



**ROUNDTABLE ON WATER INNOVATION**  
**Tuesday, December 15, 2015**  
The Eisenhower Executive Office Building

**BIOGRAPHIES OF KEYNOTE SPEAKERS AND 1<sup>ST</sup> PANEL (IN ORDER OF PRESENTATION)**



***Ali Zaidi, Associate Director for Natural Resources, Energy, and Science Programs, Office of Management and Budget, the White House***

Ali Zaidi is the White House Office of Management and Budget's Associate Director for Natural Resources, Energy, and Science Programs. In this role, Zaidi leads a team of policy and budget experts overseeing a wide array of policy, budget and management issues across a nearly \$100 billion portfolio and a number of federal agencies including the Departments of Energy, Agriculture, and the Interior; the Environmental Protection Agency; the National Aeronautics and Space Administration; the Army Corps of Engineers' civil works;

and the National Science Foundation.



***Dr. John Holdren, Director, Office of Science and Tech Policy, the White House***

Dr. John P. Holdren is President Obama's Science and Technology Advisor and the Senate-confirmed Director of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy. He is also the Chair (on behalf of the President) of the interagency National Science and Technology Council, Chair of the Arctic Executive Steering Committee, Co-Chair of the National Oceans Council, Co-Chair of the Council on Climate Preparedness and Resilience, and Co-Chair of the President's Council of

Advisors on Science and Technology (PCAST).



***Secretary Sally Jewell, Department of the Interior***

Sally Jewell is the 51<sup>st</sup> Secretary of the Interior, and was sworn in on April 12, 2013. As Secretary of the Interior, Jewell leads an agency with more than 70,000 employees. Interior serves as steward for approximately 20 percent of the nation's lands, including national parks, national wildlife refuges, and other public lands; oversees the responsible development of conventional and renewable energy supplies on public lands and waters; is the largest supplier and manager of water in the 17 Western states; and upholds trust responsibilities to the 566 federally recognized American Indian tribes and Alaska Natives. Prior to her confirmation, Jewell served in the private sector, most recently as President and Chief Executive Officer of Recreation Equipment, Inc. (REI). Jewell joined REI as Chief Operating Officer in 2000 and was named CEO in 2005. During her tenure, REI nearly tripled in business to \$2 billion and was consistently ranked one of the 100 best companies to work for by Fortune Magazine. Before joining to REI, Jewell spent 19 years as a commercial banker, first as an energy and natural resources expert and later working with a diverse array of businesses that drive our nation's economy. Trained as a petroleum engineer, Jewell started her career with Mobil Oil Corp. in the oil and gas fields of Oklahoma and the exploration and production office in Denver, Colo. where she was exposed to the remarkable diversity of our nation's oil and gas resources.



***Peter Colohan, Senior Advisor, Office of the Chief Scientist, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration***

Peter Colohan is a Senior Advisor to the Chief Scientist of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), where he assists NOAA leadership on issues relating to water and drought and in the management and oversight of NOAA's research portfolio.



***Bill Cunningham, Chief of the Office of Groundwater, U.S. Geological Survey***

Bill Cunningham is the Senior Science Advisor for Groundwater at the U.S. Geological Survey and the Chief of the USGS Office of Groundwater. This office oversees the technical and policy aspects of USGS groundwater investigations and data collection activities across the Nation, and develops groundwater tools and techniques.



***Deputy Secretary Mike Connor, Department 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.



***Heiner Markhoff, President and CEO, GE Power & Water***

Heiner Markhoff is President and Chief Executive Officer of GE Water & Process Technologies, a global business that focuses on water-related challenges. Employing approximately 7,500 people and operating in over 100 countries, Water & Process Technologies provides innovative solutions that address water availability and quality while improving customers' productivity and meeting more stringent environmental regulations.



***Manoj Bhargava, Founder, Stage 2 Innovations***

Manoj Bhargava is an entrepreneur and philanthropist, who is the founder and CEO of Living Essentials, and now a billionaire investor in several companies focus on energy and water technology innovation. These companies include Oakland Energy & Water Ventures, Stage 2 Innovations, and Senterra Water. Bhargava has committed to giving away 99% of his \$4 billion dollar net worth and signed Bill Gates' Giving Pledge in 2012.



***Dean Amhaus, President and CEO, Water Council***

Dean Amhaus has served as the first President and CEO of The Water Council since March 2010. The Council’s express purpose is to grow the Milwaukee region into a world hub for water research, education, and economic development. The only organization of its kind in the United States, The Council is coalescing these attributes into a powerful force that is garnering international recognition. The Council’s most significant achievement occurred in September 2013 with the opening of the Global Water Center, of which one of its programs assists water technology entrepreneurs develop their company and expand their commercialization opportunities.



***Newsha Ajami, Director of Urban Water Policy, Stanford University***

Newsha Ajami is the Director of Urban Water Policy with the Water in the West and NSF-ReNUWIt initiatives at Stanford University. She serves as a member of the Bay Area Regional Water Quality Control Board. She is a hydrologist specializing in sustainable water resource management, flood and water supply forecasting, and advancing uncertainty assessment techniques impacting hydrological predictions. Her research throughout the years has been interdisciplinary and impact-driven, focusing on the improvement of the science-policy-stakeholder interface by incorporating social and economic measures and relevant and effective communication.



***Christy Goldfuss, Managing Director, Council for Environmental Quality, the White House***

Christy Goldfuss serves as Managing Director at the White House Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ). CEQ helps to develop the Administration’s environmental and energy policies and initiatives and works closely with Federal agencies to implement them. Christy helps oversee implementation of the President’s Climate Action Plan and works with other White House partners on new strategies to tackle this global challenge. She also leads work to advance the President’s agenda for protecting the lands and waters Americans value. Christy has significant experience as a leader on a range of environmental issues, most recently as Deputy Director of the National Park Service where she helped lead efforts to set and meet strategic goals related to conservation and preservation of America’s natural and cultural heritage. In this capacity, she identified ways to make Federal resources more accessible, including by spearheading the Administration’s “Every Kid in a Park” initiative. Prior to joining the Administration, Christy created and directed the Public Lands Project at the Center for American Progress. Previously, she worked as legislative staff for the House Committee on Natural Resources and as a reporter in Richmond, VA, Reno, NV and Redding, CA.