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Chairman Hastings Questions Interior Department on Potentially Economically Devastating Sage-Grouse Endangered Species Listing

WASHINGTON D.C. – House Natural Resources Committee Chairman Doc Hastings (WA-04) today sent a letter to Department of the Interior Secretary Ken Salazar and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Director Dan Ashe raising concerns of scientific integrity and the imposition of arbitrary deadlines surrounding the decision to potentially list the sage-grouse under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). The letter requests detailed documents and information concerning the science supporting sage-grouse listing, the planning strategies for sage-grouse conservation, the Obama Administration’s lack of deference to state conservation and other information that has resulted from the Obama Administration’s 2011 closed door, multi-species ESA settlement with litigious groups.

[Click here](#) to read the letter.

“This potential listing of the sage-grouse could restrict grazing, farming, mining and energy production on as much as 160 million acres throughout eleven Western states. There are as many as 98 separate planning strategies under consideration in 68 various areas in several states, and the [U.S. Fish and Wildlife] Service has set dozens of self-imposed deadlines to publish and finalize proposed planning strategies,” wrote Chairman Hastings. “It is concerning that this significant project, which describes as its strategic vision to preclude the need to list sage-grouse, has instead become the latest example of the Department’s agenda being driven by litigation, closed-door settlements and court deadlines, rather than guided by sound science and the best available data and information.”

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