



OVERSIGHT PLAN | 2024

The Office of Inspector General’s (OIG’s) Office of Audits, Inspections, and Evaluations (AIE) conducts independent oversight of an expansive set of programs and operations in the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI). DOI has a remarkably broad portfolio that includes almost 70,000 employees who manage approximately \$18.7 billion in grants and contracts, \$22 billion in energy and mineral collections, 30 percent of the Nation’s energy resources, and 20 percent of the Nation’s lands. DOI also supplies and manages water in the 17 Western States.¹ In addition, DOI has far-reaching and important trust obligations to American Indians and Alaska Natives. DOI also has obligations to the Insular Areas, including, for example, coordinating Federal policy and providing technical assistance. DOI has 11 bureaus and multiple offices responsible for accomplishing its mission in these and other areas. Our oversight responsibilities are, as a result, equally broad.

AIE currently comprises approximately 120 staff who conduct performance audits, inspections, and evaluations, and perform oversight of mandated audits. In prior years, we have planned our work over a continuing 2-year period; we anticipate that all of the work highlighted in this plan will be initiated in fiscal year (FY) 2024. As such, we designed this plan to be flexible and may modify it during the year to reflect additional information or address other priorities.

Prioritizing Work That Can Lead to Positive Change

DOI’s responsibilities—and consequently, our oversight portfolio—have a significant public impact. We accordingly seek to conduct oversight that has a positive effect on DOI’s programs and operations.

We followed a risk-based, tiered approach in developing this workplan to best focus our resources. We considered (1) DOI’s three major management challenges as we have defined them—managing spending, delivering core services, and ensuring health and safety—and (2) additional factors such as stakeholder priorities, prior work, and emerging threats or vulnerabilities. Using this information, we arrived at nine focus areas for AIE work that we plan to initiate in FY 2024: contract and grant oversight, infrastructure spending, cybersecurity, energy, water and power management, responsibility to Native Americans, climate change response, public health and safety, and workplace culture and human capital. We note that this workplan places special emphasis on the unique risks presented to effective program management when there is a sudden influx of substantial funding.

Focus Areas

-  Contract and Grant Oversight
-  Energy
-  Climate Change Response
-  Infrastructure Spending*
-  Water and Power Management
-  Public Health and Safety
-  Cybersecurity
-  Responsibility to Native Americans
-  Workplace Culture and Human Capital

* Infrastructure Spending includes projects funded by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), the Great American Outdoors Act (GAOA), and other sources.

¹ The Bureau of Reclamation considers the following States to be the “Western States”: Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Dakota, Texas, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming. These States are referred to as the “Reclamation States.”



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Supplemental Funding to DOI

In considering our priority areas, we also assessed how best to use the resources our office received through the IJA and IRA, which provided dedicated funding to OIG for oversight of DOI's spending in these areas.



IRA



GAOA



IJA

Approximately \$47 billion dollars in new funding has been provided to DOI over the past 3 years to address priority areas.

Inflation Reduction Act

**\$6.65
Billion**

Includes funding for:
water management and
conservation efforts in
high-drought areas

Great American Outdoors Act

**\$9.5
Billion**

Includes funding for:
deferred maintenance for
parks, other public lands, and
Indian schools

Plus



annual funding for the Land
and Water Conservation Fund

Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act

**\$30
Billion**

Includes funding for:
water and drought resilience,
wildfire resilience, ecosystem
restoration, Tribal climate
resilience and infrastructure,
legacy pollution cleanup,
and Indian water rights
settlements

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility



In early 2021, various executive orders (EOs) imposed requirements related to diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility issues within Federal agencies, policies, and programs. In April 2022, DOI issued its *Equity Action Plan*, which provides guidance to DOI bureaus and offices in implementing the EOs. Selected projects in our oversight plan will assess compliance with these standards.

DOI Bureaus and Select DOI Offices

Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) • Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) • Bureau of Land Management (BLM) • Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) • Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) • Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE) • Bureau of Trust Funds Administration (BTFA) • U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) • National Park Service (NPS) • Office of Insular Affairs (OIA) • Office of Natural Resources Revenue (ONRR) • Office of the Secretary (OS) • Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSMRE) • U.S. Geological Survey (USGS)



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Supplemental Funding Flash Reports

In recent years, OIG received supplemental funding to conduct oversight related to DOI's IIJA, IRA, and disaster relief programs. In FY 2024, we anticipate preparing a series of flash reports, each focusing on a specific topic:

OIA IIJA and IRA Funding



The IIJA and IRA will provide at least \$24 million to Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands for ecosystem restoration and climate change technical assistance.

