



# **Department of the Interior Open Government Plan 2.0**

**April 9, 2012**

I am pleased to present Version 2.0 of the Department of the Interior's Open Government Plan (Plan). Version 2.0 reflects the efforts undertaken during the past 2 years to embed the principles of openness, transparency, collaboration, and participation within the culture of the Department of the Interior. We have developed a collaborative structure to guide our Open Government initiatives, policies, and practices and to ensure that these values are adopted throughout the Department. Rather than viewing the Plan simply as an initiative with specific projects, we view the Open Government Directive as a calling for us to fully institutionalize the fundamental values that should underlie all of the Department's actions.

With one of the broadest overall missions within the Federal Government, the work the Department does is based upon engagement with the diverse array of citizens we serve. Version 2.0 of the Plan makes clear that the mission of the Department requires us to be open, transparent, collaborative, and participatory. This Plan provides examples of our continuing efforts to change the way the Department does business and will serve as a guide for the future.

We look forward to continuing to fully integrate the values of openness, transparency, collaboration, and participation into everything we do in the Department of the Interior.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ken Salazar". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Ken Salazar

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## **I. Introduction**

The U.S. Department of the Interior (Department) protects and manages America's natural resources and cultural heritage, provides scientific and other information about those resources, supplies the energy to power our future, and honors its trust responsibilities and special commitment to American Indians, Alaska Natives, and affiliated island communities. With 9 bureaus, 5 offices, 70,000 employees, 280,000 volunteers, 2,400 locations and serving as steward for 20 percent of the Nation's land, the Department has one of the most diverse stakeholder bases in the Federal Government. The variety of missions coupled with the vast geographic expanse combines to present unique challenges.

The work of the Department directly and indirectly impacts every citizen in the Nation, from management and leasing of oil and gas reserves on our outer continental shelf, to protecting and conserving threatened and endangered species, to supplying and managing water in 17 western states, and monitoring natural hazards such as volcanoes and earthquakes, and proving geospatial data to citizens and universities.

Driven by our mission, the Department has a long history of collaboration with partner agencies, state, local and tribal governments, not-for-profit organizations, and educational institutions. The Department's Open Government Plan is intended to serve as a framework and vision to instill the qualities of openness, transparency, collaboration, and participation into the fabric of the Department and thereby:

- Create better relationships between Government and stakeholders;
- Enable the Department to understand stakeholders' demand for services more clearly and be more responsive to their needs;
- Increase the rate of innovation by leveraging public knowledge; and
- Encourage the development of initiatives, projects, and policies that produce significant cost avoidance and mission benefits.

As the Department's efforts related to Open Government have evolved and grown from our early foundational initiatives, the establishment of Open Government principles as a fundamental aspect of the Department's culture has begun to take hold. As we continue our efforts to ingrain the values of openness, transparency, collaboration, and participation within the way the Department and its bureaus carry out their missions, we have begun a new era of Government service not just for the American public but hand in hand with the America public.

## **II. Formulation of the Plan**

The Department's Open Government Version 1.0 plan focused on the establishment of foundational transparency and openness efforts and standards within the Department of the Interior, such as the publication of Departmental high value datasets to data.gov, common data standards where possible, and building the structures and policies necessary to support

further Open Government efforts. Plan 1.0 involved each of the Department's bureaus in its development and was led by the Office of the Chief Information Officer. As we implemented the initiatives of version 1.0 within the Department, we began to find increasing opportunities to further instill the values of Open Government within the Department, thereby impacting the very way in which the Department carries out its mission. Our early successes related to initiatives identified in Version 1.0 of our plan created new opportunities exponentially throughout the Department. To seize these opportunities, we recognized the need for additional partners within the Department and additional knowledge leadership in areas such as culture change design.

As a response, the Department developed a multi functional area Executive Steering Committee for Open Government led by the Office of the Chief Information Officer, Office of Collaborative Action and Dispute Resolution, Office of Communications' New Media Team, Office of the Executive Secretariat and Regulatory Affairs, and the Solicitor's Office. This Executive Steering Committee has continued to lead implementation of actions identified in Version 1.0 of the Department's Open Government plan as well as led the formation of an multi-bureau Open Government working group—comprised of members from each of the Department's nine bureaus and representing a broad cross section of program areas. This collaborative working group has led the development and implementation of Open Government initiatives, policies, and processes throughout the department as well as served as champions and change agents for the Department's efforts to implement the principles of openness, transparency, collaboration, and participation within the workings of the Department. The initiatives, projects, and policies developed by this working group have led to the collaborative development of Version 2.0 of the Department's Open Government Plan and this plan reflects the transition in approach and evolution of the Department's Open Government focus and efforts.

### **III. Transparency**

The Department is committed to carrying out its mission to serve the American public openly and transparently. The Department has developed and published two new internal policies—Policy on Scientific Integrity and a new Communications Policy—committing the Department to being open and transparent in its communications and tasking employees, bureaus, and offices with presenting the underlying scientific data which drives the decisions of the Department. In fact, the first line of the Department's new Communications Policy reads, “The Department supports a culture of openness with the news media and the public that values the free exchange of ideas, data and information that provides for the dissemination of accurate scientific, scholarly, technical and management information.” Similarly, the Department's Scientific Integrity Policy commits the Department to “Facilitate the free flow of scientific and scholarly information, consistent with privacy and classification standards, and in keeping with the Department's Open Government Plan.”

The Department has also taken a leadership role in Government transparency with its efforts to implement the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative. The Extractive

Industries Transparency Initiative is an international initiative supporting the collaborative disclosure by industry and Government of fees and payments related to the extraction of minerals and other resources. The Department was honored to be named the lead for this initiative and believes the level of transparency and collaboration prescribed by this multi-stakeholder group will serve as an example within the Department, the Federal Government, and worldwide.

**a. High Value Data**

The Department has been a leader in publishing data to Data.Gov since its inception in May 2009. As of the date of publication, the “Department Participation” tab at Data.Gov shows that the Department of the Interior has the second largest number of raw datasets available for download. The Department frequently leads the number of weekly downloads and has published over 122,612 datasets to Data.Gov as of date of publication. A sampling of the Department’s high-value datasets include:

- **Federal Volunteer Opportunities.** This data set identifies a wide range of opportunities available for the American public to participate in the well-being of publicly owned natural resources.
- **Total Wildland Fires and Acres burned from 1960 through 2008.** This dataset includes the number of wildland fires and acres burned from 1960 through 2008 (updated annually). This dataset provides a historical context for the critical threat posed by wildland fire to many Americans across the Country.
- **U.S. Government Recreation Sites and Facilities.** This dataset is a listing of U.S. Government recreation sites and facilities. This dataset provides descriptive information about America's federally managed natural resource recreation locations and opportunities. These resources constitute a National treasure for current and future generations.
- **Wild Horse and Burro.** This dataset includes non-summarized population counts of horses and burros located in Herd Management Areas controlled by the Department. This dataset describes herd populations of America's wild horse and burros on natural resources. This subject is of great interest by many conservationist, wildlife advocates, ranchers, and the public officials who represent them. The wild horses and burro herds represent more than just a longstanding sensitive topic in natural resource management.
- **Human Caused Fires and Acres.** This dataset includes the number of wildland fires and acres burned as a result of human causes, from 2001 through 2008 (updated annually). This dataset provides a historical context for the critical threat posed by wildland fire to many Americans across the country.
- **Lightening Caused Fires and Acres.** This dataset includes the number of wildland fires and acres burned as a result of lightning, from 2001 through 2008

(updated annually). This dataset allows for the identification of natural occurring lightning strikes and their contributions to the overall threat.

- **Prescribed Fires and Acres from 1998 to 2008 by Agency.** This dataset includes the number of prescribed fires and acres, from 1998 through 2008 (updated annually). This dataset provides a historical context for the critical threat posed by wildland fire to many Americans across the Country. This dataset allows for the identification Federal agency efforts to reduce public threat by proactively reducing fuel load in natural ecosystems.

