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From: EPA Press Office
Sent: Fri 6/30/2017 7:19:13 PM
Subject: EPA Weekly Round-Up for 06/30/17

EPA's Weekly Round-Up ...

NATIONAL COVERAGE ...

The Wall Street Journal first reported on Pruitt's move to walk-back WOTUS. Saying that it's "another sign the new administration and the EPA under administrator Scott Pruitt intend to prioritize the economic concerns of industry and agricultural interests over environmental concerns and, more broadly, to erase significant pieces of former President Barack Obama's legacy."

The National Review Editorial Board wrote that Pruitt is restoring order at EPA by correcting course on the Obama-Era WOTUS Regulation. "Scott Pruitt is not so much shaking things up at the EPA as restoring order, as with his decision to rescind the "Waters of the United States" rule — WOTUS, inevitably — which purported to expand the application of the Clean Water Act (CWA) and empower the federal government to regulate essentially any standing body of water and the lands adjacent to it. If you are wondering how bonkers the EPA was willing to be in its interpretation, consider that WOTUS would have applied to wet grass, if the grass had been wet enough."

Fox News reported that Pruitt's action on WOTUS ends a federal overreach on farmers and property owners. "The EPA and the Army Corps said dismantling the Obama rule would not change existing practices because the measure has been stayed by the 6th Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals in Cincinnati in response to opponents' lawsuits. House Speaker Paul Ryan, R-Wis., said the move showed "the West has won in the battle over the Obama administration's WOTUS rule. "This regulation would have been a disaster for rural communities in the West and across the country, giving Washington near-total control over water resources," Ryan added."

Additionally, Bloomberg BNA reported that repealing this water rule fulfills a major Trump campaign pledge. "The proposed repeal, once in final form, will be the first step the Trump administration takes in a two-step process to undo the 2015 Clean Water Rule, also known as the Waters of the U.S. rule (WOTUS). The second step, which Pruitt has said will be completed by as soon as the end of the year, will involve a rewrite of the 2015 regulation."

TO THE STATES ...

In Georgia, the Gainesville Times reported that lawmakers and industry groups, including the Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce, cheered Pruitt and the Trump Administration's action on WOTUS. "The Obama-era Waters of the United States regulation would have allowed federal oversight on a swath of private and state waters — from large wetlands down to ditches. The rule attracted intense opposition from Republican lawmakers and lawsuits from states, including a suit filed by then-Oklahoma Attorney General Scott Pruitt — now the head of the Environmental Protection Agency."

Farm groups in North Dakota were also proud of the Administrators action. The Duluth News Tribune reported that Daryl Lies, a Douglas, N.D., farmer and president of the North Dakota Farm Bureau, said the announcement "is a big deal and a great day for agriculture." They also wrote that, "WOTUS was unpopular with ag groups nationwide, but North Dakota ag producers were particularly critical of it. Sloughs, potholes and other small, often temporary bodies of water are common in the state, and North Dakota farmers worried about the impact of WOTUS."

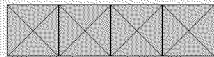
In Wyoming, The Casper Star Tribune reported that the state would receive a grant to address water pollution. "Wyoming will receive nearly a million federal dollars to address water pollution, an award praised by U.S. Rep. Liz Cheney and EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt. The \$850,000 grant will be used for seven state projects that include stream restoration and the reduction of pollutants like selenium in rivers to lakes. That type of pollution occurs from runoff, when rain and snow melt carry contaminants from cities, bacteria or pesticides from ranches and pollutants from mines and drilling activities down to Wyoming's waterways."

In Texas, the High Plains Journal praised an EPA Grant awarded to the Texas Department of Agriculture. "The grant funds a cooperative agreement between EPA and the state of Texas for the state to implement pesticide regulatory and enforcement programs. These programs include compliance monitoring, enforcement, certification and training for pesticide applicators, worker protection safety, and outreach and education."

In Florida, EPA awarded the Florida Department of Environmental Protection with a \$1.38m grant. WWSB reported that, "The grant will be used to support many of Florida's environmental programs. The funds will help support Florida so the state can continue the operation of its environmental programs and address environmental priorities, while strengthening its partnership with EPA."

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