

## NSC Alliance Washington Report, Volume 2, Issue 1, January 21, 2011

### In this Issue:

- **Participate in Congressional Visits Day 2011**
- **House Appropriations Committee Membership Announced**
- **House Science, Space and Technology Committee Membership Announced: First-Term Members to Hold Leadership Positions**
- **Plan to Attend: SPNHC/NSC Alliance 2011 Annual Meeting**
- **Recent Articles Warn of a Dwindling Supply of Taxonomists**
- **Congressional Leadership Announced for Education Committees**
- **UN Approves Scientific Panel on Biodiversity**
- **NSF Program Directors Outline Plan for Science, Engineering, and Education for Sustainability Program**
- **Act Now: Write a Letter to the Editor About the Value of Museums**

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### *Policy News from NSC Alliance*

Through the NSC Alliance partnership with the American Institute of Biological Sciences, we are pleased to provide NSC Alliance members with the following public policy update. If you have any questions or require additional information regarding any of the following items, please contact NSC Alliance director of public policy Dr. Robert Gropp at 202-628-1500 x 250 or at [rgropp@aibs.org](mailto:rgropp@aibs.org).

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### **Participate in Congressional Visits Day 2011**

The Natural Science Collections Alliance (NSC Alliance) is an active member of the Biological and Ecological Sciences Coalition (BESC). Each year, BESC organizes a Congressional Visits Day (CVD) in Washington, DC. The event is an opportunity for scientists to come to Washington, DC, to meet with their members of Congress to communicate the importance of federal investments in scientific research, such as that supported by the National Science Foundation.

This year, the BESC CVD is scheduled to take place on 30-31 March 2011. During the afternoon of 30 March, CVD participants will participate in briefings on the federal budget and appropriations process. On 31 March, CVD participants will meet with their elected officials or their staff. These meetings will be coordinated and scheduled by public policy staff affiliated with BESC member organizations.

The 112<sup>th</sup> Congress has roughly 100 new members, many of whom will serve on the appropriations and science committees. The BESC CVD event is an excellent opportunity for representatives of NSC Alliance member institutions to communicate the importance of sustained federal investments in natural science collections, research, and education programs.

To learn more about the BESC CVD event, please contact Robert Gropp at [rgropp@aibs.org](mailto:rgropp@aibs.org). Space is limited, so please express your interest in participating to Robert Gropp as soon as possible.

## **House Appropriations Committee Membership Announced**

The House Republicans have selected Kentucky's Hal Rogers to serve as Chairman of the powerful House Committee on Appropriations. Representative Norm Dicks (D-WA) will be the Ranking Minority Member for the full committee as well as hold the top Democratic seat on the Defense Subcommittee.

Chairman Rogers recently announced Subcommittee Chairmen and Republican members of the Committee for the 112<sup>th</sup> Congress.

"Each and every one of our Republican committee members are committed to the historic challenge of dramatically reducing government spending and getting our economy on a sustainable and responsible path. It is with their expertise, hard work, and leadership that this Congress will begin to undo the damage caused by record deficits and debt, put Americans back to work, and provide for a secure financial future. We have a tough road ahead of us, and this Committee will begin our work immediately to accomplish our goals for the 112th Congress," Rogers said.

The House Democratic Caucus also approved their leadership and membership for the committee. The subcommittee Chairmen, Ranking Minority Members, and members are as follows:

### *Agriculture Subcommittee:*

The Chairman will be Rep. Jack Kingston (R-GA). California's Rep. Sam Farr will assume the top Democratic spot on the subcommittee. Members of the panel will be Representatives Tom Latham (R-IA), Jo Ann Emerson (R-MO), Robert Aderholt (R-AL), Cynthia Lummis (R-WY), Alan Nunnelee (R-MS), Tom Graves (R-GA), Rosa DeLauro (D-CT), Sanford Bishop (D-GA), and Marcy Kaptur (D-OH).

