

# **Mike Connor**

## **Deputy Secretary of the Interior**



Michael L. Connor serves as Deputy Secretary of the U.S. Department of the Interior. President Obama nominated Connor for the position in July 2013 and the U.S. Senate confirmed him without opposition in February 2014.

As Deputy Secretary, Connor is the second highest ranking official at the Interior Department with statutory responsibilities as the Chief Operating Officer of an agency of more than 70,000 employees and an annual budget of approximately \$12 billion. Connor is a key leader in implementing the Administration's priorities for the Department of the Interior, including water policy and relations in the face of an unprecedented Western drought, as well as serving as the head of the Department's Land Buy-Back Program, the land consolidation component of the Cobell Settlement.

Connor has more than two decades of experience in the public sector, having served as the Commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation from 2009 to 2014, where he led efforts to promote the sustainable use of water to effectively address current and future challenges associated with water supply and power generation in the American West. As Commissioner, he forged major Indian water rights settlements and worked to resolve water conflicts in California, New Mexico, Oregon and other western states. Connor led the Department of the Interior's efforts and completed two major binational agreements with Mexico on the Colorado River that have received international attention and acclaim. Connor also directed Reclamation's efforts to expand hydropower generation at existing facilities.

From 2001 until his confirmation as Reclamation Commissioner, Connor served as Counsel to the U.S. Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee where he helped enact a significant amount of legislation addressing issues involving both the Bureau of Reclamation and the U.S. Geological Survey, as well as Native American issues that were within the Energy Committee's jurisdiction. Connor previously served in the Department of the Interior from 1993 to 2001 in the Solicitor's Office, and then as Director of the Secretary's Indian Water Rights Office where he led the Department of the Interior's efforts on a number of important water rights settlements.

Connor received his J.D. from the University of Colorado Law School and is admitted to the bars of Colorado and New Mexico. A native of New Mexico, he previously received a Bachelor of Science degree in Chemical Engineering from New Mexico State University and worked for General Electric.