

U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Natural Resources
Washington, DC 20515

Opening Statement for Chairman Rob Bishop
Committee on Natural Resources
Full Committee Organizational Meeting
February 7, 2017

Welcome to the Committee's organizational meeting for the 115th Congress. I'd like to begin by welcoming our new members to the committee on both sides of the aisle and our returning members. I look forward to working with each of you during this session.

Before we start, I want to briefly reflect on the hard work and achievements of the Committee during the 114th Congress. We held 138 oversight and legislative hearings, 14 markups, passed 118 bills through Committee, 73 passed the House and 28 were signed into law. We also made a priority to travel directly to areas impacted by issues within our jurisdiction, including eight field hearings and site visits. Accomplishments over the past two years include:

- Signing into law the most significant update to federal water policy in decades to improve and expand delivery and storage and help drought stricken communities throughout the West.
- Signing into law bipartisan legislation providing new funding and management authorities to the National Park Service as the agency prepares for the next 100 years.
- House passage of comprehensive federal forestry reforms to restore forest health and mitigate catastrophic wildfire.
- House passage of legislation addressing the federal government's overregulation of Indian lands to promote economic development by Indian tribes and Alaska Native Corporations.
- House passage of bipartisan legislation to improve energy infrastructure on federal lands so that energy can get from where it is produced to where Americans families live in a safe and efficient manner.
- Advancement of legislation addressing critical minerals, Indian water rights settlement agreements, abandoned mine reclamation, fisheries access, vegetative management, modernizing offshore leasing, sportsman reforms, and a range of important land and resource management issues, just to name a few.

The Committee also examined the developing crisis facing the territory of Puerto Rico. These efforts culminated in legislation passing through Congress on a bipartisan basis to help the territory navigate a new path to economic stability. I commend Members on both sides of the aisle for their leadership roles and helping to move this critical effort forward. Continued oversight of this important issue, will most certainly be a priority this Congress as well.

For many of the issue areas advanced last Congress, we've laid the groundwork for future reform this Congress and beyond. I am encouraged with the increased opportunities we'll have to build on these successes with an incoming administration that appears much more willing to work with Congress and actually engage in problem solving on our nation's most critical natural resource and energy needs.

I'm pleased that, in just the first few weeks of this Congress, the Committee has already played an important role to eliminate several overreaching and job-killing rules and regulations finalized in the waning days of the Obama administration utilizing the Congressional Review Act. In the coming months we will be analyzing and developing infrastructure proposals within the Committee's jurisdiction as part of broader legislation in the House and Senate. This isn't just about investment; it's lowering the regulatory burden. Additionally, the Committee will meet its responsibilities under budget reconciliation. We will also begin rolling out various oversight priorities at the subcommittee and full committee levels.

I look forward to continue working with Ranking Member Grijalva, and our new and returning members, on so many important issues. From empowering states, tribes and local communities to enhancing land, water, energy and resource management, the list of things on our Committee's agenda to accomplish is long and the work is important. I am excited for the opportunity we have to bring real change that actually helps people.

With that, I recognize my friend, the distinguished Ranking Member from Arizona, Mr. Grijalva for five minutes.