LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY FOR:

June 10, 2002

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LAST WEEK

LEGISLATION OF NOTE

The following Bills of significance to NRCS and conservation have been introduced.

Bill	Sponsor	Purpose
H. R. 4840	Hansen, UT	Sound Science of Endangered Species Act Planning Act of
		2002 amends the Endangered Species Act of 1973 to ensure
		the use of sound science in the implementation of the Act.

FARM BILL BRIEFINGS - On Tuesday, June 4, and Wednesday, June 5, representatives of USDA Farm Bill Working Group conducted a briefing for staffs of the House Agriculture Committee, Senate Agriculture Committee, and House Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture on implementation of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002. NRCS Chief Bruce Knight and Deputy Under Secretary Mack Gray, attended these briefings.

SENATE PASSES FY 2002 SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS - On Thursday, June 7, 2002, the Senate passed H.R. 4775, that provides FY 2002 Supplemental Appropriations. The legislation provides funding for emergency needs and homeland security. There is \$100 million for the Emergency Watershed Protection Program including in the legislation. The legislation now moves to a House – Senate conference to resolve differences between the House and Senate passed versions.

CLEAN WATER ACT AND "FILL MATERIAL" DEFINITION

SUBCOMMITTEE HEARING – On June 6, 2002, the Clean Air, Wetlands and Climate Change Subcommittee (Chairman Lieberman, CT) of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee held a hearing on a proposed change in the definition of "fill material." Witnesses from EPA and the Army Corps of Engineers provided testimony that this change would bring into uniformity the differing definitions used by the EPA and Army Corps of Engineers in regulating the dumping or material into streams, rivers wetlands under the provisions of the Clean Water Act. The proposed rule would define material based on its effect regardless of purpose.

THIS WEEK

TRADING WATER POLLUTION REDUCTION CREDITS SUBCOMMITTEE

HEARING – The Water Resources and Environment Subcommittee (Chairman Duncan, TN) of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee will hold a hearing in implementation by EPA of a new water quality trading program, which allows trading between point and non-point sources of pollution. NRCS Chief, Bruce Knight, has been invited to testify on behalf of the Department.

June 13

10:00 a.m.

2167 Rayburn Building

COLORADO RIVER WATER USAGE PLAN FIELD HEARING - The Water and Power Subcommittee (Chairman Calvert, CA) of the House Resources Committee will hold a field hearing on implementing a plan regulating the use of Colorado River water by California. Most of the water used in the Los Angeles metropolitan area comes from the Colorado River. The hearing will be held in the City Council Chambers of the La Quinta City Hall, 78495 Calle Tampico, La Quinta, California.

June 14

10:00 a.m.

La Quinta, CA

LOOKING AHEAD

SOUND SCIENCE AND THE ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT FULL

COMMITTEE HEARING - The House Resources Committee (Chairman Hansen, UT) will hold hearing on a bill that would require the secretary of the Interior, when making determinations under the Endangered Species Act, to "give greater weight to any scientific or commercial study or other information that is empirical or has been field-tested or peer-reviewed."

June 182:00 p.m.1334 Longworth Bldg.June 192:00 p.m.1334 Longworth Bldg.
