



# News from the Committee on Natural Resources

Rep. Nick J. Rahall, II - Chairman

1324 Longworth House Office Building - Washington DC, 20515 - <http://resourcescommittee.house.gov>

## The Weekly Preview July 21 – 25, 2008

### **This Week's Hearings and Markups:**

*Can't make it to our hearings or markups in person? Stay connected with our live and archived video and audio webcasts, available at <http://resourcescommittee.house.gov>.*

- On Monday, the **Subcommittee on Water and Power** will hold an oversight field hearing on the "Federal Response to the California Drought Emergency." On June 4, 2008, California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger released a Proclamation and issued an Executive Order declaring a drought for the State of California. The following week, Governor Schwarzenegger declared a State of Emergency in nine Central Valley counties. While the Governor made a disaster declaration for the nine counties, either the President or the Secretary of Agriculture must make a Federal disaster declaration for Supplemental Crop Revenue Assistance payments to be made. On June 19, the United States Department of Agriculture designated Fresno County as a primary natural disaster area because of losses caused by drought. Farm operators in Inyo, Kings, Madera, Merced, Mono, Monterey, San Benito, and Tulare Counties also qualify for Supplemental Crop Revenue Assistance payments because they are contiguous to Fresno County. At the field hearing, the Subcommittee will explore how the Federal government can help mitigate the social and economic effects of water shortages in the Central Valley.

The following witnesses are scheduled to testify: The Honorable Alan Autry, Mayor, City of Fresno, Fresno, California (opening remarks and welcome); The Honorable Phil Larson, Fresno County Supervisor, Fresno, California; The Honorable Robert Silva, Mayor, City of Mendota, Mendota, California; Mr. Miguel Arias, Drought Relief Strategies Group, Fresno, California (accompanied by Mr. Carlos Ramirez, Farm Worker); Mr. Stewart Woolf, Farmer, Fresno, California; Mr. Kole Upton, East Central Valley Resident, Chowchilla, California; Mr. Dan Nelson, Executive Director, San Luis-Delta Mendota Water Authority, Los Banos, California; Mr. Tom Birmingham, General Manager, Westlands Water District, Fresno, California; Mr. Ron Jacobsma, General Manager, Friant Water Authority, Lindsay, California; Philip Duffy, PhD, Chemistry, Materials, and Life Sciences Directorate, Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, Livermore, California; Mr. Don Glaser, Mid-Pacific Regional Director, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, Sacramento, California (accompanied by Ms. Claudia C. Faunt, Ph.D., P.E., Hydrologist, U.S. Geological Survey, California Water Science Center);

Mr. John Smythe, Farm Services Agency State Executive Director, U.S. Department of Agriculture, California (accompanied by Mr. Jim Otto, Senior Risk Management Specialist, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Davis, California); and Mr. Lester Snow, Director, California Department of Water Resources, Sacramento, California.

Visit the Committee's Web site to access [witness testimony](#) following the conclusion of the hearing. (*July 21, 2008, at 10:00 a.m. (PST), Fresno City Council Chambers, 2600 Fresno St., Fresno, CA*)

- On Wednesday, the **Committee on Natural Resources** will meet in open markup session to consider the following 5 bills:
  - [H.R. 5853](#) (Tsongas): To expand the boundary of the Minute Man National Historical Park in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to include Barrett's Farm, and for other purposes. "*Minute Man National Historical Park Boundary Revision Act*"
  - [H.R. 6177](#) (Rodriguez): To amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to modify the boundary of the Rio Grande Wild and Scenic River. "*Rio Grande Wild and Scenic River Extension Act of 2008*"
  - [H.R. 6159](#) (George Miller): To provide for a land exchange involving certain National Forest System lands in the Mendocino National Forest in the State of California, and for other purposes. "*Deafy Glade Land Exchange Act*"
  - [H.R. 1847](#) (Mark Udall): To amend the National Trails System Act to clarify Federal authority relating to land acquisition from willing sellers for the majority of the trails in the System, and for other purposes. "*National Trails System Willing Seller Act*"
  - [H.R. 5335](#) (Wamp): To amend the National Trails System Act to provide for the inclusion of new trail segments, land components, and campgrounds associated with the Trail of Tears National Historic Trail, and for other purposes.

