

## Grijalva introduces legislation to reform hardrock mining industry

February 13, 2015

Representative Raul Grijalva (D-AZ), Ranking Member of the House Natural Resources Committee, introduced legislation this February that would overhaul the non-coal mining industry. The Hardrock Mining Reform and Reclamation Act (H.R. 963) builds upon a bill previously introduced by Rep. Peter DeFazio (D-OR) in the 113th Congress. If enacted, the bill would increase industry royalties and implement new fees that would help clean up abandoned mine sites.

The new legislation was introduced concurrently with the release of a Government Accountability Office study that shows at least 20,401 potentially contaminated abandoned mine sites exist.

While there has yet to be outright opposition to the legislation, the National Mining Association refutes the suggestion that companies do not pay their fair share towards clean up citing other regulations associated with the Clean Water, Clean Air, and National Environmental Protection Acts.

Hardrock mining currently falls under the jurisdiction of the General Mining Act of 1872, which does not require non-coal mining firms to pay royalties on federal lands.

Sources: E&E news, Government Accountability Office, House of Representatives

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