**Campaign to Fix EPA Funding Moves to House of Representatives**: Recently, Congressmen Harper (MS) and Tonko (NY) introduced legislation in the House to fix the EPA funding problem ([H.R. 2853](https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/114/hr2853), [news feature](http://www.winwebnews.com/2015/06/bill-seeks-to-protect-rural-water.html)).  NRWA is urging the House leadership to consider the bill using an expedited process and we should have news on this effort in the coming week.  Similar legislation has already passed the U.S. Senate ([S. 611](https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/114/s611)).  Also last week, Congressman Jenkins (WV) asked the EPA appropriations committee whether passage of H.R. 2853 could impact this year's EPA appropriations funding and he received a positive reply.  The legislation would mandate in law that EPA prioritize technical assistance funding to initiatives that are the most helpful to small and rural communities.

**NRWA Standing Up for the SRFs**: Last week, NRWA urged the House Ways and Means Committee to direct all federal water infrastructure subsidies to the SRFs (and similar initiatives based on merit) versus diverting these subsidies to WIFIA ([news feature](http://www.ruralwater.org/wifia%20july%202015.pdf)).

**NRWA to Support States' Legal Challenge to EPA's WOTUS**: On July 11, the NRWA Executive Committee overwhelmingly approved the NRWA Regulatory Committee and the NRWA Maryland Board Member’s motion to support the over two-dozen states suing the U.S. EPA.  The states claim the EPA’s[Waters of the US Rule](http://www2.epa.gov/cleanwaterrule) provides the agency with expansive authority not contained in the Clean Water Act or ruled as legal by the U.S. Supreme Court ([Rapanos 2006](https://www.law.cornell.edu/supct/html/04-1034.ZS.html)).  Regulatory Committee and  MD rural water member, George Hanson, proposed,*“Based on the position that NRWA has taken on this matter it may be a good opportunity to express that position by authoring an Amicus Brief for the Plaintiff states and use that venue to go on record supporting our members and their end users… I make this recommendation for your consideration.”* The motion was adopted over the weekend at the NRWA Executive Committee meeting.  Hanson proposed filing an Amicus Curiae brief in each federal court that is hearing a challenge to the rule.

**States suing over the WOTUS Rule:**

U.S. District of ND's (ND, AK, AZ, AR, CO, ID, MO, MT, NE, NV, SD, WY, NM)

U.S. Southern District of OH (OH, MI)

U.S. 5th Circuit and U.S. Southern District of TX (TX, LA, MS)

U.S. Southern District of GA (WV, AL, FL, GA, KS, KY, SC, UT, WI)

**Florida Boil Water Caused by Car Crash**: In Lehigh Acres, a 12-inch water main was damaged July 5 following a car accident that cut water services to more than 2,000 Lehigh Acres residents ([more](http://www.news-press.com/story/news/2015/07/05/boil-water-notice-affects-2000-in-lehigh-acres/29732227/)).

**Vermont Rural Water Works to Prevent Blue-Green Algae Toxin Contamination**: With support from the VT Department of Health, VRWA will assist 9 transient water systems that have Lake Champlain sources with Emergency Response Plan development/creation.  The ERP is specifically targeting how those given systems will operate in the event of a blue-green algae incident at or near their source.  Vermont is now using a health advisory level that is more stringent than EPA guidelines.

**EPA Defends Itself against Constitutional Criticisms Of CWA Jurisdiction Rule**: EPA in its response to comments on its final Clean Water Act (CWA) jurisdiction rule rejects claims raised by industry and states that the rule runs afoul of the Constitution's Due Process provision and 10th Amendment.  This is a preview of arguments the agency is likely to raise in response to suits over the rule citing the constitutional claims.  In addition to the legal challenges, EPA is also fending off attacks on the rule from Congress that include fiscal year 2016 appropriations bill riders to block the regulation.  EPA claims the rule relied on over 1,000 peer-reviewed publications and considered more than 2 million comments it received on the proposed version of the rule.  EPA says the rule is consistent with the Constitution.

**The Great Plains' Looming Water Crisis**: About 30 percent of the aquifer's water has already been pumped out of the ground.  An additional 39 percent is expected to be gone in the next 50 years ([Bloomberg News](http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2015-07-02/great-plains-water-crisis-aquifer-s-depletion-threatens-farmland)).

**Data Shows High Nitrate Levels Plague 60 Iowa cities**([more](http://www.desmoinesregister.com/story/money/agriculture/2015/07/04/high-nitrates-iowa-cities/29720695/)).

**ASDWA Identifies States' Collaboration with WARNs**: Findings from 32 states on their experiences with their respective state WARNs were released recently.  In addition, a webinar that showcased five different state-WARN collaboration models was held.  These are part of a series of examples and opportunities that may inspire other states and WARNs to work more closely to create their own success stories ([more](http://water.epa.gov/infrastructure/watersecurity/emerplan/upload/epa-817f15019pdf.pdf)).

**National Rural Water Association**

**Contact:**Mike Keegan, Policy Analyst <keegan@ruralwater.org>

**(Washington, DC)**