## **b. Publication of Data Underlying Policies and Decisionmaking**

In March of 2012, the Department published an updated Public Communications Policy in its Departmental Manual, replacing the previous policy issued in 1999. This new Policy commits the Department to supporting a culture of openness with the news media and the public and valuing the free exchange of ideas, data, and information that provides for the dissemination of accurate scientific, scholarly, technical, and management information. Similarly, in February 2011 the Department updated its Departmental Manual by issuing a policy on Scientific Integrity, committing the Department to documenting the scientific and scholarly findings considered in decisionmaking and to ensure public access to that information and supporting data through established Departmental and Bureau procedures—except for information and data that are restricted from disclosure under procedures established in accordance with statute, regulation, Executive Order, or Presidential Memorandum. The Policy also encourages the enhancement of scientific and scholarly integrity through appropriate, cooperative engagement with the communities of practice represented by professional societies and organizations.

The Department has developed standard processes for the production and presentation of live streaming events, allowing us to provide the public with live streams of Departmental press conferences, public meetings, and other events in real time via DOI.gov. The Department has also rolled out various social media tools to facilitate participation by and collaboration with the general public, including the utilization of YouTube, Tumblr, Facebook and Twitter, among others. Utilizing these resources has leveraged citizen engagement to solicit ideas and comments on its Open Government approach, and other Departmental initiatives such as America’s Great Outdoors as well as share with the public real time information on the operations and efforts of the Department.

## **c. Transparency Initiatives**

### **i. Data.gov**

The Department is a proven leader in the area of data management and in the publication of data. To better provide high value data sets to data.gov and the American public, the Department has pulled together Departmental and Sub-agency

data.gov points of contact (POC) into a multi-bureau working group to address the challenges and opportunities associated with publishing datasets to data.gov. This working group serves to support the Department's efforts, while also looking towards the broader applicability of their efforts throughout the Federal Government. This group has worked to assess the current Departmental data dissemination process and establish a standard, comprehensive framework that is consistent with Open Government Directive (participation, collaboration, and transparency) to ensure the coordination with key stakeholders, including mission leadership, sensitivity, privacy, quality, and suitability for release perspectives. Additionally, to better support efficient continued release and publication of high value data, the Department Data Releasability Working Group (DRWG) also established a standard comprehensive framework, consistent with Open Government principles.

The Department has provided a large number of datasets to data.gov covering a wide range of topics valued by our diverse array of stakeholders. The Department's datasets are located at: [https://explore.data.gov/catalog/raw?Dataset-Summary\\_Agency=Department+of+the+Interior](https://explore.data.gov/catalog/raw?Dataset-Summary_Agency=Department+of+the+Interior) and linked from [www.doi.gov/open](http://www.doi.gov/open).

The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) is a recognized leader in geodata and to date the Department has published 122,400 geodata datasets. While the USGS has led the Department in the publication of data to data.gov, all bureaus have contributed datasets and are committed to the principles of transparency, openness, and information sharing. As of March 25, 2012, the Department has published 122,612 total data sets including 199 raw data sets and 13 toolsets. The Department remains committed to the publication of high value data sets to data.gov as well as performing analysis of the data published to assure this data is the most valuable, most accessible, and in an useable format for public use.

## ii. eRulemaking

During Fiscal Year 2011, the Department of the Interior used Regulations.Gov to publish 1,016 notices and 205 proposed and final rules, as well as numerous supporting documents. Utilizing Regulations.Gov has allowed the Department to efficiently and effectively share information with the American public, as evidenced by the thousands of comments received on these publications. The community interested in our activities is extremely large and diverse. The Departmental believes our stakeholders have benefited through their public submissions to the Regulations.Gov website and through our management of these submissions using the Federal Docket Management System (FDMS).

The eRulemaking Initiative outcomes for the Department and the other partner agencies include:

- Substantial improvement in usability for agencies and the public, with more improvements pending.



- Growing public and agency usage: Visits to and comments submitted through Regulations.Gov continue to climb; agencies continue to increase their use of FDMS. Improved service to the public because commenting is easier and because we can process comments more efficiently using FDMS.

### **iii. IT Dashboard**

The Department remains committed to and is in full compliance with reporting to the IT Dashboard. The Department submits its major investments' project cost and schedule, CIO rating, contracts, and performance data to the IT Dashboard on a monthly basis, making this information available to the public. On an ongoing basis the IT Dashboard identifies investment data quality issues, which the Department strives to correct in a timely manner. Outstanding data quality issues that currently exist with the Department investments include "long/large activities" (any that are longer than 6 months in duration) and "incomplete /inaccurate data" (the sum of project costs being greater than the total of investment costs). The Department's Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) Capital Planning and Investment Control (CPIC) team is working with bureau and office capital planners and investment managers to update their activities to meet the 6 month duration requirements and their project lifecycle costs to report in the correct format. In some cases, the processing of these updates has required that investments undergo a rebase line, which per Department policy, is required to be formally approved by its governance bodies. These continued efforts are continuing to lead the Department to better quality data and assist us in identifying and remedying areas in need of additional attention.

### **iv. Recovery.gov**

#### **Background on Program and Ensuring Results**

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) was signed into law by President Obama on February 17, 2009. The Department of the Interior received over \$2.9 billion in Recovery Act funding for eight Bureaus and Offices, including the Bureau of Reclamation, National Park Service, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Bureau of Land Management, Fish and Wildlife Service, and US Geological Survey. In addition to these Bureaus and Offices receiving Recovery Act funds, the Office of the Inspector General received \$15 million to provide oversight of the Recovery Act implementation.

The Recovery Act investment funded approximately 3,900 projects. The ARRA funding has been used for projects in parks, refuges, and public lands throughout the Nation; to improve conditions in Indian Country; to strengthen the Department's scientific infrastructure; and for water projects throughout the Western States. The Department's Recovery Act program is geographically dispersed, involving headquarters, regional, and local staff in addition to thousands of contractors, cooperators, and tribes.

Since the inception of the Recovery Act, the Department has monitored its projects through the use of three milestones. These milestones are awarded, mobilized, and substantially complete. The DOI Bureaus track each project to these three milestones, which help those responsible for project oversight and monitoring to evaluate if the projects are being completed on time, within budget, and in line with the goals of ARRA. Milestone tracking also supports the Department's effort to monitor ARRA implementation at the portfolio level. Provided below are definitions of these three project milestones.

- ***Awarded*** indicates that the Bureau has successfully issued an award for the activities of the project.
- ***Mobilized*** indicates that the project activities have started on the ground. A mobilized project is one where people and/or resources are currently being leveraged on the project site.
- ***Substantially Complete*** indicates that project activities are 90 percent complete according to the project outlays. Outlays are an indicator used to assess payments provided to the recipient by the government for services rendered. If a project is substantially complete, this indicates that the recipient has successfully invoiced and delivered 90 percent of the value of the project. Generally, all that remains after substantial completion is completion of "punch lists" and final project closeout.

The Department's Recovery Act Coordinator meets with the Bureau Recovery Act Coordinators on a monthly basis to review project completion progress. As part of the monthly progress reviews, the Department's Recovery Act Coordinator works with each Bureau Coordinator to understand any guidance needs that exist and ascertain how the Department can best support the Bureaus' efforts to complete their projects within their respective organizations. Recovery Act Implementation Teams within each Bureau meet on a regular basis to discuss project progress and potential issues, and escalate these issues to the Department's Recovery Act Coordinator and Office of the Inspector General as needed.

- **Ensuring Transparency to the Public – Recipient Reporting and Financial and Activity Reports**
  - ❖ Section 1512 of the Recovery Act requires recipients of ARRA funding to submit reports with key information pertaining to their awards on a quarterly basis, beginning upon award and continuing through project completion. The Department is committed to helping recipients meet these requirements, and providing the American public with transparency into the progress of the Recovery Act implementation through data published to Recovery.gov.