### *Commerce, Justice, Science Subcommittee:*

The Chairman will be Rep. Frank Wolf (R-VA). Pennsylvania's Rep. Chaka Fattah is now the senior Democrat on the panel, which has jurisdiction over the National Science Foundation and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Rep. Alan Mollohan (D-WV), who was chairman of the Commerce, Justice, Science panel in the last Congress, was defeated in his bid for re-election. Members of the panel will be Representatives John Culberson (R-TX), Robert Aderholt (R-AL), Jo Bonner (R-AL), Steve Austria (R-OH), Tom Graves (R-GA), Kevin Yoder (R-KS), Adam Schiff (D-CA), Mike Honda (D-CA), and José Serrano (D-NY).

### *Interior and Environment Subcommittee:*

The Chairman will be Rep. Mike Simpson (R-ID). Rep. James P. Moran (D-VA) will hold the senior Democratic spot on the panel, which has jurisdiction over the United States Geological Survey, Environmental Protection Agency, National Park Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, and parts of the Forest Service. Members of the panel will be Representatives Jerry Lewis (R-CA), Ken Calvert (R-CA), Steve LaTourette (R-OH), Tom Cole (R-OK), Jeff Flake (R-AZ), Cynthia Lummis (R-WY), Betty McCollum (D-MN), Maurice Hinchey (D-NY), and José Serrano (D-NY).

*Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Subcommittee:*

The Chairman will be Denny Rehberg (R-MT). Rep. Rosa DeLauro (D-CT) will serve as the top Democrat. The senior spot on the panel was previously held by retiring full Committee Chairman, Rep. David Obey (D-WI). DeLauro was previously Chairwoman of the Agriculture Subcommittee. Members of the panel will be Representatives Jerry Lewis (R-CA), Rodney Alexander (R-LA), Jack Kingston (R-GA), Kay Granger (R-TX), Mike Simpson (R-ID), Jeff Flake (R-AZ), Cynthia Lummis (R-WY), Nita Lowey (D-NY), Jesse Jackson Jr. (D-IL), Lucille Roybal-Allard (D-CA), and Barbara Lee (D-CA).

*Energy and Water Subcommittee:*

The Chairman will be Rep. Rodney Frelinghuysen (R-NJ). Rep. Peter J. Visclosky (IN) will hold the top Democratic spot on the Energy and Water Subcommittee. Members of the panel will be Representatives Jerry Lewis (R-CA), Mike Simpson (R-ID), Dennis Rehberg (R-MT), Rodney Alexander (R-LA), Steve Womack (R-AR), and Alan Nunnelee (R-MS).

*Defense Subcommittee:*

The Chairman will be Rep. Bill Young (R-FL). Rep. Norm Dicks (D-WA) will serve as Ranking Member. Members of the panel will be Representatives Jerry Lewis (R-CA), Rodney Frelinghuysen (R-NJ), Jack Kingston (R-GA), Kay Granger (R-TX), Ander Crenshaw (R-FL), Ken Calvert (R-CA), Jo Bonner (R-AL), Tom Cole (R-OK), Ed Pastor (D-AZ), Chaka Fattah (D-PA), and John Olver (D-MA).

*Financial Services Subcommittee:*

The Chairwoman will be Rep. Jo Ann Emerson (R-MO). Rep. José E. Serrano (D-NY) will be the senior minority member of the panel. Members of the subcommittee will be Representatives Rodney Alexander (R-LA), Jo Bonner (R-AL), Mario Diaz-Balart (R-FL), Tom Graves (R-GA), Kevin Yoder (R-KS), Steve Womack (R-AR), Barbara Lee (D-CA), Pete Visclosky (D-IN), and Ed Pastor (D-AZ).

*Homeland Security Subcommittee:*

The Chairman will be Rep. Robert Aderholt (R-AL). North Carolina's David E. Price will remain the senior Democrat on the Homeland Security panel. Members of the panel will be Representatives John Carter (R-TX), John Culberson (R-TX), Rodney Frelinghuysen (R-NJ), Tom Latham (R-IA), Ander Crenshaw (R-FL), Charles Dent (R-PA), Lucille Roybal-Allard (D-CA), Nita Lowey (D-NY), and John Olver (D-MA).

