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May 18, 2016

The Senate Energy and Natural Resources Subcommittee on Water and Power held a hearing this May to discuss a suite of water bills aimed at addressing the drought across the West.

Among the bills were S. 2533, introduced by Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-CA), and S. 2902, introduced by Sen. Jeff Flake (R-AZ). S. 2533 would provide emergency drought relief to California by funding water supply projects, creating short-term changes to operations at existing water projects, and increasing water allocations to agriculture and cities in southern California. S. 2902 would update the Army Corps of Engineers' forecasting methods for better water supply management during droughts.

The Committee also considered bills introduced by Senators Cory Gardner (R-CO) and Harry Reid (D-NV). Sen. Gardner's bills would address revenues required to pay for the construction of the Fryingpan-Arkansas Project to provide water to rural Colorado communities, and resolve a water rights issue within a wilderness area in Colorado. Sen. Reid's bill would authorize funding for Colorado River projects to increase the water supply of Lake Mead.

All 5 bills still need to be passed out of committee before they have the chance of reaching the Senate floor.

Sources: Congress.gov, E&E News
