

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 31, 2014

The Honorable Ken Calvert
Chairman
Subcommittee on Interior,
Environment, and Related Agencies
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Jim Moran
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Interior,
Environment, and Related Agencies
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Calvert, Chairman Aderholt, Ranking Member Bishop and Ranking Member Farr:

Over the past decade, there have been numerous cases when the federal government has attempted to circumvent long-established state water law in order to take privately-held water rights without paying for them. By using the federal permit, lease, and land management process to extort water rights from those who hold rights under state law, the federal government is overreaching, violating private property rights, and the United States Constitution.

As you know, water is the lifeblood of the Western United States and all water users including grazers, farmers, ski areas, businesses, tribes 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. Therefore, my colleagues and I are submitting the following report language for consideration in the fiscal year 2015 Appropriations bill to protect privately held water rights from uncompensated federal takings.

"None of the funds made available in this or any other Act may be used to condition the issuance, renewal, amendment, or extension of any permit, approval, license, lease, allotment, easement, right-of-way, or other land use or occupancy agreement on the transfer of any water right, including sole and joint ownership, directly to the United States, or any impairment of title, in whole or in part, granted or otherwise recognized under State law, by Federal or State adjudication, decree, or other judgment, or pursuant to any interstate water compact.

Additionally, none of the funds made available in this or any other Act may be used to require any water user to apply for or acquire a water right in the name of the United States under State law as a condition of the issuance, renewal, amendment, or extension of any permit, approval, license, lease, allotment, easement, right-of-way, or other land use or occupancy agreement."

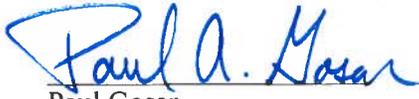
Sincerely,



Mark E. Amodei
Member of Congress



Scott Tipton
Member of Congress



Paul Gosar
Member of Congress



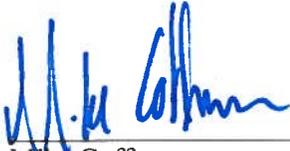
Rob Bishop
Member of Congress



Kevin Cramer
Member of Congress



Steve Pearce
Member of Congress



Mike Coffman
Member of Congress



Cory Gardner
Member of Congress



Cynthia Lummis
Member of Congress



Tom McClintock
Member of Congress