

Chairman Rob Bishop
Opening Statement
Full Committee Markup
April 26, 2017

Today, the Committee will consider a range of bills to protect and improve our nation's water and power infrastructure, spur job creation and increase economic growth.

The Committee has spent the past months reviewing regulatory barriers to support infrastructure across jurisdictions at the subcommittee level. These bills represent one part of the Committee's contributions to broader infrastructure legislation being developed in the House and Senate. We anticipate reviewing additional legislation in the coming weeks.

Water and power infrastructure measures to expand hydropower generation, create greater water supply and enhance storage include:

- HR 1654, the "*Water Supply Permitting Coordination Act*," introduced by Congressman McClintock, is designed to improve permitting efficiency for non-federal water storage facilities. The bill creates a "one-stop-shop" permitting process through the Bureau of Reclamation to streamline the current multi-agency permitting processes for new or expanded surface storage facilities.

- HR 1967, the *Bureau of Reclamation Pumped Storage Hydropower Development Act*, introduced by Congressman Lamborn, is designed to alleviate regulatory confusion over pumped water storage development while also stimulating hydropower development in seventeen western states.
- H.R. 660, the *Bureau of Reclamation Transparency Act*,” introduced by Congressman Gosar, is a bipartisan bill that requires the Secretary of the Interior to keep Congress apprised through regular reports detailing rehabilitation efforts and needs at Bureau of Reclamation facilities.
- H.R. 1873, the “Electricity Reliability and Forest Protection Act,” introduced by Congressmen Doug LaMalfa and Kurt Schrader, is a bipartisan bill to promote federal land management agency consistency, accountability, and timely decision-making as it relates to protecting electricity transmission and distribution lines on federal lands.

Specifically, the bill provides streamlined processes for the removal of hazardous vegetation adjacent to power line rights-of-way, enhancing the safety and reliability of our nation's electricity grid and protecting taxpayers from costly wildfires and avoidable blackouts.

In addition, we will consider several more targeted measures, including bipartisan land transfer bills and legislation to improve electricity transmission and distribution on federal lands:

- H.R. 220, introduced by Congressman Don Young, provides a timely solution to an urgent need to expand clean, domestic energy resources at Terror Lake in Alaska.
- H.R. 497, introduced by Congressman Paul Cook, is a bipartisan bill to spur infrastructure development and water and habitat conservation in the San Bernardino Valley.

Finally, we will consider legislation introduced by Congressman Sablan, H.R. 2085, to approve a Compact of Free Association Review Agreement between the United States and the Republic of Palau.

With these bills, we have the opportunity to cut through the insanely long permitting timelines and eliminate some of the endless bureaucratic red tape that inhibits critical, job-sustaining infrastructure projects. This slate of bills help achieve this end. I appreciate our colleagues' work on these measures and look forward to passing these and finding ways to advance similar work in other areas in the weeks ahead. I yield back.