FWS Endangered Species Recovery



The IRA provided \$125 million in funding for the purposes of developing and implementing recovery plans under the Endangered Species Act of 1973.

NPS Staffing



The IRA provided \$500 million in funding to hire employees at National Park System units or national historic or national scenic trails NPS administrators.



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During FY 2024, we plan on initiating discretionary reviews of the following:

States' Management of IJA Funds Related to Abandoned Mine Lands Remediation – A Series of Inspections and Audits



At risk: Approximately \$11.3 billion in total IJA funding. • Health and safety of affected residents. • Ability to achieve goals to minimize environmental harm.

States' Management of IJA Funds Related to Orphaned Wells Remediation – A Series of Inspections and Audits



At risk: Approximately \$4.3 billion in IJA funding. • Public health and safety. • Ability to achieve goals to minimize environmental harm. • Other subsurface impacts or land use priorities.

Audit of the Upper Colorado River Commission



At risk: \$125 million in Federal funding. • Reclamation States and other areas experiencing comparable levels of long-term drought.

Audit of Prime Recipients of IRA Funding in the Lower Colorado River System



At risk: \$4 billion in IRA funding for drought mitigation. • Ability to achieve intended drought mitigation goals.

Salton Sea's Restoration and Drought Mitigation Measures



At risk: \$250 million in IRA funding. • Ability to achieve goals related to air quality from airborne particles in the region. • Aquatic habitat upon which fish and bird species rely.

Audit of NPS IRA-Funded Restoration and Resilience Projects



At risk: \$250 million in IRA funding. • Ecosystems and wildlife habitat at risk of future effects from climate change or other threats.

Audit of USGS' Earth Mapping Resources Initiative



At risk: \$320 million in IJA grant funding. • Modernization of the Nation's maps of critical minerals.





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BIA's Missing and Murdered Unit's Efforts to Address American Indian and Alaska Native Cases



At risk: BIA's ability to effectively investigate and coordinate resources for American Indian and Alaska Native missing persons and murder cases. • Evidence collection and storage and complaint intake management.

Indian Schools Inspections



At risk: Health and education of students enrolled in 183 tribally controlled schools and 53 BIE-operated Indian Schools. • Federal Government trust responsibility to Tribes.

Audit of BIA's Administration and Oversight of Acquisition Functions



At risk: \$586 million (FY 2022) awarded in contracts. • Compliance with Indian Economic Enterprises and Indian Small Business Economic Enterprises process, which makes up more than 70 percent of BIA's overall contracts.

Evaluation of DOI's Data Recovery Activities, Operations, and Controls



At risk: Loss, change, or theft of critical or sensitive agency information due to compromised assets.

Inspection of DOI's IT Spending



At risk: More than a billion dollars a year on IT purchases; if incomplete or incorrectly coded, such purchases could contribute to wasteful spending.

Inspection of DOI's Implementation of Active Directory



At risk: Risk of compromise to infrastructure if the active directory is not implemented securely and correctly. • Noncompliance with Federal requirements and industry best practices.

Audit of ONRR's Civil Penalty Program



At risk: Millions of dollars in potential penalties. • Compliance with the Federal Oil and Gas Royalty Management Act of 1982.



Additional Oversight

Potential Additional Discretionary Reviews

We identified the following projects as discretionary work that would appropriately address areas of high risk and high impact. At the time of publication of this plan, however, we were operating under a short-term continuing resolution, which creates uncertainty as to resources available throughout the year. We accordingly designated these three projects as the likely work that we will initiate if we are able to do so.

Audit of BOR’s Construction of the Pojoaque Basin Aamodt Litigation Water Rights Settlement



At risk: \$300 million for the Regional Water System. • Non-Federal stakeholders’ financial contributions.

Controls Over NPS’ Recreation Fee Program



At risk: Recreation fees at cash operating parks. • Public trust in Government.