- ❖ Each Bureau that received Recovery Act funding has between one and three team members who participate in the Recipient Reporting "Tiger Team" and coordinate reporting among their Bureau's contracting and grants officials. The Interior Recovery Office and Bureau Tiger Team members work together to help support recipients' compliance with reporting requirements through communication with recipients; analysis of reports; and implementation of new requirements issued by the RATB and OMB. The Interior Recovery Office holds bi-monthly calls with the Tiger Team to discuss recipient reporting, communicate action items, monitor compliance, and identify risks and issues that should be escalated to the Department's Recovery Act Coordinator or Office of the Inspector General.
- ❖ The Interior Recovery Act Office, with support from the Bureau Tiger Teams, is responsible for the following activities:
  - Updating the Interior Recipient Reporting Data Quality, Compliance and Validation Plan with guidance, roles and responsibilities, and deadlines for each quarterly reporting cycle;
  - Helping to communicate reporting requirements to recipients by coordinating outreach via phone and email;
  - Maintaining an accurate record of awards and pertinent related information;
  - Tracking the submission of reports during each quarterly reporting window to identify and resolve issues that could contribute to non-compliance with reporting requirements;
  - Validating the information provided by recipients to help identify significant reporting errors and/or material omissions in the data;
  - Providing OMB and RATB with updates on reporting progress and compliance; and
  - Working with the Office of the Inspector General to identify and address non-compliance with reporting requirements. Penalties for repeat non-compliance include revocation of funding, suspension, and debarment.
- ❖ Through this robust set of outreach and monitoring activities, the Department has achieved over 98 percent compliance with recipient reporting requirements for each of the past seven quarters, and identified and resolved data quality issues to improve the public's understanding of the Recovery Act implementation via data available on [www.Recovery.gov](http://www.Recovery.gov).

To ensure the American public is able to track the progress of the Department's Recovery Act investments, the Department reports weekly to OMB on total ARRA obligations and outlays, as well as recent and planned activities associated with the implementation. Completion of the Weekly Financial and Activity Report requires that the Department obtain financial updates from each of its Bureaus and Offices that received Recovery Act funding. The Bureau Recovery Act Implementation Teams prepare a financial update on obligations and outlays by Treasury Account Funding Symbol, complete analysis of interagency obligations and outlays, and post the resulting financial update to a web-based collaboration site. The Interior Recovery Office compiles the financial updates, performs a quality control review, and updates the list of recent and planned activities prior to submitting the report to OMB. The Interior Recovery Office also uses the weekly financial updates provided by the Bureaus to brief key stakeholders on the progress of the implementation and track progress against forecasts to identify trends and potential issues at the portfolio level.

**v. USASpending.gov**

In accordance with the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA), the Department reports its spending data for direct contract awards through the Federal Procurement Data System (FPDS) and direct financial assistance awards through the USASpending, Direct Submission, and Validation Tool (DSVT).

▪ **Contract Data**

The Department does not centrally submit contract data directly to USASpending.gov, instead data is entered by each bureau and office into the Federal Procurement Data System (FPDS). Data is then submitted to USASpending.gov on behalf of the Department, and most other Federal agencies, by the FPDS system manager – the General Services Administration. The FPDS data is managed in accordance with FAR Subpart 4.6. Submission of contract data through FPDS provides for all of the data elements required to be submitted to USASpending.

The Department is migrating to a new contract writing system (PRISM), with six of Interior's nine bureaus having already migrated to PRISM and the remainder scheduled for migration by late 2013. The PRISM migration is a component of the FBMS deployment within the Department. Until all bureaus have been migrated, the Department will utilize two methods to enter its contract data into the FPDS; direct web entry, where all data fields are entered directly into the FPDS; and from PRISM where an interface populates a number of FPDS fields automatically. Using these two methods gives the Department the ability to submit all contract data to FPDS and ultimately to USASpending.

▪ **Financial Assistance (FA)**

Departmental assistance data includes grants, loans, and other forms of financial assistance. The DOI is migrating to a new FA system (PRISM Grants), with six of Interior's nine bureaus having already migrated to PRISM Grants and the remainder scheduled for migration by late 2013. The PRISM migration is also a component of the FBMS deployment within the Department. Until all bureaus have been migrated we will continue to report, and/or collect FA data in three separate and unique systems. The Department's primary legacy assistance data reporting system was developed in 2000 and configured to facilitate the reporting of assistance data to the Census. This presents some challenges in relation to the submission, review, and monitoring of the Department's assistance data as it relates to USASpending.gov.

Although the Department has been handicapped by challenges it faces with its FA systems, the Department has seen steady progress in its reporting to USASpending due to the implementation of PRISM Grants. In FY 2011 the Department was able to report approximately 19% of its FA obligations to USASpending. We project that for FY 2012 we will be able to report approximately 50% of obligations. When all bureaus have been migrated the Department will have the ability to report 100% of its FA obligations.

**d. Public Notice of Significant Departmental Actions**

The Office of Communications (OCO), the Office of External Affairs, and the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs work closely to provide information to the public, media, stakeholder groups, and state and local governments. Similarly, the offices that fall under the Assistant Secretary – Policy, Management and Budget play a key role in communicating the Secretary's vision and priorities through the budget and other means.

**Office of Communications:** This office provides leadership, expertise, counsel, and coordination for the development of communications strategies vital to the overall formulation, awareness, and acceptance of mission programs and policies. The means of communication adopted by this office are as follows:

- Maintain and constantly improve the Department's website (<http://www.doi.gov>), the Department of the Interior Recovery website (<http://recovery.doi.gov>) and the Department's official presence on social media websites such as Facebook, Tumblr, YouTube, and Twitter.
- Assist media by responding to their inquiries and provide other information they may require or find useful. The principal vehicles used for dissemination of news are internet, telephone, press releases, and audio-visual messages.

- Develop and implement media and public information projects for widespread public dissemination of policy and program information.
- Travel (By Senior Leadership) to key locations affected by Departmental policies to hold town hall meetings with stakeholders and the public to seek input and explain key Departmental policy initiatives.
- Prepare, edit, and issue news releases on departmental policies and program issues; develop speech texts, reports, briefing materials, articles, and similar materials for the Secretary; develop publications, and audio and visual materials as it determines necessary in order for the Department to be responsive to a broad range of public inquiries.
- Plan and coordinate press briefings and news conferences for the Secretary; inform officials of fresh media activity on issues; and publish special internal communications to supervisory and policy level officials. Secretary Salazar, Deputy Secretary Hayes and all Assistant Secretaries and Bureau Directors regularly grant requests for interviews with national, local and tribal news outlets.

In addition, the Department has taken great strides to improve the information made available online to the public. The Department's website has undergone a transformation in the past year to make information easily accessible, to better explain the Secretary's priorities and increase transparency. For members of the public who cannot attend, some town hall-style meetings and conferences are broadcast on [www.doi.gov](http://www.doi.gov).

**Office of External Affairs:** This office communicates with and engages outside stakeholder groups on important policy decisions at the Department.

**Office of Intergovernmental Affairs:** This office works closely with state and local governments including governor's offices, state legislatures, mayors, city councils, and other local governments to communicate the Department of the Interior's priorities and policy decisions and to coordinate feedback on these policies from a local perspective.

**Policy, Management and Budget – Office of the Budget:** This office is the portal for all information for the House and Senate Appropriations Committees and all budget information. In addition, the Secretary and the Department utilize the budget as a primary communication tool for his vision and policies. The 2013 Budget in Brief outlines the funding and legislative agenda that is included in the 2013 budget for the Department and is available on the Budget Office's Website at: <http://www.doi.gov/budget/2013/13Hilites/toc.html>.

**Department of Interior's Strategic Plan:** The Department's Strategic Plan communicates the Department's key mission strategies in a five year plan that is updated every three years. There is a link on the Departmental website for budget and performance information that provides direct access to the strategic plan and the Annual Performance Report (<http://www.doi.gov/bpp/>.)

## **e. Records Management**

The Department's Records Management Program follows the requirements of the Federal Records Act (44 U.S.C. 31) and other statutes requiring all Federal agencies to create records that document their activities, to file records for safe storage and efficient retrieval, and to dispose of records according to agency schedules which have been approved by the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). The Department's Records Management Program focuses primarily on records created, received, and used by the Department while conducting official business. The secondary focus is the media in which the record exists (paper, audiovisual, cartographic, and electronic media). It is the Department's policy to properly identify recordkeeping requirements and to effectively and efficiently manage needed records throughout their life cycle (creation, use and maintenance, and disposition).

Through better identification and scheduling of systems that contain electronic records, the Department can provide more information to the public through data sets. This availability of information provides transparency to Government processes.

The Department's Records Program responsibilities include:

- Developing an overall records management strategy producing the policy, procedures, and guidance necessary to implement that program;
- Cooperating with NARA and other authoritative bodies; and
- Developing policies and guidance on the application of technology to records management in compliance with the National Science Foundations' Office of Information and Resource Management (OIRM);
- Coordinating the program within the Department's bureaus and offices and with interested outside parties such as NARA;
- Developing records scheduling strategies that support the efficient storage, retention and retrieval of records;
- Representing the Department in interagency records management groups; and
- Assisting records programs across the Department with advice and technical expertise.

