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**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515-2508**

October 2, 2015

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Ms. Sara Parker Pauley,  
Director, Missouri Department of Natural Resources  
P.O. Box 176  
Jefferson City, MO 65102-0176

**Re: Natural Resource Restoration Projects in the Southeast Missouri Lead Mining District**

Dear Ms. Pauley:

It has come to my attention the Missouri Department of Natural Resources plans to purchase 2,463 acres in Oregon County, and the only public announcement regarding this project was made on September 2 in Reynolds County, miles away from the property in question. I also was informed that affected county and state officials were not notified of this public meeting.

As a result of the lack of contact with individuals affected by this proposed project, I strongly urge you to extend the comment period for the Natural Resource Restoration Projects in the Southeast Missouri Lead Mining District to November 6, 2015.

In addition, I understand money to purchase this property will come from a Southeast Missouri Lead Mining District lawsuit filed against lead smelter ASARCO. Oregon County was not a plaintiff in the lead litigation cases and the use of the money there does not benefit the counties that sued over their damaged resource areas – Iron, Madison and St. Francois Counties.

As you are aware, Oregon County is located within an impoverished section of Missouri's Eighth Congressional District. Removing an additional 2,463 acres will reduce school and county tax revenue in an area that needs it most. This will negatively impact our school districts which already carry the burden of educating students with reduced dollars because a significant portion of property is owned by state and federal governments.

Not only should the comment period be extended, but a public meeting should be hosted in Alton, Missouri, the Oregon County seat. All local and county officials in all counties affected, as well as state officials impacted by your decision should be promptly notified.

Please contact my West Plains District Director Heather Peugh at 417-255-1515 or by email at [heather.peugh@mail.house.gov](mailto:heather.peugh@mail.house.gov) with information related to the aforementioned meeting. I look forward to your full consideration and prompt response.

Sincerely,



Jason Smith  
Member of Congress