BOEM’s Offshore Wind Renewable Energy Program’s Planning and Analysis

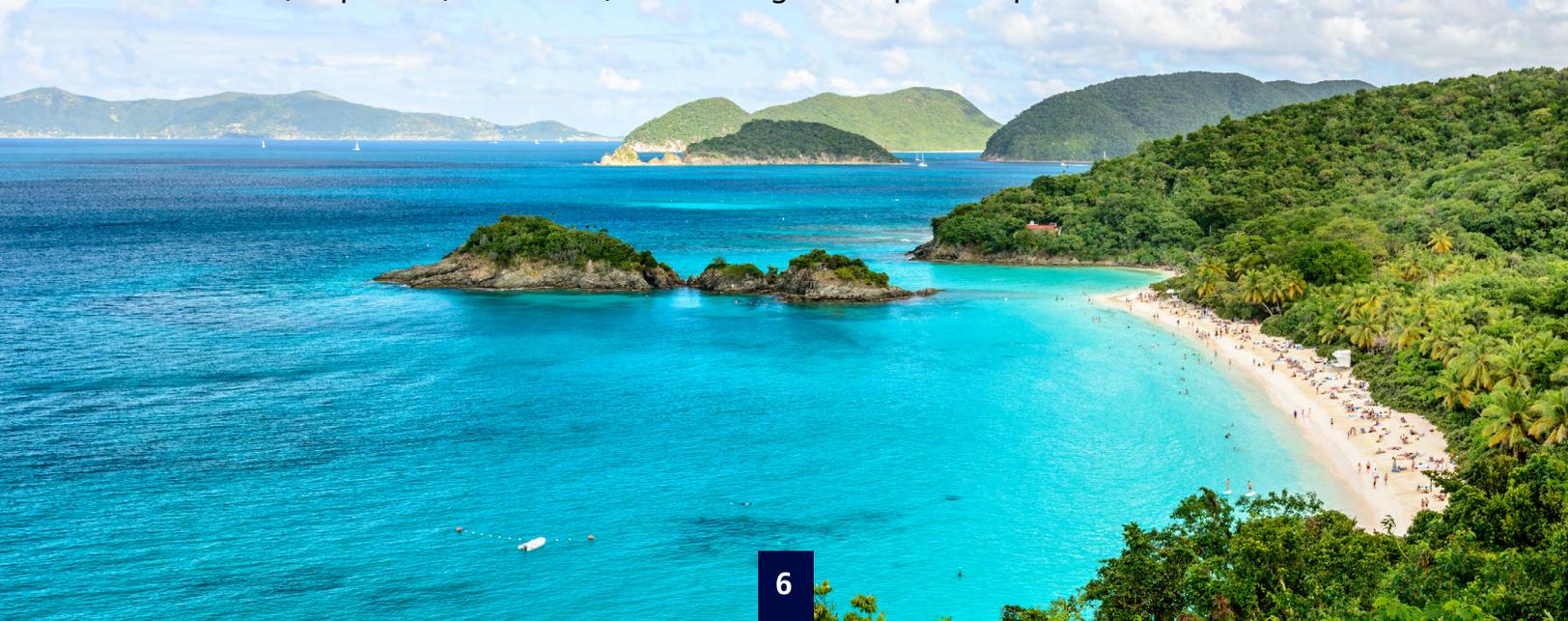


At risk: \$64.5 million in appropriated funds. • Compliance with statutory requirements and goals.

Oversight of Insular Areas

Our office serves as the Government comptroller of Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands; we also have oversight responsibilities regarding the Republic of Palau, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Federated States of Micronesia. In addition to a range of oversight efforts, we emphasize capacity building to promote efficient and effective governance while appropriately using our resources.

As with our other oversight work, this plan is flexible, and we may update it based on emerging priorities and issues. During FY 2024, we anticipate that we will attend and present at the 2024 Association of Pacific Islands Public Auditors Conference and conduct IJA and IRA outreach and review oversight preparedness. We may also conduct periodic virtual training programs on selected audit, inspection, evaluation, and investigative topics and provide technical assistance.





Mandatory and Other Activities

In addition to discretionary work, AIE will also perform the following mandatory or contractual work:

Conduct audits, evaluations, or inspections of:

- ✓ Geospatial Data Act Review
- ✓ BIE's Analysis of the Indian Student Equalization Program
- ✓ Payment Integrity Information Act (Improper Payments)
- ✓ Grants Awarded by FWS' Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program (11 audits in 10 States)

Oversee audits of:

- ✓ DOI Financial Statements
- ✓ BTFA Financial Statements (Special Trustee for American Indians)
- ✓ Federal Information Security Modernization Act

Review and prepare information related to:

- ✓ Statement on DOI Major Management and Performance Challenges
- ✓ DOI Implementation of Government Charge Card Program Recommendations
- ✓ Single Audits

