

Statement
The Honorable Cliff Bentz
Subcommittee Water, Oceans and Wildlife
Legislative Hearing on
H.R. 5345, H.R. 4832, H.R. 5001, and H.Res.320
June 29, 2021

I welcome Members and witnesses to today's hearing. We are considering four bills today.

H.R. 5345, by Mr. Moore, would establish a program within USGS to assess, monitor and conserve saline lake ecosystems in the Great Basin region. Saline lakes include Lake Abert in Oregon and the Great Salt Lake in Utah. I look forward to hearing from the Interior Department and from Utah State Representative Joel Ferry about the need for this legislation.

H.R. 4832, by Ms. Lee, aims to establish an Open Access Evapotranspiration, or OpenET, program withing USGS. I note that an OpenET program already exists, it was launched just a few weeks ago through a collaboration with NASA. Again, I look forward to hearing about the need for this legislation.

H.R. 5001, by Mr. Neguse, would extend the Upper Colorado and San Juan Recovery Implementation Programs and reporting requirements for an additional year. I look forward to hearing from the witnesses on the status of the Report to Congress and why Interior Department is delayed on finishing the report.

Lastly, H.Res. 320, also by Mr. Neguse, is a resolution that expresses the sense of the House of Representatives that access to reliable and clean drinking water is important to the health and welfare of American Indians and Alaska Natives.

I look forward to hearing from the witnesses on these bills. However, Mr. Chairman, I would be remiss if I did not speak up for the California Republican delegation, who have requested us to hold a hearing on Congressman Valadao's H.R. 737, the RENEW WIIN Act. The same delegation recently requested you and I to hold an oversight hearing on the long-term operations of California's water system in light of the Biden administration's recent proposal to change how that system operates. I hope you will strongly consider these requests. With that, I yield back the remainder of my time.