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McMorris Rodgers Named as Conferee to Farm Bill

(Washington, D.C.) Today, Congresswoman Cathy McMorris Rodgers will attend her first meeting as conferee for the 2007 Farm Bill. She was appointed conferee yesterday.

The U.S. Constitution requires that in order for a bill to be presented to the President for signature, it must pass both the House and Senate in the exact same form. The role of a Conference Committee is to work out differences between the House and Senate version of the bill.

McMorris Rodgers is the Republican representative of the Natural Resources Committee in Conference, making her well-positioned to protect and advance Eastern Washington agricultural interests through the farm bill.

“As your Representative to Congress, I am committed to making sure our agriculture industry and tradition remain strong,” McMorris Rodgers said. “I’m always proud to remind people agriculture is the number one industry in Washington State. This farm bill is important to ensuring our Eastern Washington farmers remain competitive.

“I have five goals to advance agriculture in Eastern Washington and creating a strong farm policy that enables farmers to access new markets while investing in cutting edge research is one of those goals. Last year, I was pleased that so many of our farmers participated in Farm Bill listening sessions with me. We visited Davenport, Ritzville, Walla Walla, Spangle, Omak, Colfax and Springdale.

“My second goal for agriculture is to expand domestic energy supplies and explore alternative energy sources. Whether it’s paying to fill up their tractors or fertilize their fields, expensive energy hurts our agriculture economy. We need to develop a comprehensive energy policy that includes saying ‘yes’ to American energy.”

“My third goal is to keep land productive and farmers competitive – whether it is my sponsorship of country of origin labeling legislation, or support for fair trade agreements that benefit Eastern Washington farmers.

“Fourth: protecting and enhancing water supplies and storage. Water is critical to farmers. At the top of the list is protecting our dams in the Columbia/Snake River system, as well as finding solutions to the Odessa Aquifer.

“The fifth goal is ensuring the viability of our rural communities. In the Farm Bill, much of this is done through USDA rural development, which has funded sewer, water and other infrastructure improvements in the 5th District.

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