

Statement of
Tanya Trujillo
Nominee for the Position of Assistant Secretary for Water and Science
United States Department of the Interior
Before the
Energy and Natural Resources Committee
United States Senate
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Good morning Chairman Manchin, Ranking Member Barrasso and members of the Committee. I appreciate the introduction from Senator Heinrich. As a fellow New Mexican, I am among many who are grateful for his service on behalf of our State.

I previously had the honor and pleasure of working here at the Committee with Senator Bingaman, when he was Chairman. He exemplified the bipartisan spirit that I experienced while working with Senator Murkowski's staff on water and power issues. I also appreciate the support from Tim Petty, as I transition into my new role.

I am honored to appear before you today as President Biden's nominee to serve as Assistant Secretary for Water and Science at the Department of the Interior. With me is my niece, Morgan Trujillo, who is a high school student in Minneapolis. I am grateful for the support of family, friends and colleagues that has enabled me to be here today.

I have always worked closely with technical experts from a variety of backgrounds, and I have learned to apply my skills as a lawyer, to work with them to solve complex problems. I look forward to utilizing that same approach at the Department of the Interior.

My career began in private practice in Santa Fe, and I transitioned to public service as general counsel for the New Mexico Interstate Stream Commission. In addition to working here with the Committee, I also served as Counselor to the Assistant Secretary for Water and Science at Interior, where I learned about many of the topics I am working on today.

My work on Colorado River issues continued to expand when I served as the Executive Director for the Colorado River Board of California. There, I was able to work with some of the largest agricultural and municipal water users in the Colorado River Basin. I am proud to have been able to help shape some of the innovative agreements the Basin is famous for. Those agreements are based on voluntary, proactive measures, that involved a broad range of input. They will help lay the foundation for what comes next, as we navigate through the continued drought.

I have always been interested in hearing perspectives from a variety of different sources – including farmers and ranchers, Tribes, States, local agencies, and non-profit groups. I appreciate the role that organizations such as the Western States Water Council, the Family Farm Alliance and many others play in helping to address the current challenges we face. I plan to continue to rely on them for input and advice.

I have a deep respect for the dedicated scientists, engineers and technical professionals at Department of the Interior. I look forward to continuing to work with them, as we implement the Biden Administration's goals and priorities.

For example, I will provide strong support for the Department's scientists at the U.S. Geological Survey on their efforts to address climate change, and to advance the nation's research, assessment, and prediction capabilities.

In addition, I will support the Bureau of Reclamation's important role as a water provider, and I will work closely with Reclamation, and other agencies, to ensure that hydropower resources can continue to provide an important component of our nation's renewable energy portfolio.

Indian Water Rights Settlements, and ensuring that rural communities have access to clean, reliable supplies of water, will also be priorities for me. I will be forever grateful for being able to help Tribal governments in New Mexico reach agreements on three water rights settlements. I understand why it is important to implement those settlements, and similar projects in other states.

The Water and Science work at Interior relies on coordination within the Department, coordination with other Federal agencies, and with States, Tribes and a variety of local interests. If confirmed, I will work with those entities, with members of this Committee, and with other members of Congress, on the important challenges we face.

Thank you for allowing me to be here today, and I am available to answer questions from the Committee.