The Department's Records Management Program is described on the Departmental website <http://www.doi.gov/ocio/records/> – which has information related to the following:

- Listing of all Departmental bureau and office Records Officers, including their name, phone number, and Internet address;

- Listing of Departmental records management Departmental Manual, records management Bulletins, and records management pamphlets;
- Federal records management authorities;
- References and guidance for performing records management tasks;
- Web resources from the Department, other Federal agencies, and records organizations;
- Basic information that every employee should know about records management policy and guidance to OS employees about their responsibilities for managing electronic mail records.

To better support the Department's responsibilities related to records management, the Department recently released a Notice of Intent for a cloud based records management and electronic archiving system. The Department intends to release a Request for Proposals that will target electronic archive systems with hosting and functional capabilities of email journaling archives in support of a Department of Defense (DOD) 5015.2 records management system. The implemented system will support email accounts of the Department's 88,000 employees, mobile devices where messaging and chat is passed securely through the Department's network, electronic documents, and social media content such as instant messaging for the entire Department.

#### **f. FOIA**

The Department of the Interior's FOIA operations is decentralized across 11 bureaus and offices. Each bureau/office has a FOIA Officer in charge of its FOIA program. Depending on the size of the bureau/office and the location of its personnel, some bureaus/offices maintain a highly decentralized FOIA process while others are highly centralized. Due to the vast missions of these bureaus and offices, which also involve a growing number of sensitive, high profile issues, the 11 FOIA programs continue to receive large numbers of requests of increasing complexity from a broad spectrum of requesters. Some of these issues include domestic and renewable energy production, protection of endangered species, land and water management, and fulfillment of the Government's obligations with regard to the Native American Nations.

In January 2011, the Departmental FOIA policy staff in the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) and the FOIA Office staff for the Office of the Secretary (OS) in the National Business Center (NBC) were moved to the Office of the Executive Secretariat and Regulatory Affairs (OES). This reorganization was undertaken in an effort to strengthen internal collaboration, communication, and consultation on FOIA requests and on other record access requests such as those received from Congress, parties in litigation in discovery, etc. Therefore, OES has assumed much of the oversight responsibility for the



Department's FOIA Program and supports the Chief FOIA Officer in his carrying out his responsibilities.

The Bureau/Office FOIA Officers report each month to the Department's FOIA policy staff in OES on their backlogs. This heightens awareness among the managers of the bureau/office FOIA programs about their backlogs, and allows the Department's FOIA policy staff to monitor trends or spikes in backlogs and the opportunity to work with bureaus/offices on ways to reduce backlogs. A number of the bureaus/offices send reports to their managers on a regular basis indicating any overdue FOIA requests. This step has resulted in substantial backlog reductions. At the end of FY 2011, the Department had an overall FOIA backlog of 505 requests—a 26 percent decrease from the agency's backlog at the end of FY 2010 (679 requests). In addition, the backlog of FOIA appeals was reduced from 274 to 222 appeals. This represents a 19 percent reduction.

In addition, the FOIA Policy Office produces a weekly chart for the Department's FOIA Program Office of new incoming FOIA requests from across the Department. This report helps to increase awareness and coordination among the bureau FOIA Officers and the Department as well as increase efficiency in the production of related documents associated with document requests from Congress.

The Department of the Interior Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) website (<http://www.doi.gov/foia>) contains a wealth of information about the Department's FOIA Program for both the public and Departmental employees. Highlights include:

- *Guide for Obtaining Information* that explains where and how the public can make FOIA requests for Departmental records;
- The Department's Electronic Reading Room that includes frequently requested FOIA documents;
- Electronic request form that allows the public to make FOIA requests online;
- FOIA Contacts and the Department's FOIA Service Centers/Liaisons from whom the public can obtain guidance on refining requests to facilitate prompt and complete replies and information of interest to the public that can be obtained without making a FOIA request;
- The Department's FOIA regulations; and
- The Department's FOIA Handbook (standard operating procedures) and other written policies and procedures for responding to requests.

The website also contains all of the FOIA elements of the Department's Open Government Plan on the 'About Us' page at <http://www.doi.gov/foia/aboutus.html> including:

- A description of the Department's staffing, organizational structure, and process for analyzing and responding to FOIA requests;
- An assessment of the Department's capacity to analyze, coordinate, and respond to FOIA requests in a timely manner and proposed improvements that are needed to strengthen the Department's response processes;
- Milestones that detail how the Department may reduce its FOIA backlog by at least ten percent each year; and
- Copies of FOIA Annual Reports and Chief FOIA Officer Reports.

The FOIA Annual Report and the 2012 Chief FOIA Officer Report provide details of all FOIA operations across the Department.

The Department worked with the Office of Government Information Services of the National Archives and Records Administration to deliver a dispute resolution skills training for FOIA Public Liaisons, FOIA Officers, and FOIA Attorneys in order to incorporate these skills into conversations with document requestors at any stage of the FOIA process. The goal of this training is to provide better service and a clearer understanding by parties to the FOIA process, resulting in reduced response times, improved customer service, and reduced FOIA backlogs. OGIS provided this training for Department employees at headquarters with universally positive evaluations. Key to the positive evaluations was a class training FOIA program staff alongside the attorneys responsible for defending the agency's FOIA decisions. Plans for future offerings in field locations are ongoing, using evaluation comments to refine the training.

**g. Congressional Requests for Information and Publicly Available Information on the Department's Organization and Structure**

The Department's Office of Congressional and Legislative Affairs (OCL) communicates Departmental policies and the viewpoints of the Secretary regarding Congressional issues. The OCL plans, develops, and implements the Department's legislative goals and strategies, notifies Congressional offices of Interior initiatives, and monitors the status of legislative proposals. Testimonies and other legislative information, as well as contact information for this office, are available on the Office of Congressional and Legislative Affairs website <http://www.doi.gov/ocl/index.html> which is also available as a link from [www.doi.gov/open](http://www.doi.gov/open). Information on the website includes a staff directory, links to Congressional Information, testimony and other legislative information, and a general contact email address.

The Department of the Interior document production process is led by the Office of the Executive Secretariat (OES) and managed in conjunction with OCL, Immediate Office of Secretary (SIO), and the Office of the Solicitor (SOL).

Upon receipt of a Congressional request, OES convenes a Working Group comprised of staff from SOL, OCL, and SIO, and at times, senior staff from the bureau(s) that most likely possess the requested documents. This meeting focuses on:

- The subject of the request (including whether additional clarification is needed);
- The scope of the search;
- Date range of search; and
- Which offices or bureaus should search, and expected volume of documents and time required for the search, review, and production of documents.

The OES then develops a “*Green Sheet*” that reflects decisions from the scoping meeting and contains detailed instructions on how to identify, collect, prepare, and submit responsive documents to OES. The process includes:

- Providing guidance on the scope of the search and the manner in which the collected documents should be submitted;
- Imaging and coding the collected material; and
- Organizing the collection for attorney review, and producing the documents to the requestor.

During this time, OCL is responsible for informing the Working Group of any changes to the scope of the search or timeframe as a result of communications with Congressional Office(s). After receipt of documents, OES:

- Scans and numbers documents;
- Enters documents into database;
- Provides review volumes to SOL for attorney review;
- Tracks certifications and identifies gaps;
- Assembles final document production; and
- Maintains official record of the production.

The SOL performs a privilege review of all documents submitted. Attorneys tag any document or parts of documents that contain confidential, privileged, or proprietary information.

All Congressional document requests require the completion of signed certifications. The Department will not close a production to Congress until all certifications are submitted to the Document Management Unit (DMU). All individuals who have been identified as potentially having records must certify *whether or not* responsive documents were found. The certifications ask for the time and resources required to search, collect, and prepare the documents responsive to the Congressional request. All certifications (staff, Office Supervisors, and Senior Contacts) are submitted to the DMU and become part of the administrative file. The certifications may be used to report the time and money the Department spent on the document collection and production to Congress or GAO

Once the production is complete (or the first production is ready as part of a rolling production), the Legislative Counsel for OCL signs the transmittal letter that accompanies the production and the production is sent to the requesting Congressional office.

