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## House Committee holds oversight hearing on hardrock mining

The House Committee on Natural Resources Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources held a mining oversight hearing on June 13, 2013. The hearing focused on mining fees and royalties, the withdrawal of certain lands from new mining claims, and Good Samaritan legislation for the cleanup of abandoned mine lands (AMLs).

Committee members Doug Lamborn (R-CO) and Peter DeFazio (D-OR) highlighted the need for mining law reform. Witnesses Steve Moyer of Trout Unlimited and Lauren Pagel of Earthworks voiced their support for mining legislation such as the Fair Payment for Energy and Mineral Production on Public Lands Act (H.R. 3446) that would institute federal mining royalties and levy a fee on mining operations to pay for the cleanup of AMLs. However, Kris Hefton, Chief Operating Officer of Vane Minerals, declared that royalties could make mining cost-prohibitive.

Moyer and Harold Roberts, Chief Operating Officer of Energy Fuels Resources Corp., also emphasized the need for improved Good Samaritan legislation such as S. 1777 or H.R. 3203 to enable organizations to voluntarily remediate AML sites without incurring liability under environmental laws.

Opening statements, witness testimonies and an archived webcast of the hearing can be found on the committee's website.

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