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Alaska Wilderness League applauds selection of Rep. Debra Haaland to be next Interior Secretary

Washington — Today, multiple media outlets are reporting that President-elect Joe Biden and his transition team will select Representative Debra Haaland to succeed David Bernhardt as the next Secretary of the U.S. Department of the Interior.

Statement by Adam Kolton, Executive Director, Alaska Wilderness League:

“The nomination of Congresswoman Deb Haaland to lead the Interior Department is a historic and hopeful moment for all who care about righting the wrongs of history and moving forward with greater respect and care for our natural resources, our climate, and in solidarity with frontline communities.

“This nomination reinforces President-elect Biden’s promise to reverse course on the last four years of public lands exploitation and implement the most ambitious conservation agenda in U.S. history. That Representative Haaland will be first Native American to serve as Interior Secretary will also ensure that the agency will honor the sovereignty and conservation vision of tribal nations.

“Representative Haaland was the first U.S. representative to champion the need to pursue an ambitious national conservation goal to conserve 30 percent of U.S. lands and ocean by 2030. Alaska’s vast public resources are critical to achieving that goal, offering opportunities of a kind and scale not present in the rest of the U.S. to protect resources at the landscape level, a key strategy for safeguarding vital biodiversity and reducing our carbon footprint through natural solutions.

“Congresswoman Haaland has fought to conserve America’s lands and waters, protect wildlife and uphold Indigenous rights. She has cosponsored bills including the Arctic Cultural and Coastal Plain Protection Act and the Roadless Area Conservation Act, bills that would restore protections to the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and Tongass National Forest and are supported not just by conservationist but by broad coalitions that include Alaska Natives, businesses, hunters and anglers, and more.

“Alaska Wilderness League is proud to support the nomination of Representative Haaland and we look forward to working with her to realize Alaska’s significant potential for large scale protection of ecosystems to sustain healthy and diverse wildlife and habitat for the future.”

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Alaska Wilderness League stands with, serves and supports the many people and organizations that believe in a sustainable future for Alaska. We honor and respect the cultures of Alaska Natives whose way of life remains deeply connected to the state's land, waters, and wildlife. We believe that Alaska's long-term economic future and subsistence traditions are inexorably tied to the health and sound stewardship of its natural resources, which support hunting, fishing, tourism and unrivaled outdoor experiences that are central to Alaskans' quality of life.



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