

Statement of Chairman Rob Bishop
Committee on Natural Resources
Full Committee Markup
September 9, 2015

Today, the Committee on Natural Resources will consider several good pieces of legislation, a number of which will be advanced by unanimous consent.

I want to focus my remarks on three important bills that respond to the Obama Administration's aggressive regulations and the damaging impacts they have on private property, energy, coal and mining jobs and rural economies, and the ability of tribes to develop energy on their own lands.

H.R. 2130, sponsored by Congressman Thornberry of Texas, prevents the Bureau of Land Management from illegally claiming tens of thousands of acres along 116 miles between Oklahoma and Texas

legally owned by private citizens who have paid taxes on the land for decades.

This bill would alleviate the clouded title on much of these lands by requiring BLM to commission a new survey, conducted by licensed state land surveyors along the entire stretch of contested land along the Red River between Oklahoma and Texas using the proper U.S. Supreme Court-approved survey method. It also would require BLM to sell off the surface rights of the remaining publicly owned land at fair market value after the proper boundary line is located and settled. The Committee approved a similar bill last Congress, and I'm pleased that today we'll help efforts to resolve this long-standing problem.

H.R. 538, sponsored by Congressman Young, would streamline burdensome federal regulations that currently block or stall development of Native American energy projects on tribal lands. Supported by the National Congress of American Indians, member

tribes and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, this bill increases economic opportunities and jobs for impoverished tribes through energy development of natural resources on tribes' own lands.

H.R. 538 also discourages frivolous litigation that now undermines tribal energy projects from moving forward. A similar bill passed this Committee by a voice vote in 2012. This is a common sense bill that should move forward.

Finally, H.R. 1644 is a critical bill sponsored by Mr. Mooney that would stop the Interior Department's Office of Surface Management from finalizing its 1,200 plus page job-killing "Stream Protection rule." OSM released the rule after six years behind closed doors, costing \$10 million in taxpayer dollars. The OSM's rule, much like other Interior Department proposals, lacks available, transparent, current data or science to justify the rule. This runs counter to the Administration's pledge to be the 'most transparent' in history.

This bill, and the Amendment in the Nature of a Substitute that Mr. Mooney will offer, would halt final issuance until the rule undergoes an independent scientific peer review by the National Academy of Sciences. It would require publication of actual data used for the rule and future regulatory actions by OSM, respecting personal, private or trade secret material. It also clarifies OSM's proper mission, rather than allowing unauthorized enforcement of the Endangered Species Act, the Clean Water Act or any other statute not within its statutory or regulatory jurisdiction.

Lastly, I want to acknowledge H.R. 1541, the PRISM Act sponsored by Ranking Member Grijalva. This bill would amend the National Historic Preservation Act to allow colleges and universities with a high enrollment of Hispanic students access to a grant program that encourages student involvement in historic and cultural research projects. More than 350 U.S. Hispanic-serving Institutions will receive equal access to funding already available to other Minority-serving

Institutions. This is a simple change to current law that has bipartisan support and that I am also happy to support.

I appreciate the work of my colleagues in introducing these bills and the others we'll consider today to benefits American private property owners, states, tribes, and our nation's economy.