic analyses, and market studies.

The Department currently holds in trust 55 million surface acres and 57 million acres of subsurface mineral estate throughout Indian Country. The potential on Indian lands for the development of both conventional and renewable energy resources is significant.

Renewable Energy Development

More than 50 renewable energy projects are ongoing on an estimated 35 reservations. This, however, is barely tapping into the renewable energy potential that exists in Indian Country. While the resources on these reservations have not yet been fully determined, the BIA has identified 267 reservations with renewable energy potential.

An example of this great potential is the solar energy project on Moapa Band of Paiute's trust lands in Nevada, approved by the Department last year. This milestone project is the first-ever, utility-scale solar project approved for development on tribal lands. The project will generate lease income for the Tribe, create new jobs and employment opportunities for tribal members, and connect the existing tribally-owned Travel Plaza to the electrical grid, decreasing its dependence on a diesel powered generator. The procurement of construction materials and equipment is expected to generate additional sales and use tax revenues for the county and the State. In addition,

the Tribe's agreement with the Los Angeles City Council for a 25-year power purchase agreement will provide enough energy to power over 100,000 Los Angeles households.

Conventional Energy Development

The BIA is also working closely with tribal nations that are interested in developing conventional energy resources. Together, BIA and Indian tribes are defining, quantifying, and developing tribal energy resources for industrial scale energy production. The Department has estimated that energy and mineral development on Indian lands in 2012 supported over \$16.0 billion of economic activity and nearly 120,000 jobs related to trust resources. In the last three years, IEED assisted Indian mineral owners in the negotiation of 55 leases for oil, gas, renewable energy, and aggregate materials development on approximately 3.1 million acres.

The IEED assisted the Three Affiliated Tribes of the Fort Berthold Reservation in the negotiation of lease agreements with oil and gas companies that have allowed the Tribes to share in the success of the oil and gas leasing boom in the Bakken Formation in the Williston Basin. In 2011, over 200 drilling permits and associated rights-of-ways were approved in the area. In 2012, the number of drilling permits and associated rights-of-way permits rose to over 300. Also in 2012, the Department approved a fee-to-trust application from the Tribes to build a refinery on the Fort Berthold Reservation. Once all required approvals are obtained, this will be the first new refinery built in the U.S. in more than 30 years.

Advancing Indian Education

Education of Native American children is an issue of paramount concern. These children experience some of the highest levels of poverty in the United States, which not only affects the possibilities for their academic success but may also limit other possibilities for success later in life. The Administration is committed to ensuring Native American students receive an academically rigorous, culturally appropriate education that will prepare them to be productive citizens and leaders in their communities and help build safer, stronger, healthier, and more prosperous Indian communities.

The BIE elementary and secondary school system currently has 183 academic or resident-only facilities located on 64 reservations in 23 States. During the 2011-2012 school year, the BIE-funded schools served nearly 48,000 individual K-12 American Indian students and residential boarders. After accounting for transfers, absences, and dropout rates, this equates to an average daily membership of around 41,000 students. Currently 125 of the BIE's schools are tribally-controlled with grant support funding helping to cover administrative and indirect costs incurred by tribes operating contract and grant schools. The BIE also operates two post-secondary schools, administers operating grants to 27 tribal colleges and universities and two tribal technical colleges, and promotes post-secondary opportunities with scholarships to approximately 32,000 students attending other institutions of learning.

The BIE's mission is to provide quality educational opportunities from early childhood through life in accordance with a tribe's needs for cultural and economic wellbeing while respecting the diversity of Indian tribes as distinct cultural and governmental entities. The BIE's vision for success includes:

- Maximizing student achievement – Teaching its students well is the number one priority for BIE. Effective instruction is a critical element in turning BIE schools around. The BIE has increased the number of School Improvement Grants to encourage school turnaround models across BIE schools.
- Advancing Indian education through self-determination – Self-determination and self-governance are an integral part of advancing Indian education. Over the past year, BIE consulted with tribal governments and their leaders on topics such as the Johnson-O’Malley student count, the Indian Affairs Administrative Assessment, and the Public Law 100-297 grant assurance form. Consultations have resulted in agency-wide collaborative efforts in the areas of education, language, culture, and economic development.
- Optimizing school operations – To support the President’s commitment to provide every student even footing when it comes to education, BIE has expressed a desire to adopt the Common Core State Standards, as have 46 States and the District of Columbia, to allow BIE to pursue a unified system of standards, assessments, and accountability rather than using the standards, assessments, and average yearly progress definitions of the 23 different States where BIE schools are located.
- Improving school facilities – Indian Affairs provides funds for facility programs for 183 academic and resident only campuses. From 2002 through 2012, \$2.0 billion has been invested in construction, improvement, and repair projects that have reduced the number of schools in poor condition from more than 120 to 63. This includes 42 complete school replacements and 62 major renovations, which are either completed, funded or under construction. The physical state of our schools remains a significant challenge, as it does for so many other parts of the Interior infrastructure.
- Seeking partners – The BIE signed eleven Memorandums of Understanding, Memorandums of Agreement, and cooperative agreements with other federal agencies, tribal colleges, and tribal governments to increase access to new programs and initiatives as well as to build capacity at tribal colleges and within tribal governments. The BIE recently partnered with Teach for America to increase BIE-funded schools’ access to highly qualified teachers in hard-to-fill locations in the BIE system.

