

**Chairman Rob Bishop  
Opening Statement  
Committee on Natural Resources  
Full Committee Markup  
February 2, 2016**

Today, the Committee will take action on variety of bills—18 in all—that impact access and use of federal and tribal trust lands, water rights and storage across the country. Four of the bills being considered are sponsored by Committee Members, and many other bills enjoy strong bipartisan support.

Let me specifically remark on three of them. First, H.R. 1475, sponsored by Congressman Sam Johnson of Texas, would authorize a privately-funded addition of a “Wall of Remembrance” to the Korean War Veterans Memorial to recognize all members of the U.S. Armed Forces killed in action during the Korean War and list the number of all American POWs and MIAs.

This measure, similar to bills introduced during the previous two Congresses, is cosponsored by 264 Members, including Members from both sides of the aisle who actually served in the Korean War conflict.

H.R. 1815, sponsored by Mr. Hardy, would, among other things, authorize the Bureau of Land Management to utilize a portion of proceeds from land sales to conduct hazardous fuel reduction projects and help prevent catastrophic wildfires that destroy sage grouse habitat in areas of Nevada. The bill also makes boundary adjustments to improve public access for several purposes, including a Girl Scout Camp and tribally-owned and operated dam. It is supported by the entire Nevada delegation in the House and Senate as well as local government officials.

I also want to express support for H.R. 3342, a bill sponsored by Dr. Fleming. This bill provides needed certainty for over 50 Northern Louisiana private landowners as a result of a highly contentious re-survey conducted by the Bureau of Land Management in 1967. It is concerning that the BLM's actions, which appear to be creating more and more suspicion and resulting in litigation around the country, have resulted in an unnecessary dispute over the title of these lands, which have been legally owned by private citizens for decades. Congressman Fleming's measure helps fix the problem.

Last November, during a hearing on this bill, I challenged BLM to come up with a reasonable solution to address this issue. Unfortunately, their “solution” was not a solution at all, but rather, a drawn-out and expensive bureaucratic process that would further burden these landowners and provide no means for them to retain the minerals underlying their property.

That is why this measure is needed. This is a common-sense bill, also supported by Louisiana’s Attorney General, which prevents a federal land grab and ensures that private citizens will continue to own land that has been in their families for generations.

In addition to these bills, the Committee will consider many other important bills that seek better administration and use of federal lands and water resources. I appreciate my colleagues’ efforts to work on actual solutions on these resources across the nation.