



Office of the Secretary
August 22, 2006

CONTACT: Hugh Vickery, DOI
(202) 501-4633

Interior, Commerce, Agriculture, EPA, Council on Environmental Quality Announce Next Series of Listening Sessions on Cooperative Conservation

WASHINGTON -- The Secretaries of Interior, Commerce and Agriculture, the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Chairman of the White House Council on Environmental Quality today announced the dates and locations of the next set of listening sessions on cooperative conservation and environmental partnerships.

These sessions, the third group of some two dozen to be held around the country, are scheduled at the following locations:

Corpus Christi, Texas, 1 p.m., Sept. 5, 2006, Omni Marina Hotel, Riviera Ballroom. Commerce Deputy Secretary David Sampson will attend.

Honolulu, Hawaii, 9 a.m., Sept 7, 2006, place to be determined,. CEQ Chairman James Connaughton and Hawaii Gov.Linda Lingle will attend.

Show Low, Arizona, 10 a.m., Sept. 12, 2006, Northland Pioneer College, Silver Creek Campus (Snowflake), Performing Arts Center Theatre (PAC-103). Agriculture Under Secretary Mark Rey will attend.

South Florida, Time and place to be determined. Sept 15, 2006. Commerce Secretary Carlos Gutierrez will attend.

Pottstown, Pennsylvania, 10 a.m., Sept. 18, 2006, Montgomery County Community College - Community Room, 101 College Dr. Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Stephen L. Johnson will attend.

Pinedale, Wyoming, 1 p.m., Sept. 19, 2006; Sublette County Library, Lovatt Room, 156 S. Tyler. Michael Bogert, Counselor to the Secretary of the Interior, will attend.

Orlando, Florida, Time to be determined, Sept. 25, 2006, Orange County Convention Center. Florida Gov. Jeb Bush, Secretary of the Interior Dirk Kempthorne, and Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Johnson will attend.

Waco, Texas, 10 a.m., Sept. 27, 2006, Waco Convention Center. Deputy Assistant Interior Secretary David Verhey and Assistant Deputy Under Secretary of Defense Alex Beehler will attend.

The listening sessions will give citizens an opportunity to exchange ideas on incentives, partnership programs, and regulations that can improve results and promote cooperative conservation and environmental partnerships.

The meetings are the latest in a series of discussions the Administration has hosted since the President's Conference on Cooperative Conservation in August 2005. The conference identified three broad approaches to improving conservation results: promoting cooperation within the federal government, promoting cooperation between the federal government and others, and eliminating barriers to cooperation in existing policy. Some aspects of these ideas are reflected in a recently released summary of new legislation. Other aspects will be explored in the listening sessions announced today.

The meetings will focus on issues, programs, and policies mentioned frequently at the White House Conference on Cooperative Conservation. Discussion topics will include:

How can the federal government enhance wildlife habitat, species protection, and other conservation outcomes through regulatory and voluntary conservation programs?

How can the federal government enhance cooperation among federal agencies and with states, tribes, and local communities in the application of environmental protection and conservation laws?
How can the federal government work with states, tribes, and other public- and private-sector partners to improve science used in environmental protection and conservation?
How can the federal government work cooperatively with businesses and landowners to protect the environment and promote conservation?
How can the federal government better respect the interests of people with ownership in land, water, and other natural resources?

Other upcoming listening sessions that were previously announced include the following:

Omaha, Nebraska, 1 p.m., Aug. 24, 2006, Qwest Center Omaha-Convention Center Junior Ballroom, Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Dale Hall will attend.

Muncie, Indiana, 10 a.m., Aug. 26, 2006, Horizon Convention Center Exhibition Hall, Deputy Secretary of the Interior Lynn Scarlett will attend.

Fairbanks, Alaska, 10 a.m., Aug. 28, 2006, The Carlson Center, Secretary of the Interior Dirk Kempthorne will attend.

Jefferson City, Missouri, 1 p.m., Aug. 29, 2006, Runge Conservation Nature Center, Agriculture Deputy Under Secretary Natural Resources and Environment Dave Tenny to attend. (Note: time changed from previous announcement.)

Enid, Oklahoma, 1 p.m. Aug. 30, 2006, Cherokee Strip Conference Center, Pioneer Exhibit Hall. Agriculture Deputy Under Secretary Dave Tenny will attend.

Redding, California, 1 p.m., Sept. 13, 2006, Cascade Theater, Agriculture Under Secretary, Natural Resources and Environment Mark Rey will attend.

Colorado Springs, Colorado, 9 a.m., Sept. 15, 2006, University of Colorado at Colorado Springs, the gymnasium, Agriculture Under Secretary Mark Rey will attend.

Brewer, Maine, 4 p.m., Sept. 20, 2006, Jeff's Catering Banquet and Convention Center, Secretary of the Interior Dirk Kempthorne will attend.

Brunswick, Georgia, 1 p.m., Sept. 21, 2006, Coastal Georgia Community College, SE Georgia Conference Center, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Director Dale Hall will attend.

Colton, California, 10 a.m., Sept. 28, 2006, Colton High School Auditorium, Secretary of the Interior Dirk Kempthorne will attend.