Protecting Native Communities and Natural Resources Through Climate Change Adaptation

The Department recognizes that climate change may disproportionately affect Indian tribes and Alaska Natives because they are often heavily dependent on their natural resources for economic development and cultural identity. The Department has a special role to play in working with Indian tribes to safeguard resources and to maintain fish and wildlife needed for subsistence harvests. These protections are especially critical for Native Alaskan populations given the rate of change observed in the state. Given these responsibilities, the BIA will have an essential role in the Department’s response to the impacts of climate change in Indian Country.

Climate change impacts are becoming increasingly evident for Indian tribes, and tribal leaders have voiced their growing concerns with the effects of climate change on their surrounding environment. For example:

- In Alaska, the loss of sea ice and resulting shore erosion places subsistence life-ways at risk as well as entire communities experiencing coastal erosion;
- The Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians lost its entire wild rice crop last spring in a record flood;
- For the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla, the Chinook were late again this spring, resulting in one ceremony without fish and the late root crop just delayed another traditional feast;
- In Oklahoma, Kansas, and the Southwest, extended drought has decimated crops and groundcover, and allowed the wind to move soils, making recovery harder once the drought does break.

These types of events pose significant challenges to any affected community. For Indian nations, these challenges are exacerbated because they not only impact Native economies—they also threaten Native cultures. The Cooperative Landscape Conservation Program, BIA's primary climate change adaptation program, allows the BIA to expand tribal climate adaptation planning and increase BIA capacity to transfer technical information. The Program engages field level managers, Indian Affairs staff and tribal representatives and provides them with the opportunities to improve technical skills.

Other programs at the Department address climate change adaptation as a key purpose, such as the Department's nationwide network of Landscape Conservation Cooperatives, which allows the BIA to assist tribes in identifying and implementing strategies to address impacts on tribal lands. Another example is the work of the United States Geological Survey (USGS) to identify best practices for the potential integration of traditional ecological knowledge into science and funding opportunities. To this end, USGS is interviewing Indian elders who are familiar with the local climate and terrain. This facilitates the incorporation of different and traditional forms of knowledge that allow for a more comprehensive understanding of the complex challenges posed by climate change. The indigenous knowledge encompasses observations, lessons, and stories about the environment that have been handed down for generations. This data provides a long history of environmental knowledge and also can help uncover new areas for scientific study.

Promoting Self-Governance in Tight Fiscal Times

For the Country as a whole, one key challenge moving forward is the uncertainty of the Nation's budget. In these hard fiscal times, tough choices and hard decisions will have to be made at all levels of government. As I said in my introduction, the cornerstone of my policy as Secretary of the Interior will be centered on promoting self-governance and self-determination, and the inherent right of tribal governments to make their own decisions to strengthen their communities. Nonetheless, given the financial climate, tough choices must be made with respect to Departmental programs. One such decision involves the need to balance funding for contract support costs with funding for direct programming and other tribal priorities within constrained resources.

Congress and the Administration have not fully funded contract support costs for many years. Shortfalls in the Department's appropriations for contract support costs have led to litigation to recoup unpaid support costs, most recently in a Supreme Court decision in *Salazar v. Ramah Navajo Chapter*, 132 S. Ct. 2181 (2012). The Administration intends to consult with tribes and work with Congress on a long term solution that will further promote the shared goal of tribal self-determination and self-governance.

The President's Budget for Fiscal Year 2014 has two key features related to contract support costs. First, it proposes \$231 million for contract support costs, which is \$10 million more than the Fiscal Year 2012 enacted level, and approximately 91 percent of the amount identified in the most recent projections as the estimated full funding requirement. Second, to accompany the proposed appropriations language in the President's Budget for Fiscal Year 2014, the Department will submit to the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations a Contract Support Cost Table that identifies an amount to be made available for each self-determination contract for Fiscal Year 2014, consistent with one of the Supreme Court's solutions. The appropriation will also make available a lump-sum amount for contract support costs associated with new or expanded self-determination contracts. This would provide certainty to tribes on the funding they will receive. The contract support costs proposal in the President's FY 2014 Budget is designed to be an interim step toward a long term solution reached by working with Congress and consulting with Indian tribes.

