

LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY FOR:**June 25, 2001**

NRCS, Office of Legislative Affairs
 Room 5121, South Agriculture Bldg.
 (202) 720-2771

For additional information contact:

Douglas J. McKalip

Eric W. Carlson

Sharyn C. Alvarez

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LAST WEEK

NOMINATIONS SENT TO SENATE- The President has sent two USDA nominations to the Senate for confirmation. A hearing has not yet been scheduled.

- James Moseley has been nominated for Deputy Secretary of Agriculture. Mr. Moseley is a farmer from Indiana that served previously as Assistant Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment under President George H.W. Bush.
- Mark Rey has been nominated for Under Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment. Mr. Rey is currently a professional staff member for the Senate Forest and Public Land Management Subcommittee of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee.

LEGISLATION OF NOTE

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

BILL	MEMBER	PURPOSE
H. R. 2213	Combest, TX	To respond to the continuing economic adversely effecting American agricultural producers.
H. R. 2216	Young, FL	Making supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2001.
H. R. 2217	Skeen, NM	Making appropriations for the Department of the Interior and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2002.

FISCAL 2001 SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS - On June 21, 2001 the Senate Appropriations Committee (Chairman Byrd, WV) reported a supplemental appropriations bill for FY 2001. The \$6.5 billion is primarily for military spending and contains no funding for NRCS programs. Similar legislation passed the House floor on Wednesday.

FISCAL 2001 EMERGENCY AID AUTHORIZATION BILL – On June 20th, 2001, the House Agriculture Committee (Chairman Combest, TX) passed H.R. 2213, the Crop Year 2001 Agricultural Economic Assistance Act. The bill was amended to provide \$5.5 billion for income support to farmers, \$1 billion less than the original version of the bill, primarily in the form of enhanced AMTA payments. The bill contains no funding for NRCS conservation programs.

KLAMATH BASIN MANAGEMENT FIELD HEARING - On June 16, 2001 the House Resources Committee (Chairman Hansen, UT) held a field hearing on water management and endangered species issues in the Klamath Basin. Over 3,000 people attended this hearing to review water management and the impact of the Endangered Species Act. A recent federal court had ruled that federal water allocations for farmers using water to irrigate 200,000 acres would need to be curtailed to accommodate the needs of habitat for several endangered fish species. Severe drought in the region has reduced available water supplies.

HARMFUL WEED REDUCTION SUBCOMMITTEE HEARING - On June 19, 2001 the National Parks, Recreation and Public Lands Subcommittee (Chairman Hefley, CO) of the House Resources Committee held a hearing on H.R. 1462, the Harmful Nonnative Weed Control Act of 2001. There was discussion on funding sources for the bill, financial caps as well as the need for multi-state weed management areas.

WETLANDS RESERVE AND WILDLIFE HABITAT INCENTIVES PROGRAM

On Thursday, June 21, 2001, Leslie Deavers with the NRCS Wetlands and Watersheds Division, Lee Bensey, Director of Watersheds and Wetlands and Doug McKalip of NRCS, briefed Senate Agriculture Committee staff on the WRP and WHIP. Similar briefings on all NRCS Conservation Programs are expected to be conducted in the two next weeks.

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THIS WEEK

FY 2002 AGRICULTURE APPROPRIATIONS BILL- The House is expected to take up the FY 2002 Agriculture Appropriations bill this week.

SENATE AGRICULTURE HEARING –The Senate Agriculture Committee (Chairman Harkin, IA) will hold a hearing on the farm bill. Witnesses include the American Farm Bureau, National Farmers Union, Craig Cox of the Soil and Water Conservation Society, and someone representing rural development interests. There will be no USDA witnesses.

June 28

TBA

TBA

FORESTRY HEARING- The Agriculture Subcommittee on Department Operations, Oversight, Nutrition and Forestry (Chairman Goodlatte, VA) will hold a public hearing for the purpose of the hearing testimony regarding forestry programs in the context of a comprehensive farm bill. Mark Berkland, NRCS Director, Conservation Operations will be a witness on forestry programs in the context of a comprehensive Farm Bill.

June 28

10:00 a.m.

1300 Longworth

WATER POLLUTION REDUCTION SUBCOMMITTEE HEARING - The Water Resources and Environment Subcommittee (Chairman Duncan, TN) of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee will hold a hearing on the National Academy of Sciences National Research Council Report on assessing the scientific basis of the total maximum daily load (TMDL) approach to water pollution reduction. According to Committee staff, a federal witness will not be requested for the hearing.

June 28 9:30 a.m. 2167 Rayburn

LOOKING AHEAD

CALIFORNIA WATER ISSUES- The Water and Power Subcommittee (Chairman Calvert, CA) of the House Resources Committee will hold hearings on water supply in California.

June 30 TBA Modesto, CA
 July 2 TBA San Jose, CA

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