



# 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 September 15 – 19, 2008

### On the House Floor:

- On Monday, the **House of Representatives** is expected to consider under suspension of the rules the following 4 bills under the jurisdiction of the House Natural Resources Committee:
  - [H.R. 5350](#) (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.
  - [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 2008”*
  - [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”*
- During the week, the **House of Representatives** is expected to consider the following bill, subject to a rule:
  - H.R. \_\_\_\_ (Rahall/Gene Green/George Miller): *“Comprehensive American Energy Security and Consumer Protection Act”*

### This Week’s Hearings:

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 Tuesday, the **Subcommittee on Fisheries, Wildlife and Oceans** will hold an oversight hearing on the effect that U.S. consumer demand is having on the illegal and unsustainable trade of wildlife products, and ongoing and proposed efforts to increase public awareness on the illegal trade. The United States is widely cited as the world's second largest consumer of wildlife products, with an appetite that continues to grow. The hearing will highlight the fact that U.S. consumers could be unwittingly driving a trade that directly threatens species globally. In addition, it will draw attention to a few unique individuals, companies, and organizations that are leading the way in designing consumer education programs to alert buyers to the potential implications of illegal wildlife purchases.

Visit the Committee's Web site to access [witness testimony](#) following the conclusion of the hearing. *(September 16, 2008, at 10:00 a.m., Room 1324 Longworth House Office Building)*

- Also on Tuesday, the **Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests and Public Lands** will hold an oversight hearing on "The Piñeros: Reviewing the Welfare of Workers on Federal Lands." The name "piñeros" translates literally to "men of the pines," and refers generally to the immigrant workers employed in reforestation and forest thinning work. The hearing will review the role of the Forest Service and the Department of Labor in protecting the health and welfare of workers carrying out tree planting and other service contracts on National Forest System lands. Furthermore, the hearing will evaluate contract requirements released by the Forest Service between late 2005 and early 2006, after publicity on the piñeros issue, that were intended to "explicitly require contractors to provide their employees with safety clothing and equipment." The hearing will review the effectiveness of these contract requirements, and explore what else can be done to ensure worker safety on National Forest System lands.

Visit the Committee's Web site to access [witness testimony](#) following the conclusion of the hearing. *(September 16, 2008, at 10:00 a.m., Room 1334 Longworth House Office Building)*

- On Thursday, the **Committee on Natural Resources** will hold an oversight hearing on "Recent Interior Department Inspector General Investigations on Federal Oil and Gas Royalty Collections." The hearing is in response to three reports released by the Interior Department's Office of Inspector General (OIG) on September 10, 2008 concerning multiple allegations of unethical and illicit behavior against more than a dozen current and former employees of the Minerals Management Service's Royalty in Kind (RIK) program.

Visit the Committee's Web site to access [witness testimony](#) following the conclusion of the hearing. *(September 18, 2008, at 10:00 a.m., Room 1324 Longworth House Office Building)*

- Also on Thursday, the **Subcommittee on Insular Affairs** will hold an oversight hearing on the “Federal Court Options for American Samoa,” following a GAO report issued in June 2008 that studied the issues and concerns surrounding the establishment of a federal court in American Samoa. Currently, with no federal court system in place, all matters of federal law arising in American Samoa are adjudicated in the U.S. district courts in Hawaii or the District of Columbia. The purpose of this hearing is to further expand on the report’s findings, as the Congress considers various venues for adjudicating matters of federal law while still considering issues of equity, justice and cultural preservation.

Visit the Committee’s Web site to access [witness testimony](#) following the conclusion of the hearing. (*September 18, 2008, at 2:00 p.m., Room 1324 Longworth House Office Building*)

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

- On September 10, the **House of Representatives** approved the following bill under the jurisdiction of the House Natural Resources Committee:
  - [H.R. 3667](#) (Welch): To amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to designate a segment of the Missisquoi and Trout Rivers in the State of Vermont for study for potential addition to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. *“Missisquoi and Trout Rivers Wild and Scenic Rivers Study Act”*
- Also on September 10, the Interior Department’s OIG released a series of reports concerning multiple allegations of unethical and illicit behavior against more than a dozen current and former employees of the Minerals Management Service’s Royalty in Kind (RIK) program. The reports are available on the Interior IG’s Web site at: <http://www.doioig.gov/>

### **Quotable Quote:**

“The activities at the RIK office are so outlandish that this whole IG report reads like a script from a television miniseries - and one that cannot air during family viewing time. It is no wonder that the office was doing such a lousy job of overseeing the RIK program; clearly the employees had ‘other’ priorities in that office.”

– *Chairman Rahall, reacting to reports released by the Interior IG concerning multiple allegations of unethical and illicit behavior against more than a dozen current and former employees of the Minerals Management Service’s Royalty in Kind (RIK) program on September 10, 2008.*

**Calendar:**

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

<b>Monday 9/15</b>	<b>Tuesday 9/16</b>	<b>Wednesday 9/17</b>	<b>Thursday 9/18</b>	<b>Friday 9/19</b>
	Subcommittee on Fisheries, Wildlife and Oceans Oversight Hearing (10:00 AM)  Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests and Public Lands Oversight Hearing (10:00 AM)		Full Committee Oversight Hearing (10:00 AM)  Subcommittee on Insular Affairs Oversight Hearing (2:00 PM)	

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