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Chairman Hastings' Statement on President Obama's Final Plan to Zone the Oceans

WASHINGTON, D.C. – House Natural Resources Committee Chairman Doc Hastings (WA-04) released the following statement after President Obama released the final implementation plan for the National Ocean Policy and mandatory ocean zoning initiative.

“This final implementation plan raises more questions than answers and provides even less information on what the Obama Administration will impose under the guise of a National Ocean Policy. What is certain is that this policy represents a significant step towards the mandatory zoning of our oceans and is a backdoor attempt to control the way inland, coastal and ocean activities are managed. If implemented, it will inflict red tape and economic damage both onshore and offshore across a wide-range of activities including agriculture, fishing, construction, manufacturing, mining, oil and natural gas, and renewable energy.”

“Over the past two years, the Natural Resources Committee has repeatedly attempted to obtain information on the development, legal authority, regulatory burdens, staffing, and funding sources of this policy. These questions, and many others, remained unanswered.”

“As the Congressional Committee tasked with overseeing our nation's oceans, it is imperative that the Obama Administration provide us this long-requested information and act in an open and transparent manner. I look forward to addressing these issues with Chairwoman Sutley at this Thursday's budget hearing.”

Background

On July 19th, 2010 President Obama signed Executive Order 13547 to adopt the final recommendations of the Interagency Ocean Policy Task Force to implement a new National Ocean Policy, which includes a mandatory Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning initiative to “zone” the oceans. In this unilateral action, he established a top-down, Washington, D.C.-based approval process that will hinder rather than promote ocean and inland activities and cost American jobs. Due to concerns about the impact of the National Ocean Policy on economic and recreational activities in ocean, coastal, and inland environments, the House of Representatives in both the 112th and 113th Congresses passed amendments by

bipartisan votes to halt funding for President Obama's National Ocean Policy.

The Natural Resources Committee has held multiple hearings to conduct oversight and get answers to the many questions surrounding this policy. On Thursday, April 18, the Committee will host Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Chairwoman Nancy Sutley at a budget hearing. Visit the Natural Resources Committee's Ocean Zoning information [page](#) for more information.

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