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Hastings Statement on Obama Admin.'s Proposed Listing of the Lesser Prairie Chicken

WASHINGTON, D.C. – House Natural Resources Committee Chairman Doc Hastings (WA-04) released the following statement regarding U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's proposal to list the Lesser Prairie Chicken as threatened under the Endangered Species Act:

"The Obama Administration's proposed listing of the Lesser Prairie Chicken as a threatened species could have potentially devastating job and economic impacts. The listing would affect five states and could significantly disrupt traditional and renewable American energy production and delivery, as well as agriculture. Energy projects, including renewable wind energy, would be placed in jeopardy, facing inevitable delay and uncertainty due to new layers of regulatory red tape. The proposed listing also ignores the \$50 million in habitat protection activities that states have invested over the past several years for the Lesser Prairie Chicken and creates a disincentive for future cooperative species recovery.

"This proposed listing is a prime example of how the ESA is being driven by litigation instead of science. The Lesser Prairie Chicken was one of hundreds of species included in a settlement agreement between the Department of the Interior and litigious environmental organizations. Closed-door negotiations with high-paid lawyers whose fees are being subsidized by American taxpayers are not the proper way to make decisions on species listings and set a dangerous precedent that will have widespread impacts on job creation, economic growth and energy security."

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