*Legislative Branch Subcommittee:*

The panel will be led by Chairman Ander Crenshaw (R-FL). Rep. Michael Honda (D-CA) is the new Ranking Member on the Legislative Branch Subcommittee. Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz (D-FL), who had chaired the Legislative Branch Subcommittee during the last session of Congress, lost her seat on the Appropriations Committee when House Republican's reduced the size of the panel. Members will be Representatives Steve LaTourette (R-OH), Jo Ann Emerson (R-MO), Dennis Rehberg (R-MT), Ken Calvert (R-CA), David Price (D-NC), and Sanford Bishop (D-GA).

*Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Subcommittee:*

Rep. John Culberson (R-TX) will serve as Chairman. Rep. Sanford D. Bishop Jr. of Georgia gave up his seat on the Defense Subcommittee to assume the top spot on the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Subcommittee, a spot that had been held by Rep. Chet Edwards (D-TX). Edwards lost his re-election bid. Members of the panel will be Representatives Bill Young, (R-FL), John Carter (R-TX), Jeff Flake (R-AZ), Steve Austria (R-OH), Kevin Yoder (R-KS), Alan Nunnelee (R-MS), Sam Farr (D-CA), Betty McCollum (D-MN), and Jim Moran (D-VA).

*State and Foreign Operations Subcommittee:*

Rep. Kay Granger (R-TX) will serve as Chairwoman. Rep. Nita Lowey (D-NY) will remain the top Democrat on the State and Foreign Operations Subcommittee. Members of the panel will be Representatives Jerry Lewis (R-CA), Frank Wolf (R-VA), Tom Cole (R-OK), Mario Diaz-Balart (R-FL), Charles Dent (R-PA), Steve Austria (R-OH), Jesse Jackson Jr. (D-IL), Adam Schiff (D-CA), and Steven Rothman (D-NJ).

*Transportation, Housing and Urban Development Subcommittee:*

Rep. Tom Latham (R-IA) will serve as Chairman. Rep. John Olver (D-MA) will retain his senior post on the subcommittee. Subcommittee members will include Representatives Frank Wolf (R-VA), John Carter (R-TX), Steve LaTourette (R-OH), Mario Diaz-Balart (R-FL), Charles Dent (R-PA), Steve Womack (R-AR), Ed Pastor (D-AZ), Marcy Kaptur (D-OH), and David Price (D-NC).

**House Science, Space and Technology Committee Membership Announced: First-Term Members to Hold Leadership Positions**

On 20 January 2011, the Republican members of the House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology met to elect subcommittee chairman. The full committee will be chaired by Representative Ralph Hall (R-TX).

“Issues before this Committee are critical to our nation’s competitiveness and our economy,” said Chairman Hall. “From energy technology R&D, math and science education programs, and nanotechnology to our nation’s space exploration program, we are going to be focusing on some issues that have far-ranging impact. I think we have an excellent team of subcommittee chairmen and I look forward to working with them, and all of our Members on both sides of the aisle, to advance important legislation this Congress.”

In the 112<sup>th</sup> Congress, Rep. Andy Harris (R-MD) will chair the Subcommittee on Energy and Environment. Chairman Harris, a first-term member of Congress, is an anesthesiologist by training and represents the first district of Maryland, which includes the counties on the eastern shore of the Chesapeake Bay. In addition to his service on the Science, Space, and Technology Committee, Rep. Harris also serves on the Transportation and Infrastructure, and Natural Resources Committees.

“I feel that my background as a physician and service for the last 12 years on the Maryland State Senate Health, Education, and Environment Committee have prepared me for this role. As chairman, my focus will reflect the concerns of the residents of Maryland's 1st Congressional District. I want to secure America's energy future, enhance research on new and existing energy technologies and to look for environmentally safe methods of obtaining the energy that our economy needs to grow and create jobs,” said Harris.

