



NEWS

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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INTERIOR SECRETARY TO CALL ATTENTION TO IMPACT OF CLIMATE SHIFTS ON WILDLIFE AND MARINE SPECIES

Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt will offer the keynote address tomorrow at the National Zoo at a conference about climate change and its effect on natural systems and wildlife.

The keynote speech will begin tomorrow at 1:30 p.m. at the Auditorium in the Visitors Center, immediately to the left at the entrance of the Zoo. The National Zoo is located at 3001 Connecticut Avenue, NW, in Washington.

Secretary Babbitt's speech will focus on his responsibilities and observances as principal steward for the more than 400 million acres managed by the Department of the Interior in the United States. Interior lands are primarily managed for the long-term health of watersheds and wildlife, but have been affected by noticeable climate shifts, particularly in Alaska.

"There is no way that we can move the boundaries of Yellowstone National Park if the vegetation that supports its rich diversity of wildlife dies out in that location," Secretary Babbitt explained. "We have seen some changes on Interior lands that give us great concern; vanishing populations of frogs and other amphibians, rapid retreat of glaciers in Alaska and once-abundant food sources becoming unavailable for endangered wildlife populations or marine species. It is impossible to conclude that climate change plays no role in these things."

WHO: Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt

WHEN: Wednesday, October 7, 1:30 p.m.

WHERE: The National Zoo, 3001 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.

WHAT: Keynote speech at conference "Is Climate Changing Where the Wild Things Are?"