Visit the Committee's Web site to view the [markup report](#) following the markup. (*July 23, 2008, at 12:30 p.m., Room 1324 Longworth House Office Building*)

- On Thursday, the **Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests and Public Lands** will hold an oversight hearing on "Expanding Access to Federal Lands for People with Disabilities." The Federal Access Board (formally the Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board) has been working for 15 years to produce guidelines for new or modified outdoor developed areas – such as picnic and camping facilities, trails, beaches, and other outdoor recreation access routes. On June 20, 2008, the Access Board published its proposed guidelines, and the Board is now preparing to finalize the rules. Advances in universal design, new technologies, and new thinking offer enormous possibilities for providing access to places and experiences once thought of as out of reach for those with disabilities.

As the Access Board's new guidelines near completion, the Subcommittee will examine how those guidelines were formulated; what Federal land managers, states and the private sector are already doing to provide access to those areas; and what challenges Federal agencies will face in meeting the new guidelines.

Visit the Committee's Web site to access [witness testimony](#) following the conclusion of the hearing. (*July 24, 2008, at 10:00 a.m., Room 1324 Longworth House Office Building*)

- Also on Thursday, the **Subcommittee on Fisheries, Wildlife and Oceans** will hold a legislative hearing to receive testimony on the following 2 bills:
  - [H.R. 6537](#) (Bordallo): To reauthorize and amend the National Marine Sanctuaries Act to establish a National Marine Sanctuary System, to strengthen and clarify management authorities, and for other purposes. "*Sanctuary Enhancement Act of 2008*"
  - [H.R. 6204](#) (Stupak): To expand the boundaries of the Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary and Underwater Preserve, and for other purposes. "*Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary and Underwater Preserve Boundary Modification Act*"

Visit the Committee's Web site to access [witness testimony](#) following the conclusion of the hearing. (*July 24, 2008, at 10:00 a.m., Room 1334 Longworth House Office Building*)

### **In Case You Missed It:**

- Last week, the **House of Representatives** approved the following 4 bills under the jurisdiction of the House Natural Resources Committee:
  - [H.R. 5618](#) (Bordallo): To reauthorize and amend the National Sea Grant College Program Act, and for other purposes. "*National Sea Grant College Program Amendments Act of 2008*"
  - [H.R. 1714](#) (Mack): To clarify the boundaries of Coastal Barrier Resources System Clam Pass Unit FL-64P.
  - [H.R. 3227](#) (Doc Hastings): To direct the Secretary of the Interior to continue stocking fish in certain lakes in the North Cascades National Park, Ross Lake National Recreation Area, and Lake Chelan National Recreation Area.
  - [H.R. 415](#) (Frank): To amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to designate segments of the Taunton River in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts as a component of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System.
- On July 15, the **Subcommittee on Water and Power** approved the following 3 bills:

