



Legislation Details (With Text)

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Support for a Strong Clean Water Act and Strong Clean Water Rule

WHEREAS, the Clean Water Act was created in 1972 to safeguard the country against pollution of the nation's lakes, rivers, wetlands, and waterways;

WHEREAS, the Clean Water Act strives to ensure fishable and swimmable waters exist everywhere and that, across the nation, pollution discharges are eliminated by 1985;

WHEREAS, among the many important features of the Clean Water Act is the definition of the Waters Of the United States (WOTUS), which are the rivers, streams, and lakes that fall under federal jurisdiction;

WHEREAS, the Clean Water Act features dozens of regulations and permitting requirements for anyone discharging pollution into the WOTUS in a way that could affect human health or aquatic life. These results apply to factories, power plants, golf courses, new housing developments, and much more;

WHEREAS, while by virtually every measure, our water bodies are better off today than in 1972 when the Clean Water Act was drafted, more than half of assessed waters still do not meet these goals envisioned within the Clean Water Act and the nation continues to lose wetlands, despite their widely-acknowledged ecological benefits;

WHEREAS, in 2015, the then federal administration published a ruling providing further clarification as to which streams and wetlands fall under federal clean water protections under the WOTUS ruling;

WHEREAS, the current Federal Administration is looking to radically restrict the previous Administration's definition of WOTUS, including proposed rollbacks that would reduce protections for rain-dependent and snow-dependent streams, wetlands without specified surface water connections to other waterways, certain ponds, interstate waters; and more;

WHEREAS, the current Federal Administration claims they do not know how many water bodies will be affected and says it's unable, for a variety of reasons, to quantify the public health and environmental consequences of the proposal. However, a recent U.S. Environmental Protection Agency analysis found that at least 18% of streams and roughly half of the nation's wetlands would lose protection under the proposed rollback;

WHEREAS the City of Ann Arbor has adopted a Sustainability Framework that includes the goals of sustainable systems, clean and water, and healthy ecosystems;

RESOLVED, that the Environmental Commission urges the Ann Arbor City Council to formally petition Ann Arbor's federal representatives to support the 2015 definition of the WOTUS and revoke the proposed rollback;

RESOLVED, that the Environmental Commission urges the Ann Arbor City Council to direct the City's lobbying resources to assist in supporting the 2015 definition of the WOTUS and revoke the proposed rollback.