Hearing in Front of the United States Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works

Considering the Presidential Nomination of Brian R. Nesvik to serve as the Director of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service

March 26th, 2025

Opening Statement

Good morning Chairman Capito and Ranking Member Whitehouse and members of the committee. I am honored to join you today to discuss my nomination by President Trump to serve as the 19th Director of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service.

I am joined here in person today by my wife Penny, Son Rudy and daughter Aspen and virtually by my daughter Brittany. Additionally, I am joined here in person and virtually by many friends, family and supporters from my home state and across the country.

I have spent the last 38+ years serving my state and country in a variety of roles. I grew up in Wyoming and was blessed by my parents who provided me outdoor experiences at a very young age. I developed an early interest and love for wildlife and the wild places they lived which shaped my life's work. I have worked as a game warden and wildlife manager in the field interacting directly with wildlife and the people who entrusted me to manage their wildlife resources in trust.

I know how to put tire chains on a 4 wheel drive pick up in a snow storm, how to classify mule deer from a helicopter and how to patrol some of America's most remote and wild country on a horse.

And I know how to lead.

I served in the military beginning my career as an enlisted man, starting as a private, training to defend our great nation with my boots muddy and my face

dirty. Serving in uniform is a strong part of our family history. My father and brother both served. Two of my grandfathers fought in World War II.

In my dual careers both as a wildlife manager and Soldier, I earned the privilege to lead and embraced the responsibility that came with that honor. Ultimately, I served as my State's Chief Game Warden and then its Game and Fish Director.

In my military career, I had the incredible opportunity to lead our nation's best and brightest in a variety of roles including on two combat deployments. My military career culminated with my promotion to Brigadier General and the opportunity to command the Wyoming Army National Guard for almost 4 years.

These experiences and opportunities starting in the field and working my way up have prepared me well to work complex, convoluted problems into decisive action in uncertain environments.

I'm proud of my work on big game migration corridors, protecting my state from the scourge of invasive species and working with the public and talented wildlife managers to recover species listed under the ESA.

I am grateful for the people who worked with me toward these ends. I cherished the opportunity to build a strong track record working with ranchers, farmers, sportsmen and women, tribes and all people who care about our natural resources. These people - citizens of our great country – are the ground level of our government and the foundation of the mission of the Service and my personal leadership mission.

Respecting values, building effective teams, communicating candidly and transparently, leading by example, and treating all people with dignity and respect are the core tenets of my leadership commitment.

If confirmed, I will bring these attributes and my continuing dedication to a wider array of Americans and international partners.

Foremost, I will serve the American people and their natural resources - specifically wildlife, fish and plants – and serve with honor and integrity.

Every day, I will lead the employees of the Fish and Wildlife Service. I know firsthand the dedication of these incredible people to their profession and their country. If confirmed, I will execute my charge decisively and work every day to provide the men and women of the Service with the leadership they deserve and the American people expect. I look forward to working with the team to deliver and achieve together and in the best interests of America.

When this committee, its members, other senators, or members of the House need my attention to requests or initiative in informing you, I will be available and prompt.

President Trump's America First agenda includes building a government that better serves the citizens of our country, and there are immediate and transformational opportunities to demonstrate that: improving the Service's interactions with the public, simplifying regulations, accelerating permitting with technology, and relying more on education, voluntary compliance, and verification. I share Secretary Burgum's vision that innovation outperforms regulation. Creative, innovative, purposeful action is a proven hallmark of American success.

President Theodore Roosevelt personified such action as America's earliest and most influential conservationist. His leadership and achievements have long influenced my career in wildlife conservation. His oft-quoted arena metaphor combines thoughtfulness, pragmatism, and courage. If confirmed to enter this arena I will dare greatly.

I am honored by President Trump's nomination and Secretary Burgum's support and am thankful to all of those who have supported my potential appointment.

Thank you again Chairman Capito and Ranking Member Whitehouse. I look forward to answering your questions here today and any you or the members of this committee may submit for the record.