



The Honorable Dirk Kempthorne

A former mayor, United States Senator and a state governor, Dirk Kempthorne took office as the 49th Secretary of the U.S. Department of the Interior on May 26, 2006.

Secretary Kempthorne's vision was to provide stewardship for America with integrity and excellence and he worked vigorously to implement President Bush's ambitious plan to infuse up to \$3 billion into our national parks. During his tenure, Kempthorne improved the lives of American Indians, Alaska Natives and insular residents, protected and restored landscape, ocean and coastal resources, strengthened southwest border law enforcement, protected wild bird habitat and populations and conserved, managed and developed vital water resources.

Immediately before becoming Secretary, Kempthorne served nearly two full terms as Governor of Idaho, elected first in 1998 and reelected in 2002. He guided Idaho through one of the worst economic downturns that the states' have experienced since World War II. He did so while also continuing investment in education, protecting natural resources through expanded state parks and improving the quality of life for all Idahoans through innovative education, health care, and workforce development programs. Kempthorne also worked to develop consensus on management of Idaho's and the West's natural resources, including an innovative Indian water rights settlement that protected water supply and developed new approaches to species protection through state-federal partnerships. He was instrumental in achieving an historic bipartisan four-state agreement to restore salmon to rivers. Following devastating wildfires in 2000, he led the effort to improve federal and state forest health and wildlife management. He helped develop wolf and grizzly bear management plans aimed at delisting the endangered species.

Before his terms as Governor, Kempthorne completed a successful six-year term in the United States Senate (1993-1999). As a Senator, he wrote, negotiated, and won passage of two major pieces of legislation: a bill to end unfunded federal mandates on state, local and tribal governments, and a substantial revision of the federal Safe Drinking Water Act. He also worked to improve the quality of life for American active-duty military personnel, reservists, their families and veterans.

Dirk Kempthorne began public service as the highly successful Mayor of Boise, Idaho (1985-1992). During his seven years in office, he presided over a renaissance in the state's capital city. As a result, Boise experienced record growth and economic development. Boise won numerous national honors and recognitions for quality of life, business climate and family issues.



Secretary Kempthorne has been recognized by his peers as a national leader. As Governor, his colleagues elected him as the Chairman of the National Governors Association in August of 2003. He has served as President of the Council of State Governments and Chairman of the Western Governors Association. He served on the Executive Committees of the National Governors Association and the Republican Governors Association. Secretary of Education Rod Paige appointed then-Governor Kempthorne to the National Assessment Governing Board and Secretary of Homeland Security Tom Ridge appointed him to the Homeland Security Task Force.

Secretary Kempthorne and his wife Patricia are both University of Idaho graduates and have two grown children, Heather and Jeff. They have one grandchild.