

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

August 18, 2017

The Honorable Scott Pruitt  
Administrator  
Environmental Protection Agency  
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Administrator Pruitt:

We write in opposition to the proposed rule rescinding the Clean Water Rule (*Docket No. EPA-HQ-OW-2017-0203*), also called the Waters of the United States (WOTUS) rule. Americans need an Environmental Protection Agency that will use the best possible science to protect our health and this nation's natural heritage. This rule to rescind WOTUS and reports of plans to reduce protections under the Clean Water Act are deeply concerning. Rather than protecting Americans, these actions ignore science and undermine our clean drinking water, our public health and our outdoor recreation economy.

The Clean Water Rule finalized by the Obama Administration protects the drinking water of roughly one-third of Americans. 117 million people rely on drinking water sources fed by headwater, intermittent or ephemeral streams—waterways protected under the Clean Water Rule. Rescinding this rule puts Americans' health at risk by endangering their drinking water.

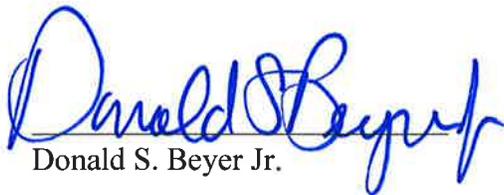
Eliminating this rule also threatens our safe access to the great outdoors and the outdoor recreation economy, which generates \$887 billion in consumer spending annually and supports 7.6 million American jobs. Pollution in unprotected streams and wetlands can threaten the health of the lakes and rivers that our constituents use for swimming, boating and other recreation. Wetlands protected under the Clean Water Rule provide some of the country's best habitat for hunters and anglers. As EPA Administrator, it is imperative to protect the water bodies that our constituents use for recreation, both to protect public health and the millions of jobs these places have helped create.

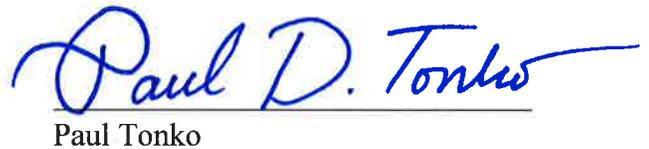
Rescinding this clean water safeguard ignores science. Years of research and peer-reviewed science have told us that intermittent and ephemeral streams and wetlands provide critical services, from filtering our drinking water to protecting communities from flood and drought. They also connect directly to major waterways, which means they can pose a danger to drinking water and recreation if polluted or degraded. The science is clear - what we do to these water bodies impacts large, continuous water sources.

Americans agree that we should protect these waterways. The previous Administration crafted the Clean Water Rule using the comments of over one million Americans, the vast majority of which were in support of the rule. Some opponents have used scare tactics to confuse the public by stating that there are new requirements for agriculture and that the rule covers new types of waters. This is not the case. In reality, the rule provides certainty over streams and wetlands that have historically been covered by the Clean Water Act while preserving agricultural and other common sense exemptions, including for things like drainage ditches and stock watering ponds on dry land.

The Clean Water Rule is a science-based rule that keeps our communities safe and our natural resources protected—exactly what Congress intended the Clean Water Act to do. We would be willing to work with an Administration that wants to develop thoughtful changes that maintain protections for this life-sustaining resource, but this repeal is reckless. In rescinding this rule, the Agency is risking the health and safety of the American people and our natural resources. We urge you to reconsider this rescission and instead focus on fairly and fully enforcing the Clean Water Act.

Sincerely,

  
Donald S. Beyer Jr.

