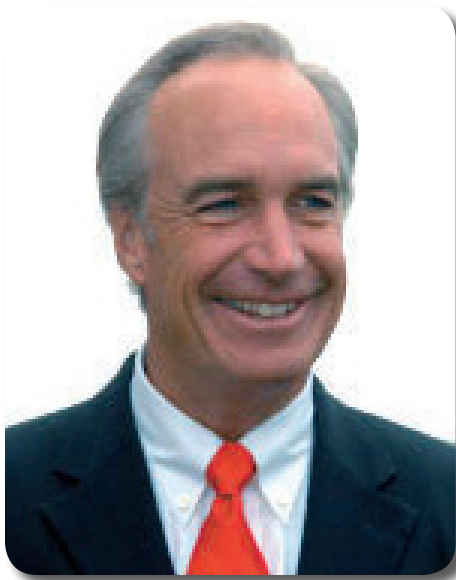


Message from the Secretary



Everyday, Interior Department agencies must make complex land management decisions, often with uncertain or incomplete information. Adaptive management offers a tool consistent with the President's vision of Cooperative Conservation to help agencies make better decisions in this context of uncertainty while agencies are accumulating more information. This *U.S. Department of the Interior Technical Guide* provides technical guidance for using adaptive management in decision making. It represents an important step in the Department's efforts to collaboratively engage partners in the conservation and management of our nation's natural resources.

As this Guide demonstrates, adaptive management is useful in addressing many important resource management issues. The *U.S. Department of the Interior Technical Guide* includes case studies, such as the Bureau of Reclamation's management of Glen Canyon Dam and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's determination of annual waterfowl harvests, to demonstrate how adaptive management can be applied.

Adaptive management as described in this document can be especially valuable in achieving the Department's stewardship goals. I am encouraged by the emphasis on science and improved decision making over time. The joint focus on learning and management promotes a process that focuses on goals and engages interested citizens in the decision making process.

The document sets a high standard for natural resource management in DOI, providing a general management framework that can be tailored to specific agency resource and partnership arrangements. The *U.S. Department of the Interior Technical Guide* will be a key component of the Department's adaptive management training program and Web site. In this way, new challenges, such as the recovery of the Gulf of Mexico region from hurricane damage, may also benefit from adaptive management.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which reads "Dirk Kempthorne". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

DIRK KEMPTHORNE
Secretary of the Interior