Republican members of the Subcommittee on Energy and Environment include Representatives Dana Rohrabacher (R-CA), Roscoe Bartlett (R-MD), Frank Lucas (R-OK), Judy Biggert (R-IL), Todd Akin (R-MO), Randy Neugebauer (R-TX), Paul Broun (R-GA), and Chuck Fleischmann (R-TN).

Rep. Ben Quayle (R-AZ), another first-term member of Congress, was selected to serve as Chairman of the Subcommittee on Technology and Innovation. Prior to serving in Congress, Rep. Quayle practiced law as a corporate lawyer in California, New York and Arizona. In addition to serving on the Science, Space, and Technology Committee, he will also hold seats on the Judiciary and Homeland Security Committees.

“I am excited about serving on this important Committee and as chairman of the Subcommittee on Technology and Innovation. House Republicans are focused on creating jobs, cutting spending and reducing burdensome government regulations. The Subcommittee on Technology and Innovation will play an important role in making sure these goals are being met,” said Quayle.

Republican members of the Subcommittee include Representatives Lamar Smith (R-TX), Judy Biggert (R-IL), Randy Neugebauer (R-TX), Michael McCaul (R-TX), Chuck Fleischmann (R-TN), and Scott Rigell (R-VA).

Rep. Mo Brooks (R-AL), also a first-term member of Congress, was elected Chairman of the Subcommittee on Research and Science Education. Chairman Brooks represents northern Alabama's fifth district and will also serve on the House Armed Services Committee. Brooks is a lawyer, and a former prosecutor and state legislator.

Brooks stated, "I'm looking forward to working with my colleagues in Congress to ensure that America continues to lead the world in scientific achievement. Research and education are vital to the future of our country; highly trained scientists and researchers contribute to almost every area of American life."

Republican members of the Subcommittee include Representatives Roscoe Bartlett (R-MD), Michael McCaul (R-TX), Ben Quayle (R-AZ), Steven Palazzo (R-MS), and Andy Harris (R-MD).

Rep. Steven Palazzo (R-MS) will serve as the Chairman of the Subcommittee on Space and Aeronautics. A first-term member of Congress, Palazzo represents the fourth district of Mississippi and will also serve on the House Armed Services Committee.

"I am honored as a freshman member of Congress to serve as chairman of the Subcommittee on Space and Aeronautics. South Mississippi is home to many NASA assets, but I will work with my colleagues from all NASA-impacted states to help shape the future of space policy," said Palazzo.

Republican members of the Subcommittee include Representatives Jim Sensenbrenner (R-WI), Lamar Smith (R-TX), Dana Rohrabacher (R-CA), Frank Lucas (R-OK), Todd Akin (R-MO), Michael McCaul (R-TX), Sandy Adams (R-FL), Scott Rigell (R-VA), and Mo Brooks (R-AL).

Serving as Chairman of the Subcommittee on Investigations and Oversight will be Georgia's Rep. Paul Broun. Rep. Broun was first elected to Congress in July 2007 and represents the tenth district of Georgia. Rep. Broun, a medical doctor by training, practiced general medicine prior to his service in Congress. In addition to his service on the science panel, he is a member of the House Homeland Security and Natural Resources Committees.

"I am honored to have been chosen to chair the Investigations and Oversight Subcommittee and address the many critical matters that will come before this Subcommittee in the 112th Congress. I look forward to leading this Subcommittee as it performs its oversight responsibilities, which the American people deserve," stated Broun.

Republican members of the Subcommittee include Representatives Jim Sensenbrenner (R-WI), Sandy Adams (R-FL), Ben Quayle (R-AZ), Steven Palazzo (R-MS), Mo Brooks (R-AL), and Andy Harris (R-MD).

The Democrats have yet to announce subcommittee membership or who will serve as the Ranking Minority Member for the various subcommittees. However, Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-TX) will serve as the Ranking Member for the full Science, Space, and Technology Committee.

