



Protecting nature. Preserving life.

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May 27, 2019

The Honorable Peter DeFazio
2134 Rayburn House Office Building
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Brian Fitzpatrick
1722 Longworth House Office Building
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Grace Napolitano
1610 Longworth House Office Building
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representatives DeFazio, Napolitano, and Fitzpatrick:

Thank you for introducing the Water Quality Protection and Job Creation Act of 2021 (H.R. 1915). The investments contained in your legislation will help ensure all Americans have access to clean and safe water supplies while addressing many of the stormwater and wastewater management challenges communities face. The Nature Conservancy is proud to support H.R. 1915.

As the nation emerges from the critical impacts the COVID-19 pandemic has inflicted on our citizens and the economy, Congress needs to make investments that will rebuild our infrastructure, address climate change, and stimulate the nation's economy. Investments in water infrastructure must be a priority for Congress because they will help ensure our communities can be resilient in the face of climate change and natural disasters and create jobs in the process. We urge you to make H.R. 1915 a major component of Congress's action on water infrastructure along with other legislation addressing drinking water and water supply issues in drought-prone areas.

TNC applauds your focus in H.R. 1915 on targeting federal assistance to the unique needs of small, underserved, and Tribal communities. Many of these communities have been disproportionately impacted by poor water infrastructure and lack of access to clean and safe water supplies.

TNC also appreciates the emphasis on green and nature-based infrastructure solutions that provide multiple benefits to communities, including water quality improvements, flood risk reduction, enhanced recreational opportunities, among others. In addition, green and nature-based infrastructure solutions, whether used alone or in combination with traditional grey infrastructure, are effective and cost-effective ways to meet the country's water infrastructure needs. In fact, they can outperform and cost less over a project lifetime than grey infrastructure solutions alone.

TNC is particularly supportive of provisions in H.R. 1915 that increase the authorized funding for the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF), invest in Tribal wastewater needs, help communities identify alternative sources of water, which is particularly important in arid regions of the country, and help communities manage sewer overflows and stormwater reuse, including through the use of green

infrastructure. Both the reauthorization of CWSRF and sewer overflow and stormwater reuse grants set minimum thresholds, to the extent possible, on the use of “green infrastructure, water or energy efficiency improvements, or other environmentally innovative activities.” The CWSRF reauthorization creates a 15% set aside for green infrastructure solutions while the sewer overflow and stormwater reuse grants maintain the existing 20% set-aside for green infrastructure.

Thank you for your leadership on water infrastructure issues. We look forward to working with you to advance this important piece of legislation into law.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James M. Hague". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

James M. Hague