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DOI Continues to Withhold Missing Documents Regarding National Monument Designations

"If the Administration truly has nothing to hide, then show the public all the documents."

WASHINGTON D.C. – Over two months after Republicans [requested](#) missing pages and information regarding the Obama Administration's "Treasured Landscape" document that details plans to designate new national monuments, the Department of Interior (DOI) last night released just 383 pages of emails.

The emails simply raise more questions about these potential designations, while failing to provide any substantial information regarding the Administration's plans.

Items of note:

- **While DOI released 383 pages, they are purposely withholding at least 2,016 pages of documents.**
- **DOI refuses to turn over ALL the pages of the "[Internal Draft](#)" document of which only pages numbered 15 to 21 have been revealed.** DOI is not only withholding the first 14 pages, but also any pages that likely come after page 21.
- **DOI did not release attachments seen and referenced in the emails.** They did however release an attachment of the Republican letter to the Secretary requesting the documents. In fact, of the 383 pages they provided, at least seven of them were letters and emails from Committee Republicans requesting the documents.
- **The emails reveal that other DOI agencies including the National Park Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Bureau of Reclamation were involved in contributing to this document.** In an email, BLM officials confirm that there are other sections of the document that have not been released. (See Email #1)
- **The Department of Interior claims that this document was "very preliminary" and the result of a "brainstorming session," yet the emails show that Secretary Salazar received presentations of bureau proposals as far back as October 2009.** (See Email #2)
- **Secretary Salazar has said "that there is no direction from the White House on**

any of this,” yet the Department was discussing meeting with the White House on the topic last November. (See Email #3) This raises questions about whether the White House was aware of this document and the extent of their involvement.

Today, the House Natural Resources Committee will markup [H. Res. 1254](#), a Resolution of Inquiry directing the Secretary of the Interior to transmit to the House of Representatives specific information relating to potential National Monuments designations. The Resolution was introduced by Ranking Member Doc Hastings (WA-04) and National Parks, Forest and Public Lands Subcommittee Ranking Member Rob Bishop (UT-01) following the Department of Interior’s (DOI) [refusal](#) to cooperate with previous [written requests](#) for additional information.

The Resolution has received strong support from the [U.S. Chamber of Commerce](#) as well as the [American Motorcyclist Association](#).

“I’m hopeful that my Democrat colleagues on the Committee will help ensure government transparency and accountability by doing everything within the Committee’s power to obtain these missing documents from the Interior Department,” said Hastings. “It’s highly suspicious that after more than two months the Interior Department can’t produce one additional page from the Treasured Landscape document to support the Administration’s [claim](#) that the internal documents are merely products of brainstorming sessions and bear no real consequences. On too many occasions we have seen this Administration say one thing and follow up with actions that are entirely contradictory to its words. If the Administration truly has nothing to hide, then show the public all the documents.”

Background

Republicans are concerned that 13 million acres of Western land will be put under lock and key without any Congressional or public support, much like the Clinton Administration’s [dark of night](#) use of the Antiquities Act to create Grand-Staircase Escalante National Monument in Utah.

House rules provide that the Democrat Majority on the Committee has 14 legislative days to report the Resolution of Inquiry or it can be brought to the Floor of the House of Representatives for a vote as a Privileged Resolution.

The Resolution of Inquiry seeks the information requested in the [February 26, 2010 letter](#) as well as additional information on potential DOI land actions.

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