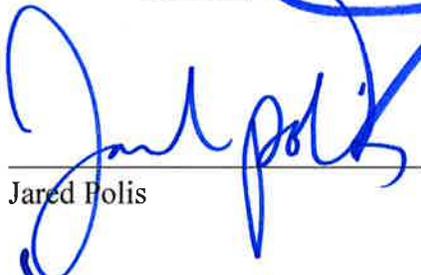
  
Paul Tonko

  
Doris Matsui

  
Alan Lowenthal

  
Gerald E. Connolly

  
Matt Cartwright

  
Jared Polis

  
Mike Quigley

  
Marcy Kaptur

  
Grace F. Napolitano

Jared Huffman

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Barbara Lee

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Anthony Brown



Madeleine Z. Bordallo



A. Donald McEachin



Earl Blumenauer



William R. Keating



James P. McGovern



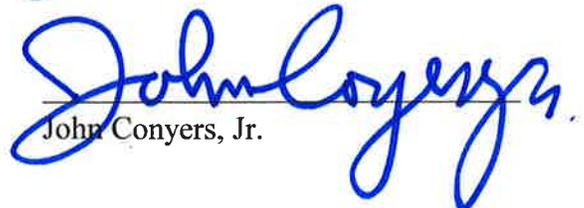
Sheila Jackson Lee



Janice D. Schakowsky



Elijah E. Cummings



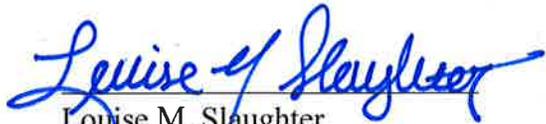
John Conyers, Jr.



Gwen Moore



Debbie Wasserman Schultz

  
Louise M. Slaughter

  
Hakeem Jeffries

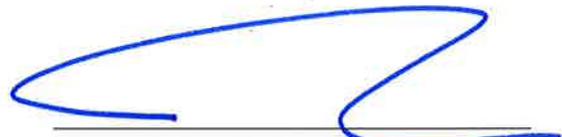
  
Raúl M. Grijalva

  
Mark Pocan

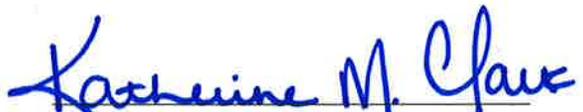
  
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Mike Doyle

  
Katherine Clark

  
Bonnie Watson Coleman

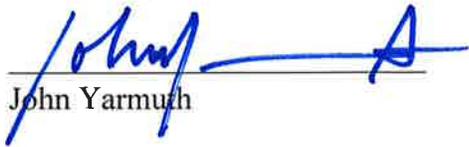
  
Joseph P. Kennedy, III

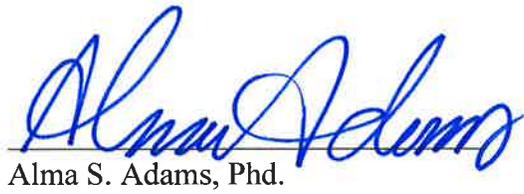
  
Nydia M. Velázquez

  
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Frank Pallone, Jr.

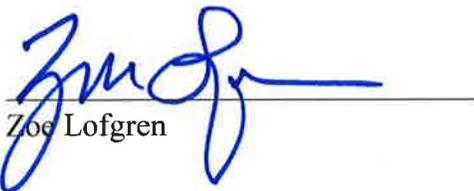
  
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Rick Nolan



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David E. Price



Suzanne Bonamici



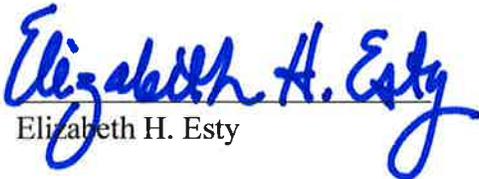
Judy Chu



Daniel W. Lipinski



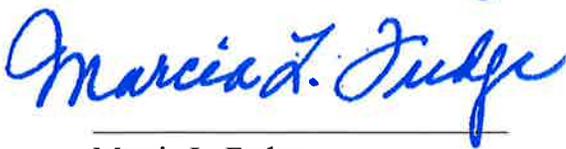
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Elizabeth H. Esty



Linda Sánchez



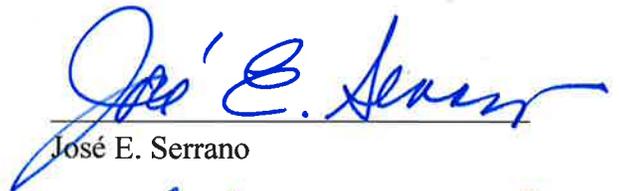
Marcia L. Fudge



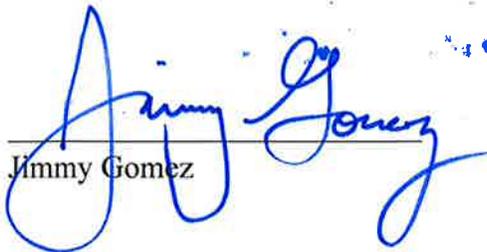
Robert A. Brady



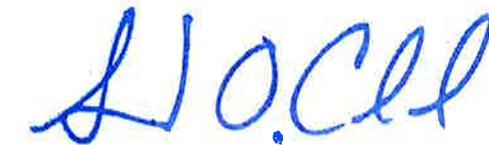
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