



Meeting Tomorrow's Challenge

April 13, 2015

The Honorable Bill Shuster
Chairman
House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Peter DeFazio
Ranking Member
House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Shuster and Ranking Member DeFazio:

On behalf of the National Water Resources Association (NWRA) I write to support the Regulatory Integrity Protection Act. This and other legislative solutions will help address water provider concerns about the Army Corps of Engineers and Environmental Protection Agency's proposed rule defining "waters of the United States". The NWRA has significant concerns about this pending rule. We encourage Congress to consider legislative options like the Regulatory Integrity Protection Act to ensure that water quality is protected without unnecessarily hindering water providers ability to meet our nation's growing water needs.

NWRA represents state associations, irrigation districts, other water providers, and their collective interests in the management of irrigation and municipal water supplies. NWRA members provide clean water to millions of individuals, as well as families, agricultural producers and other businesses throughout the United States. For more than eighty years our members have worked collaboratively with partners at the federal, state and local level to provide water in a manner that provides both economic and ecosystem benefits to communities.

NWRA strongly believes that the successful implementation of the Clean Water Act depends on all parties working collaboratively to address the issues. Water users need certainty and NWRA is committed to working with Congress, the agencies, and other stakeholders to provide a clearly defined, efficient process for all permitting requirements associated with the Clean Water Act. Our members have historically been, and will continue to be supporters of the goals of the Clean Water Act. We fully understand and support the need for keeping our waters safe and clean, not only for purposes of crop production, but also for drinking water, fish and wildlife habitat, and recreational uses. To further those goals, NWRA members continue to make necessary improvements to their systems to

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increase efficiencies, conservation, and environmental protections. NWRA and its members share concerns over the Environmental Protection Agency and Army Corps of Engineers' proposal rule defining of "waters of the U.S." under the federal Clean Water Act.

Like other stakeholders, NWRA members hoped for and urged the agencies to put forth a rule that would at long last provide us with clear definitions and a reasonable regulatory approach designed to achieve necessary environmental protections without hindering our ability to use and deliver water resources. It was a disappointment to us that the proposed rule only seemed to further confuse the issues raised in notable judicial rulings. In addition to creating a great deal of confusion, the Agencies' proposed rule fails to consider the unique geographic and hydrologic diversity in the Western United States. In light of these concerns NWRA believes that Congress should consider legislation that would improve the agencies collaboration with states and stakeholders and results in an improved rule that provides the clarity our members desire. We believe that the Regulatory Integrity Protection Act is will help achieve these goals.

One of the greatest strengths of the Clean Water Act is the relationship between the States and the federal government. The Regulatory Integrity Protection Act builds upon this strength by engaging state, local and federal partners in an open, transparent and collaborative process. We believe that this consensus based process will lead to a stronger more effective Clean Water Act that protects the environment and also allows our members to meet the water supply challenges of our nation.

On behalf of NWRA's members I thank you for your attention to the critical water issues facing our nation, and for supporting our members as they continue to be stewards of our nation's water supply and a critical part of the economy.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bob Johnson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Robert W. Johnson
Executive Vice President
National Water Resources Association