



U.S. Department of the Interior News Release

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Contact: Interior_Press@ios.doi.gov

Secretary Haaland Establishes Climate Task Force, Strengthens Scientific Integrity

*New Orders Prioritize Department-Wide Climate Action, Revokes Orders That Are Out Of
Alignment With Biden Administration Priorities*

WASHINGTON – Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland today issued two Secretarial Orders to prioritize action on climate change throughout the Department and to restore transparency and integrity in the Department’s decision-making processes.

[SO 3399](#) establishes a Climate Task Force to coordinate work across the Department, including accelerating renewable energy development and identifying actions to foster investments in energy communities. The Order also provides guidance on how science should be used in the decision-making process and improves transparency and public engagement in the Department’s decision-making process. The Order additionally provides policy instruction to ensure that the level of National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analysis across DOI bureaus is not diminished, that climate change is appropriately analyzed, and that Tribes and environmental justice communities are appropriately engaged.

"From day one, President Biden was clear that we must take a whole-of-government approach to tackle the climate crisis, strengthen the economy, and address environmental justice," **said Interior Secretary Deb Haaland**. "At the Department of the Interior, I believe we have a unique opportunity to make our communities more resilient to climate change and to help lead the transition to a clean energy economy. These steps will align the Interior Department with the President’s priorities and better position the team to be a part of the climate solution."

Secretary Haaland also issued [SO 3398](#), which revokes a series of Secretarial Orders issued in recent years that are inconsistent with the Department’s commitment to protect public health; conserve land, water, and wildlife; and elevate science. Collectively, those Orders tilted the balance of public land and ocean management without regard for climate change, equity, or community engagement. The new Order does not impact the Interior Department’s ongoing review of proposals for oil, gas, coal, and renewable energy development on public lands and waters.

“I know that signing Secretarial Orders alone won’t address the urgency of the climate crisis. But I’m hopeful that these steps will help make clear that we, as a Department, have a mandate to act,” **added Secretary Haaland**. “With the vast experience, talent, and ingenuity of our public servants at the Department of the Interior, I’m optimistic about what we can accomplish together to care for our natural resources for the benefit of current and future generations.”

Previous Orders that were revoked include:

- [SO 3348 – “Concerning the Federal Coal Moratorium”](#) (March 29, 2017)
- [SO 3349 – “American Energy Independence”](#) (March 29, 2017)
- [SO 3350 – “America-First Offshore Energy Strategy”](#) (May 1, 2017)
- [SO 3351 – “Strengthening the Department of the Interior’s Energy Portfolio”](#) (May 1, 2017)
- [SO 3352 – “National Petroleum Reserve – Alaska”](#) (May 31, 2017)
- [SO 3354 – “Supporting and Improving the Federal Onshore Oil and Gas Leasing Program and Federal Solid Mineral Leasing Program”](#) (July 6, 2017)
- [SO 3355 - Streamlining National Environmental Policy Reviews and Implementation of Executive Order 13807, “Establishing Discipline and Accountability in the Environmental Review and Permitting Process for Infrastructure Projects”](#) (Aug. 31, 2017)
- [SO 3358 – “Executive Committee for Expedited Permitting”](#) (Oct. 25, 2017)
- [SO 3360 – “Rescinding Authorities Inconsistent with Secretary’s Order 3349, “American Energy Independence”](#) (Dec. 22, 2017)
- [SO 3380 – “Public Notice of the Costs Associated with Developing Department of the Interior Publications and Similar Documents”](#) (March 10, 2020)
- [SO 3385 – “Enforcement Priorities”](#) (Sept. 14, 2020)
- [SO 3389 – “Coordinating and Clarifying National Historic Preservation Act Section 106 Reviews”](#) (Dec. 22, 2020)

In addition, the Solicitor’s office [issued a withdrawal](#) of M-37062, an opinion that concluded that the Interior Secretary must promulgate a National Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program consisting of a 5-year lease schedule with at least two lease sales during the five year plan. This withdrawal will allow the agency to evaluate its obligations under the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act (OCSLA).

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About the U.S. Department of the Interior

The Department of the Interior (DOI) conserves and manages the Nation's natural resources and cultural heritage for the benefit and enjoyment of the American people, provides scientific and other information about natural resources and natural hazards to address societal challenges and create opportunities for the American people, and honors the Nation's trust responsibilities or special commitments to American Indians, Alaska Natives, and affiliated island communities to help them prosper.



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