To be clear, the Administration is strongly committed to supporting and advancing self-determination and self-governance for Federally-recognized tribes. For the reasons discussed above, I hope a long-term, mutually beneficial solution can be achieved by working with Congress and consulting with Indian tribes.

Regulatory Reform

As part of this Administration's goal to improve regulatory processes, the Department has been looking at a number of areas, including programs within Indian Affairs.

Reform of the Federal acknowledgment process is a high priority for the Department. The acknowledgment of the continued existence of another sovereign entity is one of the most solemn and important responsibilities undertaken by the Department. Federal acknowledgment permanently confirms the existence of a nation-to-nation relationship between a Federally-recognized Indian tribe and the United States. The work of Assistant Secretary Washburn and his staff on this issue is important and we are committed to improving the process

The Department's process for acknowledging an Indian tribe provides for the Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs to make a decision on whether to acknowledge a petitioner's government-to-government relationship with the United States. Some have criticized the process as expensive, inefficient, burdensome, intrusive, less than transparent and unpredictable. The Department is aware of these critiques, and we are reviewing our existing regulations to consider ways to improve the process and address these criticisms and concerns. With this in mind, the Department is actively working to develop draft revised Federal Acknowledgement regulations and will be initiating the Tribal Consultation soon. Pending the outcome from tribal consultation, the next

step would be to release the proposed rule for public comment, which will be published in the Federal Register. While the current goal is to publish a final rule sometime in 2014, the timing for publication of a final rule depends upon the volume and complexity of comments and revisions necessary to address the comments received.

Conclusion

Thank you for the opportunity to share my views with the Committee on some of the critical issues affecting tribal nations. I look forward to working with you as we collectively work to uphold our responsibilities.



NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR THE ARCTIC REGION

MAY 2013





THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

May 10, 2013

We in the lower forty-eight and Hawaii join Alaska's residents in recognizing one simple truth that the Arctic is an amazing place.

The Arctic is one of our planet's last great frontiers. Our pioneering spirit is naturally drawn to this region, for the economic opportunities it presents and in recognition of the need to protect and conserve this unique, valuable, and changing environment. As we consider how to make the most of the emerging economic opportunities in the region, we recognize that we must exercise responsible stewardship, using an integrated management approach and making decisions based on the best available information, with the aim of promoting healthy, sustainable, and resilient ecosystems over the long term.

The Arctic region is peaceful, stable, and free of conflict. The United States and its Arctic allies and partners seek to sustain this spirit of trust, cooperation and collaboration, both internationally and domestically. Together, we have made much progress on issues of common concern, such as search and rescue, and pollution prevention and response. Working together, we will continue to increase our understanding of the region through scientific research and traditional knowledge.

Through the National Strategy for the Arctic Region, we articulate our strategic priorities to position the United States to meet the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. We will seek to prioritize and effectively integrate the work of Federal departments and agencies with activities that are already underway in the State of Alaska and at the international level. And we will partner with the State of Alaska and Alaska Natives, as well as the international community and the private sector, to develop innovative solutions and new ways of operating.

The Arctic is changing. We must proceed, cognizant of what we must do now, and consistent with our principles and goals for the future.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be the name 'Barack' followed by a stylized 'O' and a horizontal line extending to the right.

NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR THE ARCTIC REGION

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	2
Introduction.....	4
Changing Conditions	5
Lines of Effort.....	6
1. Advance United States Security Interests	6
2. Pursue Responsible Arctic Region Stewardship	7
3. Strengthen International Cooperation.....	8
Guiding Principles	10
Conclusion	11

Executive Summary

“The United States is an Arctic Nation with broad and fundamental interests in the Arctic Region, where we seek to meet our national security needs, protect the environment, responsibly manage resources, account for indigenous communities, support scientific research, and strengthen international cooperation on a wide range of issues.”¹

The *National Strategy for the Arctic Region* sets forth the United States Government’s strategic priorities for the Arctic region. This strategy is intended to position the United States to respond effectively to challenges and emerging opportunities arising from significant increases in Arctic activity due to the diminishment of sea ice and the emergence of a new Arctic environment. It defines U.S. national security interests in the Arctic region and identifies prioritized lines of effort, building upon existing initiatives by Federal, state, local, and tribal authorities, the private sector, and international partners, and aims to focus efforts where opportunities exist and action is needed. It is designed to meet the reality of a changing Arctic environment, while we simultaneously pursue our global objective of combating the climatic changes that are driving these environmental conditions. Our strategy is built on three lines of effort:

1. **Advance United States Security Interests** – We will enable our vessels and aircraft to operate, consistent with international law, through, under, and over the airspace and waters of the Arctic, support lawful commerce, achieve a greater awareness of activity in the region, and intelligently evolve our Arctic infrastructure and capabilities, including ice-capable platforms as needed. U.S. security in the Arctic encompasses a broad spectrum of activities, ranging from those supporting safe commercial and scientific operations to national defense.
2. **Pursue Responsible Arctic Region Stewardship** – We will continue to protect the Arctic environment and conserve its resources; establish and institutionalize an integrated Arctic management framework; chart the Arctic region; and employ scientific research and traditional knowledge to increase understanding of the Arctic.
3. **Strengthen International Cooperation** – Working through bilateral relationships and multilateral bodies, including the Arctic Council, we will pursue arrangements that advance collective interests, promote shared Arctic state prosperity, protect the Arctic environment, and enhance regional security, and we will work toward U.S. accession to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (Law of the Sea Convention).

Our approach will be informed by the following guiding principles:

- **Safeguard Peace and Stability** – Seek to maintain and preserve the Arctic region as an area free of conflict, acting in concert with allies, partners, and other interested parties. Support and preserve: international legal principles of freedom of navigation and overflight and other uses of the sea and airspace related to these freedoms, unimpeded lawful commerce, and the peaceful resolution of disputes for all nations.

¹ National Security Strategy, May 2010.

- **Make Decisions Using the Best Available Information** – Across all lines of effort, decisions need to be based on the most current science and traditional knowledge.²
- **Pursue Innovative Arrangements** – Foster partnerships with the State of Alaska, Arctic states, other international partners, and the private sector to more efficiently develop, resource, and manage capabilities, where appropriate and feasible, to better advance our strategic priorities in this austere fiscal environment.
- **Consult and Coordinate with Alaska Natives** – Engage in a consultation process with Alaska Natives, recognizing tribal governments’ unique legal relationship with the United States and providing for meaningful and timely opportunity to inform Federal policy affecting Alaskan Native communities.

² Traditional knowledge refers to a body of evolving practical knowledge based on observations and personal experience of indigenous communities over an extensive, multigenerational time period. (BOEM Ocean Science, Vol. 9, Issue 2, May/April/June 2012, page 4).

Introduction

We seek an Arctic region that is stable and free of conflict, where nations act responsibly in a spirit of trust and cooperation, and where economic and energy resources are developed in a sustainable manner that also respects the fragile environment and the interests and cultures of indigenous peoples.

As the United States addresses these opportunities and challenges, we will be guided by our central interests in the Arctic region, which include providing for the security of the United States; protecting the free flow of resources and commerce; protecting the environment; addressing the needs of indigenous communities; and enabling scientific research. In protecting these interests, we draw from our long-standing policy and approach to the global maritime spaces in the 20th century, including freedom of navigation and overflight and other internationally lawful uses of the sea and airspace related to these freedoms; security on the oceans; maintaining strong relationships with allies and partners; and peaceful resolution of disputes without coercion.

To achieve this vision, the United States is establishing an overarching national approach to advance national security interests, pursue responsible stewardship of this precious and unique region, and serve as a basis for cooperation with other Arctic states³ and the international community as a whole to advance common interests.

Even as we work domestically and internationally to minimize the effects of climate change, the effects are already apparent in the Arctic. Ocean resources are more readily accessible as sea ice diminishes, but thawing ground is threatening communities as well as hindering land-based activities, including access to resources. Diminishing land and sea ice is altering ecosystems and the services they provide. As an Arctic nation, the United States must be proactive and disciplined in addressing changing regional conditions and in developing adaptive strategies to protect its interests. An undisciplined approach to exploring new opportunities in this frontier could result in significant harm to the region, to our national security interests, and to the global good.

When implementing this strategy, the United States will proceed in a thoughtful, responsible manner that leverages expertise, resources, and cooperation from the State of Alaska, Alaska Natives, and stakeholders across the entire nation and throughout the international community. We will encourage and use science-informed decisionmaking to aid this effort. We will endeavor to do no harm to the sensitive environment or to Alaska native communities and other indigenous populations that rely on Arctic resources. Just as a common spirit and shared vision of peaceful partnership led to the development of an international space station, we believe much can be achieved in the Arctic region through collaborative international efforts, coordinated investments, and public-private partnerships.

