

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE REPUBLICANS

CONGRESSMAN DOC HASTINGS, RANKING MEMBER

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Hastings Statement on the President's Ocean Policy Taskforce's Final Recommendations

"Millions of Americans depend on the ocean for their livelihood and the Obama Administration should not implement policies that will cost jobs and further the economic hardships being felt in the Gulf and throughout the country"

WASHINGTON D.C. –House Natural Resources Committee Ranking Member Doc Hastings (WA-04) released the following statement today regarding the final recommendations of the President's Ocean Policy Taskforce:

"These final recommendations will significantly impact the economic and recreational uses of our oceans, ocean lands, and potentially all rivers, tributaries and lands that drain or adjoin our oceans. While better coordination and cooperation between Federal agencies and States would be welcome, these recommendations would unfortunately establish a top-down, Washington, D.C.-based approval process that will hinder rather than promote ocean activities. These recommendations will create a new Federally-controlled system of regional planning bodies that will override local and state zoning authorities as far inland as necessary to 'protect' and 'maintain' ocean and coastal ecosystems. New federal planning groups would be allowed to place 'off-limits' signs on huge portions of our oceans and coasts, seriously curtailing recreational activities, commercial fishing, and all types of energy development – including renewable energy such as offshore wind farms. In addition, all activities that require a Federal permit in the ocean or coastal areas will soon have to meet a new set of 'principles' that will create further confusion and litigation.

"Millions of Americans depend on the ocean for their livelihood and the Obama Administration should not implement policies that will cost jobs and further the economic hardships being felt in the Gulf and throughout the country. These recommendations ignore the need to have a balanced, multi-use policy for our oceans that recognizes the importance of both environmental stewardship and the responsible uses of our ocean resources."

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