

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Tuesday, March 16, 2010

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Secretary Salazar Conducts “Photo-Op” Border Visit

Fails to acknowledge how DOI’s actions contribute to environmental damage, terrorist threats, human trafficking, drug smuggling

WASHINGTON, D.C. – On Saturday, March 13, 2010, Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar briefly toured Arizona’s southern border. While he can now check the visit off his to-do list, Secretary Salazar has yet to address how the implementation of environmental regulations by Department of Interior land managers are impeding border security efforts and contributing to drug and human trafficking, violent crimes, environmental damage and national security risks.

Last week, National Parks, Forests and Public Lands Subcommittee Ranking Member Rob Bishop (UT-01) [issued four challenges](#) to Secretary Salazar on how to improve border security and protect the environment. Secretary Salazar failed to address any of these challenges during his trip to the border.

“Secretary Salazar recognizes that criminal activity on federal lands along the border is a threat to our security and causes serious environmental damage, but he is completely blind to the direct role his Department plays in this problem. It’s unacceptable for Secretary Salazar to make a trip to the border, which turned out to be nothing more than a photo-op, and fail to offer any real changes or solutions. Immediate action must be taken and I continue to challenge Secretary Salazar to stop blocking Border Patrol access to federal lands, admit DOI’s actions contribute to environmental damage and security threats, stop blocking the construction and siting of electronic surveillance, and end the DOI practice of extorting “mitigation” funds from the DHS,” said Congressman Bishop.

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