



# Committee on Natural Resources U.S. House of Representatives

Chairman Doc Hastings

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## House Approves Bipartisan Measure to Protect Water Rights

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – Today, the House of Representatives approved H.R. [3189](#), the *Water Rights Protection Act* by a bipartisan vote of 238-174. This bipartisan bill, authored by Natural Resources Committee Member Scott Tipton (CO-03), protects private property rights from recent federal overreach that threatens to take water supplies from recreation businesses, ranchers, cities and towns, and local conservation efforts. This important legislation would stop the federal government from demanding citizens and businesses turn over their privately owned water in order to qualify for a federal permit or lease.

*“Water is the lifeblood of communities and essential for a strong economy. Cities, ranchers, farmers, businesses – along with the jobs they support – all depend on a stable supply of water to survive,” said Natural Resources Committee Chairman Doc Hastings (WA-04). “For over a century there have been established laws upholding a state’s right to manage its water and water laws. But now the Obama Administration is threatening to undermine those laws and seeking to take away private water rights governed under state laws. It’s time for the Legislative Branch to exert itself on behalf of the American people and rein in the imperial overreach of the Executive Branch. No law gives federal agencies the authority to take private water rights as they’re seeking to do – in fact, the Constitution prohibits such takings. It’s time to put an end to such tactics.”*

*“The Water Rights Protection Act is the result of bipartisan efforts that began in October 2011 and encompass testimony from Congressional hearings, conversations with stakeholders from across Colorado and the West, and close collaboration with my colleagues on the Natural Resources Committee in order to protect state-recognized water rights,” said Congressman Scott Tipton (CO-03). “Water is the lifeblood of the Western United States and all water users including grazers, ski areas, businesses and municipalities need certainty that all federal land management agencies, not just the Forest Service, are prohibited from future attempts to take privately held water rights. The Water Rights Protection Act offers a sensible approach that preserves water rights and the ability to develop water requisite to living in the arid West. I thank my House colleagues for joining me today in passing this important bill, and urge our colleagues over in the Senate to take swift action to do the same.”*

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