³ Arctic state is defined as one of the eight nations making up the permanent membership of the Arctic Council and includes the following nations: Canada, Denmark (including Greenland and the Faroe Islands), Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden, and the United States.

Structure of the Strategy

Through this *National Strategy for the Arctic Region*, we seek to guide, prioritize, and synchronize efforts to protect U.S. national and homeland security interests, promote responsible stewardship, and foster international cooperation.

This strategy articulates three priority lines of effort. It also identifies guiding principles as a foundation for Arctic region activities. Through a deliberate emphasis on the priority lines of effort and objectives, it aims to achieve a national unity of effort that is consistent with our domestic and international legal rights, obligations, and commitments and that is well coordinated with our Arctic neighbors and the international community. These lines of effort identify common themes where specific emphasis and activities will be focused to ensure that strategic priorities are met. The three lines of effort, as well as the guiding principles are meant to be acted upon as a coherent whole.

Changing Conditions

While the Arctic region has experienced warming and cooling cycles over millennia, the current warming trend is unlike anything previously recorded. The reduction in sea ice has been dramatic, abrupt, and unrelenting. The dense, multi-year ice is giving way to thin layers of seasonal ice, making more of the region navigable year-round. Scientific estimates of technically recoverable conventional oil and gas resources north of the Arctic Circle total approximately 13 percent of the world's undiscovered oil and 30 percent of the world's undiscovered gas deposits, as well as vast quantities of mineral resources, including rare earth elements, iron ore, and nickel.⁴ These estimates have inspired fresh ideas for commercial initiatives and infrastructure development in the region. As portions of the Arctic Ocean become more navigable, there is increasing interest in the viability of the Northern Sea Route and other potential routes, including the Northwest Passage, as well as in development of Arctic resources.

For all of the opportunities emerging with the increasing accessibility and economic and strategic interests in the Arctic, the opening and rapid development of the Arctic region presents very real challenges. On the environmental front, reduced sea ice is having an immediate impact on indigenous populations as well as on fish and wildlife. Moreover, there may be potentially profound environmental consequences of continued ocean warming and Arctic ice melt. These consequences include altering the climate of lower latitudes, risking the stability of Greenland's ice sheet, and accelerating the thawing of the Arctic permafrost in which large quantities of methane – a potent driver of climate change – as well as pollutants such as mercury are stored. Uncoordinated development – and the consequent increase in pollution such as emissions of black carbon or other substances from fossil fuel combustion – could have unintended consequences on climate trends, fragile ecosystems, and Arctic communities. It is imperative that the United States proactively establish national priorities and objectives for the Arctic region.

⁴ U.S. Geological Survey, "Circum-Arctic Resource Appraisal: Estimates of Undiscovered Oil and Gas North of the Arctic Circle," fact sheet, 2008, <http://pubs.usgs.gov/fs/2008/3049/fs2008-3049.pdf>.

Lines of Effort

To meet the challenges and opportunities in the Arctic region, and in furtherance of established Arctic Region Policy⁵, we will pursue the following lines of effort and supporting objectives in a mutually reinforcing manner that incorporates the broad range of U.S. current activities and interests in the Arctic region.

1. Advance United States Security Interests

Our highest priority is to protect the American people, our sovereign territory and rights, natural resources, and interests of the United States. To this end, the United States will identify, develop, and maintain the capacity and capabilities necessary to promote safety, security, and stability in the region through a combination of independent action, bilateral initiatives, and multilateral cooperation. We acknowledge that the protection of our national security interests in the Arctic region must be undertaken with attention to environmental, cultural, and international considerations outlined throughout this strategy. As many nations across the world aspire to expand their role in the Arctic, we encourage Arctic and non-Arctic states to work collaboratively through appropriate fora to address the emerging challenges and opportunities in the Arctic region, while we remain vigilant to protect the security interests of the United States and our allies.

