

times, and your full participation . . . We owe you a debt of gratitude; and for me, personally, it has helped remind me yet again of what true public service looks like.”

“You are going to be sorely missed in the Department. Your record over the years is incredibly impressive. I hope that you will be able to look back in the years ahead and see how your work lives on in so many ways and for so many millions of people. I am proud to know you and to call you a friend and colleague.”

“This is a huge loss for our community . . . From the fiery speech you delivered at the Great Outdoors America reception in 2011 to your focus on regional energy issues in Alaska, it was refreshing to have such a strong friend of conservation at DOI.”

“I am sad for the public lands and great places in America that you are leaving the Department of the Interior . . . You have been the best possible advocate for everything that is most important to me.”

“It is a big loss for us today in the Obama Administration. We are all so sad to see you go . . . You have a big fan club and will be so sorely missed!”

“You have been a steady, smart, and fun ally and friend throughout. I appreciate you and will miss you during the rest of my time in the Obama Administration.”

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

REMEMBERING DR. CLINTON PATTEA

• Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I would like to acknowledge the passing of longtime tribal leader Dr. Clinton Pattea, the president of the Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation in Arizona.

Dr. Pattea was one of the longest serving Native American public officials in the Nation. Last year—coinciding with the State of Arizona’s centennial celebration—we marked Dr. Pattea entering his 50th year of service to the Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation’s tribal council. While he held a variety of elected posts, including tribal councilman and vice president, most of his time in office was spent serving as the tribe’s president.

President Pattea was a true visionary in his community and throughout Indian Country. He was a strong advocate for the principles of tribal self-governance and Indian self-determination, which over the years helped bring about positive change in the relationship between the Federal Government and all Native Americans.

He was among the first tribal leaders in Arizona to acknowledge the tremendous economic potential that Indian gaming offered his people. Dr. Pattea was a fierce advocate for developing a government-to-government relationship with the State of Arizona and worked tirelessly to spearhead a voter-approved tribal gaming compact that has made Arizona the pinnacle of regulated Indian gaming that we know today.

Over the past 30 years, I have personally witnessed the Fort McDowell Yavapai make tremendous strides as a community, and I attribute much of that success to Dr. Pattea’s leadership.

He directed his tribal government to develop business ventures to help take his community out of poverty; he successfully fought for the Nation’s Federal water rights settlement; and he assembled a tribal government that is among the best examples of a sovereign governing body in the country. Today, the Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation stands as a leader in the Valley of the Sun as well as the United States.

We were fortunate to have been enriched by Dr. Pattea’s passion for public service. His work with the tribal council brought him immense satisfaction. It is fitting that his legacy will continue on through the recently established Dr. Clinton M. and Rosiebelle Pattea Foundation, which will fund tribal scholarships for education, culture, health and wellness programs in his name.

I offer my deepest condolences to the Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation on Dr. Clinton Pattea’s passing. My thoughts and prayers are with his tribal members and his loved ones. ●

TRIBUTE TO COLONEL KEVIN J. WILSON

• Mr. BEGICH. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize and pay tribute to COL Kevin J. Wilson for his exceptional contributions to the Nation as he concludes 30 years of service in the U.S. Army, culminating as commander of the U.S. Army Engineer Research and Development Center. Throughout his Army career, Colonel Wilson has displayed superior leadership, outstanding professional competence and initiative, dedication, and commitment to the welfare of soldiers, civilians, and their families. He has made significant and lasting contributions to the development, training, and leadership of the Army.

Colonel Wilson has performed with distinction in all of his assignments including as the group operations officer for the 555th Combat Engineer Group, the military assistant to the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works while stationed at the Pentagon, the battalion commander of the 249th Engineer Battalion (Prime Power) at Fort Belvoir, VA, the U.S. Northern Command/J-4 Army engineer officer at Peterson Air Force Base, CO, the Commander of the Alaska District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and, most recently, as the commander of the Engineer Research and Development Center.

As commander of the Engineer Research and Development Center, the Department of Defense’s largest multidisciplinary engineering and research center, Colonel Wilson has taken the organization to the highest performance levels with a focus on human capital and positioning the center for dramatic increases in performance and effectiveness. His support of research and development is second to none, and he provides innovative pathways for technology transfer that speeds the inte-

gration of new ideas. Colonel Wilson has also supported the warfighter by equipping both deploying tactical units and the U.S. Army Engineer School with new combat systems and training on the Engineer Research and Development Center’s capabilities.

Colonel Wilson was an extremely effective brigade-level commander in Afghanistan, responsible for all corps operations for Regional Command-South and Regional Command-West. His efforts focused on military construction in support of the buildup of U.S. forces, facilities for the Afghanistan National Security Forces, and water resources and infrastructure projects. While deployed, he coordinated with regional and battlespace commanders, North Atlantic Treaty Organization and coalition partners, Provincial Reconstruction Teams, U.S. Forces-Afghanistan, the U.S. Department of State, the U.S. Agency for International Development, and U.S. and Afghan government agencies and organizations at all levels. During this deployment, he focused on big picture projects such as electricity for Kandahar and critical road infrastructure for Regional Command-S, proving he could successfully integrate the operations of U.S. and coalition partners.

Colonel Wilson was commander of the Alaska District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, where he led 500 personnel, executing military construction, civil works, and environmental programs throughout the State. Due to his drive and foresight, Colonel Wilson’s command was able to execute end-of-year funding to protect Alaska Native villages from coastal erosion. This tremendous feat was recognized by the Alaska Congressional delegation and the Alaska Native community. As commander of the largest geographic and perhaps most complex U.S. Army Corps of Engineers district, Colonel Wilson deftly weaved disparate units into a cohesive team driven to deliver excellent products to its customers, winning four Pacific Air Force Engineer awards and being named the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Project Delivery Team of the Year. Under his leadership, the Alaska District consistently improved its delivery of military construction, civil works, and environmental projects, ensuring they were on time and under budget, routinely winning accolades from customers.

As the U.S. Northern Command/J-4 engineer officer stationed at Peterson Air Force Base, Colonel Wilson was the subject matter expert on Army military construction capabilities, prime power, electrical power systems, and emergency support functions. He served as a trusted member of the Federal Emergency Management Agency disaster response team during several hurricanes, later leading a hurricane conference, from which a pre-scripted request for assistance was developed, to help local officials better understand the assets available during a disaster. As a part of the Joint Planning