

Margaret E. Everson
571-274-6236
margaret@oakgroveinitiative.org

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

Executive Director

OAK GROVE INITIATIVE
WASHINGTON, DC
January 2022–present

Lead the Oak Grove Initiative to help government agencies improve their internal processes and policies to better distribute funds to support communities while delivering conservation, recreation, and natural-resource benefits. Recommend policies to decision-makers and deliver on-the-ground project support through public-private partnerships to benefit communities and conservation. Enter into memorandums of understanding with industry, state, and nongovernmental partners.

Principal

MILL RUN STRATEGIES
BETHESDA, MD
March 2021–present

Advise state agencies, nongovernmental organizations, and industry on balanced access to public lands, conservation, recreation, and natural-resource matters. Provide insight and guidance to clients on the executive branch, as well as the federal regulatory and legislative processes. Supply strategic advice on communications and outreach strategies on issues related to natural resources, deferred maintenance, and conservation initiatives, including the Great American Outdoors Act, the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, the Endangered Species Act, and water-resource concerns. Having chaired the 52-member American Wildlife Conservation Partners, catalyze strategic partnerships and connect decision-makers in federal, state, and local governments with nongovernmental and industry leaders.

Director (Acting)

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, WASHINGTON, DC
August 2020–January 2021

Led the National Park Service, overseeing 20,000 permanent, term, and seasonal employees; a \$3 billion annual budget; and 423 national park system sites that are enjoyed by more than 327 million visitors a year. Established three new parks in the National Park System and added three sites to the African American Civil Rights Network. Oversaw the creation of a business and strategic investment plan to manage an additional \$1.2 billion in discretionary funds provided through 2020's bipartisan Great American Outdoors Act to address substantial maintenance and backlog issues at the NPS. Developed and finalized regulations for e-bikes on public lands, including units of the NPS to provide additional access for visitors. Served on boards including the National Park Foundation, White House Historical Association, the Committee for the

Preservation of the White House, and the National Park System Advisory Board. Represent the National Park Service and the Department of the Interior in speaking engagements including large conferences, panels, and all media formats (TV, radio, online, and print).

Counselor to the Secretary

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, WASHINGTON, DC

February 2020–January 2021

Advised and counseled the Secretary of the Interior on conservation, natural-resource, and management issues. Chaired the task force chair for implementation of the Great American Outdoors Act, overseeing the provision of nearly \$2 billion annually for deferred maintenance to federal agencies and \$900 million for the Land and Water Conservation Fund. Served as the Secretary's lead for the department's COVID-19 response. In that role, oversaw the creation and implementation of all nine DOI bureaus' plans that prioritized the health of employees and the visiting public while supporting providing safe access to public lands and open spaces.

Principal Deputy Director, Exercising the Delegated Authority of the Director

U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE, WASHINGTON, DC

November 2018–February 2020

Led the USFWS, overseeing 7,500 employees, a \$3 billion annual budget, and 568 national wildlife refuges that host 59 million visitors a year. Served as the United States' co-head of delegation for the 2019 Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species Conference of the Parties in Geneva co-sponsoring proposals to protect five wildlife species all of which were adopted. Expanded hunting and fishing opportunities on 1.4 million acres nationwide. Championed the largest appropriation ever, \$502 million for the USFWS Refuge System. Led efforts to increase access to national wildlife refuges and green spaces near urban communities. Established Green River National Wildlife Refuge in Kentucky. Worked with farmers and ranchers to conserve more than 84,000 acres of priority wetlands and grasslands through voluntary conservation easements. Approved and awarded more than \$1 billion in grants and apportionments through the Pittman-Robertson Act, the Dingell-Johnson Act, and the State Wildlife Grant Program to states for improving access and fish and wildlife conservation. Established public-private partnerships to benefit the monarch butterfly and at-risk pollinator species. Approved final actions that recognized the recovery standard under the Endangered Species Act had been met for four previously federally listed species, and thereby the species were delisted. Approved and implemented a restructuring of administrative functions for the entire USFWS. Served on the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation board that in 2019 invested more than \$507 million to support 930 conservation projects nationwide. Expanded opportunities to promote diverse hiring. Testified before Congress, including presenting the bureau's budget to the House Committee on Appropriations.

Chief Policy Officer

DUCKS UNLIMITED, WASHINGTON, DC

December 2014–October 2018

Planned, directed, and oversaw all policies and strategies relating to every phase of government relations in Ducks Unlimited's conservation efforts. Served on the executive leadership team and directly oversaw a multimillion-dollar department budget along with providing executive oversight of an organizational budget of more than \$200 million and a \$2 billion North American campaign. Analyzed proposed legislation and regulations for impacts on the organization's mission and influenced their content to maximize appropriations and other conservation benefits. Managed a team of federal and regional government-relations professionals dispersed across the country. Grew department and organizational strength through corporate-sustainability partners, foundations, major donor gifts, and government funding. Served as the Chair of the annual Ducks Unlimited DC dinner that was attended by over 70 members of congress, cabinet members, industry leaders and non-profit partners and raised over \$100,000 each year. Developed and maintained collaborative partnerships with a diverse range of environmental and conservation groups, and served as chair of the American Wildlife Conservation Partners. Expanded longstanding relationships with top-ranked senior career and political administration members along with key congressional members and their staffs. Led scientifically sound policy efforts at the community, state, regional, and national levels that utilize wetlands for clean water in rural and urban areas and protect communities from flooding and saltwater intrusion. Collaborated with counterparts in Canada and Mexico to further sustainable wetlands and water policies throughout North America. Collaborated with board members and trustees to expand their understanding, participation, and support of policy initiatives, mobilizing them and their networks to further nature-based conservation. Extensive public-speaking engagements included representing Ducks Unlimited at national and state conventions, conferences, and meetings as a panelist and keynote speaker.

