

Executive Summary

For more than 150 years, the employees of this Department have served the nation well, providing service and value to our citizens. This five-year plan seeks to sustain and strengthen these efforts. It sets forth how we are working to provide the people who carry out our mission with the right skills, in the right places, at the right time.

Understanding Our Mission

The Department of the Interior manages over 500 million acres of Federal lands. It provides water for much of the West. As manager of the Federal domain of the outer continental shelf, it provides access to energy and minerals within Federal lands and waters. It works with Native American tribes, Alaskan natives, and affiliated island communities to fulfill special trust and service responsibilities. It is the nation's premier natural sciences research, mapping, and monitoring agency.

Currently, approximately 70,000 employees provide these recreation, resource protection, resource management, and trust services. Our Strategic Human Capital Management Plan seeks to sustain and strengthen these efforts. It builds upon our Department Strategic Plan, which presents end outcomes and intermediate outcomes consistent with achieving our overall mission.

Setting the Context

Our Plan explores the demographic features of our workforce, its geographic dispersion, and the wide diversity of skills needed to fulfill our mission. This workforce review uncovers several key challenges: an aging workforce; insufficient numbers of people with pivotal business and information technology skills; a need for enhanced law enforcement capability; and a need for negotiat-

ing and partnership skills among all employees in the field.

Our Strategic Human Capital Management Plan also describes four key external and internal “drivers” that are shaping the extent, complexity, and volume of our work. These include: growing urbanization; increased demand by citizens for good public-sector business practices; an aging infrastructure; and growing law enforcement and homeland security challenges. These forces are increasing our bureaus’ workload and responsibilities. For example, an urbanizing West is multiplying the number and types of recreation activities on public lands. Demands for business management practices, financial transparency, and mission accountability augment the need for skilled financial managers. An aging infrastructure means increased maintenance challenges and a need for skilled asset managers.

Achieving Our Performance Goals

To meet our expanding challenges, we must adjust our traditional bureau and program-specific focus. Many of our management and programmatic challenges cut across bureau boundaries and would benefit from more integrated and coordinated approaches. We must build the skills and capacity to make cross-bureau coordination a hallmark of our efforts.

We must also extend the hand of cooperation to our external partners as well. Secretary Norton’s 4C’s—consultation, communication, and cooperation, all in the service of conservation—offer a vision for building partnerships with federal, state, and local governments, citizens, and organizations to address landscape issues that transcend individual agency boundaries. These partnerships leverage financial and human resources.

In our pursuit of excellence, we must become a more results-oriented and customer-focused Department. The Secretary’s Plan for Citizen-Centered Governance and the President’s Manage-

ment Agenda are guiding these improvements. This Strategic Human Capital Management Plan describes our steps toward greater intra-Departmental integration, expanded partnerships, and more effective and efficient operations.

Addressing Unique Program Challenges

This Plan also describes three of our especially important and urgent challenges: Indian Trust Management, Wildland Fire Management, and Law Enforcement and Security. Each has significant and immediate human resource implications set forth in the Plan.

The actions presented in this Plan build capacity necessary to achieve our varied missions. The Department’s Management Initiatives Team will oversee implementation of our Plan and outline additional actions needed over time to meet our performance goals.