



Connecticut Fund
for the Environment

Save the Sound®

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Weakening federal stream protections would threaten rivers, wildlife, and human health, says CFE/Save the Sound

NEW HAVEN, CONN. - Connecticut Fund for the Environment and its bi-state program Save the Sound issued a statement today in response to the issuance of an Executive Order directing Environmental Protection Agency administrator Scott Pruitt to repeal and replace the Waters of the United States rule. The rule addresses the jurisdiction of the federal Clean Water Act, clarifying that it includes smaller streams and wetlands that may be dry for part of the year.

CFE/Save the Sound attorneys noted that this executive order has no independent legal authority, and pledged to fight efforts to roll back legally-enacted regulations.

Donald S. Strait, president of CFE/Save the Sound, said,

“One of the first things schoolchildren learn about water is that every bit of it is part of one constantly flowing, interconnected system. The Waters of the United States rule is important to care for the small watercourses where our great rivers begin. To imagine otherwise—that we can protect America’s rivers and lakes without protecting the streams and wetlands that feed them—is to fundamentally misunderstand the nature of water.

“Today’s announcement signals that this administration is serious about rolling back existing protections to the streams and creeks that are the lifeblood of rural communities. These small waterways flow to the Connecticut River, the Hudson, the Pequonnock, the Thames, and eventually to Long Island Sound. Amphibians, fish, and forest-dwelling animals rely on these wetlands and creeks to sustain them. The Waters of the United States rule is a critical tool in protecting clean water, wildlife, and human health and we must fight these ill-advised attempts to roll back protections every step of the way.”

CFE/Save the Sound also expressed serious concern over reports that the president is considering a budget proposal that would cut EPA funding by 25 percent.

“It’s been decades since the EPA’s budget was that low,” said Strait. “Such a cut would devastate the agency’s ability to fulfill its core functions. We urge the administration to rethink this approach, and allow the EPA to continue protecting American’s air and water.”

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