



NEWS RELEASE

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Trump Administration Puts America's Waters at Risk
Izaak Walton League Opposes Rollback of Clean Water Rule

Gaithersburg, MD – Clean water and abundant wetlands are essential for hunting and fishing, America's outdoor recreation economy, and public health. Yet today the Trump Administration took the first step to roll back the Clean Water Rule, which protects small streams and wetlands that are vital to the nation.

The Izaak Walton League of America believes the Clean Water Rule is fundamentally sound and that further delay in restoring protections for streams and wetlands risks long-term damage to water quality, habitat for fish and wildlife, and our economy.

Unfortunately, by issuing an Executive Order to rescind or revise the Clean Water Rule, the Trump Administration has set a different course. This effort is even more troubling because the president directs the Environmental Protection Agency and Army Corps of Engineers to consider defining waters protected by the Clean Water Act based on an extreme minority opinion from the Supreme Court. That opinion, authored by the late Justice Antonin Scalia, rejected the intent of Congress in passing the Clean Water Act and is unsupported by the overwhelming science on the interconnected nature of waters.

Under this opinion, the Clean Water Act would not protect small streams, such as headwaters, unless they flow continuously. Moreover, it would also deny protection for many wetlands – including prairie potholes critical to migratory waterfowl and other wildlife – that lack a continuous surface connection to larger waters.

To protect our nation's drinking water resources and economy, revisions to the Clean Water Rule **must not rely on Justice Scalia's opinion to define waters protected by the Clean Water Act**. Furthermore, any new rule must:

- **Be grounded in science.** The existing rule is supported by more than 1,200 studies demonstrating the effects of upstream waters on downstream waters.
- **Effectively safeguard streams, wetlands, and other waters as required by the Clean Water Act.** The purpose of the Clean Water Act is to improve water quality nationwide. It is impossible to achieve that goal without protecting streams from pollution and small wetlands from being drained and filled.

- **Ensure America’s outdoor traditions thrive for generations to come.** Clean water and abundant wetlands are essential to hunting and angling. If this critical habitat is degraded, our hunting and angling traditions – and the \$646 billion outdoor recreation economy – will suffer.

It is impossible to achieve the fundamental purpose of the Clean Water Act – “to restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the Nation’s waters” – without protecting the waters covered by the Clean Water Rule, including tributary streams and small wetlands. The administrations of Presidents George W. Bush and Barack Obama rejected using Justice Scalia’s opinion to define waters covered by the Clean Water Act. If the Trump Administration bases a new rule on this opinion, many of the waters important to hunters and anglers and vital to the outdoor recreation economy would lose Clean Water Act protections.

As the Trump Administration moves forward, the sportsmen and women of the Izaak Walton League will fight for our most critical natural resource: clean water.

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Founded in 1922, the Izaak Walton League of America (www.iwla.org) protects America's outdoors through education, community-based conservation, and promoting outdoor recreation.

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