



# News from the Committee on Natural Resources

Rep. Nick J. Rahall, II - Chairman

1324 Longworth House Office Building - Washington DC, 20515 - <http://resourcescommittee.house.gov>

## The Weekly Preview March 16 – 20, 2009

### **This Week's Hearings:**

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- On Tuesday, the **Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources** will hold an oversight hearing on "Leasing and Development of Oil and Gas Resources on the Outer Continental Shelf." The hearing will attempt to address the issue of why 68 million acres of federal lands and waters have been leased for oil and gas development, but are not producing that oil and gas. Both the Government Accountability Office and the Interior Department's Office of Inspector General have looked into this concern over the past several months, and will testify at the hearing on their findings, as well as present other suggestions on how to improve the federal oil and gas program. The Minerals Management Service and the National Ocean Industries Association will also testify on the details and difficulties of oil and gas production on the Outer Continental Shelf. The following witnesses are scheduled to testify: Mr. Chris Oynes, Associate Director, Offshore Energy and Minerals Management Program, Minerals Management Service; Ms. Mary L. Kendall, Acting Inspector General, U.S. Department of the Interior; Mr. Frank Rusco, Director, Natural Resources and Environment, U.S. Government Accountability Office; Mr. Tom Fry, President, National Ocean Industries Association; and Mr. James W. Farnsworth, President Cobalt International Energy, L.P.

Visit the Committee's Web site to access [witness testimony](#) following the conclusion of the hearing. (*March 17, 2009, at 10:00 a.m., Room 1324 Longworth House Office Building*)

- On Wednesday, the **Committee on Natural Resources** will receive testimony on the following bills:
  - [H.R. 31](#) (McIntyre): To provide for the recognition of the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina, and for other purposes. "*Lumbee Recognition Act*"
  - [H.R. 1385](#) (Moran): To extend Federal recognition to the Chickahominy Indian Tribe, the Chickahominy Indian Tribe-Eastern Division, the Upper Mattaponi Tribe, the Rappahannock Tribe, Inc., the Monacan Indian Nation, and the Nansemond Indian Tribe. "*Thomasina E. Jordan Indian Tribes of Virginia Federal Recognition Act of 2009*"

Visit the Committee's Web site to access [witness testimony](#) following the conclusion of the hearing. *(March 18, 2009, at 10:00 a.m., Room 1324 Longworth House Office Building)*

- On Thursday, the **Subcommittee on Insular Affairs, Oceans and Wildlife** will receive testimony on the "*Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing Enforcement Act of 2009*" ([H.R. 1080](#)), legislation introduced by Subcommittee Chairwoman Madeleine Z. Bordallo (D-GU). The bill would strengthen and improve the enforcement authorities of NOAA and the U.S. Coast Guard in an effort to combat IUU fishing. It would also authorize an international cooperation and assistance program to help other countries develop the technical expertise to combat IUU fishing.

Visit the Committee's Web site to access [witness testimony](#) following the conclusion of the hearing. *(March 19, 2009, at 10:00 a.m., Room 1334 Longworth House Office Building)*

- Also on Thursday, the **Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests and Public Lands** will hold an oversight hearing on "Restoring the Federal Public Lands Workforce." The purpose of the hearing is to examine issues related to the morale and effectiveness of employees of the U.S. Forest Service (FS), Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and National Park Service (NPS). The hearing will review agency efforts to improve employee recruitment, satisfaction, and retention, and explore the need for additional efforts in these areas. The hearing will also review the Department of the Interior's progress at improving its law enforcement programs, particularly the U.S. Park Police.

Visit the Committee's Web site to access [witness testimony](#) following the conclusion of the hearing. *(March 19, 2009, at 10:00 a.m., Room 1324 Longworth House Office Building)*

### **In Case You Missed It:**

- On March 9, the **U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)** announced new efforts - in the wake of the massive December 2008 coal ash spill at a Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) facility in Kingston, Tennessee - to regulate the management of coal ash impoundments and landfills. Last month, Chairman Rahall sent a letter to EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson requesting the promulgation of regulations to address the hazards of coal combustion wastes, prior to a Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources hearing on legislation he authored to establish federal standards to ensure the structural integrity of impoundments used to dispose of coal ash. Visit the Committee's Web site to view Chairman Rahall's [statement](#) commending the EPA's announcement.

- On March 10, Chairman Rahall and National Parks, Forests and Public Lands Subcommittee Chairman Raúl Grijalva (R-AZ) introduced **The Federal Land Assistance, Management and Enhancement Act (FLAME Act) (H.R. 1404)**, bipartisan legislation to establish a new federal fund to cover the growing costs associated with fighting catastrophic, emergency wildland fires. Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee Chairman Jeff Bingaman (D-NM) introduced companion legislation. Visit the Committee's Web site to view the [press release](#) with additional information about the FLAME Act.

**Quotable Quote:**

“Fire seasons on public lands are getting longer and more intense - putting American lives and our treasured public lands in harm's way. Fighting these fires is eroding other non-fire programs and impacting the core mission of the Federal land management agencies - turning our Forest Service into the Fire Service. This legislation will help ensure that America's brave firefighters have the necessary tools to continue putting out fires with minimal damage to life and property.”

– Chairman Rahall, upon introduction of **The Federal Land Assistance, Management and Enhancement Act (FLAME Act) (H.R. 1404)** on March 10, 2009. Visit the Committee's Web site to view the [press release](#) with additional information about the FLAME Act.

**Calendar:**

Click on the text within the calendar to be linked directly to our Web site.

<b>Monday 3/16</b>	<b>Tuesday 3/17</b>	<b>Wednesday 3/18</b>	<b>Thursday 3/19</b>	<b>Friday 3/20</b>
	Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources Oversight Hearing (10:00 AM)	Full Committee Legislative Hearing (10:00 AM)	Subcommittee on Insular Affairs, Oceans and Wildlife Legislative Hearing (10:00 AM)  Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests and Public Lands Oversight Hearing (10:00 AM)	

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