

Today is _____, _____ the _____. This is Ken Morgan's Northcoast Ag Report, our lead story is about _____ when we return

The 2018 farm bill is now headed to the president's desk for his expected signature after the House voted ## to ## to follow the Senate in passing the final compromise version of the bill.

The House approved the 2018 farm bill after a procedural spat involving the president's war powers in Yemen failed to derail the bill.

House approval came a day after the Senate overwhelmingly passed the bipartisan measure, months after the expiration of the '14 farm bill, and after years of a farm crisis that's driven many producers out of business.

President Trump said Tuesday he expects to sign the \$867 billion bill, backed by lawmakers after lawmaker on the House floor. Illinois Republican Rodney Davis...tape

Cut #1 _____ :15 _____ OC:... "for farmers."

Davis voted for the bill but called it a "missed opportunity" to get millions of food stamp families into job training.

Top Senate Ag Democrat Debbie Stabenow declared victory in holding back those tougher House GOP SNAP work and training requirements, while making community food programs permanent...tape

Cut #2 _____ :09 _____ OC:... "and job training."

But USDA Secretary Sonny Perdue plans to issue a post-farm bill rule to crack down on work-requirement waivers—a bid to assuage House conservatives.

The final version strengthens and expands crop insurance, keeps and expands EQIP and CSP, and increases CRP acreage from 23-million acres to 27-million.

ARC and PLC are improved, producers are given greater selection flexibility, and PLC reference prices are allowed to float upwards based on 85-percent of a five-year Olympic average, if there's a rebound in market prices.

The AGI or adjusted gross income eligibility limit for farm payments remains at 900-thousand dollars, but there's no limit on the number of farm managers eligible for payments—another farm bill fight.

Also included--a new Dairy Margin Coverage program crafted to help smaller dairies. A new Foot-and-Mouth Disease vaccine bank is authorized. And Industrial hemp, key for Senate GOP Leader Mitch McConnell and his home state Kentucky, can now be covered by crop insurance contracts but not Title 1 subsidies.

<https://www.publicnewsservice.org/2018-12-12/water/groups-vow-to-fight-rollback-of-clean-water-protections/a64886-1>

Groups Vow to Fight Rollback of Clean-Water Protections





Thousands of vernal pools, such as this one in California, will lose federal protection if a new version of the "Waters of the United States" rule is finalized. (California Native Plant Society)
December 12, 2018

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – Negative reaction from conservation groups was swift to a Trump administration [proposal](#) on Tuesday to remove federal clean-water protections from many smaller streams and wetlands.

The Environmental Protection Agency announced a replacement for the [Waters of the United States Rule](#) that would lift federal protections from water sources that are seasonal and wetlands that are not connected by a stream to a larger body of water.

Jenifer Collins, a legislative representative for the law firm [Earthjustice](#), said the proposal ignores the basic science of hydrology.

"All water is connected," she said. "So, whether it's a small stream that only runs part of the year or a wetland that isn't directly connected to a larger body of water, they feed into the larger bodies of water that are the drinking-water sources for millions of people across the country."

Acting EPA administrator Andrew Wheeler called the original, Obama-era rule "government

overreach" and said the new rule gives power back to states, reducing red tape for farmers and other landowners.

Collins said the original rule was meant to protect millions of acres of seasonal wildlife habitat, especially in arid Western states such as California and Nevada, and to keep the water supply free of pesticides and industrial runoff.

"This proposal is a prime example of the administration putting polluter profits over people," she said. "Really, it's just benefiting polluting industry, like oil and gas, and other developers."

States do have the option of requiring stricter standards within their borders.

The public now has two months to comment on the proposed changes at [Regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov). If the rule is finalized, multiple conservation groups already have vowed to take the fight to the courts.

The proposed rule changes are online at [epa.gov](https://www.epa.gov), and the original rule is at [federalregister.gov](https://www.federalregister.gov).