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July 17, 2013

Honorable Rob Bishop, Chairman
Subcommittee on Public Lands
and Environmental Regulation
Committee on Natural Resources
House of Representatives
1324 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Bishop:

Attached please find a resolution, recently adopted by Western Governors, supporting efforts to simplify federal-state land exchanges. On behalf of the Western Governors' Association (WGA), I respectfully request that the document be included in the record of the Friday, July 19, 2013 hearing on various public lands bills scheduled for the Subcommittee on Public Lands and Environmental Regulation.

The Governors' resolution supports reauthorization of the Federal Lands Transfer Facilitation Act (FLTFA). H.R. 2068, sponsored by Representative Lummis, would reauthorize FLTFA, and WGA commends her for introducing this important legislation.

The Governors also support other efforts to reform federal-state land exchange processes. WGA is working with the Western States Land Commissioners' Association, for example, on its proposed legislation to solve part of the land tenure problems based on a process known as "in lieu" selections. WGA also supports federal legislation to amend the Federal Lands Policy and Management Act to:

- Index the existing \$150,000 threshold for using an expedited exchange process for inflation (the \$150,000 threshold was adopted in 1986);
- Allow use of a statement of value to replace the appraisal process in federal-state exchanges of similar rural lands; and

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- Presume any agreed-upon federal-state land exchange as in the public interest unless clearly countervailing factors are present (federal-private exchanges are not included in this presumption).

With appreciation for your leadership and best wishes for continued success, I am

Respectfully,


James D. Ogsbury
Executive Director

*Identical letter sent to Rep. Doc Hastings, Chairman
Committee on Natural Resources*