The Department of the Interior is committed to providing the public with information on the History of the Department, its organization and structure, and resources to find Department employees to best serve the needs of our stakeholders through frequent revisions and updates to our websites including [www.doi.gov](http://www.doi.gov).

#### **h. Declassification**

The Department of the Interior does not have original classification authority; therefore our classified documents have, at the most, a derivative classification (taken from another agency based on their classification of the information). The departments and agencies which “originate” the classified documents are responsible for declassifying and releasing the relevant documents.

The Department is frequently contacted through the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) process to authorize disclosure of classified information when another agency has mentioned the Department in their classified document. In those cases, the Department reviews the content and context of the information and works with the Department’s Solicitor’s Office to determine what information is appropriate to be released. As the Department does not have original classification authority, as mentioned above, the Department will only do this if requested by the originating agency. The Department’s Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) is responsible for establishing policy and procedures for the protection of national security classified and sensitive information processed in automated systems, including all forms of hard, soft, and transmission media. The OCIO is also responsible for coordinating with bureau/Office Security Officers regarding classified national security and other sensitive controlled unclassified information (CUI) matters, as appropriate.

#### **IV. Participation**

The Department recognizes that public participation and engagement are essential ingredients for serving and working with the American public, making good policy and reaching sound decisions on challenging and complex natural resource management issues.

With the engagement of DOI's 280,000 volunteers, our myriad of partnerships, among them the National Park Foundation, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, park and refuge friends groups, and non-governmental organizations. The Department also has a long history of participation with the public at large, other Federal, tribal, state, and local governments, and academic institutions, to better meet the mission of the Department. Participation with the public is a fundamental way of doing business within the Department, as exhibited by specific efforts such as:

- a. **America's Great Outdoors Public Listening Sessions** – In 2010, President Barack Obama launched the America's Great Outdoors (AGO) Initiative to develop a 21<sup>st</sup> Century conservation and recreation agenda. The AGO takes as its premise that lasting conservation solutions should rise from the American people – that the protection of our natural heritage is a non-partisan objective shared by all Americans.

The AGO recognizes that many of the best ideas come from outside of Washington, DC. Instead of dictating policies, this initiative turns to communities for local, grassroots conservation initiatives, and calls for reworking inefficient policies and making the Federal Government a better partner with states, tribes, and local communities

Over the previous two years, the Department and partner agencies have held 32 public listening sessions and 5 community generated sessions in which Administration official participated related to America's Great outdoors (<http://americasgreatoutdoors.gov/listening-sessions/>). The Department and partner agencies have provided an online tool through the America's Great Outdoors website that allows citizens to share stories about places they love, as well as provides resources and opportunities for citizens to get outdoors and reconnect with the environment. In addition, the site provides a link to an ideation site (<http://ideas.usda.gov/ago/ideas.nsf/>) where citizens are encouraged to share their ideas on forming the recreation and conservation agendas for the future.

- b. **EITI Public Listening Sessions** – The Department, as lead agency for the Nation's efforts to gain membership to and participate in the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), has held a series of public listening sessions ([www.doi.gov/eiti](http://www.doi.gov/eiti)) designed to gather comments concerning the creation of a U.S. multi-stakeholder group that will develop and implement the U.S. framework for the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative, a voluntary, global standard for transparency in reporting revenues received for oil, gas, and mineral extraction.
- c. **Tourism Initiative Recreation Information Database** - With the signing of the January 19, 2012, Presidential Executive Order creating a Task Force on Travel and Competitiveness, the Department of Interior has been charged with developing the National Travel and Tourism Strategy. As requested by President Obama, this strategy includes recommendations for new policies and actions to promote both domestic and international travel opportunities throughout the United States. One of the early efforts of this initiative is tasking Federal agencies with working towards improving the quality of data in [www.Recreation.Gov](http://www.Recreation.Gov), a "one stop shop" for information related to recreation on

Federal lands, which includes information on volunteering and partnering with Federal agencies and the ability to download and utilize Federal recreation data.

The Department has recently directed each agency to place priority on their commitment toward the current effort to upgrade Recreation One-Stop, including reviewing and updating their existing information in the Recreation Information Database (RIDB). Recreation One-Stop has the ability to significantly increase visitor information, including: Federal recreation opportunities, locations, access, routes, features, transportation options, permits, reservation requirements, and access to Federal lands supporting business, jobs and the economy.

Each member agency will implement a plan to fully populate the RIDB with relevant data from all of their sites, to ensure that visitors planning trips this summer have full information about camping, activities, and lodging offerings on our public lands. In addition, the Department will implement a system to ensure that the database of public places is updated regularly and data is not allowed to fall out of currency. Finally, the Department is exploring additional ways that the data in RIDB can support complementary tourism promotion tools and activities (e.g. by making the data available and portable so that other public or private entities can use it to create websites or apps), and work with partner agencies on the Task Force to implement these partnerships.

- d. **Other Initiatives** - In addition to these ongoing initiatives and activities, the Department seeks to build upon its strong record of encouraging participation with the public and partner organization. The Department currently offers numerous trainings on how to plan and carry out effective public participation and has frequently partnered with organizations such as the International Association for Public Participation to offer Department employees the tools and information necessary to conduct high quality public participation processes, and the educational resources to increase the quality of their participation in such processes. Additionally, the Office of Collaborative Action and Dispute Resolution is in the early stages of developing a new pilot training and webinar on the principles and techniques of public participation to be offered to employees across the Department, thereby developing participation and collaboration competencies within the Department's bureaus and offices. The Department has committed to developing a new Policy on Public Participation with this policy published for comment during 2013. Finally, the Office of Collaborative Action and Dispute Resolution is developing a contract to allow Department bureaus and offices access to expert impartial public participation process planning and facilitation services to ensure meaningful input and engagement even in conflict situations.

## V. **Collaboration**

The Department of the Interior recognizes that effective collaboration is essential to fulfilling the agency's core mission activities, serving the needs of our constituents and stakeholders and their diverse interests and allows the Department and its collaboration partners to produce more innovative and durable policies and decisions. The Department is committed to working collaboratively with other Federal, state, local and tribal governments, non-government organizations, private entities, and the public. The

Department encourages collaboration within the organization and with external partners and stakeholders at all stages of decisionmaking and problem-solving. To support better collaboration with our external partners, the Department strives to create a culture of open communication and collaboration within the organization based upon leadership commitment and education of employees. To build upon a collaboration culture based upon open communication, the Department offers a wide variety of collaboration tools available for use by all organizations and in all program areas. The Department is actively building a culture of collaboration and encouraging innovation in problem-solving and service delivery.

- a. **Departmental Initiatives** - The Department is building the skills, organizational structures, and processes necessary to make collaborative approaches to planning, decisionmaking, and problem-solving a core business practice in all program areas, activities and initiatives. The DOI is also working with volunteers and partners to implement policies and carry out mission critical activities in local communities.

Examples of ongoing and expanding collaboration in mission critical activities and initiatives include:

- **Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative** – The Department is leading a model collaboration process for the Nation between Federal, state and tribal governments, civil society, private industry, and the public to improve transparency of natural resource revenues. [www.doi.gov/eiti](http://www.doi.gov/eiti).
- **Geospatial Landscape Decision Tool** – The Department is developing a decision support tool that immediately improves collaboration, and enables greater collaboration and information sharing between the Department’s bureaus and offices, and with other Federal agencies. It is envisioned this tool will allow the Department to expand collaboration with its external partners. The Department has used a collaborative approach to develop this tool by partnering with the U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution and enlisting nongovernmental organizations such as NatureServe, Trust for Public Lands, and Conservation Biology Institute to assist the primary vendor with developing and implementing collaboration applications within this tool as part of the initial operating capability.
- **America’s Great Outdoors** – President Barack Obama launched the America’s Great Outdoors (AGO) Initiative to develop a 21<sup>st</sup> Century conservation and recreation agenda. The AGO takes as its premise that lasting conservation solutions should rise from the American people – that the protection of our natural heritage is a non-partisan objective shared by all Americans. The AGO recognizes that many of the best ideas come from outside of Washington. Instead of dictating policies, this initiative turns to communities for local, grassroots conservation initiatives. Instead of growing bureaucracy, it calls for reworking inefficient policies and making the Federal Government a better partner with states, tribes, and local communities. [www.americasgreatoutdoors.gov](http://www.americasgreatoutdoors.gov)

- **Government-to-Government Tribal Consultation policy** – The Department developed a new Departmental policy on Government-to-Government consultation, by working collaboratively with tribes in the drafting process. The Department continues to work collaboratively with tribes to ensure full implementation and improved working relationships with tribes. [www.doi.gov/tribes/Tribal-Consultation-Policy.cfm](http://www.doi.gov/tribes/Tribal-Consultation-Policy.cfm).
- **Landscape Conservation Cooperatives** – To address the increasing complex issues surrounding the protection of the Nation’s natural and cultural resources and landscapes, the Department has founded Landscape Conservation Cooperatives (LCCs). The LCC’s bring together stakeholders to address challenges including: land use changes, drought, wildfire, habitat fragmentation, contaminants, pollution, invasive species, disease and rapidly changing climate, which can threaten human populations as well as native species and their habitats. Protecting the Nation’s natural and cultural resources and landscapes is essential to sustaining our quality of life and economy. Native fish and wildlife species depend on healthy rivers, streams, wetlands, forests, grasslands, and coastal areas in order to thrive. Managing these natural and cultural resources and landscapes, however, has become increasingly complex.

