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**Committee on Natural Resources**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

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**Opening Statement of**  
**The Honorable Tom McClintock**  
**Before the Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests and Public Lands**  
**Oversight Field Hearing on**  
***“Restoring Public Access to the Public’s Lands:***  
***Issues Impacting Multiple-use on Our National Forests”***  
**Monday, September 19, 2011 at 10:00 AM PT**  
**Sacramento, California**

Gifford Pinchot, the founder of the U.S. Forest Service, gave a series of lectures at the Yale School of Forestry from 1910 to 1915, in which he propounded maxims for the (quote) “Behavior of Foresters in Public Office.” Among them:

- A public official is there to serve the public and not run them.
- Public support of acts affecting public rights is absolutely required.
- It is more trouble to consult the public than to ignore them, but that is what you are hired for.
- Find out in advance what the public will stand for. If it is right and they won’t stand for it, postpone action and educate them.
- Get rid of an attitude of personal arrogance or pride of attainment or superior knowledge.

Since taking office, I have been inundated with citizen complaints over conduct amounting to the very opposite of Pinchot’s maxims. I want to thank Chairman Bishop and the sub-committee for responding to these complaints and coming to Sacramento to hear firsthand from the people directly victimized.

We will hear about a multitude of exclusionary policies adopted by the current administration including:

- Imposing inflated fees that are forcing the abandonment of family cabins held for generations;
- Shutting down long-established community events upon which many small and struggling mountain towns depend for tourism;

- Expelling long-standing grazing operations on specious grounds – causing damage both to the local economy and the federal government’s revenues;
- Closing long-used roads, many of which are parts of county road systems essential to local residents and even obstructing county efforts to provide maintenance from local budgets to keep those roads open.
- Obstructing the sound management of our forests, creating both severe fire dangers and chronic unemployment. For example, the Forest Service has dramatically reduced its Timber Harvest Target and then boasts they’re going to achieve 90 percent of their reduced target.

During this hearing, we will also hear the usual excuses by activist political groups supporting these policies. It is important to understand the context of their assurances.

For example, after doing everything possible to discourage motorized access to our forests, the activists now cite decreased motorized use of our forests as evidence the public has lost interest and they are merely responding to changing demand.

After imposing punitive new conditions on routine events with the obvious intention of shutting them down, the activists tell us that they’re merely trying to assure the victims of these punitive conditions pay for them.

After driving out cabin owners and grazing operations with cost-prohibitive fees, we’re told they’re just trying to reflect market conditions, raising the question, if these are market rates, why aren’t the cabin sites and grazing lands being re-leased?

We’re told they have to shut down forest roads for lack of funds, yet as we will hear, their policies are to actively obstruct local communities seeking to use their own funds to maintain these vital roads.

Frankly, I believe the sophistries in the written testimonies submitted to this subcommittee by the administration and these so-called environmental advocacy groups border on intellectual dishonesty.

I do want to acknowledge that there have been some improvements over the last few months and I want to thank Randy Moore for what he has done to produce them.

For example, the Forest Service has removed inflammatory leftist anti-grazing propaganda from official Forest Service plaques within the Tahoe National Forest and local officials are reporting that consultation by the Forest Service has improved to a limited extent.

However, these are exceptions. The sum total of these policies clearly seems more in line with the radical leftist agenda to drastically limit any human presence from vast tracts of public land, an objective antithetical to the original aims of the U.S. Forest Service and hostile to the values and principles of any free society.

The preservation of our forests for future generations does not mean closing them to the current generation.

I believe that the vast timber, land and recreational assets administered by the U. S. Forest Service represent a limitless and renewable source of prosperity for our nation and for our local economies, a portion of which can then be redirected to assure the maintenance and preservation of the national forest lands for the use, enjoyment and prosperity of the American people in perpetuity. Or, as Gifford Pinchot envisioned, "To provide the greatest amount of good for the greatest amount of people in the long run."