

JUN 12 2019

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Chairman, Committee on Energy
and Natural Resources
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Murkowski:

Enclosed you will find my responses to the written questions submitted following the June 5, 2019, hearing on my nomination to be Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks at the Department of the Interior.

Please feel free to contact me if I can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,



G. Robert Wallace

Enclosure

U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
June 5, 2019 Hearing: *The Nomination of Robert Wallace to be Assistant Secretary*
for Fish and Wildlife and Parks at the Department of the Interior
Questions for the Record Submitted to Mr. Robert Wallace

Questions from Senator Mazie Hirono

Question 1: As part of my responsibility as a member of the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources and to ensure the fitness of nominees for an appointed position, I am asking nominees to answer the following two questions:

- a. Since you became a legal adult, have you ever made unwanted requests for sexual favors, or committed any verbal or physical harassment or assault of a sexual nature?

Response: No, I have not.

- b. Have you ever faced discipline, or entered into a settlement related to this kind of conduct?

Response: No, I have not.

Question 2: I am extremely concerned by allegations regarding political pressure influencing science at the Department of the Interior under this administration. These allegations have been specific to agencies that you will oversee-including political edits to early versions of a sea level rise report by the National Park Service and the suppression of a Fish and Wildlife Service report on the impacts of pesticides on endangered species.

Do you believe that science plays an important role in informing policy decisions within the Fish and Wildlife Service and National Park Service?

Response: I believe science is a fundamental component of sound policies and positive outcomes for the myriad challenges facing the Department's land and resource managers. Should I be confirmed, my decision making within the Department will be informed by the best available science.

If confirmed, what steps will you take to ensure that scientists within the department are able to communicate their science free of political pressure?

Response: Scientific integrity should underpin agency actions. I have great respect for the work the Department scientists carry out. My view is that agency decisions should be predicated on the best information, including an evaluation of the science.

Question 3: In early 2017 a department-wide survey was sent to Interior employees to assess the workplace environment. Of the respondents, nearly a combined 10,000 National Park Service and Fish and Wildlife Service employees said that they had experienced harassment within the past 12 months.

U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
June 5, 2019 Hearing: *The Nomination of Robert Wallace to be Assistant Secretary*
for Fish and Wildlife and Parks at the Department of the Interior
Questions for the Record Submitted to Mr. Robert Wallace

If confirmed, what steps will you take to ensure that the workplace culture is changing and what metrics will you utilize to assess the effectiveness of these steps?

Response: I am committed to making sure that, from the top to the bottom of the agencies I would oversee, effective policies will be developed and implemented to address this very serious issue, should I be confirmed.

Questions from Senator Martha McSally

Question 1: In Arizona, our state game and fish department has a strong record of successful conservation by taking a science-based approach and balancing recreational, environmental, and community concerns. While leadership on the federal level is key, any successful conservation goals must include effective partnerships with state and local efforts.

Mr. Wallace, if confirmed, what would be your approach to or principles for working with state fish and wildlife agencies?

Response: I believe that partnerships are the key to almost all good, well-balanced public policy. So strong, sustained working relationships and dialogue with not only state fish and wildlife agencies, but also localities, members of Congress, Tribes and all interested stakeholders is paramount.

Question 2: Managing and producing fish in a desert state like Arizona is no small feat. Its success is critical not only for species conservation but for the state's economics and tourism as well. For example, the Williams Creek National Fish Hatchery located on the Fort Apache Indian Reservation in eastern Arizona is the only facility in the world that has a brood-stock of Apache trout, one of Arizona's two native species of trout. While the hatchery is renowned for its role in the species' recovery, the facility is in desperate need of infrastructure and operational improvements.

Mr. Wallace, how do you plan to ensure that fish hatcheries, both those managed by the federal government and the state, are properly maintained and producing quality native and sport fish to meet current and future population demands?

Response: Although I am not currently at the Department and do not have the latest information on the legal, regulatory and budgetary parameters concerning fish hatchery management, if I am confirmed, I will work with you and with the professionals in the Department to learn more about this issue.