To accomplish this line of effort, the United States Government will seek to:

- **Evolve Arctic Infrastructure and Strategic Capabilities** – Working cooperatively with the State of Alaska, local, and tribal authorities, as well as public and private sector partners, we will develop, maintain, and exercise the capacity to execute Federal responsibilities in our Arctic waters, airspace, and coastal regions, including the capacity to respond to natural or man-made disasters. We will carefully tailor this regional infrastructure, as well as our response capacity, to the evolving human and commercial activity in the Arctic region.
- **Enhance Arctic Domain Awareness** – We seek to improve our awareness of activities, conditions, and trends in the Arctic region that may affect our safety, security, environmental, or commercial interests. The United States will endeavor to appropriately enhance sea, air, and space capabilities as Arctic conditions change, and to promote maritime-related information sharing with international, public, and private sector partners, to support implementation of activities such as the search-and-rescue agreement signed by Arctic states.
- **Preserve Arctic Region Freedom of the Seas** – The United States has a national interest in preserving all of the rights, freedoms, and uses of the sea and airspace recognized under international law. We will enable prosperity and safe transit by developing and maintaining sea, under-sea, and air assets and necessary infrastructure. In addition, the United States will support the enhancement of national defense, law enforcement, navigation safety, marine environment response, and search-and-rescue capabilities. Existing international law provides a comprehensive set of rules governing the rights, freedoms, and uses of the world’s oceans and airspace, including the Arctic.

⁵ National Security Presidential Directive-66/Homeland Security Presidential Directive-25, January 2009.

The law recognizes these rights, freedoms, and uses for commercial and military vessels and aircraft. Within this framework, we shall further develop Arctic waterways management regimes, including traffic separation schemes, vessel tracking, and ship routing, in collaboration with partners. We will also encourage other nations to adhere to internationally accepted principles. This cooperation will facilitate strategic partnerships that promote innovative, low-cost solutions that enhance the Arctic marine transportation system and the safe, secure, efficient and free flow of trade.

- **Provide for Future United States Energy Security** – The Arctic region’s energy resources factor into a core component of our national security strategy: energy security. The region holds sizable proved and potential oil and natural gas resources that will likely continue to provide valuable supplies to meet U.S. energy needs. Continuing to responsibly develop Arctic oil and gas resources aligns with the United States “all of the above” approach to developing new domestic energy sources, including renewables, expanding oil and gas production, and increasing efficiency and conservation efforts to reduce our reliance on imported oil and strengthen our nation’s energy security. Within the context of this broader energy security strategy, including our economic, environmental and climate policy objectives, we are committed to working with stakeholders, industry, and other Arctic states to explore the energy resource base, develop and implement best practices, and share experiences to enable the environmentally responsible production of oil and natural gas as well as renewable energy.

2. Pursue Responsible Arctic Region Stewardship

Responsible stewardship requires active conservation of resources, balanced management, and the application of scientific and traditional knowledge of physical and living environments. As Arctic environments change, increased human activity demands precaution, as well as greater knowledge to inform responsible decisions. Together, Arctic nations can responsibly meet new demands – including maintaining open sea lanes for global commerce and scientific research, charting and mapping, providing search-and-rescue services, and developing capabilities to prevent, contain, and respond to oil spills and accidents – by increasing knowledge and integrating Arctic management.⁶ We must improve our ability to forecast future conditions in the Arctic while being mindful of the potential for unexpected developments.

To realize this line of effort, we will pursue the specific objectives outlined below:

- **Protect the Arctic Environment and Conserve Arctic Natural Resources** – Protecting the unique and changing environment of the Arctic is a central goal of U.S. policy. Supporting actions will promote healthy, sustainable, and resilient ecosystems over the long term, supporting a full range of ecosystem services. This effort will be

⁶ Much of this work is already underway including efforts under Executive Order 12501 (Arctic Research), Executive Order 13547 (Stewardship of the Ocean, Our Coasts, and the Great Lakes), and Executive Order 13580 (Interagency Working Group on Coordination of Domestic Energy Development and Permitting in Alaska). Entities under these Executive Orders are developing partnerships with Federal, state, local, tribal, territorial, public and private sector partners to ensure that natural resource decisions in the Arctic integrate economic, environmental, and cultural interests of the Nation.

risk-based and proceed on the basis of best available information. The United States in the Arctic will assess and monitor the status of ecosystems and the risks of climate change and other stressors to prepare for and respond effectively to environmental challenges.

