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Home > Interior Secretary names new director of Bureau of Ocean Energy Management

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Interior Secretary Sally Jewell named Abigail Ross Hopper as Director of the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) on December 18. Hopper succeeds Acting Director Walter Cruickshank and will be the second director of the agency, following Tommy Beaudreau who left the position in May to be Chief of Staff to Secretary Jewell.

BOEM was formed out of the former Minerals Management Service in the wake of the 2011 Deepwater Horizon oil spill. BOEM oversees oil and gas development and renewable energy development on 1.7 billion acres of federal waters.

As Hopper joins the agency, BOEM faces critical questions on whether to open new waters to oil and gas leases in its 2017-22 leasing plan and whether to move forward with proposed lease sales in 2016 in Alaska's Beaufort and Chukchi Seas. She will oversee 569 employees and a \$170 million budget at BOEM. Hopper currently serves as the Director of the Maryland Energy Administration and oversaw passage of the Maryland Offshore Wind Energy Act of 2013.

Sources: Department of the Interior, E&E News
