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From: Wilcox, Jahan
Sent: Thur 9/21/2017 3:30:35 PM
Subject: APPROVAL: LA Times questions -- civil service

Ex. 5 - Deliberative Process

Background Without Attribution – As Everything Below Is In The Public Domain

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According to career EPA employee Joel Scheraga, he has a great working relationship with EPA employees. “Staff from the EPA’s disbanded climate adaptation office are still doing the same work despite moving to different offices a few months ago, the head of the team told POLITICO. An EPA reorganization finalized last week revealed that the agency followed through with a plan set in in the spring to reassign four climate change adaptation employees to two different sections of the Office of Policy, which is run by Samantha Dravis, a longtime political strategist and top aide to Administrator Scott Pruitt. ‘Unequivocally, the Office of Policy continues to support work on climate adaptation,’ said Joel Scheraga, a veteran EPA employee and the agency’s senior adviser for climate adaptation. ‘Samantha Dravis has asked me to continue working on climate adaptation issues. The bottom line is that climate adaptation work continues.’ ... Scheraga said the agency wants to help make sure that as communities “invest literally billions of dollars in new [water] systems that they in fact are better prepared for these extreme weather events so that they don’t overflow so that they don’t spill raw sewage into our lakes and streams,” for example. ‘We work with the communities to provide them with the information and the tools that they have told us they need to address their needs,’ Scheraga said. ‘They have told us they need to deal with these more intense precipitation events, these storm surges, so that in fact they can continue to protect public health and the environment, again consistent with EPA’s mission to ensure that they continue to protect water quality and can provide safe drinking water.’ ([Politico Pro](#), 09/11/17)

Michael Cox said his retirement was planned before Administrator Pruitt was nominated and confirmed by the Senate. “Cox said his own retirement had been long planned even before Trump’s election, and that he’s not aware of any big exodus of EPA staff from the Seattle office.” ([Seattle Times](#), 04/12/17)

In an email to an EPA colleague, Betsy Southland said she retired because she

found out that she needed to help out with family medical care. “Maybe you did not receive my email about my retirement, but I sent it to you in June as soon as I found out I needed to retire to help out with family medical care.” (NTK Network, Email Obtained By FOIA, 07/26/17)

Betsy Southerland questioned Pruitt’s decision to partner with states to protect the environment. “Southerland questioned Pruitt’s belief that the EPA and federal environmental standards were guilty of ‘running roughshod over states’ rights.” (The Huffington Post, 08/02/17)

Governor Dayton (DFL-MN) praised Administrator Pruitt for working with the states and even said he didn’t want the regional EPA offices micromanaging his state. “Gov. Mark Dayton described a meeting Wednesday with EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt as ‘productive and cordial’ and said he’s hopeful the Trump administration will eliminate some of the federal government red tape dealt to state agencies. ‘We don’t believe we need to be micromanaged by Region 5 in Chicago,’ Dayton said during a news conference following a meeting at the Capitol that lasted more than an hour.” (Minnesota Public Radio, 07/19/17)

According to McClatchy, Congress will move forward with their own budget. “Trump’s fellow Republicans control both chambers of Congress, but even so lawmakers are expected to move forward with their own budget blueprint this spring, as they traditionally have done.” (McClatchy, 03/16/17)

The White House’s Budget no matter who is in power has become increasingly irrelevant as Congress has the power of the purse. “First, no matter who has been in the White House in recent years the president’s budget has become increasingly irrelevant to what, if anything, gets done. This is not Obama-dependent: it has been happening over the past few decades.” (Forbes, 02/01/16)

In 2015, President Obama’s budget received 1 vote. “President Obama’s budget suffered its latest ignominious defeat when the Senate rejected it on a 98-1 vote Tuesday evening, capping off the first votes of the budget season.” (The Washington Times, 03/24/15)

In 2012, not a single person in the Senate or the House voted for President Obama’s budget. “President Obama’s budget suffered a second embarrassing defeat Wednesday, when senators voted 99-0 to reject it. Coupled with the House’s rejection in March, 414-0, that means Mr. Obama’s budget has failed to win a single vote in support this year.” (The Washington Times, 05/16/12)

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell has said that he expects Congress to ignore the budget. “Senate Republican Leader Mitch McConnell has already said he expects the Republican-led Congress to largely ignore the proposal, saying in an interview last week with Bloomberg News that early versions reflected priorities that “aren’t necessarily ours.” (Bloomberg, 05/22/17)

In 2016, Elizabeth Southerland made \$249,000.
(<https://www.federalpay.org/employees/environmental-protection-agency/southerland-elizabeth>, Accessed 07/31/17)

In 2015, Elizabeth Southerland made \$183,300.
(<https://www.federalpay.org/employees/environmental-protection-agency/southerland-elizabeth>, Accessed 07/31/17)

In 2014, Elizabeth Southerland made \$181,500.
(<https://www.federalpay.org/employees/environmental-protection-agency/southerland-elizabeth>, Accessed 07/31/17)

In 2013, Elizabeth Southerland made \$179,700.
(<https://www.federalpay.org/employees/environmental-protection-agency/southerland-elizabeth>, Accessed 07/31/17)

In 2012, Elizabeth Southerland made \$179,700.
(<https://www.federalpay.org/employees/environmental-protection-agency/southerland-elizabeth>, Accessed 07/31/17)

In 2011, Elizabeth Southerland made \$215,640.
(<https://www.federalpay.org/employees/environmental-protection-agency/southerland-elizabeth>, Accessed 07/31/17)

From: Halper, Evan [<mailto:Evan.Halper@latimes.com>]
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