

**Statement of Katharine MacGregor
Nominee for the Position of Deputy Secretary
of the Department of the Interior**

**Before the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
United States Senate**

November 5, 2019

Chairman Murkowski, Ranking Member Manchin, and Members of the Committee, it is with profound humility that I thank you for the opportunity to appear here today as President Trump's nominee for the position of Deputy Secretary of the Department of the Interior.

This morning I am joined by one of my brothers, Robert MacGregor, and my Aunt and Godmother, Sheila Sanford. I am also joined by my best friend from college, Carla Spain, and my goddaughter, Elizabeth Spain, who flew out today from California. Finally I am joined by my parents, Jean and Peter MacGregor, who have sacrificed so much for us - including at least 10 straight years of weekends driving us to ice hockey games. As they are hockey parents, I feel compelled to remind them that this is not a hockey game, there are no refs to yell at, so kindly abide by the rules of the committee.

My personal introduction to the mission of the Department of the Interior began much as one might expect in a state where the federal footprint is just 2% of the landscape - with our National Parks. Some of my earliest memories are of my parents taking me and my brothers to Valley Forge National Park to play and learn about our nation's early history. In driving up and down the eastern seaboard to all of our ice hockey games, there wasn't a battlefield that my Dad didn't stop at. From Yorktown, to Gettysburg, to Lexington and Concord - we saw them ALL. I have to admit today that these visits drove my passion for American history and my understanding for the importance of preserving these special places for future generations.

In my decade of federal service on Capitol Hill working on natural resource issues, I formed an even deeper understanding of the broad and diverse missions of the Interior Department. In addition to our parks and monuments, I learned our nation's history through a new lens - our controlling statutes. Beginning with the Homestead Act and Pacific Railroad Acts of 1862, our laws tell the tale of an expanding, industrialized nation growing westward, and a government providing measured access to the land so that people could carve out an existence.

These laws have provided the Interior Department with a wide and wonderful range of mission areas and a land ownership and management pattern that does not come without challenges.

However, since day one at Interior, I have worked hard to achieve a balance in managing America's public lands, cultural treasures, and natural resources in order to achieve this Administration's priorities. I take seriously the call to protect our healthy natural environment and the species that depend upon it - just as seriously as I take the call to foster economic growth through the multiple-use of, and sustained yield from, our public lands.

In both my time working on Capitol Hill and at the Interior Department, I have had the privilege to visit many of your states, meet some of your constituents, and work on issues that are important to them. In the Permian Basin, we had the largest revenue generating lease sale in the history of the BLM - \$1billion - and I was able to hand over half of the proceeds to the State of New Mexico to reinvest in schools, law enforcement, and other priority municipal needs. I have worked to enhance the reach of broadband to rural and tribal communities so that they may have the same educational and economic opportunities that we take for granted here in our 5-bars world.

And I have worked hard with our Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs, Tara Sweeney, to address the outrage of Missing and Murdered Native American women. In fact, one of the

personal stories I heard on my recent trip to Bethel, Alaska, to discuss these issues will stay with me forever. I will never again take for granted that access to justice sometimes relies upon a navigable road.

What I have learned from my time here at Interior and in your states is similar to what I have learned from many of you in our meetings last week. So many people have a profound connection to the lands and waters that we manage – just as Valley Forge National Park serves as one waypoint in my personal history that reminds me of the love, joy, and strength of my family. They care deeply about the decisions we make. And many feel that Washington has forgotten about them, their families, and their way of life.

From landing a bowhead whale up in Wainwright, Alaska, to cutting and milling timber in the O&C counties, moving cattle around an arid landscape, to moving kids around our national parks in an RV. All of these uses are valid and important, often directed and preserved in our statutes. All of these uses can, and should, continue to meet the needs of current and future generations.

If confirmed, I will do my best to ensure that we strike the right balance in a way that will provide conservation stewardship, enhance the safety of our communities, increase energy security, and allow rural communities to thrive. Again, thank you for this opportunity and I look forward to your questions.