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## Event Speaker Biographies



**Sally Jewell, Secretary, United States Department of the Interior**

Sally Jewell was sworn in as the 51st Secretary of the Interior on April 12, 2013. In nominating Jewell, President Obama said, “She is an expert on the energy and climate issues that are going to shape our future. She is committed to building our nation-to-nation relationship with Indian Country. She knows the link between conservation and good jobs. She knows that there’s no contradiction between being good stewards of the land and our economic progress; that in fact, those two things need to go hand in hand.”

As Secretary of the Interior, Jewell leads an agency with more than 70,000 employees. Interior serves as steward for approximately 20 percent of the nation’s lands, including national parks, national wildlife refuges, and other public lands; oversees the responsible development of conventional and renewable energy supplies on public lands and waters; is the largest supplier and manager of water in the 17 Western states; and upholds trust responsibilities to the 566 federally recognized American Indian tribes and Alaska Natives.

Prior to her confirmation, Jewell served in the private sector, most recently as President and Chief Executive Officer of Recreation Equipment Inc. (REI). Jewell joined REI as Chief Operating Officer in 2000 and was named CEO in 2005. During her tenure, REI nearly tripled in business to \$2 billion and was consistently ranked one of the 100 best companies to work for by Fortune Magazine.

Before joining REI, Jewell spent 19 years as a commercial banker, first as an energy and natural resources expert and later working with a diverse array of businesses that drive our nation's economy. Trained as a petroleum engineer, Jewell started her career with Mobil Oil Corp. in the oil and gas fields of Oklahoma and the exploration and production office in Denver, Colo., where she was exposed to the remarkable diversity of our nation's oil and gas resources.

An avid outdoorswoman, Jewell finds time to explore her backyard in the Pacific Northwest where she enjoys skiing, kayaking, hiking and other activities. She has scaled Mount Rainier on seven occasions and recently climbed Vinson Massif, the highest mountain in Antarctica.

Jewell has worked to ensure that public lands are accessible and relevant to all people from all backgrounds, and to build a connection between the great outdoors and a new generation of Americans.



**Daniel M. Ashe, Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service**

Daniel M. Ashe was confirmed on June 30, 2011, as the 16th Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the nation's principal federal agency dedicated to the conservation of fish and wildlife and their habitats. His appointment by President Obama is the culmination of a lifetime spent within the Service family.

Ashe was born and spent his childhood in Atlanta, Ga., where his father began his 37-year career with the Service. Much of Ashe's childhood was spent on national wildlife refuges and fish hatcheries in the Southeast where he learned to band birds, fish, hunt and, most importantly, simply enjoy the outdoors.

Prior to his appointment as Director, Ashe served as the Service's Deputy Director for Policy beginning in 2009, where he provided strategic program direction and developed policy and guidance to support and promote program development and fulfill the Service mission. Ashe also served as Science Advisor to the Director of the Service. Appointed to this position in March 2003, he advised the Service Director and provided leadership on science policy and scientific applications to resource management. As Science Advisor, Ashe led an organizational renaissance for science and professionalism, leading the Service's efforts to respond to changes in the global climate system; shaping an agency agenda for change toward a science-driven,

landscape conservation business model; defining an agency Code of Scientific and Professional Conduct; authoring new guidelines for scientific peer review and information quality; building state-of-the-art, electronic literature access for employees; and reinstating internal scientific publication outlets. He was also responsible for leading efforts to build stronger relationships with the U.S. Geological Survey and scientific professional societies.

From 1998 to 2003, Ashe served as the Chief of the National Wildlife Refuge System, directing operation and management of the 150 million-acre National Wildlife Refuge System and the Service's land acquisition program. During his tenure as Chief, the Refuge System experienced an unprecedented and sustained period of budget increases for operations, maintenance, construction and land acquisition. The Refuge System also saw vastly expanded public visibility, and partner and community involvement. Ashe also led the Service's migratory bird management and North American wetlands conservation programs from 1998 to 2000, contributing to significant advances in both programs' impact and effectiveness.

From 1995 to 1998, Ashe served as the Service's Assistant Director for External Affairs, where he directed the agency's programs in legislative, public and Native American affairs, research coordination, and state grants-in-aid. During his tenure in this position, the Service restructured and broadened its communications programs and capacities, incorporating communications expertise into all of its program areas and employee training. The agency implemented a vision for congressional relations that led to several groundbreaking legislative accomplishments, including enactment of the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act.

From 1982 until 1995, Ashe was a Member of the Professional Staff of the former Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries in the U.S. House of Representatives. In 13 years on Capitol Hill, Ashe served in several capacities, advising the Committee's Chairmen and Members on a wide range of environmental policy issues, including endangered species and biodiversity conservation, ocean and coastal resources protection, the National Wildlife Refuge System, the National Marine Sanctuaries Program, the Clean Water Act, wetlands conservation, fisheries management and conservation, and offshore oil and gas development.



**U.S. Representative Steve Israel (NY, 3<sup>rd</sup> District)**

U.S. Congressman Steve Israel represents New York's 3rd Congressional District, encompassing northeast Queens and the townships of North Hempstead, Oyster Bay, Huntington and

Smithtown. Much of the area is famously known as the historic "Gold Coast." He is the sixth ranking member of the House Democratic Leadership, serving as Chair of Policy and Communications, where he focuses on the issue of middle-class economic security and opportunity. While speaking to the House Democratic Caucus in 2013, former President Bill Clinton called Congressman Israel "one of the most thoughtful people in the House of Representatives."

Israel serves New York on one of the most important committees in Congress: Appropriations. On the Defense Subcommittee he is a strong and forceful supporter of national security programs that protect our nation against evolving threats, including cyberattacks. On the Interior Subcommittee he is an environmental champion, protecting air, water, national parks and in particular, investments in the Long Island Sound.



