

**LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY FOR:**

**July 29, 2002**

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**LAST WEEK**

**FY 2003 AGRICULTURE APPROPRIATIONS BILLS** - On Thursday, July 25, 2002, the Senate Appropriations Committee (Chairman Byrd, WV) reported, S. 2801, the Agriculture Appropriations Bill for FY 2003 (Report No. 107-223). Several amendments were withdrawn including one by Sen. Tom Harkin that would have taken \$15 million from EQIP to be used for ethanol subsidies.

The House Appropriations Committee (Chairman Young, FL) has passed similar legislation, H. R. 5263 (Report No. 107-623) Floor action is expected in September following the August recess.

A summary of reported funding for NRCS is as follows:

<b>Program</b>	<b>President's Budget</b>	<b>House</b>	<b>Senate</b>
Conservation Operations.....	\$840,963,000	\$843,553,000	\$846,963,000
Watershed Surveys and Planning.....	\$0	\$ 11,197,000	\$ 10,960,000
Watershed and Flood Prev. Ops.....	\$0	\$110,000,000	\$105,000,000
Resource Cons. and Development.....	\$ 49,079,000	\$ 55,079,000	\$ 50,378,000
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Environmental Quality Incentives ...	\$200,000,000	\$695,000,000	\$700,000,000
Wetlands Reserve Program.....	\$0	245,833 acres	250,000 acres
Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program	\$0	\$ 30,000,000	\$ 30,000,000
Farmland Protection Program.....	\$0	\$100,000,000	\$100,000,000
Watershed Rehabilitation.....	\$0	\$ 45,000,000	\$ 30,000,000 <sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> The Senate restricts the funding as discretionary funding only, not mandatory.

**FY 2002 EMERGENCY SUPPLEMENTAL BILL** – On July 24, 2002 by a vote of 92-7, the Senate passed the Conference Report for H.R. 4775, a bill making Supplemental Appropriations for FY 2002. The House passed the report earlier this week. The legislation provides \$144 million in funding through the Emergency Watershed Protection Program to assist with recovery from natural disasters.

**FARM BILL IMPLEMENTATION BRIEFING**- On Thursday July 25, 2002, House and Senate Agriculture Committee staff were updated by the USDA Farm Bill Implementation Working Group. NRCS Chief Bruce Knight briefed the staff and responded to questions regarding implementation of conservation programs.

**LEGISLATION OF NOTE**

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

<b>Bill</b>	<b>Sponsor</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
H. R. 5263	Bonilla, TX	Making appropriations for Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration and Related Agencies programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2003.
S. 2756	Jeffords, VT	To establish the Champlain Valley National Heritage Partnership in the States of Vermont and New York.
S. 2767	Akaka, HI	To enhance agricultural biosecurity in the United States through increased prevention, preparation and response planning.
S. 2768	Hagel, NE	To provide to agricultural producers emergency livestock assistance and assistance for control of grasshoppers and Mormon crickets.
S. 2801	Kohl, WI	Making appropriations for Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration and Related Agencies programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2003.

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**THIS WEEK**

**ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES BILLS FULL COMMITTEE MARKUP** – The Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee (Chairman Bingaman, NM) will mark up pending legislation, including S. 2773, a bill which provides for hydrogeologic characterization of the High Plains Aquifer. The markup was originally scheduled for July 24.

July 31

9:30 a.m.

366 Dirksen Building

**RECLAMATION AND IRRIGATION BILLS SUBCOMMITTEE HEARING** - The Water and Power Subcommittee (Chairman Dorgan, ND) of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee will hold a hearing on pending legislation.

July 31

2:30 p.m.

366 Dirksen Building

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**LOOKING AHEAD**

**SUMMER RECESS** – The House is in recess from July 29 until September 3, 2002. The Senate will remain in session until August 5, when the Senate will go on recess until September 3, 2002.

**A JOINT SESSION OF CONGRESS TO BE HELD IN NEW YORK** - The House adopted a concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 449, to schedule a special joint session in New York City on September 6, 2002. This is the second time that Congress has convened outside Washington, DC since moving to the Capitol in 1800. The session is intended to honor the city's recovery from the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks.

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