

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Friday, February 26, 2010

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Republicans Request Missing Pages and Documents on Administration's Targeting of New Monument Designations

WASHINGTON, D.C. – House Natural Resources Committee Ranking Member Doc Hastings (WA-04); National Parks, Forests and Public Lands Subcommittee Ranking Member Rob Bishop (UT-01); and 14 Members of Congress sent a [letter](#) today to Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar requesting further information related to an [internal DOI document](#) that revealed the Administration is considering designating numerous new National Monuments that would lock up at least 13 million acres of land.

Secretary Salazar has publicly said that there is “*no secret agenda*” and wants to have a “*public dialogue*.” Therefore, the Department should be willing to answer questions regarding the exact undertakings and status of the potential Monument designations, as well as what outside group and individuals have been involved in the secret planning.

“If this internal document had not been exposed, Americans would still be in the dark about the Obama Administration’s potential plans to lock up millions of acres of land across the West,” said Hastings. “While Secretary Salazar says that the discussions are just ‘preliminary,’ no assurances have been given that the President will not designate these monuments. When you catch someone in the kitchen in the dark of night with their hand in the cookie jar, it’s very hard to believe they’re just checking to see what’s inside and that no cookies were just about to get eaten. The communities and those workers whose jobs could be directly affected by the locking up of these lands deserve to see a full picture of what was happening inside their government. We’ve asked for copies of documents relating to the planning, which includes coordination with outside groups, and all of the missing pages from the document we uncovered last week.”

“Western communities and residents that stand to be affected by these proposed monument designations have the right to know what the Administration is planning with regards to the future of millions of acres of both public and private lands throughout the West,” said Bishop. “Despite the DOI’s statements that the initial documents are simply ‘drafts,’ the American people deserve to know the full extent of the planning as well as the involvement of all outside parties. If the DOI is confident that it is operating with the utmost transparency then they should have no problem providing these documents expeditiously. However, given the number of congressional document requests made to DOI this past year that remain unfulfilled, I am not holding my breath.”

In the letter, the Members request the following additional information from Secretary

Salazar:

1. All pages of the “Internal Draft” document of which we obtained only pages numbered 15 to 21.
2. With regard to the “brainstorming,” a copy of any documents distributed at or in preparation for the meetings, a list of all participants or invitees, any notes taken at the meeting (s), and any memoranda, work product or follow up documents from the meeting(s). All records, electronic or otherwise, of meetings or discussions with private groups, individuals or other persons or entities that are not employees of the Department of the Interior where potential National Monument designations were discussed. All notes, agendas, memoranda or documents from those meetings.
3. All documents related to the Secretary’s initiative to compile a list of potential National Monument designations since July 1, 2009, including, but not limited to, maps.
4. Any communication with any person or entity outside of the Department of the Interior related to the Secretary’s initiative since July 1, 2009.

Background

The letter was signed by the following Members:

Congressman Doc Hastings (WA-04)	Congressman Rob Bishop (UT-01)
Congressman Tom McClintock (CA-04)	Congresswoman Cynthia Lummis (WY)
Congressman Doug Lamborn (CO-05)	Congressman Wally Herger (CA-02)
Congressman Don Young (AK)	Congressman Jason Chaffetz (UT-03)
Congressman Dean Heller (NV-02)	Congressman Pete Sessions (TX-32)
Congressman Greg Walden (OR-02)	Congressman Scott Garrett (NJ-05)
Congressman Jeff Flake (AZ-06)	Congressman John Campbell (CA-48)
Congressman Denny Rehberg (MT)	Congressman Mike Simpson (ID-02)

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