**U.S. Representative Grace Meng (NY, 6th District)**

U.S. Congresswoman Grace Meng is serving her second term in the U.S. House of Representatives. Meng represents the Sixth Congressional District of New York encompassing the New York City borough of Queens, including west, central and northeast Queens.

Meng is the first Asian-American Member of Congress from New York State and the only member of Congress of Asian descent in the entire Northeast. She is also the first female Member of Congress from Queens since former Vice Presidential nominee Geraldine Ferraro.

Meng is a member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee and its subcommittees on the Middle East and North Africa, and Asia and the Pacific. The Foreign Affairs Committee oversees U. S. foreign policy toward all nations and has jurisdiction over foreign aid, the State Department and key international organizations such as the United Nations. Meng also serves on the House Small Business Committee where she is the Ranking Member of the Agriculture, Energy and Trade Subcommittee.

Meng is also an Assistant Whip in the House and a founder and Co-Chair of the Kids' Safety Caucus, the first bipartisan coalition in the House that promotes child-safety issues. She helped

create and serves as Co-Chair of the Quiet Skies Caucus which works to mitigate excessive aircraft noise that adversely affects communities.

During her first term in the House, Grace scored several legislative victories, a significant accomplishment for a new Member of Congress. In fact, she was one of just 12 Democrats – out of all 207 – who passed three or more bills, placing her in the top six percent. Her bill to make the desecration of cemeteries a violation of religious freedom was signed into law by President Obama, as was her legislation to study the viability of making Queens historic sites part of the National Park Service.

Born in Elmhurst, Queens, and raised in the Bayside section of the borough, Grace graduated from Stuyvesant High School and the University of Michigan. She then earned a law degree from Yeshiva University's Benjamin Cardozo School of Law. Prior to serving in Congress, she was a member of the New York State Assembly. Before entering public service, she worked as a public-interest lawyer.



**Commissioner R. Gil Kerlikowske, U.S. Customs and Border Protection**

R. Gil Kerlikowske was nominated by President Obama and sworn in on March 7, 2014, as Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection, taking the helm of the 60,000-employee agency with a budget of \$12.4 billion.

Kerlikowske oversees the dual U.S. Customs and Border Protection mission of protecting national security objectives while promoting economic prosperity and security. As Commissioner, he runs the largest federal law enforcement agency and second largest revenue collecting source in the federal government. Most recently, he served as Director of the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy.

Kerlikowske brings four decades of law enforcement and drug policy experience to the position. He formerly served nine years as the Chief of Police for Seattle, Wash.

Previously, he was Deputy Director for the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services. Kerlikowske was also Police Commissioner of Buffalo, N.Y. The majority of his law enforcement career was in Florida where he served in the St. Petersburg Police Department.



**John F. Calvelli, Executive Vice President of Public Affairs, Wildlife Conservation Society**

John F. Calvelli is the Executive Vice President of Public Affairs for the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), a global conservation organization headquartered at the Bronx Zoo dedicated to saving wildlife and wild places.

Calvelli specifically oversees the work of WCS in Government and Community Affairs, Public Policy, Communications and the WCS Digital Programs. He serves as Director of the WCS's 96 Elephants campaign and is on WCS's Executive Management team that manages the overall organization where he is leading efforts to identify ways for the public to support meaningful conservation action. 96 Elephants, which has more than 195 partners in 45 states including 125 zoos, has resulted in more than 775,000 individual actions taken by the public on behalf of elephants to stop the killing, stop the trafficking, and stop the demand.

Prior to joining WCS in 2000, he served as the senior staff person to Congressman Eliot Engel (D-Bronx) in Washington, D.C. Calvelli was a founder and currently serves as Chair of the Executive Committee of the International Conservation Partnership (ICP), which is comprised of senior public affairs representatives from the major global U.S. conservation organizations.



**Brad Hoylman, New York State Senator, 27<sup>th</sup> District**

Brad Hoylman is a Democratic State Senator representing New York's 27th District, which includes the Manhattan neighborhoods of the Upper West Side, Midtown, Times Square, Chelsea, Greenwich Village and the East Village. He was first elected to the State Senate in 2012 and currently serves as the Ranking Member of the Senate Environmental Conservation

Committee. Hoylman is a staunch advocate for animal rights and introduced a bill this legislative session to make the mistreatment of elephants and use of cruel instruments such as bull hooks, electric shocks or whips on elephants a class E felony.



**Joseph Martens, Commissioner, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation**

As commissioner of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) since March 2011, Joseph Martens leads the agency in implementing its core statutory mission to protect public health and the environment. In doing so, Martens led the agency's response in the aftermath of the 2011 summer storms and Superstorm Sandy in 2012. This work continues through DEC's partnerships with state, local and federal governments to expedite recovery efforts and help communities restore and rehabilitate the state's waterways. In addition, Martens oversees implementation of the N.Y. Works Program to repair, rebuild and enhance DEC's flood control projects and dams and to support important coastal erosion projects.

Martens also has streamlined agency processes to further New York Governor Cuomo's efforts to grow jobs and support sustainable economic growth. In addition, he serves as co-chair of the governor's Energy Highway Task Force.

From 1998 through 2010, Martens served as president of the Open Space Institute, directing and overseeing land acquisition, sustainable development, historic preservation and farmland protection. Martens served then-Governor Mario Cuomo as Deputy Secretary for Energy and the Environment from 1992-94 and as Assistant Secretary from 1990-92. He was Chair of the Board of the Olympic Regional Development Authority and is currently an ex-officio member of the Authority.