The LCCs are public-private partnerships that recognize these challenges transcend political and jurisdictional boundaries and require a more networked approach to conservation—holistic, collaborative, adaptive and grounded in science to ensure the sustainability of America's land, water, wildlife, and cultural resources. As a collaborative, LCCs seek to identify best practices, connect efforts, identify gaps, and avoid duplication through improved conservation planning and design. Partner agencies and organizations including Federal agencies, state, tribal and local government, not for profit organizations and universities, coordinate with each other while working within their existing authorities and jurisdictions.

The 22 LCCs are organized by eco-region and collectively form a national network of land, water, wildlife, and cultural resource managers, scientists, and interested public and private organizations—within the U.S. and across our international borders—that share a common need for scientific information and interest in conservation.

- **National Oceans Policy** – In order to better meet our Nation’s stewardship responsibilities for the ocean, our coasts, and the Great Lakes, President Barack Obama established the Interagency Ocean Policy Task Force (Task Force) on June 12, 2009. The Task Force is composed of 24 senior-level officials from Executive departments, agencies, and offices across the Federal Government, and led by the Chair of the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ). The President charged the Task Force with developing recommendations to enhance our ability to maintain healthy, resilient, and sustainable ocean, coasts, and Great Lakes resources for the benefit of present and future generations. [www.whitehouse.gov/administration/eop/oceans](http://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/eop/oceans)



- **WaterSMART** - To implement the SECURE Water Act, and ensure that the Department of the Interior is positioned to meet these challenges, Secretary Salazar established the WaterSMART program in February 2010. WaterSMART allows all bureaus of the Department to work with states, tribes, local governments, and non-government organizations to pursue a sustainable water supply for the Nation by establishing a framework to provide Federal leadership and assistance on the efficient use of water, integrating water, and energy policies to support the sustainable use of all natural resources, and coordinating the water conservation activities of the various Interior offices.

The Bureau of Reclamation plays a key role in the WaterSMART program as the Department's main water management agency. Focused on improving water conservation and helping water and resource managers make wise decisions about water use, Reclamation's portion of the WaterSMART program is achieved through administration of grants, scientific studies, technical assistance, and scientific expertise. [www.usbr.gov/waterSMART](http://www.usbr.gov/waterSMART)

- **No Child Left Behind Negotiated Rulemaking on School Facilities and Construction for Bureau-funded Schools** - When Congress enacted the No Child Left Behind Act in 2001 (Act), the requirements of the Act were also made applicable to the schools funded by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (Bureau) for the benefit of Native American children. Several rules were required to be written and implemented under the Act and all were undertaken using the Federal Advisory Committee Act and the Negotiated Rulemaking Act. The most recent and remarkable example, is the No Child Left Behind School Facilities and Construction Negotiated Rulemaking Committee's (Committee) preparation of a report to Congress, as required by the Act, regarding conditions and needs for Bureau-funded schools. For decades, the Committee believes appropriations have not been sufficient to keep pace with the deterioration of Bureau funded school facilities. Consequently, the Committee was faced with having to determine a fair and equitable formula to use in prioritizing the use of available funding to improve existing facilities or replace facilities with new construction.

The work done by this Committee exemplifies a commitment to open and participatory government, in partnership with sovereign Native governments. Before the Committee was appointed, extensive neutral convening and assessment was done to ensure that all interested parties were consulted and their input used in determining how to convene and operate a committee. Once the Committee was established, it set a schedule of seven multi-day meetings over a two year period; some including visits to the deteriorating school facilities so that the challenges facing the schools were made real. Once the Committee drafted a report, the Committee engaged in five tribal consultation meetings throughout Indian country. In December 2011, the Committee compiled its findings and recommendations and forwarded it to the Secretary of the Interior, Congress and appropriate parties in a report titled, "Broken Promises, Broken Schools." Committee members and

Bureau officials point to this as an example of working collaboratively to enhance relationships and understanding through consensus.

**b. Collaboration Skills**

New training and education is being delivered to improve collaborative leadership skills, increase employees' knowledge, and develop collaboration competencies within the Department. This will allow employees to work more collaboratively to manage natural resources and address complex challenges that cross governmental jurisdictions and geographic boundaries such as climate change, renewable energy, water supply, and conservation of species. The Department's Offices of Strategic Employee and Organizational Development, Collaborative Action and Dispute Resolution, and the Bureau Human Capital Officers, training centers and partnership offices are working together to ensure consistent education and training that support genuine collaboration. During FY 2013 and 2014, 50 percent of Department senior leadership will participate in educational events and training related to Open Government including: collaboration, public participation, transparency, open communication, government-to-government consultation with Tribes, consensus-building, negotiated rulemaking and conflict management. During this same period, 25 percent of the Department's attorneys will participate in training on these topics and will have opportunities to participate in training with program manager clients. In addition, training is being delivered to Freedom of Information Act staff from all bureaus and offices to improve the capacity to communicate and resolve issues over Freedom of Information Act requests at the earliest opportunity and in the a non-adversarial manner whenever possible.

**c. Leadership Commitment and Organizational Structures**

For the organization to embrace collaboration principles and practices, requires new support structures more consistent with a culture of collaboration. The Department has taken a collaborative approach to leading the Open Government initiative with a shared responsibility of an executive steering committee in the Office of the Secretary comprised of senior managers from the Office of the Chief Information Officer, the Office of the Solicitor, the Office of the Executive Secretariat and Regulatory Affairs, the Office of Collaborative Action and Dispute Resolution, the Office of Communications, and the Office of Policy Analysis, who are working together with a working group comprised of a network of champions in the bureaus from varied program areas and locations. The Open Government effort is closely coordinated and linked to the Customer Service initiative and other inter-related efforts including the Regulatory Compliance and Enforcement initiative.

**d. Processes and Tools**

The Department is committed to the recognized principles and standards of effective public participation, collaboration, and Environmental Conflict Resolution (ECR). A wide range of tools and techniques are used by all Department bureaus and offices to accomplish core mission activities and the Department aspires for every manager and employee to have a collaboration tool kit with knowledge of when and how to use each tool to achieve results.

The tool kit includes Negotiated Rulemaking processes, Listening Sessions and public meetings, Government-to-Government consultation processes, Environmental Conflict Resolution and collaborative problem-solving, National Environmental Policy Act collaboration, prizes and competitions, anonymous feedback options, and facilitated negotiation processes. In addition to these tools, in its collaboration efforts, the Department frequently utilizes:

- **Grants and Cooperative agreements**

Partnership grants are used by the Department when it is supporting a public purpose and does not anticipate any substantial involvement with the recipient after funds are transferred, for example, where an agency grants funds to an organization that will use the funds for a specified purpose. Cooperative agreements are similar to grant agreements, but are used when the Department will be actively involved in the activity for which the funding or in-kind service is being provided. Another type of grant arrangement is the challenge assistance or cost-sharing agreement, which requires the provision of matching funds to leverage the effectiveness of the grant funds. Criteria for when to use a grant or cooperative agreement are found in the Federal Grant and Cooperative Agreement Act at 31 U.S.C. § 6305.