- [H.R. 3437](#) (Salazar): To authorize the Secretary of the Interior to carry out the Jackson Gulch rehabilitation project in the State of Colorado. “*Jackson Gulch Rehabilitation Act of 2007*”
- [H.R. 2535](#) (Nunes): To direct the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study on the feasibility and suitability of constructing a storage reservoir, outlet works, and a delivery system for the Tule River Indian Tribe of California to provide a water supply for domestic, municipal, industrial, and agricultural purposes, and for other purposes. “*Tule River Tribe Water Development Act*”
- [H.R. 5293](#) (Heller): To approve the settlement of the water rights claims of the Shoshone-Paiute Tribes of the Duck Valley Reservation in Nevada, to require the Secretary of the Interior to carry out the settlement, and for other purposes. “*Shoshone-Paiute Tribes of the Duck Valley Reservation Water Rights Settlement Act*”
- On July 16, the **Committee on Natural Resources** approved the following 12 bills:
  - [H.R. 160](#) (Holt): To amend the American Battlefield Protection Act of 1996 to establish a battlefield acquisition grant program for the acquisition and protection of nationally significant battlefields and associated sites of the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812, and for other purposes. “*Revolutionary War and War of 1812 Battlefield Protection Act*”
  - [H.R. 4828](#) (Ortiz): To amend the Palo Alto Battlefield National Historic Site Act of 1991 to expand the boundaries of the historic site, and for other purposes. “*Palo Alto Battlefield National Historic Site Boundary Expansion Act of 2007*”
  - [H.R. 5751](#) (Pastor): To direct the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture to jointly conduct a study of certain land adjacent to the Walnut Canyon National Monument in the State of Arizona, and for other purposes. “*Walnut Canyon Study Act of 2008*”
  - [H.R. 6176](#) (Rodriguez): To authorize the expansion of the Fort Davis National Historic Site in Fort Davis, Texas, and for other purposes.
  - [H.R. 2933](#) (Gary Miller): To amend the American Battlefield Protection Act of 1996 to extend the authorization for that Act, and for other purposes. “*Civil War Battlefield Preservation Act of 2007*”
  - [H.R. 3299](#) (Musgrave): To provide for a boundary adjustment and land conveyances involving Roosevelt National Forest, Colorado, to correct the effects of an erroneous land survey that resulted in approximately 7 acres of the Crystal Lakes Subdivision, Ninth Filing, encroaching on National Forest System land.

- [H.R. 3336](#) (Lamborn): To direct the Secretary of the Interior to carry out a study to determine the suitability and feasibility of establishing a historic district to the Camp Hale on parcels of land in the State of Colorado. "*Camp Hale Historic District Study Act*"
- [H.R. 3849](#) (Rob Bishop): To provide for the conveyance of parcels of land to Mantua, Box Elder County, Utah. "*Box Elder Utah Land Conveyance Act*"
- [H.R. 3437](#) (Salazar): To authorize the Secretary of the Interior to carry out the Jackson Gulch rehabilitation project in the State of Colorado. "*Jackson Gulch Rehabilitation Act of 2007*"
- [H.R. 2535](#) (Nunes): To direct the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study on the feasibility and suitability of constructing a storage reservoir, outlet works, and a delivery system for the Tule River Indian Tribe of California to provide a water supply for domestic, municipal, industrial, and agricultural purposes, and for other purposes. "*Tule River Tribe Water Development Act*"
- [H.R. 5293](#) (Heller): To approve the settlement of the water rights claims of the Shoshone-Paiute Tribes of the Duck Valley Reservation in Nevada, to require the Secretary of the Interior to carry out the settlement, and for other purposes. "*Shoshone-Paiute Tribes of the Duck Valley Reservation Water Rights Settlement Act*"
- [H.R. 5350](#) (Robert C. "Bobby" Scott): To authorize the Secretary of Commerce to sell or exchange certain National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration property located in Norfolk, Virginia, and for other purposes.

**Quotable Quote:**

"Let there be no mistake about it. As Democrats, we are pro-drilling. And we are for drilling now, in areas that can bring near term relief to the American public. As others put forth bumper sticker energy policies, today, House Democrats are bringing forth prudent legislation aimed at unleashing the vast potential of the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska."

– Chairman Nick J. Rahall (D-WV), during floor debate in the U.S. House of Representatives on the ***Drill Responsibly in Leased Lands (DRILL) Act (H.R. 6515)*** on July 17, 2008. Visit the Committee's Web site to read Chairman Rahall's [floor statement](#).

**Calendar:**

*Click on the text within the calendar to be linked directly to our Web site.*

| <b>Monday<br/>7/21</b>   | <b>Tuesday<br/>7/22</b> | <b>Wednesday<br/>7/23</b>        | <b>Thursday<br/>7/24</b>   | <b>Friday<br/>7/25</b> |
|--|-------------------------|----------------------------------|--|------------------------|
| Subcommittee on Water and Power Oversight Field Hearing (10:00 AM) |                         | Full Committee Markup (12:30 PM) | Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests and Public Lands Oversight Hearing (10:00 AM)<br><br>Subcommittee on Fisheries, Wildlife and Oceans Legislative Hearing (10:00 AM) |                        |

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