



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 30 – April 3, 2009*

This Week's Hearings:

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- On Tuesday, the **Committee on Natural Resources** will hold an oversight hearing on "The California Drought: Actions by Federal and State agencies to address impacts on lands, fisheries, and water users." On February 26, 2009, Interior Secretary Ken Salazar and Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced the creation of a Federal Drought Action Team that will work cooperatively to respond to communities facing significant drought. Following the announcement, California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger proclaimed a state of emergency and ordered immediate drought action on February 27, 2009. The state is expected to face its third consecutive year of drought, possibly "the worst California drought in modern history," according to Lester Snow, Director of the California Department of Water Resources (DWR). As a result, the Committee will review what actions federal and state agencies have taken or will take to address the effects of drought on lands, water users, and fisheries.

Visit the Committee's Web site to access [witness testimony](#) following the conclusion of the hearing. (*March 31, 2009, at 10:00 a.m., Room 1324 Longworth House Office Building. NOTE: this hearing was originally scheduled for March 26, 2009*)

- On Wednesday, the **Committee on Natural Resources** will hold an oversight hearing on the ramifications to Indian tribes of the recent Supreme Court decision *Carcieri v. Salazar*. The case called into question the authority of the Secretary of the Interior to place land into trust status for the benefit of the Narragansett Indian Tribe of Rhode Island.

Visit the Committee's Web site to access [witness testimony](#) following the conclusion of the hearing. (*April 1, 2009, at 10:00 a.m., Room 1324 Longworth House Office Building*)

- On Thursday, the **Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests and Public Lands** will receive testimony on the following bill:
 - [H.R. 1612](#) (Grijalva): To amend the Public Lands Corps Act of 1993 to expand the authorization of the Secretaries of Agriculture, Commerce, and the Interior to provide service-learning opportunities on public lands, help restore the Nation’s natural, cultural, historic, archaeological, recreational, and scenic resources, train a new generation of public land managers and enthusiasts, and promote the value of public service. *“Public Lands Service Corps Act of 2009”*

Visit the Committee’s Web site to access [witness testimony](#) following the conclusion of the hearing. (*April 2, 2009, at 2:00 p.m., Room 1324 Longworth House Office Building*)

In Case You Missed It:

- On March 25, the **U.S. House of Representatives** approved the **“Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009”** ([H.R. 146](#)), a bipartisan package that combines more than 160 individual measures that enjoyed wide support in the Congress. Among its many provisions, the bill permanently codifies the National Landscape Conservation System; creates two million new acres of wilderness across 9 states; establishes 3 new national park units; designates 1,000 miles of wild and scenic rivers; designates a National Monument and 3 National Conservation Areas; protects world-class hunting land in the Wyoming Range; and recognizes new Historic Sites and Heritage Areas. The bill will now be sent to the President’s desk. Visit the Committee’s Web site to [view archived video](#) of Chairman Rahall’s floor statement.
- On March 26, **Chairman Rahall** was presented with the Patriot Award by Tom Selleck on behalf of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund in recognition of his dedication to facilitating the planned visitor center at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. Rahall was an original co-sponsor and advocate for the legislation that authorized the education center in the 108th Congress, and an original co-sponsor and advocate for the legislation that passed the House in the 109th Congress to expedite construction of the facility. In his role as Chairman, Rahall oversees all programs of the Department of the Interior, including the National Mall in Washington, D.C. Visit the Committee’s Web site to view the [press release](#) with additional information, and [view a photo](#) of the award ceremony.
- Also on March 26, the **U.S. House of Representatives** approved the **“Federal Land Assistance, Management and Enhancement (FLAME) Act”** ([H.R. 1404](#)), bipartisan legislation introduced by Chairman Rahall to establish a new federal fund to cover the growing costs associated with fighting catastrophic, emergency wildland fires. Visit the Committee’s Web site to [view archived video](#) of Chairman Rahall’s [floor statement](#), and view the [press release](#) with additional information about the FLAME Act.

Quotable Quote:

“It will preserve pristine wilderness such as in my home state of West Virginia, protect our national monuments and conservation areas, conserve free-flowing rivers, establish new park units, and guarantee abundant, clean water for thousands of families and more. At a time when so much of the news is bad – when so much about our future seems uncertain – enactment of this public lands bill will serve as a reminder that our nation is truly blessed, and that no matter what happens, if we pass those blessings on to our children our nation will endure.”

– Chairman Rahall, during floor debate in the U.S. House of Representatives on the **Omnibus Public Land Manage Act of 2009 (H.R. 146)** on March 25, 2009. Visit the Committee’s Web site to [view archived video](#) of Chairman Rahall’s floor statement.

Calendar:

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

Monday 3/30	Tuesday 3/31	Wednesday 4/01	Thursday 4/02	Friday 4/03
	Full Committee Oversight Hearing on California Drought (10:00 AM)	Full Committee Oversight Hearing on Ramifications of <i>Carciari v. Salazar</i> (10:00 AM)	Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests and Public Lands Legislative Hearing (2:00 PM)	

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