

LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY FOR:**March 18, 2002**

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LAST WEEK

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

Bill	Sponsor	Purpose
H.R. 3930	Mr. Duncan, TN	To amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to authorize appropriations for State water pollution control revolving funds, and for other purposes.

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS HEARING - The Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development and Related Agencies (Chairman Kohl, WI) held an appropriations hearing on March 14, 2002 regarding the FY 2003 Budget Request as it relates to assistance for farmers. Undersecretary Rey placed strong emphasis in his opening statement on the need to support funding for Conservation Operations, and specifically, Conservation Technical Assistance. He stated that NRCS had best customer service rating for any agency within the Department of Agriculture. Chairman Kohl stated his concern regarding elimination of funding for the Small watershed program. He and other members of the Subcommittee submitted numerous questions for the record.

INVASIVE SPECIES CONTROL HEARING – The Fisheries, Wildlife, and Oceans Subcommittee (Chairman Gilcrest, MD), Forests and Forest Health Subcommittee (Chairman McInnis, CO), and National Parks, Recreation and Public Lands Subcommittee (Chairman Radanovich, CA) of the House Resources Committee held a joint hearing on March 14, 2001 on legislation that would restore native fish and wildlife on their native habitats on federal lands by controlling, mitigating, and eradicating harmful nonnative species. Witnesses from the USDA Forest Service and the Department of Interior provided testimony that supported the legislation to address the issue on public and adjacent private lands as a demonstration project.

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS HEARING - The Senate Environment and Public Works Committee (Chairman Jeffords, VT) held a hearing on March 13 on the economic and environmental risks associated with the increase in greenhouse gas emissions and review the magnitude of the possible injuries or losses that may be caused by global warming. Witnesses presented information related to methodologies for predicting impacts on global warming.

ENDANGERED FISH IN THE KLAMATH RIVER BASIN OVERSIGHT

HEARING - The House Resources Committee (Chairman Hansen, UT) held a hearing on March 13 regarding the decision by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to withhold water from farmers in the Klamath River Basin in order to protect endangered sucker fish. A report by the National Academy of Sciences has challenged the scientific data used in making that decision. Dr. William Lewis, representing the National Research Council described the shortcomings in scientific information used to develop the biological opinion that was used begin to restrict water withdrawals from the Klamath River. Recommendations made include the need to focus on modifying the existing in-stream impediments to fish movement as a first step.

WATER QUALITY FINANCING HEARING - The Water Resources and Environment Subcommittee (Chairman Duncan, TN) of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee held a hearing on March 13, 2002, on H.R.3930, "Water Quality Financing Act of 2002". The legislation will provide \$20 billion for infrastructure development and water quality improvements through the State Revolving Fund (SRF) Program. Ben Grumbles, EPA Assistant Administrator for Water, endorsed provisions in the legislation that would use of the SRF for new and innovative technologies and to address water quality issues on a watershed basis.

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THIS WEEK

WATER RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT ACT HEARING - The Water Resources and Environment Subcommittee (Chairman Duncan, TN) of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee will hold a hearing on proposals for a Water Resources Development Act of 2002.

March 20	10:00 a.m.	2167 Rayburn
March 21	10:00 a.m.	2167 Rayburn
April 10	10:00 a.m.	2167 Rayburn

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LOOKING AHEAD

WATER RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT ACT HEARING - The Water Resources and Environment Subcommittee (Chairman Duncan, TN) of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee will hold a hearing on proposals for a Water Resources Development Act of 2002.

April 10	10:00 a.m.	2167 Rayburn
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HOUSE AND SENATE DEPARTURE LIST - Listed below is a summary of changes in status of several Members of Congress.

Resigned to run for Governor House	Running for Governor	
	House	Senate
Steve Largent, OK	John Baldacci, ME David Bonior, MI Tom Barrett, WI Bob Riley, AL Rod Blagojevich, IL Van Hilleary, TN	Frank Murkowski, AK
Resigned House	Defeated in Primary House	
Joe Scarborough, FL Bud Shuster, PA	Gary Condit, CA	
Died House	Appointed to other office House	
Julian Dixon, CA Joe Moakley, MA Floyd Spence, SC Norman Sisisky, VA	Asa Hutchinson, AR Tony Hall, OH	
Running for the Senate House	Retiring	
	House	Senate
Saxby Chambliss, GA Greg Ganske, IA Lindsey Graham, SC John Thune, SD John Sununu, NH John Cooksey, LA Ken Bentsen, TX	William Coyne, PA Dan Miller, FL Tom Roemer, IN Steve Horn, CA Marge Roukema, NJ Eva Clayton, NC Bob Schaffer, CO Dick Armey, TX Wes Watkins, OK Joe Skeen, NM James Hansen, UT Sonny Callahan, AL Robert Borksi, PA	Phil Gramm, TX Jesse Helms, NC Strom Thurmond, SC Fred Thompson, TN

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