An example of this cooperation occurred in October of 2011 when Secretary Salazar announced a self-determination construction cooperative agreement worth \$11.8 million was awarded to the White Mountain Apache Tribe to greatly expand the current water delivery system to meet the critical needs of the tribe. The agreement, between the tribe, the Department of the Interior and its Bureau of Reclamation, funds planning and design activities for the Miner Flat Project on the tribe's reservation in Arizona. The agreement covers a three-year period for the initial planning, environmental compliance, feasibility engineering and design of the Miner Flat Project on the reservation. The completed project will include construction of a concrete dam, pumping plants, a water treatment plant and water distribution pipelines on the White River in southeast Navajo County, Arizona.

- **Partnerships**

The Department has a long history of engaging with other Federal and non-Federal government agencies, and non-profit and private entities in fulfilling our mission. At the Department, our partnerships promote conservation on our treasured landscapes, preserve natural and cultural resources, bring innovative approaches to resource management, and engage diverse entities, including youth, to accomplish Interior's mission.

Through partnerships, we achieve community- and landscape-level conservation results across America, tapping the knowledge and innovation of local people and organizations. As Secretary Salazar said at the Partners in Conservation Awards Ceremony on May 7, 2009, "Government agencies work best when they work in partnerships with each other and with private partners. ... We are in a new era of

conservation [working with] partners with whom we are finding common ground and forging solutions to the complex natural resource issues of our times."

Conservation, use, and protection of America's natural, cultural, and historical heritage constitute an essential component of the mission of the Department of the Interior. Scientifically-informed and technologically-based stewardship of our public lands, waters, wildlife and special places – if it is to succeed – must be done in collaboration and partnership among Interior agencies, with other governmental entities and, most importantly, with the citizens who share and give form to our mission.

The Department is committed to building partnerships to encourage conservation and preserve our natural and cultural resources; to bringing innovative approaches to solving land management and water disputes; and to developing energy, including renewable sources of energy, in the most environmentally protective manner.

The Department engages in many types of formal and informal partnership arrangements including: grants and cooperative agreements; memoranda of understanding; donations to the Department; and statutory partnerships. These tools are available for use in structuring the partnership arrangements specific to the needs of, and to the mutual benefit of the parties involved.

Secretary Ken Salazar recently announced a \$6.3 million project under the Department's WaterSMART Basin Study Program to fund comprehensive water studies in California, Colorado, Kansas, Nebraska, New Mexico, and Oklahoma. WaterSMART is designed to promote partnerships between the Department and non-government organizations and other non-Federal partners to support water quality and sustainability efforts. The recently announced WaterSMART studies in California, Colorado, Kansas, Nebraska, New Mexico, and Oklahoma are being funded with \$2.4 million of Departmental funds and \$3.9 million in funds from the Department's non-Federal partners.

#### o **Memoranda of Understanding**

Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) are useful when partnership arrangements do not involve the transfer of funding, property, services, or human resources by either party, but is instead based on mutual agreement on processes, products, or outcomes accomplished by working cooperatively with other Federal or non-Federal partners on issues of mutual interest. Memoranda of Understanding are based on the appropriate statutory authority for the formation of the partnership, and should generally include the following elements: heading; background; statement of purpose; identification of statutory authorities; procedures to be followed and responsibilities of the parties; and administrative provisions.

The Department, the Department of Agriculture, and the Environmental Protection Agency developed a collaborative, interagency approach to address air quality issues associated with onshore oil and gas development on public lands. The MOU

establishes a common process for the agencies to follow in analyzing the potential air quality impacts of proposed oil and gas activities on federally managed lands. The collaborative approach established in the MOU will increase efficiency, certainty, and transparency in the process – benefiting industry, Federal agencies, states, and Tribes.

#### ○ **Statutory Partnerships**

A substantial number of general statutory (programmatic) authorities can be broadly thought of as partnership tools because they enable Department partnership action. Congress also often enacts legislation that authorizes specific partnerships or partnership activities. These partnership tools often define a relationship in which the Department will work with other Federal or non-Federal entities, including state, local and tribal governments. In these situations, Congress determines the scope of the partnership and usually provides specific authority in addition to the bureau's general statutory authorities. Legislation to implement a particular partnership activity may be proposed to Congress through appropriate official channels and through the bureau's congressional liaison office.

The Department enjoys statutory partnerships with organizations such as the National Park Foundation and National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, working together to protect and preserve the Nation's natural and cultural resources.

#### ○ **Advisory Committees**

Advisory committees allow the Federal Government to obtain independent expert advice on scientific, technical, and policy matters from stakeholders and constituents with knowledge or interest related to broad or specific issues. An advisory committee is any committee, board, commission, council, conference, panel, task force, or other similar group, or any subcommittee or other subgroup thereof that is established by statute or reorganization plan, established or utilized by the President, or one or more agencies, in the interest of obtaining advice or recommendations for the President or one or more agencies or officers of the Federal Government.

In 2007, for example, the Wind Power Federal Advisory Committee brought together industry, non-governmental organizations, and Federal agencies to develop voluntary guidelines for the siting of wind turbines to diminish the adverse impacts to birds and bats. Successful collaboration on these guidelines supports the FWS' obligations under the Endangered Species Act and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. Implementing the guidelines is underway, with continued interaction with stakeholders.

Another example involves the Bureau of Land Management, which established more than 15 years ago, Resource Advisory Committees/Councils (RACs) in each of its 12 states for the purpose of collaboratively working with industry, citizens, non-government organizations and other stakeholders who want to work with the BLM in addressing resource management decision-making. Some states have more than one RAC and the breadth of what the RACs do in terms of recommending action to the

BLM ranges from advice on grazing policy to recreational opportunities. The BLM continues to renew the RACs' charters and rotate membership, in consultation with governors, to ensure a meaningful balance of interests are represented on these groups. The RACs have proven to be an important mechanism for public engagement in Federal land management.

## **VI. Significant Initiatives**

The Department of the Interior is working towards ingraining the values of openness, transparency, collaboration, and participation within the day to day activities of the Department and as part of how the Department carries out its mission. To showcase how integrating these values into our work can lead to stronger decisions and policies, and lead the Department in better carrying out its mission and serving the American public, the Department has undertaken three significant long-term initiatives, each espousing the principles of openness, transparency, collaboration, and participation.

### **a. Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative**

On September 20, 2011, eight founding countries (Brazil, Indonesia, Mexico, Norway, Philippines, South Africa, United Kingdom, and the United States) endorsed an Open Government Declaration and announced individual National Action Plans committing their governments to better serving their constituents.

The Open Government Partnership is a new multilateral initiative that aims to secure concrete commitments from governments to promote transparency, empower citizens, fight corruption, and harness new technologies to strengthen governance. In the spirit of multi-stakeholder collaboration, the Open Government Partnership is overseen by a steering committee of Governments and civil society organizations. Since the initial endorsement by the eight founding countries, the Open Government Partnership has welcomed the commitment of 43 additional governments to join the Partnership

In the United States' National Action Plan, President Obama announced the US's commitment to implementing the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), a voluntary, global standard for transparency in reporting revenues received for oil, gas, and mineral extraction. Recognizing the Department's lead role in the management of revenues associated with Federal offshore and Federal and American Indian onshore mineral leases, as well as revenues received as a result of offshore renewable energy efforts, President Obama named Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar as the Administration's Senior Official responsible for the oversight of implementation of EITI.

The EITI's aim is to strengthen governance by improving transparency and accountability in the extractives sector. Full implementation of EITI is a multi staged process with prescribed actions which must be taken within each of the stages. To become an initial EITI Candidate, a country must meet five "sign-up" requirements including the formation of a multi-stakeholder group comprised of the Federal Government, companies participating in extractive activities and civil society groups. Upon meeting these

requirements, a country has one and half years to publish an “EITI report” that reconciles what companies involved in extractive activities indicate they pay in taxes, royalties, and signature bonuses, with what Governments indicate they have received. To achieve EITI Compliant status, a country must complete an EITI Validation, which provides an independent assessment of the progress achieved and what measures are needed to strengthen the EITI process. If the international EITI Board considers a country to have met all EITI requirements, that country is recognized as EITI Compliant.

