Making Conservation Happen Webinar

*The Election’s Over. Now What?*

[Cartoon image showing people voting with captions: WE THE PEOPLE IN ORDER TO FORM A MORE PERFECT UNION.]

FTZ SUMMONS @THE ARIZONA DAILY STAR 2018 CALEB CARTOONS.COM
Goals for Today’s Webinar

- Update on end of 115th Congress
- Provide basic landscape of the 116th Congress
- What to expect from the new congress
  - Newer, bluer and more diverse
  - Who are the leaders
  - Priorities of House Democratic Majority
- Debrief on new priorities House Natural Resources Committee
- Engaging friends with gavels and cultivating newly elected members
- Case Study: The WILD Act
Agenda

- Transitions
  - *Lame Duck and Adjournment*
  - *You Were Elected...Now What?*
- Congressional Leaders
- The Priorities (in the House) they are a Changin’.
  
  Jean Flemma, Ocean Defense Initiative & former House Natural Resources Committee staff
- Strengthening and Cultivating Relationships
  
  Colin Sheldon, Assistant Director of Federal Affairs, Wildlife Conservation Society
Introduction

What Happens
When One Congress Ends and Another Begins

Tom Adams
Policy Advisor
The Ocean Project
What is a Lame Duck Session of Congress and it’s “to-do” List

- When Congress Meets After an Election and Before a New Congress Convenes on January 3

- The Agenda
  - “Mini-bus” Appropriations Bill
  - Farm Bill
  - Criminal Justice Reform
  - Judicial Nominations (Senate)
  - Mueller Protection Bill
  - “Odds and Ends”
Adjournment, Sine Die

Sine Die
Definition: without any future date being designated (as for resumption): the meeting adjourned *sine die*

Legislation not passed by both the House and Senate dies
The 116th Congress
Hope You Like Ping Pong...
Game Starts on January 3, 2019

Likely Issues
Infrastructure
Appropriations
Judicial Confirmations (Senate)
Immigration/Border Security/Dreamers
Ethics (H.R. 1)
Investigations
House of Representatives
Freshman Class Picture
53 Republicans & 47 Democrats

➢ Net GOP gain of 2

Republican Leadership

➢ Majority Leader: Mitch McConnell (KY)
➢ Majority Whip: John Thune (SD)
➢ Conference Chair: John Barrasso (WY)

Democratic Leaders

➢ Minority Leader: Chuck Schumer (NY)
➢ Minority Whip: Richard Durbin (IL)
➢ Assist. Leader: Patty Murray (WA)
Difference Between Congressional Appropriations & Authorizations

- My father was cheap but permissive. So we asked him for permission – he “authorized our behavior.”

- My mother was less permissive but more generous – we asked her for money – she “appropriated funding for our activities.”
Key Senate Committees

- **APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE:**
  
  Chair, Richard Shelby (AL)
  
  Ranking Dem., Patrick Leahy (VT)

- **Key Subcommittees**
  
  ➢ Interior and Environment: Lisa Murkowski (AK) Chair
  
  ➢ Commerce, Justice, Science: Richard Shelby (AL) Chair

**AUTHORIZING COMMITTEES**

- Commerce and Science Committee: 
  
  John Thune (SD) Chair
  
  ➢ Oceans, Atmosphere, Fisheries, and Coast Guard: Dan Sullivan (AK) Chair

- Energy and Natural Resources: Lisa Murkowski (AK) Chair.

- Environment and Public Works: John Barrasso (WY)
Sen. Richard Shelby (AL)
Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee

- First elected in 1986
- Became Committee Chair in 2018 when former Sen. Thad Cochran (MS) resigned due to health issues.
- Lifetime 13% rating from League of Conservation Voters (LCV)
- Changed from Democrat to Republican soon after 1994 election
- 84 years old
Sen. John Thune (SD)
Chair, Commerce, Science & Transportation Committee

- Elected to Senate in 2004
- Served in House from 1996-2002
- Ran unopposed in 2016
- Lifetime 10% rating from LCV
- Positioned be next Republican Leader
Sen. John Barrasso, M.D. (WY)
Chair, Committee on Environment and Public Works

- Appointed to Senate in 2007 following death of Sen. Craig Thomas. Then elected in 2008
- Served in Wyoming Senate 2002-2007
- Lifetime 8% LCV
- One of 22 Senate signers of letter to President urging U.S. withdrawal from Paris Climate Accord
The 116th Congress
Younger, Bluer & More Diverse

- 100 of the 535 Members of House and Senate were elected on 11/6/18
- 63 Democrats/37 Republicans
- 42 Women Newly Elected to House
- 22 are Veterans or served in the CIA
- 24 in House are Native American, Hispanic, or people of color
- Average Age is 49
- Includes teachers, scientist, doctors, former professional athletes, two Muslim women and openly gay or bisexual
- Many new Members did not accept “special interest” campaign contributions
House of Representatives

- 435 Members (218 = 50% + 1)
- 235 Democrats & 200 Republicans
  - Net gain of 40 seats is largest for Democrats since 1974
- Democratic Leaders (Expected)
  - Speaker: Nancy Pelosi (CA)
  - Majority Leader: Steny Hoyer (MD)
  - Majority Whip: James Clyburn (SC)
  - Caucus Chair: Hakeem Jefferies (NY)
- Republican Leadership
  - Minority Leader: Minority Whip (CA)
  - Minority Whip: Steve Scalise (LA)
  - Conference Chair: Liz Cheney (WY)
Key House Committees

- APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

  Chair, Nita Lowey (NY)
  Ranking Republican, Kay Granger (TX)

  Key Subcommittees
  - Interior and Environment, Betty McCollum (MN)
  - Commerce, Justice, Science, Jose Serrano (NY)
  - Labor, HHS, Education: Rosa DeLauro (CT)

- Natural Resources Committee:
  Expected Chair, Raul Grijalva (AZ).

