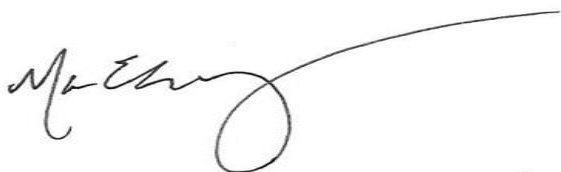


## U.S. House of Representatives

### Committee on Natural Resources

First I would like to say thank you to the Committee for coming to Arkansas to hold a field hearing at Congressman Crawford's request. My name is Marcus Creasy and I am a cattleman from Drasco, AR. I am also the Immediate Past President of the Arkansas Cattlemen's Association. I feel this hearing today is imperative for you to hear directly from the producers affected by US Fish and Wildlife's regulation overreach with designations of Critical Habitat and economic impact studies that are not all inclusive. Many times Critical Habitat designations list cattle as being detrimental to populations of the species listed as well as their habitat. Also many times Critical Habitat designations are expanded to include private property owned by cattlemen even when the primary constituent elements for the listed species' habitat are not present. Prime example would be Critical Habitat for the Yellow Cheek Darter in the 4 forks of the Little Red River and their tributaries above the Greens Ferry Dam. Not only did this designation include language to list cattle ranching as being a negative impact upon species population and habitat, but initially a large percent of the designation was outside the high water marks for these streams while all the primary constituent elements that have to be present for the healthy habitat for species growth is not outside the high water mark. At this point what is the need for the extra acreage to be included in the designation if not for control, and why would the economic analysis not include the negative economic impact from taking this acreage out of production or limiting the land owner's property rights? When we as cattlemen are listed as an adverse modification within the Critical Habitat designation why are those points left out of the economic impact, why are stakeholder meetings not scheduled? These are the questions we have with US Fish & Wildlife's overreaching regulation. We understand they have a job to do, but there needs to be adequate transparency, there needs to be full and thorough economic studies complete on all implications before designation is set, and then open lines of communication with all involved so that designations have minimal impact to the established economy inside the designation while allowing for protection of the species and its habitat. It is hard for us at the end of the day to believe the only impact is agency consultation when cattle production keeps being listed as an "adverse modification", therefore we have concerns with critical habitat designations and believe US Fish & Wildlife should be more transparent with information concerning listing of species and critical habitat designations, more complete with their economic analysis and not just limit economic impacts to agency consultations, and more forthcoming with open lines of communication to stakeholders involvement. Arkansas is a rural state and farming and ranching is still the lifeblood to a large percent of our local communities and their survival, understanding that US Fish & Wildlife has a job to do; it would be nice if they would remember this point. Again on behalf of the cattlemen of Arkansas, I would like to thank the committee for showing their concern of federal agency overreach and hosting this field hearing here today and would also like to thank Congressman Crawford and his staff for standing up for Arkansas Agriculture. I would be more than happy to answer any questions the committee might have, again thank you for allowing me to give testimony.

Marcus Creasy; Arkansas Cattlemen's Association

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Marcus Creasy", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right from the end of the signature.