Other Democrats assigned to the full Committee include Representatives Jerry F. Costello (IL), Lynn Woolsey (CA), Zoe Lofgren (CA), David Wu (OR), Brad Miller (NC), Daniel Lipinski (IL), Gabrielle Giffords (AZ), Donna Edwards (MD), Marcia L. Fudge (OH), Ben Ray Lujan (NM), Paul Tonko (NY), Jerry McNerney (CA), John Sarbanes (MD), Terri Sewell (AL), Frederica Wilson (FL), and Hansen Clarke (MI).

### **Plan to Attend: SPNHC/NSC Alliance 2011 Annual Meeting**

In 2011, the NSC Alliance will hold an annual meeting in conjunction with the Society for the Preservation of Natural History Collections (SPNHC). The conference, hosted by the California Academy of Sciences, will take place in San Francisco, California from 23-28 May. The NSC Alliance portion of the meeting is scheduled for 24-25 May 2011 and will include an NSC Alliance Board of Directors meeting, business meeting, and a plenary session (25 May) on federal policy and scientific collections.

Additional information about the meeting is available on the NSC Alliance website at <http://nscalliance.org/?p=355>. The meeting website, including registration page, is available at <http://research.calacademy.org/spnhc>.

### **Recent Articles Warn of a Dwindling Supply of Taxonomists**

Two articles published this month draw attention to a global decline in the number of taxonomists.

The January 2011 issue of the journal *BioScience* includes an article entitled “Recovery Plan for the Endangered Taxonomy Profession.” The article, authored by David Pearson, Andrew Hamilton, and Terry Erwin, appears in the journal’s Professional Biologist section. The authors argue for an increased emphasis on training non-professional taxonomists, including parataxonomists, amateurs, and youths, to reverse the declining trend in professionals entering the field.

On 19 January 2011, Wired.com published “The Mass Extinction of Scientists Who Study Species.” The article considers the impact of the declining number of professional taxonomists. This loss of expertise could have profound impacts on our collective scientific knowledge: “The problem we face is a loss of knowledge not yet recorded in the scientific literature. In our technological efforts to concentrate our biodiversity knowledge, we may be rendering a field and body of knowledge obsolete. And in the process, we may be undermining our own efforts to protect biodiversity.” The article is available at <http://www.wired.com/wiredscience/2011/01/extinction-of-taxonomists/>.

### **Congressional Leadership Announced for Education Committees**

The start of the 112th Congress brought some changes to the leadership of the legislative committees with jurisdiction over education policy.

In the House of Representatives, the Education and Labor Committee has been renamed – it is once again the Education and the Workforce Committee. The committee will also have a new chairman, Representative John Kline (R-MN), who has served as the top ranking Republican on the panel since 2009. In a statement released in December 2010, Kline said: “My goal for the federal programs and agencies that oversee our schools and workplaces is to provide certainty and simplicity. We must ensure federal red tape does not become the enemy of innovation, and that federal mandates do not become roadblocks on the path to reform.” In the past, Kline has advocated for greater flexibility and local control in education. Rep. George Miller (D-CA), who chaired the Education and Labor Committee in the 111th Congress, is expected to serve as Ranking Member.

Rep. Virginia Foxx (R-NC) has been named chairwoman of the panel’s Subcommittee on Higher Education, Lifelong Learning, and Competitiveness. Foxx is a former college professor and administrator. Although she has a light legislative footprint in the area of education, she has previously expressed criticism of the Department of Education’s handling of for-profit colleges. In a recent interview with Inside Higher Ed, Foxx expressed her interest in cutting back federal regulations in education and in reevaluating funding for the Department of Education. “...[G]overnment funding for higher education is most effective the closer the funding source is to the institutions. This is why I support focusing our efforts on state and local government and removing much of the federal red tape, mandates and funding mechanisms that hinder innovation and accountability.” The ranking member for the subcommittee has not yet been announced.

The Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education will be chaired by Rep. Duncan D. Hunter (R-CA). Hunter, who is serving his second term in office, has little legislative history in education policy, but has expressed interest in cutting government spending.

The House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education will be chaired by Rep. Denny Rehberg (R-MT). This is the congressman’s first time as top Republican on the committee. Rehberg commented on his priorities for the subcommittee in a statement released on 7 January: “Even as federal spending went through the roof, the quality of health care and education has suffered. We need to spend tax dollars more responsibly and efficiently. We need to empower communities, not federal bureaucrats. We need to stop thinking that we can solve every problem by throwing more money at it.” House Democrats have not yet made a decision regarding the panel’s ranking member. The subcommittee was led in the last session of Congress by now retired Rep. David Obey (D-WI), who had also served as chairman of the full Appropriations Committee.

The Senate has not yet officially named the leadership for its committees. However, the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee is expected to be chaired again by Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA). Harkin became the lead Democrat on the committee after the death of Senator Edward Kennedy (D-MA) in 2009. Senator Michael Enzi (R-WY) has served as the education committee’s ranking member since 2008. He chaired the committee from 2005-2007, when the Republicans last controlled the Senate, and played an important role in the enactment

of the No Child Left Behind Act. Senator Harkin is also expected to continue on as chair of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies.

### **UN Approves Scientific Panel on Biodiversity**

Nations will soon have access to expert advice on science and policy issues related to biological diversity. The United Nations General Assembly recently gave final approval to the creation of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services. The panel is charged with evaluating the causes and effects of, and policy solutions to, the loss of biodiversity. Although details regarding the new panel have yet to emerge, it is expected to be modeled after the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

### **NSF Program Directors Outline Plan for Science, Engineering, and Education for Sustainability Program**

A recent "dear colleague" letter from the heads of all eleven directorates and offices at the National Science Foundation (NSF) outlines the agency's plans for supporting the "science and engineering research needed to understand and overcome the barriers to sustainable human well-being." The Science, Engineering, and Education for Sustainability (SEES) program is an NSF-wide investment that "will include the conceptual, theoretical, empirical, and computational research needed to further develop the basic science, engineering, education, and policy knowledge base relevant to sustainability. Additionally, it will support projects at multiple scales, from the individual to the system level, and will stimulate innovations in education and learning research and practice."

The program began in 2010 with a solicitation for proposals that addressed the intersection of climate and environment. In fiscal year 2011, SEES will focus on energy sustainability, such as the development of sustainable energy technologies, development of techniques for effective and efficient use of water resources, and research in transportation technology.

For more information on the SEES program, including upcoming activities, visit <http://www.nsf.gov/sees>. To read the dear colleague letter, visit [http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2011/nsf11022/nsf11022.jsp?WT.mc\\_id=USNSF\\_25&WT.mc\\_ev=click](http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2011/nsf11022/nsf11022.jsp?WT.mc_id=USNSF_25&WT.mc_ev=click).

### **Act Now: Write a Letter to the Editor About the Value of Museums**

Scientific collections and the institutions that house them are an important part of our nation's research and education enterprise. Write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper to spread the word about the value of museums. Send a prepared letter at <http://capwiz.com/aibs/issues/alert/?alertid=22163501>.

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The Natural Science Collections Alliance is a Washington, D.C.-based nonprofit association that serves as an advocate for natural science collections, the institutions that preserve them, and the research and education that extend from them for the benefit of science, society, and stewardship of the environment. NSC Alliance members are part of an international community of museums, botanical gardens, herbariums, universities, and other institutions that house natural science collections and utilize them in research, exhibitions, academic and informal science education, and outreach activities. Website: [www.NSCAlliance.org](http://www.NSCAlliance.org).

Note: You are receiving a copy of this electronic report as part of your membership in the NSC Alliance. Contact the Alliance office with any email address or member representative name changes send an email to [spotter@aibs.org](mailto:spotter@aibs.org).