  Key Subcommittees
  - Public Lands
  - Water, Power and Oceans (pending name change)
A New Democratic Majority:

What does this mean for Congress generally

What does this mean for the Natural Resources Committee

Jean Fleemma
Ocean Defense Initiative &
former staffer to House Natural Resources Committee
Rep. Nita Lowey (NY-17)
Presumed Chair, House Appropriations Committee

- First elected in 1988
- First ever female Chair of Appropriations Committee
  - Appointed female staff director
- Lifetime 94% rating from LCV
- District includes Westchester County and Lower Hudson Valley
- Leader in efforts to clean up/restore Hudson River and Long Island Sound
- Clintons are constituents
Rep. Raul Grijalva (AZ-3)
Presumed Chair, House Natural Resources Committee

- First elected in 2002
- District includes portions of Phoenix and Tucson suburbs and most of the AZ portion of U.S.-Mexico border
- Lifetime 96% rating from LCV
- On Obama’s short list for Interior Secretary
Rep. Jared Huffman (CA-2) Likely to Chair Subcommittee with Jurisdiction for Ocean and Fisheries

- First elected in 2012
- Coastal district stretches from Marin County to Oregon border
- Lifetime 99% rating from LCV
Changing Priorities
House of Representatives

Three Priorities for the Democratic Leadership

1. Lower health care costs
2. Raise wages by “Rebuilding America”
3. Cleaning up corruption
Likely Shift in Priorities for the House Natural Resources Committee

**115th Congress...**
- Legislate/Don’t Investigate
- Deny and ignore climate change
- Undermine bedrock environmental laws in legislation and “riders” to appropriations bills (e.g., ESA, Magnuson-Stevens Act)
- Deemphasize role for science in decision-making, e.g., fisheries management

**116th Congress**
- Legislate & Investigate
- Focus on climate change
- Uphold and defend bedrock environmental laws
- Maintain the role of science in Magnuson-Stevens Act during reauthorization
Possible Topics for Legislation or Investigation

**Legislation**

- Magnuson-Stevens Act
- Marine Mammal Protection Act
- Land & Water Conservation Fund
- Shark conservation

**Investigation**

- Secretary Zinke
- Antiquities Act decisions
- Administration initiatives to fast-track resource extraction (land and sea)
- “Next week’s scandal”
Advocacy Case Study:

Wildlife Conservation Society Engaging on The WILD Act

Colin Sheldon
Assistant Director of Federal Affairs
Wildlife Conservation Society
A New Strategy for a New Congress

- **Time to reassess institutional priorities**
  - *Institutional buy-in*
  - *Keep focused!*

- **Identify resources available**
  - *Internal—Time, existing connections*
  - *External—Trade groups, Coalitions*

- **Identify the opportunities**
  - *What may already be moving?*
  - *What interest is already there for our issues?*

- **Identify targets**
  - *Local connections*
  - *Key positions*
  - *Issue interests*
Building Relationships

- Build locally
- Start with staff
- Use your facilities
- Play the long game
- Take advantage of force multipliers
Wildlife Innovation and Longevity Act (WILD Act)

- Bipartisan bill sponsored by John Barrasso (Chair) and Tom Carper (Ranking Democrat)
- Passed Senate in 115th Congress
- No action taken by House
- Reauthorizes and funds the Multinational Species Conservation programs for marine turtles, elephants, great apes, rhinos, and tigers (Expired in 2012)
- Adds tortoises and freshwater turtles to the Marine Turtle Conservation Act
- Reauthorizes Interior Department Partners in Wildlife program
- Requires federal strategies to control invasive species
- Establishes Theodore Roosevelt Genius Prizes for use technology to advance species conservation
The WILD Act as a Case Study

■ Priority
  - Renew the Multinational Species Conservation Fund

■ Resources
  - Strong coalition
  - Institutional and partner commitments

■ Opportunity
  - Sen. Barrasso (WY) looking for a bipartisan wildlife bill

■ Targets
  - Key senators/staff on the committee
    ■ Local: Sens. Gillibrand (NY) & Booker (NJ)
    ■ Key Positions: Sens. Sullivan (AK) & Carper (DE)
    ■ Issue interest: Sens. Inhofe (OK) & Whitehouse (RI)
Planning for the 116th Congress

- What prevented success?
  - Was not a priority of House leadership
  - Competing with other higher profile issues

- Opportunity
  - New House leadership

- Targets
  - Who can help us get to the finish line?
Opportunities for Zoos, Aquariums and Museums

■ Change presents opportunity
  ➢ It’s not just the Democrats winning the House
  ➢ Real demographic change has come to the Congress
  ➢ Will growing number of Veterans recreate WWII effect

■ Some legislation that’s been stuck could be unstuck
  ➢ “Magnuson-Stevens”
  ➢ WILD Act

■ No time like the present
  ➢ Beginning of new Congress always best time to engage to establish or build relationships
  ➢ Never more true than with the 116th Congress because 20% are new to their office – many new to elected office

▪ Engage...
  ➢ Invite to visit your facility for tour and photo op
  ➢ If possible, attend AZA Lobby Day and Congressional Reception
Thank you!

The First Friday Brown Bag Webinar Series is funded through a grant from the Betty and Gordon Moore Foundation.

This webinar has been recorded. If you want to rewatch it, share it with a friend or colleague, it is posted at www.theoceanproject.org. Additionally, a PDF version of the slides will also be available on our website.

If you have any follow up questions, need information or advice on possible engagement activities, or are interested in an on-site advocacy and engagement session, please contact Tom Adams at tadams@theoceanproject.org.