### **LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY FOR:**

NRCS, Office of Legislative Affairs Room 5121, South Agriculture Bldg. (202) 720-2771 www.nrcs.usda.gov/about/legislative For additional information contact: Douglas J. McKalip Eric W. Carlson Sharyn C. Alvarez

# LAST WEEK

## **LEGISLATION OF NOTE**

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

Bill	Spons or	Purpose
H.R. 5183	Oberstar, MN	To amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to
		clarify the jurisdiction of the United States over waters
		of the United States.
H. R. 5310	Thune, SD	To provide emergency livestock assistance and
		emergency crop loss assistance to agricultural
		producers.
S. 2830	Roberts, KS	To provide emergency disaster assistance to
		agricultural producers.
S. 2813	Smith, NH	To improve the financial and environmental
		sustainability of the water programs of the United
		States

**DROUGHT AID** – On Tuesday, September 10, the Senate in a vote of 79-16 adopted the Drought Assistance amendment to the Interior appropriations bill, H.R. 5093. The Daschle Modified Amendment No. 4481 provides emergency disaster relief to agricultural producers.

**EVERGLADES HEARING-** On September 13, 2002 the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee (Chairman, Jeffords, VT) conducted an oversight hearing regarding the implementation of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan. Witnesses from EPA, the Army Corps of Engineers, and the Department of Interior discussed the programmatic regulations governing the restoration. Other witnesses from the State of Florida, Indian tribes, farm groups, environmental groups, and local governments expressed strong support for the balanced approach to allocate water resources between restoration and water use demands in southern Florida stressing the importance for continuing the collaborative planning process.

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### THIS WEEK

**FARM BILL OVERSIGHT HEARING -** Secretary Ann Veneman will testify before the Senate Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry Committee (Chairman, Harkin, IA) to discuss progress regarding implementation of the 2002 Farm Bill, including conservation programs. Chief Knight will also attend.

September 17	10:00 a.m.	328A Russell Building
	10:00 <b>u</b> .m.	52614 Russell Dullaling

### **REVIEW OF FEDERAL CROP INSURANCE PROGRAMS OVERSIGHT HEARING -**

The General Farm Commodities and Risk Management Subcommittee (Chairman Chambliss, GA) of the House Agriculture Committee will hold a hearing on the implementation of the Agriculture Risk Protection Act (P.L. 106-224) and on the effectiveness of the federal crop insurance program

September 18 1:00 p.m. 1500 Longworth Bull	September 18	1:00 p.m.	1300 Longworth Building
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**KANSAS EQIP BRIEFING-** On September 20, 2002, Mark Berkland, NRCS Conservation Operations Division Director and other program staff will meet with Margaret Fast, Kansas Manager of Water Planning, and brief her on EQIP funding for water conservation and other conservation programs which can assist with water conservation. Sen. Brownback, KS, requested the meeting.

#### LOOKING AHEAD

## AGRICULTURE DEPARTMENT CIVIL RIGHTS PROGRAM SUBCOMMITTEE

**HEARING** – The Department Operations, Oversight, Nutrition and Forestry Subcommittee (Chairman Goodlatte, VA) of the House Agriculture Committee will hold a hearing on the civil rights programs of the Agriculture Department.

September 25	10:00 a.m.	1300 Longworth Building
environment and Public V	<b>PROJECTS FULL COMMIT</b> Vorks Committee (Chairman Jeff horize water resources developm	fords, VT), will mark-up draft

September 26	Time TBA	406 Dirksen Building