

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.

