

Chairman Opening Statement: James P. Moran**Public Witness Day**

House Interior, Environment and Related Agencies Appropriations

March 25, 2010

9:30 a.m.

Good Morning, and welcome to all of our witnesses and guests for our second public witness hearing of the week.

This morning we will hear from members of Congress and many witnesses representing a variety of environmental, recreation, memorial and arts organizations. I want to especially welcome those of you who traveled long distances to be here today. We look forward to your testimony.

As most of you know, the great John Muir advocated passionately for the environment. He helped to inspire President Theodore Roosevelt's conservation initiatives and encouraged Congress to found the extensive national park system.

He reminds us, we should never underestimate the importance of public citizens advocating before their government when they see opportunities for improvement.

I think this quote from Muir sums up why many of you have traveled here today and why this subcommittee believes your testimony is so valuable, no matter the subject:

"Everybody needs beauty as well as bread, places to play in and pray in, where nature may heal and give strength to body and soul."

Now for some important housekeeping items: I want to remind all witnesses, you have only five minutes total to deliver your statement and answer questions. We will watch this timer closely to ensure we hear from everyone on the schedule. When the orange light comes on, you have only one minute left and should begin to wrap-up. When the red light comes on, your time has expired.

Of course, your entire prepared statement will be included in the final hearing record.

Before we get started, Mr. Simpson, do you have any comments?

Our first witness is Representative Dean Heller, from the great state of Nevada. Mr. Heller, welcome.