

**STATEMENT FOR THE RECORD  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
FOREST SERVICE**

**BEFORE THE  
UNITED STATES HOUSE of REPRESENTATIVES  
COMMITTEE on NATURAL RESOURCES  
SUBCOMMITTEE on FEDERAL LANDS  
REGARDING**

**H.R. 5923 – Walnut Grove Land Exchange Act**

**July 17, 2018**

Thank you for the opportunity for the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Forest Service, to provide views on H.R. 5923 – the Walnut Grove Land Exchange Act.

H.R. 5923 provides for the equal-value exchange of approximately 4 acres of National Forest System land on the Ouachita National Forest for approximately 6.3 acres of non-federal land held by the Walnut Grove Church in Garland County, Arkansas. The federal parcel is currently occupied by the Church and associated infrastructure and a portion of the Rock Springs Cemetery.

USDA supports H.R. 5923 as it would allow the Church to own the land on which the Church operates in exchange for unencumbered forest land to be managed as part of the Ouachita National Forest. USDA would like to work with the committee and the bill's sponsor to offer minor edits to clarify the appraisal standard to be used in the land valuation and to allow for reservation of a road easement across the federal parcel to maintain access to adjacent National Forest System lands.

We appreciate the efforts of the sponsor to facilitate this land exchange and thank the committee for the opportunity to provide a statement for the record on this bill.