



Committee on Natural Resources U.S. House of Representatives

Chairman Doc Hastings

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Wednesday, July 3, 2013
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Chairman Hastings: Obama Admin Retreats from Designating White River as National Blueway

“Withdrawal is yet further proof that the Blueways program has been deeply and fundamentally flawed from the beginning”

WASHINGTON, D.C. – House Natural Resources Committee Chairman Doc Hastings released the following statement after the Department of the Interior announced it was withdrawing the National Blueways Designation for the White River watershed in Arkansas and Missouri.

“This withdrawal is yet further proof that the Blueways program, imposed unilaterally by the Obama Administration without any statutory authority, has been deeply and fundamentally flawed from the beginning. I congratulate those in the Arkansas and Missouri delegations who brought forth concerns over this Blueway; their hard work has paid off by forcing the Obama Administration to retreat. But the fact remains that there are other watersheds and working rivers that may be impacted by this misguided policy, which seems to create more troubled waters every day. The House Natural Resources Committee intends to continue our oversight of this matter, including a hearing later in the month. We expect the Interior Department to answer our questions and fully comply with the Committee’s request for documents.”

Background

The National Blueways Secretarial Order was signed by Secretary Salazar in 2012 and creates unilateral authority for the Secretary to designate entire watersheds as “National Blueways.” There are growing concerns that the Order has the potential to impose land and water use restrictions and undermine property rights.

Last week, Chairman Hastings sent a [letter](#) to Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell seeking further information about the implementation of the National Blueways program.

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