

The Ecological Society of America

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The Honorable _____

Richard Arme; Peter Blute; Sherwood Boehlert; Robert Borski; Dave Camp; Michael Castle; Howard Coble; Wayne Gilchrest; Newt Gingrich; Peter Goss; James Hayes; Nancy Johnson; Scott Klug; Jan Meyers; Susan Molianari; Charles Norwood; Bill Paxon; Peter Torkildsen; Jim Saxton; Christopher Shays; Bud Shuster; Gerald Solomon; Billy Tauzin; Don Young; Dick Zimmer

United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Representative _____ :

The Ecological Society of America is a non-profit, professional organization with over 7,000 members who specialize in the science of ecology. As its President, I would like to address the scheduled 10 May vote on HR 961, the Clean Water Act rewrite bill offered by House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman Bud Shuster. I am gravely concerned about the wisdom of conducting a vote on such a crucial piece of legislation without giving the National Academy of Sciences wetlands report due consideration.

The NAS report, scheduled for release on 9 May, will likely include key scientific information imperative to an informed policy decision. Congress itself directed the Environmental Protection Agency to commission the NAS study to aid legislators in deliberations. The NAS report should cover such vital information as methods to identify wetlands and ways to compare wetlands functions and values.

Clearly, science can not provide all the answers in developing policy. But science can and must play a part in considerations of a bill that will affect the future of one of our nation's most vital resources--one that affects every American citizen. To ignore the findings of a scientific review of issues so relevant to the wetlands provisions of HR 961 is unconscionable.

Sincerely,

Judy Meyer
President