

Committee on Natural Resources
1324 Longworth House Office Building
March 4, 2020 at 10:00 a.m.

Oversight Hearing

*Examining the Department of the Interior's Spending Priorities and the President's Fiscal Year
2021 Budget Proposal*

Questions from Rep. Joe Neguse for Susan Combs, Assistant Secretary of Policy,
Management and Budget, U.S. Department of the Interior

1. Please provide an explanation of why only five Colorado State University ("CSU") agreements are listed in the Financial Assistance Clearance System ("FACS") as denied, out of over 700 agreements. These projects were requested by the USGS, and it is CSU's understanding that USGS remains very interested in having the university complete the requested tasks and continue working with extended partners to achieve common outcomes and deliverables of research to directly aid in conservation and management actions. CSU has not received any explanation as to why these projects were denied. It is CSU's understanding that the decision that prevented USGS from moving those allocations to the university stems from somewhere within Bureau of Land Management, but the university has not received any response to their multiple inquiries about the denials, learning only of the definitive denial from the online FAC system. Given the proximity in timing to CSU withdrawing from a study on ovariectomies in wild horses and the heretofore strong relationship between CSU and the granters, there is concern that these denials are tied to the university's previous research participation decisions of which BLM disapproved. Are these denials related to CSU withdrawing from the study on the use of ovariectomies within wild horse herds? If not, please provide a thorough explanation for these denials.