



Committee: House Natural Resources Committee

Event: [Full Committee Markup](#)

Date: September 15, 2026

Executive Summary:

On September 15, 2026, the House Natural Resources Committee held a markup to consider 17 bills focused on public lands preservation, wildlife management, tribal water rights settlements, wildfire mitigation, and energy development. The readout below focuses on the following five bills of interest:

- Bureau of Land Management Mineral Spacing Act ([H.R. 1555](#))
- Action Versus No Action Act ([H.R. 184](#))
- Technical Corrections to the Northwestern New Mexico Rural Water Projects Act, Taos Pueblo Indian Water Rights Settlement Act, and Aamodt Litigation Settlement Act ([H.R. 4598](#))
- Earth MRI Reauthorization Act of 2026 ([H.R. 9640](#))
- Technical Correction to the Shoshone-Paiute Tribes of the Duck Valley Reservation Water Rights Settlement Act of 2025 ([H.R. 10306](#))

The full list of legislation considered by the Committee can be found [here](#).

Member Toplines¹:

Chairman Bruce Westerman (R-AR-04): Westerman highlighted the Committee's productivity during the 119th Congress, emphasizing its bipartisan record of advancing bills to increase American energy production, reduce fraud, and reform permitting. He argued that the Committee had worked to balance expanded domestic natural resources development with efforts to strengthen energy security, drive economic growth, and preserve public land.

[Ranking Member Jared Huffman \(D-CA-02\):](#) Huffman criticized Republicans for failing to conduct meaningful congressional oversight of the Trump administration, arguing that the Committee has prioritized legislation benefiting the interests of large corporations over American citizens. He cited several instances in which Committee Democrats had pursued investigations into alleged conflicts of interest and potential misuse of federal resources but said Republicans had blocked their efforts

Legislation of Interest Considered:

¹ The opening remarks of Chairman Westerman were unavailable at the time of this memo's distribution.

Bureau of Land Management Mineral Spacing Act ([H.R. 1555](#))

I. Member Toplines:

- Huffman opposed the bill, stating it would remove a key layer of federal oversight for oil and gas development on roughly four million acres of split-estate federal lands. He insisted that the federal permitting process provides important protections and opportunities for landowners to raise concerns about impacts of development on natural resources.
- Westerman supported the bill, arguing that it would eliminate a duplicative federal permitting requirement for oil and gas drilling on private lands while preserving state permitting standards, royalty accountability, and federal inspection authority.

II. Amendments:

- [Westerman 01 ANS](#) - Amendment in the Nature of a Substitute.
 - Westerman introduced the amendment, emphasizing that it clarifies when operators can avoid federal permitting reviews for wells originating on non-federal land, as well as those that traverse federal land or access federal mineral estates
 - [Huffman #1 to ANS](#) - Establishes a minimum bond for federal oil and gas interests; increases the surface owner protection bond.
 - Huffman explained that his amendment would explicitly preserve the Department of the Interior's authority to require financial assurances for oil and gas development, even when the bill eliminates the federal drilling permit requirement. He stated that the amendment would also strengthen protections for private surface owners by increasing minimum bonding requirements, ensuring operators, rather than taxpayers, remain financially responsible for potential damages and cleanup.
 - Westerman opposed the amendment, arguing that it would impose duplicative federal requirements on non-federal land, as well as add an additional layer of compliance for operators by excessively expanding the Bureau of Land Management's authority over private surface lands. He argued that these provisions would undermine the bill's goal of streamlining oil and gas development.
 - The amendment to the amendment in the nature of a substitute failed by a vote of [16-21](#).
 - The amendment in the nature of a substitute was agreed to by voice vote.

III. Final Vote on H.R. 1555: Passed out of Committee, as amended, by a vote of [21-16](#).

Action Versus No Action Act ([H.R. 184](#))

I. Member Toplines:

- Huffman opposed the bill, arguing that its limits on the consideration of alternatives under the *National Environmental Protection Act* (NEPA) would undermine science-based forest management. He stated that wildfire risk is primarily driven by factors outside the scope of NEPA, and argued that coupling

reduced agency staffing and resources with decreased environmental review would hinder effective forest management.

- Rep. **Tom McClintock** (R-CA-05) supported his bill and argued that environmental regulations have paralyzed active forest management, which has led to overgrown forests and catastrophic wildfires. He explained the bill does not waive environmental protections but rather requires agencies to focus environmental reviews on either the proposed action alternative or the no-action alternative for certain hazardous fuels reduction projects.
- Rep. **Val Hoyle** (D-OR-04) stated that while there is a demonstrated need for more effective federal forest management, she opposed the bill because it would limit land managers' flexibility in managing federal forests.
- Westerman supported the bill, arguing that it would improve federal forest management by requiring agencies to meaningfully evaluate the consequences of making a decision of no-action when combatting forest fires.

II. Amendments:

- [McClintock ANS](#) - Amendment in the Nature of a Substitute.
 - The amendment in the nature of a substitute was agreed to by voice vote.

III. Final Vote on H.R. 184: Passed out of Committee, as amended, by a vote of [21-17](#).

Technical Corrections to the Northwestern New Mexico Rural Water Projects Act, Taos Pueblo Indian Water Rights Settlement Act, and Aamodt Litigation Settlement Act ([H.R. 4598](#))

I. Member Toplines:

- Rep. **Melanie Stansbury** (D-NM-01) introduced her amendment and called for continued bipartisan efforts to advance tribal water rights settlements, emphasizing the longstanding nature of these communities' water rights claims and urging the Trump administration to provide resources to fund these needs.
- Westerman expressed support for advancing additional tribal water rights settlements but cited funding and Congressional Budget Office scoring constraints as potential obstacles that would need to be addressed.

II. Amendments:

- [Leger Fernandez 108 ANS](#) - Amendment in the Nature of a Substitute.
 - Rep. **Teresa Leger Fernandez** (D-NM-03) introduced her amendment, stating that it would facilitate the recovery of critical settlement funds for the purpose of water infrastructure improvement efforts.
 - The amendment in the nature of a substitute was agreed to by unanimous consent.

III. Final Vote on H.R. 4598: Passed out of Committee by Unanimous Consent.

Earth MRI Reauthorization Act of 2026 ([H.R. 9640](#))

I. Member Toplines:

- Rep. **Rob Wittman** (R-VA-01) supported his bill, stating that it would strengthen understanding of domestic geological and mineral resources through modern mapping technologies and expanded federal and state data, supporting critical mineral supply chains, energy independence, and other national priorities.

- Rep. **Pete Stauber** (R-MN-08) highlighted the program's role in improving understanding of the nation's geology and domestic mineral resources.
- II. Amendments:*
- [Wittman 059](#) - Amendment in the Nature of a Substitute.
 - The amendment in the nature of a substitute was agreed to by unanimous consent.
- III. Final Vote on H.R. 9640: **Passed out of Committee by Unanimous Consent.***

Technical Correction to the Shoshone-Paiute Tribes of the Duck Valley Reservation Water Rights Settlement Act of 2026 ([H.R. 10306](#))

- I. Amendments:*
- [Amodei 032](#) - Amendment in the Nature of a Substitute.
 - The amendment in the nature of a substitute was agreed to by unanimous consent.
- II. Final Vote on H.R. 10306: **Passed out of Committee by Unanimous Consent.***