

Department of the Interior Departmental Manual

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Part 105: Department
Chapter 1: Creation, Mission, and Goals

Originating Office: Office of the Executive Secretariat and Regulatory Affairs

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1.1 **Creation.** The Department of the Interior (Department) was created by an act of Congress on March 3, 1849. Transferred to the new Department were the General Land Office, Indian Office, Pension Office, and Patent Office. The Department was also given responsibility for supervising the Commissioner of Public Buildings, the Board of Inspectors and Warden of the Penitentiary of the District of Columbia, and the census of the United States; accounts of marshals and other officers of the United States courts; and lead mines (as well as and other mines) of the United States.

1.2 **Evolution of Functions.** Over the years, other functions were added to the Department, such as education; hospitals and charitable institutions; labor; railroad accounts; commercial fisheries; water pollution control; and interstate commerce. As a result of the creation of other executive departments and independent agencies, some of the Department's activities were later assigned elsewhere. The role of the Department gradually changed from general housekeeper for the Federal Government to custodian of the Nation's natural resources.

1.3 **Mission.** The mission of the Department is to conserve and manage the Nation's natural resources and cultural heritage for the benefit and enjoyment of the American people; provide scientific and other information about natural resources and natural hazards to address societal challenges and create opportunities for the American people; and honor the Nation's trust responsibilities or special commitments to American Indians, Alaska Natives, native Hawaiians, and the territories; and help them to prosper.

1.4 **Goals.** In accomplishing its mission, the Department is committed to the following goals:

- A. Goal 1 - Conserving our land and water.
- B. Goal 2 - Generating revenue and utilizing our natural resources.
- C. Goal 3 - Expanding outdoor recreation and access.

- D. Goal 4 - Fulfilling our trust and insular responsibilities.
- E. Goal 5 - Protecting our people and the border.
- F. Goal 6 - Modernizing our organization and infrastructure for the next 100 years.