



AMERICAN FLY FISHING TRADE ASSOCIATION · BACKCOUNTRY HUNTERS  
AND ANGLERS · INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF FLY FISHERS · IZAAK  
WALTON LEAGUE OF AMERICA · NATIONAL WILDLIFE FEDERATION ·  
THEODORE ROOSEVELT CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP · TROUT UNLIMITED

November 2, 2015

**Re: Hunters and Anglers Strongly Oppose S.J.Res.22 Invalidating the  
Final Clean Water Rule**

Dear Senator:

The undersigned sportsmen organizations strongly oppose Senate Joint Resolution 22 invalidating the final Clean Water Rule, which revises the definition of “waters of the United States” in a manner that is both legally and scientifically sound.

This joint resolution is an extraordinary and radical action to overturn a fundamental, once-in-a-generation final rule that is critical to the effective implementation of the 1972 Clean Water Act, and that was adopted following an exhaustive public rulemaking process. This joint resolution would overturn this rule that finally resolves longstanding confusion and debate, promotes clarity and efficiency for regulatory programs promoting river health, and preserves longstanding protections for farmers, ranchers, and foresters.

By using the Congressional Review Act, this joint resolution not only wipes out the final Clean Water Rule but also prohibits any substantially similar rule in the future. It locks in the current state of jurisdictional confusion and offers no constructive path forward for regulatory clarity or clean water. America’s hunters and anglers cannot afford to have Congress undermine effective Clean Water Act safeguards, leaving communities and valuable fish and wildlife habitat at risk indefinitely.

This joint resolution dismisses out of hand the voices of the millions of Americans, including businesses that depend on clean water, who support the new rule and are eager to reap its benefits. The agencies engaged in a very transparent and thorough multi-year rulemaking process that included over 400 stakeholder meetings and an extended public comment period that produced over one million comments. Nearly 900,000 members of the public commented in support of the Clean Water Rule. A recent poll found that 83 percent of sportsmen and women think the Clean Water Act should apply to smaller streams and wetlands, as the new rule directs.

The Clean Water Rule clearly restores longstanding protections for millions of wetlands and headwater streams that contribute to the drinking water of 1 in 3 Americans, protect communities from flooding, and provide essential fish and wildlife habitat that supports a robust outdoor recreation economy. The sport fishing industry alone accounts for 828,000 jobs, nearly \$50 billion annually in retail sales, and an economic impact of about \$115 billion every year that relies on access to clean water. The Clean Water Rule will translate directly to an improved bottom line for America's outdoor industry.

Opponents claiming the rule goes too far and protects water too much have filed a barrage of nearly identical legal challenges in numerous district and appellate courts across the country. On October 9<sup>th</sup>, the 6<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court of Appeals temporarily stayed the Clean Water Rule nationwide. The Clean Water Rule and those who oppose it will have their day in court.

Meanwhile, we want Congress to know that despite these legal challenges, conservationists across the nation are steadfast in our support for the Clean Water Rule. After nearly 15 years of Clean Water Act confusion, further delay is unacceptable to the millions of hunters and anglers eager to have their local waters fully protected again. We are confident, when the dust settles in the courts, that the Clean Water Rule will withstand challenges saying it protects our water too much.

The Clean Water Act has always been about restoring and maintaining the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the Nation's waters. It is bedrock support for America's more than 40 million hunters and anglers and for the 117 million Americans whose drinking water depends on healthy headwater streams. We thank all of the members of Congress who stand with America's sportsmen and women to block attempts to derail the rule, and ask you to reject S.J.Res.22 and any other legislative action against the rule that may follow this fall.

For more information, please contact:

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