

To: Peter Culp[pculp@ckblueshift.com]; Ricky Puckett[ricky_puckett@ios.doi.gov]
From: Cason, James
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Thanks for the feedback Pete.

Rick is gathering info on this topic for presentation to senior leadership soon.

On Thu, Feb 16, 2017 at 5:18 PM, Peter Culp <pculp@ckblueshift.com> wrote:

Gentlemen:

Based on some recent conversations with Jeff Klein, my understanding is that you may be among the people thinking through the future direction of the Department of Interior's Natural Resource Investment Center (NRIC). Assuming that's correct, I wanted to offer a couple of thoughts for your consideration from the perspective of a water and natural resources lawyer working out here in the Western U.S; my practice includes work for a range of clients that are trying to put private capital to work to solve water and natural resources problems in the region.

Over the course of my more than 17 years of work with DOI, the opportunity to interact with the staff of the NRIC has been one of the real highlights. Although NRIC is obviously still in its early stages of life, I believe it to be incredibly important to have dedicated individuals within DOI that are actively seeking out opportunities to bring private capital to bear and seek out innovative approaches to project financing. Just as importantly, it is critical to have people within the agency that have an affirmative mandate to look beyond the individual agency and program silos, and who can help to make connections between and among DOI agencies and staff to advance innovative projects. DOI is a big place, and can be hard to interact with from the outside; by combining expertise and people who speak the language of finance with meaningful access to and understanding of DOI capabilities, NRIC has opened a way for people looking to advance new approaches to work more effectively with DOI to get things done.

My interactions with Jeff Klein and Martin Doyle during late 2015 and 2016 led to a whole raft of new ideas and potential investment opportunities that have actively benefited my legal practice and my clients, and both their efforts and their presence at key meetings and gatherings have visibly helped to grow interest within the investment community in opportunities connected to DOI projects and resources. Just to cite a few examples from my own practice, thanks to Jeff's efforts, we have made significant strides on a proposal to develop a network of groundwater recharge facilities that will help to resolve a major conflict

between a federal reserved water right, a U.S. military base, and local community and development interests; this project is being advanced by two of our clients who are proposing to assist with project development and bond financing.

We've also made substantial progress on the development of water market frameworks and supporting technologies in both Nevada and Arizona thanks to introductions that Jeff helped to make. Jeff's efforts to explore potential investment opportunities also substantially informed the design and start-up of the Liquid Assets Project, a new, privately-funded collaborative effort involving two large investment funds, the Nature Conservancy, Trout Unlimited, and others that are working on investments and joint ventures to benefit farm and ranch operations in the Western U.S. while conserving water. Work with Martin Doyle led to an investigation of a potential permit streamlining approach with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers that I believe will ultimately benefit several of our clients working on watershed health improvement efforts. I could list a dozen other examples.

I sincerely hope that DOI continues its support for the Center, and expands this important work over the coming years; I believe it has a critical role to play in solving the natural resource challenges that we are facing in the West.

Please feel free to reach out as appropriate; I would be more than happy to discuss this further if that would be of assistance to you.

Best regards,

Peter

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