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To Group Ow-Docket@EPA
cc
bcc

Subject EPA-HQ-OW-2007-0282

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Please respond to Deirdre Brown <dede77@comcast.net>

Dear Representative,

As you know, the understanding of what the Clean Water Act is supposed to protect is muddied. Between advances in land use engineering and increases in effluent, waters that were once sort of clean are now part of the vast river of pollution and destruction that unfortunately spreads across our country.

The June 2007 "guidance" interpreting the current legal scope of waters protected by the Clean Water Act and instructing field officials how to implement recent Supreme Court case law further endangers our waters. The guidance is not as protective as the law allows. This will lead to water pollution and destruction of wildlife habitat.

The stakes are huge. Across the U.S., there are approximately 20 million acres of "isolated" wetlands and nearly 2 million miles of streams that do not flow year-round. For many of these important bodies of water, protection is now unclear.

Therefore, I urge the EPA and the Corps to revise this guidance to provide stronger and clearer protections for headwater streams, "isolated" waters and many wetlands associated with smaller streams. Primarily, the guidance should uphold current broad regulations to the extent allowable. As importantly, it must permit the consideration of the overwhelming collective importance of upstream and isolated waters to the health of downstream waters.

However, this guidance is yet another example of why the current state of the law is confusing and untenable. Even with revisions to the guidance, certainty is needed from Congress that all important waters remain protected.

Sincerely,
Ms. Deirdre Brown
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