

March 19, 2007

## **H.R. 658 – Natural Resource Protection Cooperative Agreement Act**

### **Floor Situation**

H.R. 658 is being considered on the floor under suspension of the rules and will require a two-thirds majority vote for passage. This legislation was introduced by Representative Jon Porter (R-NV) on January 24, 2007, and has not been considered by any committee in the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress.

H.R. 658 is expected to be considered on the floor on March 19, 2007.

### **Summary**

Allows the National Park Service (NPS) to enter into cooperative agreements with state, local, or tribal governments, other Federal agencies, other public entities, educational institutions, private nonprofit organizations, or private landowners for the purpose of protecting natural resources through collaborative efforts on land inside and outside of NPS units.

H.R. 658 states that such agreements should provide for:

- The preservation, conservation, and restoration of coastal and riparian systems, watersheds, and wetlands.
- Prevention and control of the spread of invasive species.
- Restoration of natural resources

### **Background**

According to the General Accountability Office (GAO), the NPS is the only major federal land management agency that cannot enter into such agreements. NPS has identified more than 60 park units that would benefit from the authority to enter into the kinds of agreements H.R. 658 would allow. Most of these projects would be expected to cost less than \$50,000.

Identical legislation, H.R. 4294 from the 109<sup>th</sup> Congress, was ordered to be reported out of the Resources Committee by unanimous consent on June 21, 2006 (House Report 109-558).

### **CBO Estimate**

The Congressional Budget Office has concluded that funding cooperative agreements on nonfederal land would add a few million dollars to the NPS operating budget of around

\$1.7 billion annually. However spending under cooperative agreements depends on the availability of appropriated funds.

**Staff Contact**

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