



# washington dc update

September 18, 2013

## WRDA and Lacey Act Issues on the Front Burner in Washington this Week

### WRDA

The House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee marks up its version of the Water Resources Reform Development Act at 10:00 AM tomorrow morning. Floor time for debate in the full House is anticipated in October. This means that we will have a House and a Senate version of WRDA by the time of the fall conference in Tucson. The workshop that follows the Legislative session on Thursday afternoon will provide the opportunity for member input into the positions that WESTCAS should take on this important legislation.

### House Hearing on the Lacey Act

The House Subcommittee on Fisheries, Wildlife, Oceans, and Insular Affairs will hold a hearing on Friday, September 20 to give the US Fish and Wildlife Service the opportunity to elaborate on its proposed "Categorical Exception" changes for listing a species under the Lacey Act.

USFWS asked for public comments on its proposed rule changes during the summer. Thanks to the efforts of WESTCAS and other agencies, this comment period was extended to October 15. WESTCAS already submitted its comments on July 31.

US Fish and Wildlife Service vigorously enforces the prohibition against moving species listed under the Lacey Act across a state line. This has played havoc with the water supply of North Texas after zebra mussels were discovered in Lake Texoma. Millions of acre feet are moved across state lines in the Arid West despite the presence of quagga mussels.

Recently introduced legislation would add quagga mussels to the Lacey Act. Should this occur, the consequences for water transfers in the Arid West would be profound.

Hicks-Ray will cover the House hearing on Friday and provide updates to you. This issue will also be thoroughly discussed in Tucson.

**Summary & Take-Away .**

**Active Times in Washington for Western Water Issues**

Tomorrow morning the House T&I Committee is scheduled to mark-up its version of WRDA. HRA will provide an update on the mark-up and specific provisions of interest or concern to WESTCAS and Western water managers. At the Tucson conference, we should have the Senate and House versions to review and comment.

This Friday, a hearing will be held to delve into the USFWS position on use of Categorical Exclusion to add invasive species to the Lacey Act.

Both of these are critical issues for Western water will be discussed at the Tucson conference and a strawman prepared for the Legislative work group to provide comments.



*Come Join Us in Tucson, Oct 29<sup>th</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup>*



**WESTCAS**  
Western Coalition of Arid States