

**LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY FOR:****September 20, 1999**

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**LAST WEEK -**

**FARM CRISIS HEARING** - On Wednesday, September 15, the House Committee on Agriculture held a hearing on the farm crisis. Secretary Dan Glickman testified that agriculture is not sharing in the current prosperity enjoyed by most other sectors of the economy. Farmers and ranchers in some regions of the country are faced with seemingly improbable combination of low crop yields and low prices. Farmers in other regions were affected by natural disasters as well.

He said the Administration had several proposals for emergency farm relief. "For drought and natural disaster relief, Congress should enact a continuation of the single-year portion of last year's crop loss disaster assistance program. Second, Congress should enact a new program to target assistance to farmers of 1999 crops suffering from low prices. Third, the Administration recommends funding for additional farm loans, including emergency loans. Fourth, reform of federal crop insurance program has been a top priority. These changes include, raising the coverage floor for catastrophic risk protection (CAT) coverage; making higher-level coverage more affordable by increasing premium subsidies; covering multi-year disasters; speeding up the development of new policies; insuring certain livestock losses; improving the Noninsured Disaster Program (NAP) by increasing coverage and replacing the area trigger with a Secretarial or Presidential disaster designation. Fifth, the administration supports eliminating the acreage enrollment cap for the Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP), increasing the annual enrollment cap to 250,000 acres, expanding the acreage enrollment cap for the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) to 40 million acres, increasing funds for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), and providing the additional conservation technical assistance funds necessary to implement the increases. Sixth, increasing export expansion activities will help bring markets into balance sooner, thus hastening the recovery of the farm economy. And lastly, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and Farm Service Agency (FSA) should be funded at a level commensurate with their responsibilities such as conducting signups, issuing checks, providing technical assistance and enforcing program rules and regulations. Also, additional CCC borrowing authority should be granted."

**HOUSE CONFEREES NAMED** - House conferees for the FY 2000 Agriculture Appropriations have been named and are as follows:

Joe Skeen, R-NM  
James Walsh, R-NY  
Jay Dickey, R-AR  
Jack Kingston, R-GA  
George Nethercutt, R-WA  
Henry Bonilla, R-TX  
Tom Latham, R-IA  
Jo Ann Emerson, R-MO  
C.W. Young, R-FL

Marcy Kaptur, D-OH  
Rosa DeLauro, D-CT  
Maurice Hinchey, D-NY  
Sam Farr, D-CA  
Allen Boyd, Jr., D-FL  
David Obey, D-WI

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**THIS WEEK**

**WATERSHED REHABILITATION HEARING POSTPONED** - The Water Resources and Environment Subcommittee (Chairman Boehlert, R-NY) of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee hearing on the Natural Resources Conservation Service's Small Watershed Program was postponed. The hearing will focus on the Middle Deep Red Run Creek Watershed Project in Oklahoma and H.R. 728, a bill to amend the Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act to authorize the Secretary of Agriculture to provide cost share assistance of the rehabilitation of structural measures constructed as part of NRCS water resource projects. The hearing may occur Friday in room 2167 Rayburn building. The time will be announced. It was rescheduled because Hurricane Floyd prompted leaders to close the House for business on Wednesday.

**ESTUARY HABITAT RESTORATION** - The Fisheries Conservation, Wildlife and Oceans Subcommittee (Chairman Saxton, R-N.J.) of House Resources Committee will hold a hearing on H.R. 1775, a bill to catalyze restoration of estuary habitat through financing of projects and enhanced coordination of federal and non-federal restoration programs.

Sept. 23

10:00am

1334 Longworth Bldg.

**DUCK STAMPS** - The Fisheries Conservation, Wildlife and Oceans Subcommittee (Chairman Saxton, R-N.J.) of House Resources Committee will hold a hearing on North America Wetlands Conservation Act Amendment and H.R. 2496, a bill to reauthorize the Junior Duck Stamp Conservation and Design Program Act of 1994.

Sept. 23

10:00am

1334 Longworth Bldg.

## **LOOKING AHEAD**

**FISCAL 2000 AGRICULTURE APPROPRIATIONS** - Conferees will meet on legislation making fiscal 2000 appropriations for programs of the Agriculture Department. The time, room number and date will be announced later.

**ENERGY FULL COMMITTEE MARKUP** - The Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee (Chairman Murkowski, R-Alaska) will markup S. 25, a bill to provide coastal impact assistance to state and local governments, to amend the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act Amendments of 1978 and the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965.

date TBA

time TBA

366 Dirksen Bldg.

**RESOURCES FULL COMMITTEE MARKUP** - The House Resources Committee (Chairman Young, R-Alaska) will meet to markup H.R. 701, a bill to provide Outer Continental Shelf Impact Assistance to state and local governments, to amend the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965 and the Urban Park and Recreation Recovery Act of 1978. The committee will also markup H.R. 798, a bill to provide for the permanent protection of the resources of the United States in the year 2000 and beyond.

date TBA

time TBA

1324 Longworth Bldg.

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