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Opening Statement By
Chairman Doug Lamborn
Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources
At the Oversight and Legislative Field Hearing on
“Federal Geospatial Spending, Duplication and Land Inventory Management”
and on H.R. 4233 (Lamborn), *Map It Once, Use It Many Times Act* and
H.R. 1620 (Kind/Bishop of UT), *Federal Land Asset Inventory Reform Act of 2011*
Thursday, May 3, 2012 in Colorado Springs, CO

Thank you everyone for being here today. I'm Congressman Doug Lamborn, and I am Chairman of the House Natural Resources Committee Energy and Mineral Resources Subcommittee. We are here today to hear testimony on *“Federal Geospatial Spending, Duplication and Land Inventory Management”* and H.R. 4233, the *Map It Once, Use It Many Times Act* and H.R. 1620, the *Federal Land Asset Inventory Reform Act of 2011*; two pieces of legislation designed to address the issues laid out in the oversight portion of this hearing.

Just last week the Bureau of Land Management celebrated the 200th anniversary of the “General Land Office” currently housed at their Eastern Division office in Springfield, Virginia. I'd like to share part of what the BLM had to say about the General Land Office:

“The General Land Office was established April 25, 1812 to handle the business associated with the sale of public lands for private ownership, transforming wilderness to agricultural use, and generating income for the Federal government. The [General Land Office], in fact, became the “Gateway to Land Ownership” for millions of people. In 1946, the [General Land Office] and the U.S. Grazing Service merged to create the BLM under the U.S. Department of the Interior to manage the public lands for the benefit of current and future generations.”

Some of the problems, the legislation we are discussing today, seeks to address are in fact a result of the early mapping techniques employed by the General Land Office and other federal agencies that may have been state of the art 200 or even 50 years ago but have been overtaken by modern technology and practices.

For example, monuments – rock piles or blazed trees - used to mark corners and other boundaries may be long gone necessitating that the parcels in question be re-surveyed.

The March 3, 1879 organic act for the United States Geological Survey also contains mapping provisions including requiring the agency to conduct "the classification of the public lands and examination of the geological structure, mineral resources, and products of the national domain."

Other federal agencies and Departments also have mapping programs important to meet their mission – these agencies might include the Department of Transportation, Department of Agriculture, the Defense Department, or even the Department of Commerce to name a few.

Sometimes the agencies are mapping the same area not once but maybe two or three times over rather than sharing information or coordinating to make sure all the geospatial requirements to meet a group of agencies needs be collected in one survey contract.

In other instances agencies are acquiring equipment – such as planes, ships or computer equipment – instead of contracting with private sector companies that are set up to conduct state of the art geospatial surveys.

In fact my state of Colorado is proud to be home to many outstanding geospatial and mapping companies and surveyors ready and willing to work with the federal government to meet their geospatial surveying requirements.

Using the private sector for this purpose leaves more resources for infrastructure projects such as highways, airports and addressing the maintenance backlog in our National Parks and other federal facilities.

H.R. 4233, the *Map It Once, Use It Many Times Act* seeks to address duplication of geospatial data acquisition by federal agencies and geospatial infrastructure between federal agencies and the private sector. While, H.R. 1620, the *Federal Land Asset Inventory Reform Act of 2011* requires the Secretary of the Interior to develop a multipurpose cadastre (an inventory) of federal land to assist with federal land management, resource conservation, environmental protection, and uses of the land.

I want to welcome the witnesses and I look forward to their testimony.