



NEWS RELEASE

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NACo statement on “waters of the U.S.” rule

WASHINGTON, D.C. – After more than a year of voicing serious concerns and calling for clarity on the federal proposal to redefine “waters of the U.S.,” the National Association of Counties (NACo) today issued the following statement in response to the EPA and Army Corps’ release of the final rule. After an initial analysis of the published rule, NACo Executive Director Matthew Chase said:

“We support clean water. Clean water is essential to the nation’s counties on the front lines of preserving local resources, strengthening public safety and promoting economic growth.

“We have repeatedly called for a collaborative intergovernmental process, greater certainty and a pragmatic rule to advance clean water goals without hindering counties’ vast public safety and infrastructure responsibilities.

“While we appreciate the agencies’ recent efforts, the flawed consultation process has resulted in a final rule that does not move us closer to achieving clean water goals and creates more confusion than clarity. “Counties support common-sense environmental protection, but the final rule expands federal oversight and will create costly delays in critical work without any proven environmental benefit.

“We will continue to work with bipartisan leaders on Capitol Hill to repeal the rule and ensure a collaborative rule-making process with state and local governments. Only when we work together can we achieve the best results for county residents and protect water resources for generations to come.”

Late last year, NACo formally [called for the proposed rule to be withdrawn](#) until further analysis and meaningful consultation could be completed. The reasons included:

- The proposal’s far-reaching impacts on counties,
- An inadequate consultation process with state and local governments,
- Ambiguous and inconsistent terminology, and
- Ongoing delays with the current permitting process.

Over the past year, NACo testified before congressional bodies four times, including a [bicameral congressional hearing](#) earlier this year. Since the proposal was unveiled in April 2014, NACo has advocated for greater certainty and launched an [online resource hub and action center](#).

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The [National Association of Counties](#) (NACo) is the only national organization that represents county governments in the United States. Founded in 1935, NACo assists America’s 3,069 counties in pursuing excellence in public service to produce healthy, vibrant, safe and resilient counties. NACo promotes sound public policies, fosters county solutions and innovation, promotes intergovernmental and public-private collaboration and provides value-added services to save counties and taxpayers money. More information at: www.naco.org.