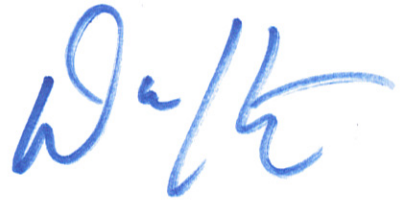


**Additional Views
The Honorable Doc Hastings
House Resolution 1406**



Over three months ago, Committee Republicans sent a written request to Interior Secretary Salazar seeking documents related to an internal memo that revealed the Administration's potential plans to unilaterally designate up to 13 million acres as new national monuments. Such a designation could have a dramatic impact on the livelihoods and jobs of Americans and rural communities all across the Western United States.

Despite repeatedly claiming that there is no "hidden agenda," the Interior Department has done nothing but stonewall efforts to make these documents public. In fact, the Department has failed to produce even one single additional page from this memo beyond pages 15-21 that the Committee Republicans exposed.

The night before the Committee's previous markup when the first resolution of inquiry was considered, the Department released 383 pages of emails and documents, but purposefully withheld 2,016 pages of documents. While these emails contained no substantial information – they did not even provide the attachments shown in the emails – they did raise even more questions about the Administration's plans.

We know that other pages of this document do exist and that the Department of the Interior apparently does not want the American people to what find out what the document says. At this point only pages 15 to 21 have been revealed and they were leaked, not released. The Department continues to withhold pages 1 through 14 as well as pages 22 and higher. Why is the Department refusing to disclose ALL of the pages?

We now know that other agencies were involved in preparing this document – not just the Bureau of Land Management. The emails reveal that other Department of the Interior agencies including the National Park Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Bureau of Reclamation were involved in contributing to this document. What were the proposals for new designations or actions within each of these agencies?

The resolution of inquiry – House Resolution 1406 – passed with a bi-partisan vote of the Committee on Natural Resources. The Committee's favorable vote should result in the American public getting answers to these questions. The Department should promptly transmit a complete copy of the document along with the 2,016 pages of related material they have identified and gathered as being responsive to our request but are nevertheless deliberately withheld from the public.

The Resolution is very straight forward. It simply directs the Department of the Interior to transmit to the House of Representatives material that is specifically identified in the resolution as:

Copies of all Department of the Interior documents, maps, records (including electronic records), communications and other information dating from July 1, 2009, and later referring to or relating to the document containing 'Attachment 4 Prospective Conservation Designation: National Monument Designations under the Antiquities Act' and marked 'Internal Draft--NOT FOR RELEASE', including that document in full, all attachments in full, and all iterations of that document, and related similar documents.

This will not require extra work or distract the Department from other responsibilities. They have this information readily available. It was assembled weeks ago. All they need do is make it public. There is no justifiable reason for the Department to keep these documents secret. This resolution puts the Committee on Natural Resources on the side of full disclosure and transparency, principles that Members on both sides should be proud to support. It is now time for the Department to make all the documents public. If the Department fails to disclose all of the documents following action by the Committee to favorably report House Resolution 1406, then it will be up to the Committee to act again and take what steps are necessary to compel the Department to disclosure the documents.