The United States is striving to meet all five of the EITI “sign-up” requirements. To gain further insights from potential EIT stakeholders including industry, civil society groups, and the American public, the Department has recently completed a number of listening sessions held across the country and has announced a public comment period to gather suggestions as to the formation of the collaborative multi-stakeholder group. Feedback provided through written comments as well as the listening sessions will directly inform the Department as it works to design and develop this collaborative multi-stakeholder group which will be tasked with developing the scope, framework, and criteria for the reporting of extractive industry data as well as developing and publishing a fully costed workplan for implementation and reporting, and a timetable for implementation of the EITI as part of its application for candidacy in EITI. The Department has engaged a facilitator to assist its efforts in the formation of the multi-stakeholder group and has developed an aggressive timeline for doing so. Based on the reporting requirements collaboratively developed by the multi-stakeholder group, the Department may be required to coordinate and collaborate with other Federal agencies, state, tribal and local governments and Congress to identify policies and regulations that need to be developed, updated, or changed as they relate to the disclosure of information related to extractive activities. The Department would continue to lead the Nation’s efforts to enact these changes as necessary.

The Department has engaged a number of organizations and individuals involved with EITI implementation efforts in some of the 35 countries who have begun the EITI implementation process. While valuable information and lessons learned have been gathered, the sheer size and scope of the efforts which will be required in the United States’ full implementation of EITI are unprecedented. Full EITI compliance on such a scale will help the US serve as an inspiration to other countries to implement EITI.

#### **b. Landscape Decision Tool**

The Department of the Interior serves as steward to our Nation’s most precious natural and cultural resources and oversees 20 percent of the Nation’s land mass. The work of the Department is place based with much of the work of the Department taking place in citizen’s backyards as well as in their most treasured landscapes. As advances in technology have now placed geospatial capabilities in the hands of every day citizens and not just scientists, academics, and researchers, the Government now has the ability to share information and collaborate with the public through citizen generated GIS information and data. The Department is undertaking an initiative to better develop, use, and synthesize geospatial and other related technology to improve agency decision-making, landscape

level planning, collaboration, and public engagement regarding the management and use of the Nation's land, water, and coastal resources.

The Department is a recognized leader and within the Federal Government in regards to the gathering, analysis, and production of geospatial data. The Department is proud to play a leadership role in the collaborative development of the Federal Geospatial Platform with the Assistant Secretary for Water and Science serving as the Chair of the Federal Geospatial Data Committee. The Geospatial Platform provides shared geospatial data, services, and applications from Federal agencies and partners including state, tribal, regional, and local governments as well as non-governmental organizations and makes this data available to the public.

While the Department presently has access to and uses geospatial data from many sources including the Geospatial Platform, much of this data is not able to be easily utilized by organizations and individuals without significant experience working with geospatial data. The Department has identified a need for a user friendly tool to allow non GIS experts to utilize the vast amounts of data the Department, other Federal agencies, and their partners have made available to the public. This initiative will utilize service oriented architecture to better and more easily share, integrate, analyze, and display data in a fashion that is convenient, and easily accessible to policy and decision makers, and the American public. The Department's new tool will publish data to and consume data from the Geospatial Platform in support of the Department's mission and policy goals, and will support issues that cross-cut Interior programs, Federal Agencies and public stakeholders and brings a strategic focus to managing and using geospatial information and technology. This platform will:

- Inform strategic decisions about the Nation's natural and cultural resources with "the right information at the right time at the right scale;"
- Support landscape level planning;
- Engage the public in decisions about Interior programs; and
- Foster collaboration between Interior bureaus, other Federal agencies, state, local and tribal governments, NGO's, and the public.

The collaborative development of this executive decision support tool is under way. This tool will provide landscape knowledge about Department priority initiatives and inform management policies and decisions about land use, resource conservation, climate change adaptation, outdoor recreation, and other resource management issues. The Department has partnered with the US Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution to initiate and oversee the project. The Institute is a program of the Morris K. and Stewart L. Udall Foundation, an independent executive branch agency established to increase awareness of the importance of the Nation's natural resources. The Institute promotes the application of geospatial and decision support tools to further collaborative decision-making processes. This partnership has allowed the Department to engage, collaborate with, and gain input



from stakeholders representing some of the non-governmental leaders in the application of geospatial data. This approach has led to continued development of the first task order under this initiative, an initial operating capability of the Landscape Decision Tool to support policy making by Senior Departmental leaders. The continued development of this initiative is expected to lead to the opportunity for further collaboration with and participation by the American public with developed capabilities for the public to upload and share citizen generated geospatial data and applications with the Federal Government.

**c. America's Great Outdoors Rivers Initiative**

To fulfill the President's vision for healthy and accessible rivers, the Department of the Interior is undertaking a National Rivers Initiative to restore and reconnect American communities with their rivers as part of the America's Great Outdoors (AGO) program. This AGO Rivers Initiative will undertake collaborative river restoration and recreation projects in all 50 States; develop a National Blueways System to recognize communities that rediscover, restore, and enhance the recreational value of rivers; and work with partners to develop a National Rivers Atlas.

Our rivers, lakes, and other waterways are the lifeblood of our communities, connecting us to nature, our history and culture, our economy, and our way of life. These specific efforts related to rivers within the larger America's Great Outdoor's initiative will allow the Federal Government, tribal, state, and local governments, non-governmental organizations, business and industry, and citizen volunteers to partner together and collaboratively restore and explore our Nation's waterways.

While in the early planning and development stages, the National River Atlas will be a contemporary, state-of-the-art source of rich information about the Nation's rivers and their associated human and natural communities. The Atlas will be web-based and a fusion of geospatial capabilities, multi-media communications (video, photos, etc.), and social media allowing for the sharing of information among Federal agencies and the public. This Atlas for the digital age will be designed to be interactive, analytical, and customizable in order to provide the easiest engagement experience for the myriad of communities and stakeholders interested in our Nation's rivers. It will provide the ability for anyone to access and contribute to a "one-stop" gateway of knowledge about the Nation's river resources.

The National River Atlas will be used to support the river recreation and restoration projects in the States, assist communities and the Department in working together to develop the National Blueways System, and help inform citizens about the status and value of the Nation's rivers. It also will be used to support decisionmaking about rivers by executives in the Department of the Interior. As such, the initial and primary areas of focus of the National River Atlas are river recreation, restoration, and protection with goals to:

- Increase public appreciation and civic engagement in river related initiatives;

- Enhance local-Federal collaboration on river conservation; and
- Support decision-making about rivers.

Based on conversations with internal and external stakeholders, the following initial elements will be developed:

- A geospatial, multi-media tool that tells the story of DOI's river-related responsibilities and capacities, for use by DOI leadership in making executive-level decisions, and for use by the public to understand the role that DOI plays in river recreation and restoration.
- A geospatial, multi-media, and social-media tool that will support the work of community-led river recreation and restoration projects. Initially, the Rivers Initiative will work with a handful of watershed-level river projects that will greatly benefit from such a tool, and at the same time, will be invaluable in testing and refining the tool.
- A geospatial, multi-media tool that supports improved coordination and communication among Interior bureaus about river priorities; encourages new river-related ideas, policies and projects; and contributes to a lasting legacy for river recreation and restoration.

Additional content and functionality will be implemented based on continuous partner and stakeholder involvement.

While this initiative is still in its early stages, the Department is moving forward aggressively. A project manager is being selected for the project and a working group of representatives from Interior bureaus and offices will assist and help guide work on the National River Atlas. Participating bureaus and offices include National Park Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Reclamation, USGS, and the Office of Policy, Management and Budget, with outreach to non Interior agencies and the general public in the months ahead as the initiative moves into development and implementation.

This initiative will align, coordinate and further support a number of initiatives such as the Urban Waters partnership, a partnership of 11 Federal Agencies dedicated to reconnecting urban communities, particularly those that are overburdened or economically distressed, with their waterways by improving coordination among Federal agencies and collaborating with community-led revitalization efforts to improve our Nation's water systems and promote their economic, environmental and social benefits.

Recently the Department announced a partnership with the City of Los Angeles and others to focus on supporting the City of Los Angeles' efforts to implement the Los Angeles River Revitalization Master Plan along the nine-mile Glendale Narrows reach of the River, with a focus on recreation. Interior and partners will improve recreational opportunities by

enhancing existing trails, developing a sign program for access and interpretation, and access water-based recreation such as kayaking and canoeing.