Principal

EVERSON CONSULTING, ALEXANDRIA, VA

February 2014–December 2014

Advised state agencies, nongovernmental entities, and industry on wildlife, conservation, and natural-resource matters. Provided insight and guidance to clients on the executive branch, as well as the federal regulatory and legislative processes. Supplied strategic advice on communications and outreach strategies on a wide range of issues related to wildlife and conservation initiatives, including the Endangered Species Act, and water-resource concerns. Drafted regulatory responses on behalf of clients, provided insight on the impacts that proposed amendments may have on states' and industries' interests and activities. Recommended strategic partnerships and connected decision-makers in federal, state, and local governments with nongovernmental and industry leaders.

Assistant Attorney General

OFFICE OF THE KENTUCKY ATTORNEY GENERAL, FRANKFORT, KY

December 2008–February 2014

Represented the office of the Kentucky attorney general in environmental and natural-resource issues including mining, public nuisances, the Clean Water Act, and the Clean Air Act. Served as general counsel for the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources (KDFWR). Managed complex litigation with internal and external counsel and represented KDFWR in state

courts at both the appellate- and lower-court levels. Testified on pending legislation to state senate and house committees and represented KDFWR before the Administrative Regulation Review Subcommittee. Advised clients on U.S. Constitutional issues including the First and Second Amendments and the Endangered Species Act. Counseled clients on day-to-day issues pertaining to federal, state, and local laws including regarding property rights, biodiversity, wildlife trafficking, personnel issues, and law enforcement. Managed legal research and coordinated staff to support litigation and legislative outreach. Served as a representative on the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies legal committee, endangered species committee, and the ESA joint task force working group.

Counselor to the Director

U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE, WASHINGTON, DC
January 2005–November 2008

Represented the Fish and Wildlife Service’s position on natural-resource conservation issues in discussions with the Department of the Interior, other departments and federal agencies, Congress, state governments, and nongovernmental organizations. Managed and coordinated issues relating to the service’s policies, the Endangered Species Act, the Freedom of Information Act, the Administrative Procedure Act, and other national and international programmatic priorities of the director. Served as the Fish and Wildlife Service’s representative on the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument plan. Represented the Service on American Bar Association panels and on the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies’ legal committees.

Attorney/Adviser

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, WASHINGTON, DC
October 2003–January 2005

Provided legal analysis and policy recommendations for the department and its agencies pertaining to restoration of the South Florida Ecosystem and the Everglades. Worked with Interior agencies to implement the requirements of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan, Water Resources Development Act, Clean Water Act, National Environmental Policy Act, Freedom of Information Act, and Endangered Species Act. Assisted federal agencies and the state of Florida on Everglades-related rulemaking. Received departmental STAR award for outstanding job performance.

Policy Analyst

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, WASHINGTON, DC
December 2001–September 2003

Provided policy recommendations, legal analysis, and technical evaluations for the department and its agencies on scientific reports, pending legislation, and court decisions pertaining to restoration of the South Florida ecosystem and the Everglades. Prepared testimony for congressional oversight hearings for senior department officials, including the secretary of the interior and the deputy secretary. Worked with the Army Corp of Engineers, the state of Florida, and local governments on negotiations to implement the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan.

Legal Fellow

SENATE ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE, MAJORITY STAFF,
WASHINGTON, DC
January 2000–May 2000

Drafted legislation, congressional reports, and legal memorandums. Met with constituents and advocacy groups to discuss proposed legislation on the Conservation and Reinvestment Act, Striped Bass Act, and other wildlife and conservation issues.

Resource Specialist

ASSOCIATION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE AGENCIES (AFWA), WASHINGTON, DC
December 1996–August 1998

Tracked, analyzed, and provided comment on national fish and wildlife resource-management, conservation, and legislative issues for the state fish and wildlife agencies. Wrote and coordinated successful U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service administrative grants in sport fish and wildlife restoration. Analyzed federal legislation, including the Transportation Equity Act (TEA 21), for AFWA committees.

EDUCATION

VERMONT LAW SCHOOL, SOUTH ROYALTON, VT August 1998–May 2001

Juris doctor

SAINT FRANCIS COLLEGE, LORETTO, PA

September 1992–May 1996

Bachelor of science in biology, with a concentration in marine biology

LEGAL AFFILIATIONS

- Admitted to the Maryland State Bar
- Admitted to the Kentucky State Bar
- Admitted to the Supreme Court of the United States Bar

PUBLICATIONS

Taylor, Gary J., Everson, Margaret, Perry, Louie and Witte, Jeremy (2018). The Policy Job in Conservation. In Bruce D. Leopold et al. (Eds), *North American Wildlife Policy and Law* (pp. 553– 565). Boone and Crockett Club.

Everson, Margaret (2012). A Review of Federal Environmental Legislation and the Federal Environmental Regulator Structure. In Mary Clifford and Terry D. Edwards (Eds), *Environmental Crime* (2nd ed., pp. 153–181). Jones & Bartlett Learning.