Salazar Names Marcilynn Burke as Acting Assistant Secretary for Lands and Minerals Management

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar today named Marcilynn Burke to serve as Acting Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management at the Department of the Interior. Burke, who currently serves as Deputy Director for Policy of the Bureau of Land Management, will take over for Wilma Lewis, who is being commissioned as Judge for the District Court of the Virgin Islands.

“Marcilynn’s broad experience with the Bureau of Land Management and as an expert in natural resource matters will greatly benefit Interior’s energy and conservation priorities,” Salazar said. “She is an outstanding choice to ensure Interior’s programs address the challenges of managing our public lands and resources in the 21st century.”

Burke took leave in August of 2009 from the University of Houston Law Center (UHLC) in Texas, where she is an Associate Professor of Law, to serve as the Bureau of Land Management Deputy Director for Policy under Director Bob Abbey.

At UHLC, she teaches environmental law courses on land use and its management, natural resources, and property. She has also served as visiting assistant professor of law at the Rutgers School of Law in Camden, N.J., and at Seattle University School of Law.

Burke was previously with the law firm of Cleary, Gottlieb, Steen & Hamilton in Washington, D.C., where she focused on environmental law, antitrust, and civil and criminal litigation. She clerked for the Honorable Raymond A. Jackson of the Eastern District of Virginia.

Burke received her bachelor’s degree in International Studies from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill where she was elected to Phi Beta Kappa. She obtained her law degree from Yale Law School where she was an editor for both the Yale Journal of Law and Feminism and the Yale Journal of International Law.

Former Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management Wilma Lewis was nominated by President Obama for a judgeship in the District Court of the Virgin Islands in March, 2011. She was confirmed by the Senate in June and will be commissioned shortly in that position.
“Wilma has served this Department with distinction and I am grateful for her leadership over the past two years,” Salazar said. “I am confident Wilma will make an excellent addition to the bench and the people of the Virgin Islands are lucky to have her.”

The Assistant Secretary for Lands and Minerals Management helps establish Interior policies and provides oversight to the Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Regulation and Enforcement, and the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement. The assistant secretary oversees management of public lands and resources, including production of federal energy and mineral resources, both onshore and on the Outer Continental Shelf.

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