

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Opening Statement of
Chairman Rob Bishop
On Wednesday, January 28, 2015, at 9:45 a.m
1324 Longworth House Office Building
Full Committee Organizational Meeting

I want to welcome you all to the organizational meeting of the Committee on Natural Resources Committee for the 114th Congress. I'd like to begin by welcoming all of our new members to the committee on both sides of the aisle along with our retuning members. It is truly an honor to serve as Chairman, and I look forward to working with each of you during this session. With your help, I expect our Committee to advance many issues and priorities that are important to both for our districts and for the nation as a whole.

Over the next two years we will conduct oversight and advance policies that will:

- (1) Encourage responsible development of our domestic energy resources, both onshore and offshore;
- (2) Allow for better management, utilization and expanded public access of Federal lands, parks, forests, fisheries, oceans and waters;
- (3) Promote greater collaboration with state, tribal, insular and local government partners that are already successfully managing their resources; and
- (4) Closely examine and reduce the burdensome regulatory overreach of the federal government on Americans' lives.

Despite recent rhetoric from the President touting an uptick in the economy and energy production largely on private lands, the Obama Administration is significantly ramping up regulations and other actions that are adversely impacting the U.S. economy.

According to the Competitive Enterprise Institute, this Administration issued over 3,500 final rules *during last year alone*, with hundreds more proposed just since the beginning of this year, including, most recently, closing off access to tens of millions of acres to energy exploration in Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and significant portions of the Outer Continental Shelf.

National resources, including energy resources, are going untapped and unmanaged. All of this comes at the expense of a rising national debt, now above \$18 trillion, and lost economic opportunities for local communities. Given this week's report for Congressional Budget Office, we need to be planning for our long term debt crisis.

The jurisdiction of this Committee impacts not only western states like Utah, where 67 percent of the land is owned by the Federal government, but also the Mid-west, the Gulf, New England and every state, local entity, tribe and even private property across this country within the reach of excessive federal regulations and red-tape.

All issues previously under the Committee's jurisdiction will remain priorities. We have, however, re-organized the subcommittees to create more efficient administration of the committee's work, and created a new subcommittee with the sole purpose of reviewing federal regulations and the implications of thousands of recent executive branch natural resource-related policies and actions.

In addition, because the National Environmental Policy Act and the Endangered Species Act affect every sector of the American economy and also every subcommittee, these two issues will be handled at the full committee level.

Our proposed oversight plan reflects these general objectives and priorities. We are also proposing modest changes to make our Committee rules consistent with House rules, and a policy to encourage participation and more orderly markups of legislation and issues before our Committee this Congress.

Having served alongside my Ranking Member for over eight years at the subcommittee level, I look forward to our work together at the full committee level. While we may not agree on every issue, I know he shares my view that we can disagree without being disagreeable. That is the standard for honest and open discussion. We have much to accomplish this Congress, and I am looking forward to areas we can work together and a mutual respect for different, and at times, passionate points of view.

With that, I recognize my friend, the distinguished Ranking Member from Arizona, Mr. Grijalva for five minutes.