

**Business Meeting to Report  
Department of the Interior Nominations  
Thursday, May 27, 2021**

**Chairman Manchin's Opening Statement**

- The Committee is meeting today to consider three pending nominations for offices in the Department of the Interior.
- We held a hearing on all three nominations last week.
- The three nominations are:
  1. Robert Anderson to be Solicitor;
  2. Shannon Estenoz to be Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks; and
  3. Tanya Trujillo to be Assistant Secretary for Water and Science.
- Mr. Anderson is currently the Interior Department's Principal Deputy Solicitor and has been serving as the Acting Solicitor since January.
- He previously served as the Associate Solicitor for Indian Affairs and as Counselor to Secretary Babbitt during the Clinton Administration.
- He has been a law professor for the past 20 years and has taught American Indian law, natural resources law, and water law at the University of Washington Law School and

at Harvard Law School.

- He has the broad legal knowledge and experience, not only in Indian law, but also natural resources, public land, and water law.
- I believe he is very well qualified to serve as Solicitor, and I strongly support his nomination.
- Like Mr. Anderson, Ms. Estenoz will bring a wealth of professional experience to the Department.
- She is currently serving as the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife, and Parks.
- She spent over two decades helping to restore the Everglades—
  - at the Department of the Interior under Secretary Salazar;
  - as Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of The Everglades Foundation;
  - at the National Parks Conservation Association and the World Wildlife Fund; and
  - on boards and commissions in Florida, under both Democratic and Republican Governors.
- I was particularly impressed by the very strong letter of support for Ms. Estenoz’s nomination that we received from our colleague, Senator Rubio.
- Senator Rubio wrote of her “unwavering commitment to

pragmatic environmental stewardship,” her “ability to ... understand complex problems, and her willingness to work collaboratively to reach consensus on contentious issues,” and of “her disposition for acting in good faith.”

- I believe those are precisely the attributes one needs to oversee both the Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Park Service, and I strongly support Ms. Estenoz’s nomination.
- Finally, I am particularly pleased to support Tanya Trujillo’s nomination.
- Tanya served as a very able and valued member of the committee staff when Jeff Bingaman was Chairman.
- Senator Bingaman has written a strong letter of support for her nomination, attesting to “her competence and professionalism.”
- Tanya has been deeply involved in western water issues for over 20 years, not only on the staff of our committee, but—
  - at the Interior Department under Secretary Salazar,
  - with the New Mexico Stream Commission,
  - with the Colorado River Board of California and the Colorado River Sustainability Campaign, and
  - for the past 5 months as the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Water and Science.
- Western water issues are complex and contentious, but

Tanya has demonstrated her ability to work with all sides to find acceptable solutions to these difficult challenges.

- I think all three of the nominees are supremely well qualified, and I urge an affirmative vote on all have three.