# POSITION DESCRIPTION

# Commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation, department of the interior

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| **OVERVIEW** |
| Senate Committee | Energy and Natural Resources[[1]](#endnote-1) |
| Agency Mission | The mission of the Bureau of Reclamation is to manage, develop and protect water and related resources in an environmentally and economically sound manner in the interest of the American public.[[2]](#endnote-2) |
| Position Overview | The commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation leads the bureau in the efforts to develop and protect water and resources specifically in the Western region of the United States. The commissioner also acts as a liaison between the bureau and its efforts and the rest of the U.S. government.  |
| Compensation | Level V $145,700[[3]](#endnote-3) (5 U.S.C. § 5316) |
| Position Reports to | Assistant Secretary for Water and Science[[4]](#endnote-4) |
| **RESPONSIBILITIES** |
| Management Scope | The commissioner is responsible for 5,344 employees and a $1.073 billion budget.[[5]](#endnote-5) In immediate communication with the commissioner is the chief of staff and three deputy commissioners Two others report directly to the commissioner: the director of information services and the civil rights division of the bureau.[[6]](#endnote-6) |
| Primary Responsibilities | * Manages, develops and protects water and resources in an environmentally and economically sound manner in the interest of the American public
* Plans and directs the management, engineering and scientific requirements needed to achieve comprehensive solutions to water and related resources issues and problems
* Cooperates with states, local governments and other federal agencies throughout the 17 contiguous Western states of Hawaii, U.S. territories of American Samoa, Guam, the Virgin Islands, the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands, and nationwide by enabling legislation or delegation
* Develops policies which set the overall goals and objectives for the reclamation’s program and ensures those goals are consistent with the administration’s priorities
* Serves as a liaison with bureaus and offices, other executive branch agencies, the Office of Management and Budget, Congress and constituent groups
* Directs all program and policy matters of reclamation[[7]](#endnote-7)
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| Strategic Goals and Priorities | [Depends on the policy priorities of the administration] |
| **REQUIREMENTS AND COMPETENCIES** |
| Requirements | * Prior government experience, whether from Capitol Hill or similar state function (helpful)
* Prior agency experience (helpful)
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| Competencies | * Strong communication skills to communicate well internally within the department, across different agencies and with external stakeholders
* Political savvy and sensitivity
* Willingness to travel
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| **PAST APPOINTEES** |
| Estevan López (2014 to 2017) – Director of New Mexico’s Interstate Stream Commission; New Mexico’s Governor's Representative on Colorado River compact matters; Commissioner to the Upper Colorado River Compact and Canadian River Compact Commissions[[8]](#endnote-8) |
| Lowell Pimley (2014, Acting) – Deputy Commissioner for Operations of the Bureau of Reclamation; Director of the Technical Service Center for the Bureau of Reclamation; Civil Engineer for the Bureau of Reclamation[[9]](#endnote-9) |
| Michael L. Connor (2009 to 2014) – Counsel to the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee; Director of Indian Water Rights Office; Deputy Director of Indian Water Rights Office[[10]](#endnote-10) |

1. Plum Book [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. <https://www.usbr.gov/main/about/mission.html> [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2017 (Public Law 115-31, May 5, 2017), contains a provision that continues the freeze on the payable pay rates for certain senior political officials at 2013 levels during calendar year 2017. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. OPM [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. <https://www.usbr.gov/main/about/fact.html> [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. <https://www.usbr.gov/main/images/br_org_chart.pdf> [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. OPM [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. <https://www.usbr.gov/newsroom/presskit/bios/detail.cfm?recordid=1> [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
9. <http://www.usbr.gov/newsroom/newsrelease/detail.cfm?RecordID=46129> [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
10. <http://www.usbr.gov/history/CommissBios/connor.html> [↑](#endnote-ref-10)