

**Chair Grijalva Opening Statement
Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests, and Public Lands
Oversight Hearing on Wildfire Management, Ecosystem Restoration,
and Resilient Communities: Examining Implementation of the
Bipartisan Infrastructure Law
April 5, 2022**

- **Thank you Chair Neguse and Ranking Member for having me in the Subcommittee today.**

- **I also appreciate the Biden administration witnesses joining us as you work to implement priorities for the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.**

- **Listen, I don't care what you call it, Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, BIL, BIF, whatever...**

- **What matters is that Congress came together to pass a historic investment in the future of our nation's infrastructure, including the natural world and systems most impacted by climate change.**

- **That is why I decided to vote for it.**

- **I didn't like everything in it.**
- **I didn't love the process.**
- **And I know some of my progressive colleagues had legitimate concerns about passing it while so much else was up in the air.**
- **But at the end of the day, I voted in support.**
- **Because I decided that it what would benefit my constituents.**
- **Of course, there is an acknowledgement that more needs to be done.**

- **That is why this Committee has spent considerable time and effort on a legislative and oversight agenda that maybe, just maybe, will be enough to begin to address our climate, jobs, justice and public lands needs.**
- **That is also why I voted for the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law when I had the chance.**
- **Unfortunately, not a single Republican on this Committee can say the same.**
- **Except, of course, for the late Dean from Alaska, Rep. Don Young, who in all his wisdom recognized an important vote that would benefit the State of Alaska.**
- **I expect we'll hear the usual complaints that bedrock environmental laws or endangered species protections are the real problem.**

- **But we all know that what is deeply needed: federal leadership in support of long-term investments, working with states and other partners, to meaningfully address climate change, wildfire, and biodiversity.**
- **That's what the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law does, that's what Protecting America's Wilderness Act does, and that's what we'll continue to do through any means available to us.**
- **Without continued action on climate change, communities that rely on forests and public lands for clean water, recreation, and wildlife habitat will continue to be at risk from climate impacts like drought and wildfires.**
- **The record of Natural Resources Committee Democrats speaks for itself.**

- **This hearing today is about making sure the Department of the Interior and the US Forest Service are transparent, accountable, and guided by science in implementing what needs to be a down payment in our efforts to address climate change, wildfire, restoration, reforestation, and workforce needs.**
- **I'd like to again thank the Chair, Ranking Member, and witnesses, I look forward to your testimony.**
- **I yield back.**