

WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Rep. Harry Mitchell and U.S. Rep. Dean Heller (R-Nev.) today introduced the bipartisan Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program Act to provide for a long-term, regional program to protect endangered species along the Lower Colorado River, while addressing Arizona, Nevada and California’s water and energy needs.

“This bill has been more than a decade in the making, and I believe it is a worthy, bipartisan compromise,” said Mitchell.

Specifically, the Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program Act (MSCP):

- Protects 26 endangered, threatened and sensitive species on and along the lower Colorado River in Arizona, California and Nevada from Lake Mead to the U.S.-Mexico border for 50 years,
- Creates more than 8,100 acres of riparian, marsh and backwater habitat for protected species, and includes plans for the rearing and stocking of more than 1.2 million fish to augment populations of two endangered fish covered by the program,
- Conditions the continued operation of impacted water and power agencies on compliance with the MSCP’s environmental requirements, and
- Directs the Secretary of the Interior to manage and implement the MSCP.

“In Nevada, we understand the importance of the need to protect water resources from the Colorado River, while protecting endangered species and their habitat,” said Heller. “This legislation provides for the long term health of every community that depends upon the water from the lower Colorado River. Helping southern Nevada better manage their water resources benefits the state as a whole. As a member of House Natural Resources Committee, I will work to move this legislation as quickly as possible.”

The Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program Act was introduced in the 109th Congress by former U.S. Rep. J.D. Hayworth and was referred to the House Committee on Natural Resources Subcommittee on Water and Power. Heller currently serves on that subcommittee.