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House Democrats yesterday decided to allow votes on 13 of the 105 amendments submitted for the spending bill that funds environmental agencies, prompting cries of foul play from Republicans.

The Rules Committee last night approved a resolution governing debate on the House floor, which is expected as soon as today, for the \$32.3 billion fiscal 2010 appropriations bill to fund the Interior Department, U.S. EPA and Forest Service.

The limited number of amendments continues a practice begun last week when Democrats allowed 33 amendments to the Commerce, Justice, Science spending bill out of the more than 100 filed by Republicans.

While appropriations bills often come to the floor under an "open rule" that allows for nearly unlimited amendments, Democrats sought the structured rule because the large number of amendments could have stretched out debate for days. Republicans on the Rules panel requested an open rule and suggested that the chairman and ranking member of the Interior Appropriations Subcommittee should be able to work out a deal between themselves on how many amendments to offer.

"Let's just try to do what's been done through the history of the Republic," said Rules Committee ranking member David Dreier (R-Calif.). "We're going to continue to fight until we get back to that open amendment process."

But Rules Chairwoman Louise Slaughter (D-N.Y.) said Democratic leaders made a "generous offer" to Republicans months ago to come to an agreement about amendments but were rebuffed. She said Republicans continue to refuse to cooperate, citing the rare eight-hour non-stop voting session they forced last week in frustration over the limited amendments on the CJS bill as proof that "nothing's really going to change."

Assuming the rule is approved, two of the amendments that will be voted on by the full House would reduce the bill's spending, including a measure from Rep. Jim Jordan (R-Ohio) to eliminate \$5.75 billion -- returning to 2008 spending levels -- and one from Rep. Cliff Stearns (R-Fla.) to decrease EPA funding by 38 percent to 2009 levels. Both measures are expected to fail.

A manager's amendment from Interior Appropriations Subcommittee Chairman Norm Dicks (D-Wash.) includes provisions to allow abandoned mine land funding to be used for the non-federal share of projects to repair acid mine drainage from coal mines; increase funding for the Saving America's Treasures Account by taking money from the National Park Service construction account; and increase funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund Stateside program by \$10 million, which would come out of Interior's working capital fund.

The House will also vote on amendments to prohibit recreation grants from the Land and Water Conservation Fund from being used to acquire land in state or local parks; provide \$25 million for Forest Service drug enforcement efforts; and provide \$2.5 million for forest health and community wildfire protection under the Healthy Forest Restoration Act, among other measures.

EPA, climate amendments left behind

Democrats jettisoned several amendments that would have limited EPA's ability to regulate greenhouse gases under the Clean Air Act. None of the 13 amendments allowed to go to the floor addressed climate regulations.

An amendment from Rep. Phil Roe (R-Tenn.) would have blocked EPA from using funds to implement, administer or enforce its proposed "endangerment" finding, which would determine that greenhouse gases threaten public health and welfare.

Another measure put forth by Rep. Steve King (R-Iowa) would have prevented EPA from using funds to implement any rule requiring the mandatory reporting of greenhouse gas emissions. The House Appropriations Committee adopted an amendment to the bill last week from Rep. Tom Latham (R-Iowa) that would prevent funding for any rule that requires mandatory reporting

of greenhouse gases from manure management systems at large factory farms ( [E&E Daily](#) , June 19).

Democrats also discarded two measures from Rep. Jerry Lewis (R-Calif.), ranking member of the Appropriations Committee, to limit EPA's scope on climate regulations. One measure would have prohibited the agency from making changes to its greenhouse gas regulations; the other would have reduced the bill's funding for climate change to the fiscal 2009 enacted level.

Other amendments Democrats rejected include one to reinstate commercial oil shale regulations put in place months before the Bush administration left office, which Interior Secretary Ken Salazar has put under review, and a proposal from Rep. Devin Nunes (R-Calif.) to eliminate funding for a federal biological opinion that calls for curtailing irrigation in California's Central Valley to protect fish.

Nunes said without the measure "absolute chaos" could break out in the valley, but Rules Committee member Dennis Cardoza (D-Calif.) said Salazar will visit the area Sunday and is taking steps to resolve the issue.

Rep. Lee Terry (R-Neb.) withdrew an amendment that would prevent EPA from considering the effects of "indirect" land-use changes when calculating biofuels emissions. Terry said he was satisfied by a similar provision that was included in the House energy and climate change bill.

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