- **Use Integrated Arctic Management to Balance Economic Development, Environmental Protection, and Cultural Values** – Natural resource management will be based on a comprehensive understanding of environmental and cultural sensitivities in the region, and address expectations for future infrastructure needs and other development-related trends. This endeavor can promote unity of effort and provide the basis for sensible infrastructure and other resource management decisions in the Arctic. We will emphasize science-informed decisionmaking and integration of economic, environmental, and cultural values. We will also advance coordination among Federal departments and agencies and collaboration with partners engaged in Arctic stewardship activities.
- **Increase Understanding of the Arctic through Scientific Research and Traditional Knowledge** – Proper stewardship of the Arctic requires understanding of how the environment is changing, and such understanding will be based on a holistic earth system approach. Vast areas of the Arctic Ocean are unexplored, and we lack much of the basic knowledge necessary to understand and address Arctic issues. The changes in the Arctic cannot be understood in isolation and must be viewed in a global context. As we learn more about the region, we have identified several key subcomponents of the Arctic that require urgent attention: land ice and its role in changing sea level; sea-ice and its role in global climate, fostering biodiversity, and supporting Arctic peoples; and, the warming permafrost and its effects on infrastructure and climate. Better earth system-level knowledge will also help us meet operational needs such as weather and ice forecasting. We can make faster progress through a well-coordinated and transparent national and international exploration and research agenda that reduces the potential for duplication of effort and leads to better leveraging of resources.
- **Chart the Arctic region** – We will continue to make progress in charting and mapping the Arctic region’s ocean and waterways, so long obscured by perennial ice, and mapping its coastal and interior lands according to reliable, modern standards. Given the vast expanse of territory and water to be charted and mapped, we will need to prioritize and synchronize charting efforts to make more effective use of resources and attain faster progress. In so doing, we will make navigation safer and contribute to the identification of ecologically sensitive areas and reserves of natural resources.

3. Strengthen International Cooperation

What happens in one part of the Arctic region can have significant implications for the interests of other Arctic states and the international community as a whole. The remote and complex operating conditions in the Arctic environment make the region well-suited for collaborative efforts by nations seeking to explore emerging opportunities while emphasizing ecological awareness and preservation. We will seek to strengthen partnerships through existing multilateral fora and legal frameworks dedicated to common

Arctic issues. We will also pursue new arrangements for cooperating on issues of mutual interest or concern and addressing unique and unprecedented challenges, as appropriate.

U.S. efforts to strengthen international cooperation and partnerships will be pursued through four objectives:

- **Pursue Arrangements that Promote Shared Arctic State Prosperity, Protect the Arctic Environment, and Enhance Security** – We will seek opportunities to pursue efficient and effective joint ventures, based on shared values that leverage each Arctic state’s strengths. This collaboration will assist in guiding investments and regional activities, addressing dynamic trends, and promoting sustainable development in the Arctic region.

Arctic nations have varied commercial, cultural, environmental, safety, and security concerns in the Arctic region. Nevertheless, our common interests make these nations ideal partners in the region. We seek new opportunities to advance our interests by proactive engagement with other Arctic nations through bilateral and multilateral efforts using of a wide array of existing multilateral mechanisms that have responsibilities relating to the Arctic region.

As appropriate, we will work with other Arctic nations to develop new coordination mechanisms to keep the Arctic region prosperous, environmentally sustainable, operationally safe, secure, and free of conflict, and will protect U.S., allied, and regional security and economic interests.

- **Work through the Arctic Council to Advance U.S. Interests in the Arctic Region** – In recent years, the Arctic Council has facilitated notable achievements in the promotion of cooperation, coordination, and interaction among Arctic states and Arctic indigenous peoples. Recent successes of the Council include its advancement of public safety and environmental protection issues, as evidenced by the 2011 Arctic Search-and-Rescue Agreement and by the 2013 Arctic Marine Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response Agreement. The United States will continue to emphasize the Arctic Council as a forum for facilitating Arctic states’ cooperation on myriad issues of mutual interest within its current mandate.
- **Accede to the Law of the Sea Convention** – Accession to the Convention would protect U.S. rights, freedoms, and uses of the sea and airspace throughout the Arctic region, and strengthen our arguments for freedom of navigation and overflight through the Northwest Passage and the Northern Sea Route. The United States is the only Arctic state that is not party to the Convention. Only by joining the Convention can we maximize legal certainty and best secure international recognition of our sovereign rights with respect to the U.S. extended continental shelf in the Arctic and elsewhere, which may hold vast oil, gas, and other resources. Our extended continental shelf claim in the Arctic region could extend more than 600 nautical miles from the north coast of Alaska.

In instances where the maritime zones of coastal nations overlap, Arctic states have already begun the process of negotiating and concluding maritime boundary agreements, consistent with the Law of the Sea Convention and other relevant

international law. The United States supports peaceful management and resolution of disputes, in a manner free from coercion. While the United States is not currently a party to the Convention, we will continue to support and observe principles of established customary international law reflected in the Convention.

- **Cooperate with other Interested Parties** – A growing number of non-Arctic states and numerous non-state actors have expressed increased interest in the Arctic region. The United States and other Arctic nations should seek to work with other states and entities to advance common objectives in the Arctic region in a manner that protects Arctic states' national interests and resources. One key example relates to the promotion of safe, secure, and reliable Arctic shipping, a goal that is best pursued through the International Maritime Organization in coordination with other Arctic states, major shipping states, the shipping industry and other relevant interests.

