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Top Skills

Environmental Awareness
Renewable Energy
Government

David J. Hayes

Former Special Assistant to the President for Climate Policy at The White House; Professor of the Practice at Stanford's Doerr School of Sustainability and Stanford Law School.

Washington DC-Baltimore Area

Summary

David J. Hayes is Professor of Practice at Stanford's Doerr School of Sustainability and Stanford Law School. He served as Special Assistant to the President for Climate Policy at the White House from President Biden's inauguration to November 2022 where he managed a wide-ranging climate portfolio including reducing the greenhouse gas emissions that are causing climate change—with a special focus on reducing methane emissions and deploying nature-based climate solutions; accelerating the transition to a clean energy economy—with a special focus on successful permitting of clean energy projects (e.g., offshore wind; transmission); and organizing the Biden Administration's whole-of-government strategy to improve resilience to climate-related impacts.

In his prior public service, Hayes served both Presidents Obama and Clinton as the Deputy Secretary and COO of the Department of the Interior from 2009 to 2013 and from 1999 to 2001, respectively. As Deputy Secretary, Hayes was the second in command to the Secretary with authority over Interior's 9 major bureaus and 70,000 employees. During his tenure as Deputy Secretary, Hayes led the Department's climate change-related activities, including renewable energy project siting and permitting reforms; Interior's response to the 2010 Gulf oil spill; negotiations in major water conflicts in California and the west; and the \$3.4B Cobell Indian trust fund settlement.

From 2017 to 2021, Hayes was Executive Director of the State Energy and Environmental Impact Center and an adjunct law professor at the NYU School of Law, where he worked with state attorneys general who were advocating for clean energy, climate and environmental laws and policies.

From 2013 to 2017, Hayes was a Visiting Lecturer at the Stanford Law School, where he taught courses on climate change, renewable and conventional energy, environment and natural resources, and wildlife trafficking.

From 1990-97 and 2001-09, Hayes was a partner at Latham & Watkins, where he was Global Chair of the Environment, Land & Resources Department. From 1997-99, he served as Counselor to Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt.

Hayes is on the Board of Directors of the Coalition for Green Capital; a Board member of Vaulted Deep; a former Chair of the Environmental Law Institute; and a member of American College of Environmental Lawyers.

Hayes graduated summa cum laude from the University of Notre Dame; he received his J.D. from Stanford Law School.

Experience

Stanford Doerr School of Sustainability
Professor of the Practice
June 2024 - Present (8 months)

Stanford Law School
Professor of the Practice
January 2023 - Present (2 years 1 month)
Stanford, California

The White House
Special Assistant to the President for Climate Policy
January 2021 - October 2022 (1 year 10 months)

The State Energy & Environmental Impact Center at NYU School of Law
Executive Director
August 2017 - January 2021 (3 years 6 months)
Washington, D.C

The non-partisan State Energy & Environmental Impact Center at the NYU School of Law supports state attorneys general in defending and promoting clean energy, climate and environmental laws and policies.

Stanford Law School

Distinguished Visiting Lecturer at Law

September 2013 - December 2017 (4 years 4 months)

Hayes taught and lectured at SLS on a variety of energy and environmental topics, including energy project siting and permitting issues, international wildlife trafficking, NEPA reform, and Arctic policy.

The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation

Senior Fellow

September 2013 - June 2014 (10 months)

Menlo Park, California

As Senior Fellow, Hayes worked directly with the Hewlett Foundation President, Larry Kramer, and senior staff, providing input on the Foundation's robust environmental program, including on climate change and western conservation matters, and the Foundation's Madison Initiative, which focuses on improving the democratic process.

U.S. Department of the Interior

Deputy Secretary and Chief Operating Officer

January 2009 - July 2013 (4 years 7 months)

Washington D.C. Metro Area

As the Deputy Secretary and Chief Operating Officer of the Department of the Interior, Hayes was the #2 official with overall responsibility for the Department's 70,000 employees and \$12 billion dollar budget. As the COO (by statute), Hayes had oversight over all of the Department's bureaus, including the National Park Service, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Bureau of Indian Education, Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement, Office of Surface Mining, Bureau of Reclamation and United States Geological Survey. Hayes also served as Deputy Secretary and Chief Operating Officer at Dept. of the Interior from 1999-2001. From 1997 to 1999, Hayes served as Counselor to the Secretary of the Interior.

President-Elect Obama Official Transition Team

Team Lead for Obama Transition: Energy and Environment Agencies

November 2008 - January 2009 (3 months)

Washington D.C. Metro Area

Hayes was responsible for appointing, directing, and consolidating input from agency review teams that the Transition inserted in the energy and environmental agencies -- the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of the Interior, the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Energy -- during the post-election, pre-inauguration period.

Latham & Watkins

Partner and Global Chair, Environment, Land and Resources Department

March 2000 - December 2008 (8 years 10 months)

Hayes was a partner and Global Chair of the Environmental, Land and Resources Department at the international law firm of Latham & Watkins, where he practiced from 1990 to 1997 and again from 2000-2008. Hayes maintained a large energy and environmental practice, representing corporations in the energy, technology, transportation and manufacturing fields. Prior to 1990, Hayes was a partner at Hogan & Hartson (now, Hogan Lovells).

Stanford University Woods Institute for Environment

Consulting Professor

September 2007 - August 2008 (1 year)

Stanford, California

World Wildlife Fund

Senior Fellow

August 2007 - July 2008 (1 year)

Education

Stanford Law School

J.D. · (1975 - 1978)

University of Notre Dame

A.B., Government and English · (1971 - 1975)