

Mother Jones

All the Secretary's Men

Dan Spinelli

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Since riding into Washington, DC on an actual horse to take command of the Department of the Interior (DOI), Ryan Zinke has stocked the agency with a swamp-soaked stable of advisers.

- **James Cason**
Associate Deputy Secretary of the Interior
Before entering government, he worked at the Western Environmental Trade Association, a pro-industry group that lobbies against environmental regulations. While serving in Reagan's Interior Department, Cason sold thousands of acres of Colorado land to oil and gas developers below market price.
- **Daniel Jorjani**
Acting Solicitor of the Interior Department
Since 2011, he has collected at least \$700,000 from the Kochs, working as a researcher, operative, and lawyer for several of the conservative megadonors' institutions. As Interior's top lawyer, he's developed a reputation as a powerful "troubleshooter" close to Secretary Zinke, according to the Washington Post. He rescinded an Obama-era interpretation of the Migratory Bird Act allowing prosecution of businesses that accidentally kill birds after taking dozens of meetings with representatives from trade groups and industry lobbyists.
- **Doug Domenech**
Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Insular Areas
First joined Interior under George W. Bush, where he served as a conduit for lobbyist Jack Abramoff's requests as he pushed Indian casino licenses. He later lobbied for oil and natural gas companies and joined the industry-backed Texas Public Policy Foundation to oversee an Exxon and Koch-funded program to undermine Obama's Clean Power Plan.
- **Vincent DeVito**
Counselor to the Secretary for Energy Policy
Before leaving his newly-created role at Interior in August, DeVito coordinated the department's energy portfolio and advised Zinke on environmental issues. DeVito

previously served as the treasurer of Zinke's congressional SEAL PAC. According to Politico, the Federal Election Commission is scrutinizing \$600,000 improperly reported contributions, mostly taken on his watch.

- **P. Daniel Smith**

Acting National Park Service Director

Before joining Reagan's Interior Department, Smith lobbied for the National Rifle Association. Was criticized by DOI's inspector general for arranging a permit allowing Washington Redskins owner Dan Snyder to fell trees on national park land to improve his house's view. Days into his tenure as acting director, Smith apologized for making an obscene gesture involving his genitalia.

- **Todd Wynn**

Director of Intergovernmental and External Affairs

Worked at Oregon's Koch-backed Cascade Policy Institute, an electricity utility trade group, and the American Legislative Exchange Council, helping draft anti-regulatory bills for state lawmakers. In 2009, Wynn wrote in the *Earth is "currently cooling"* and deemed climate change a "modern-day witch hunt."

- **Steven Howke**

Senior adviser in the Office of Policy Analysis

A policy analyst at Interior since the Reagan administration, Goklany's fringe climate views have seen him rise to a key advisory role in Cason's office. He's published two books with the libertarian CATO Institute. "Emissions from fossil fuels have already had increased crop yields," he wrote in 2015. "This is good for both humankind and the natural world."