

## Hearing Reveals Administration's Apparent Double-Standard for Federally Subsidized Renewable Energy Projects On Federal Lands

**WASHINGTON, D.C., July 14, 2016 -**

Today, the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations held a hearing on the status of Ivanpah and other federal loan-guaranteed solar energy projects on Bureau of Land Management (BLM) lands.

The Obama Administration has subsidized billions of taxpayer dollars in renewable energy projects that have significantly underperformed, killed federally protected birds and destroyed the habitats of endangered species.

*"It seems that in spite of improved technologies, billions of dollars-worth of federal tax credits, and government mandates that force utilities into solar power purchase agreements, the cost and efficiency of solar energy is still not competitive with hydro, nuclear, coal and natural gas," Subcommittee Chairman Louie Gohmert (R-TX) said. "And Americans repeatedly pay the price in a system where the government chooses winners and losers."*

The \$2.2 billion Ivanpah Solar Electric Generating System facility on the California-Nevada state line was made possible by a \$1.6 billion federal loan guarantee. Even though this facility is owned by companies worth hundreds of billions — Google, NRG Energy and Brightsource Energy — the project was almost fully financed by federal subsidies.

*"Ivanpah is an example of big-government programs benefitting big and influential economic actors for preferred projects," David Kreutzer, PhD, Senior Research Fellow in Energy Economics and Climate Change at the Heritage Foundation, said.*

Panel members discussed their frustration with the Administration's apparent double standard between renewable energy facilities and other economic activities on federal lands. For an expensive source of electricity generation, solar projects enjoy preferential treatment in leasing, financing and law enforcement.

*"[T]he problem with the Administration's actions with regard to solar leasing is that contrary to claims that the Administration has an 'all-of-the-above' policy, the Administration has been antagonistic towards natural gas, oil and coal production on federal lands," Daniel Simmons, Vice President for Policy at the Institute for Energy Research, stated.*

Ironically, Ivanpah relies on nonrenewable energy to reheat the facility's water necessary to turn sunlight into energy. In fact, natural gas use accounts for substantially more than the five percent limit for electricity production codified in their contract, according to Kreutzer.

Of the very few questions Michael Nedd, Assistant Director for Energy Minerals and Realty Management for the BLM, could answer, he acknowledged that Ivanpah has killed hundreds

of protected migratory birds. Violations of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act carry a maximum penalty of six months in prison and a \$15,000 fine per bird, but no such accountability exists.

The U.S. Department of Energy and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service were invited to testify, but they refused to send a witness.

Click [here](#) to view full witness testimony.

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