



Committee on Natural Resources U.S. House of Representatives

Chairman Doc Hastings

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Members Request Ag Department Report on Cost & Feasibility of Lesser Prairie Chicken Conservation Measures

Department misses 90-day deadline to produce report

WASHINGTON, D.C. – House Natural Resources Committee Chairman Doc Hastings (WA-04), House Agriculture Committee Chairman Frank Lucas (OK-03), and 11 Members of Congress recently sent a [letter](#) to Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack asking for a copy of a report, as required by law, on the cost and effectiveness of the Department’s conservation measures for the lesser prairie chicken.

The Agricultural Act Conference Report, passed by the House in January and signed by the President in February ([P.L. 113-79](#)), requires the U.S. Department of Agriculture to submit the report within 90 days. More than 150 days have elapsed, and the Department has not provided a copy of the report to Congress.

“This report is perhaps even more important now, following the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s (FWS) decision in March 2014 to list the lesser prairie chicken as threatened under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). In our view, it is unfortunate that this listing, driven by the Department of the Interior’s settlement deadline negotiated with certain groups, proceeded despite the FWS’ approval last fall of a comprehensive five-state rangewide plan that is already demonstrating positive results for the lesser prairie chicken,” **wrote the Members in the letter.** *“We request that your Department provide this report immediately to appropriate Committees as required by the law, so that millions of private landowners, states and other stakeholders that are investing significant resources for conservation of this species can ensure that the cost and effectiveness of federal programs are being properly accounted for, and to provide Congress information it requested prior to the listing.”*

[Click here](#) to read a full copy of the letter.

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