Guiding Principles

The U.S. approach to the Arctic region must reflect our values as a nation and as a member of the global community. We will approach holistically our interests in promoting safety and security, advancing economic and energy development, protecting the environment, addressing climate change and respecting the needs of indigenous communities and Arctic state interests. To guide our efforts, we have identified the following principles to serve as the foundation for U.S. Arctic engagement and activities.

- **Safeguard Peace and Stability** by working to maintain and preserve the Arctic region as an area free of conflict, acting in concert with allies, partners, and other interested parties. This principle will include United States action, and the actions of other interested countries, in supporting and preserving international legal principles of freedom of navigation and overflight and other uses of the sea related to these freedoms, unimpeded lawful commerce, and the peaceful resolution of disputes. The United States will rely on existing international law, which provides a comprehensive set of rules governing the rights, freedoms, and uses of the world's oceans and airspace, including the Arctic.
- **Make Decisions Using the Best Available Information** by promptly sharing – nationally and internationally – the most current understanding and forecasts based on up-to-date science and traditional knowledge.
- **Pursue Innovative Arrangements** to support the investments in scientific research, marine transportation infrastructure requirements, and other support capability and capacity needs in this region. The harshness of the Arctic climate and the complexity associated with developing, maintaining, and operating infrastructure and capabilities in the region necessitate new thinking on public-private and multinational partnerships.

- **Consult and Coordinate with Alaska Natives** consistent with tribal consultation policy established by Executive Order.⁷ This policy emphasizes trust, respect, and shared responsibility. It articulates that tribal governments have a unique legal relationship with the United States and requires Federal departments and agencies to provide for meaningful and timely input by tribal officials in development of regulatory policies that have tribal implications. This guiding principle is also consistent with the Alaska Federation of Natives Guidelines for Research.⁸

Conclusion

We seek a collaborative and innovative approach to manage a rapidly changing region. We must advance U.S. national security interests, pursue responsible stewardship, and strengthen international collaboration and cooperation, as we work to meet the challenges of rapid climate-driven environmental change. The melting of Arctic ice has the potential to transform global climate and ecosystems as well as global shipping, energy markets, and other commercial interests. To address these challenges and opportunities, we will align Federal activities in accordance with this strategy; partner with the State of Alaska, local, and tribal entities; and work with other Arctic nations to develop complementary approaches to shared challenges. We will proactively coordinate regional development. Our economic development and environmental stewardship must go hand-in-hand. The unique Arctic environment will require a commitment by the United States to make judicious, coordinated infrastructure investment decisions, informed by science. To meet this challenge, we will need bold, innovative thinking that embraces and generates new and creative public-private and multinational cooperative models.

⁷ See Executive Order 13175 – Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments, November 2000.

⁸ Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) (1996) *AFN Board Adopts Policy Guidelines for Research*. AFN, Anchorage. Alaska Natives Knowledge Network. Policy adopted in 1993, <http://ankn.uaf.edu/IKS/afnguide.html>.

United States Senator Lisa Murkowski

Friday May 10 2013

Alaska Veterans Saluted by Library of Congress

Senator Murkowski's Veteran Spotlight Series Seen as National Model

WASHINGTON, DC – Senator Lisa Murkowski's "Veteran Spotlight" was recognized this morning at a Library of Congress event as a model of the 'Best Practices' for its [Veterans History Project](#) - an effort to share the oral accounts of war from America's veteran community and inform future generations of their bravery and valor. Murkowski launched her "[Veteran Spotlight](#)" series last Memorial Day, and Alaskans from the Alaska Territorial Guard to veterans of our present military conflicts have shared their stories.

"I thank Alaska's modest veteran community for opening up and sharing their experiences through the Veteran Spotlight effort, and giving Alaskans a window into our wars that we cannot get through news articles or history books," said Murkowski. "In honoring their stories today, the Library of Congress shows that they believe these men and women are providing powerful testimonials for the nation of patriotism and commitment."



Some of the Alaskans featured in Senator Murkowski's Veteran Spotlight project - [CLICK](#) to view

"The Veterans History Project at the Library of Congress has truly resonated with the American people - not only veterans themselves but their spouses, their children, their grandchildren and their compatriots in military service," said Librarian of Congress James H. Billington. "We are pleased to be working with Senator Murkowski's office whose Veteran Spotlight honors Alaska's veterans and also serves as a model for others in Congress and across the nation as they participate in the Veterans History Project."

The Veteran Spotlight project can be viewed online [on its webpage](#), at the [Alaska Veteran's](#)