

## Questions for the Record by Democrat Members

Questions from Rep. Gallego for Darryl LaCounte, Director, Bureau of Indian Affairs:

1. (H.R. 4888) Is the Bureau aware that the land exchange understanding between the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the Grand Ronde Tribe at the time of negotiation only required the Tribe to relinquish its claims to the Thompson Strip and not to the entire State of Oregon?
  - a. We have internal documents obtained from BLM that support this understanding. In fact, a 1994 BLM memorandum on the issue states: *“The [Grand Ronde Reservation Act] extinguishes all claims established by the Executive Order of June 30, 1857. This does not protect the Indians’ rights. This Bill should apply only to the Thompson Strip because there may be other similar [survey] problems that we are not aware of at this time.”* Do documents such as these have any impact on the Department’s stance on this legislation?
2. (H.R. 4888) Is the Department aware that at the original legislative hearing on this issue, both the Tribe’s testimony and that of the legislation’s Sponsoring Member of Congress, Rep. Mike Kopetski, also support the original intention of only extinguishing claims to the Thompson Strip? In the view of the Bureau, does this or should this have any impact on the Department’s stance on this legislation?
3. (H.R. 4888) Before the hearing, was the Bureau aware that the Grand Ronde Tribe had not been made aware that the legislation distinguished all land claims in the State of Oregon instead of just the Thompson strip until after the legislation was signed into law? In the view of the Bureau, does this or should this have any impact on the Department’s stance on this legislation?
4. (H.R. 4888) The Chairwoman of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, Cheryle A. Kennedy, says in her testimony today that the Department of Interior was the entity which developed the language voiding the Tribe’s land claims in the entire State of Oregon. Why did the Department override BLM’s understanding of the land exchange and insert language that was not agreed upon by the Tribe?