

From: Purchia, Liz
Sent: Monday, December 14, 2015 4:54 PM
To: Amy Harder
Subject: RE: Statement on GAO

Also, GAO agrees that they cannot be certain that at the time EPA linked to the non-profit websites that an action prompt to contact Congress even existed (pg. 23 and 25)

From: Purchia, Liz
Sent: Monday, December 14, 2015 4:50 PM
To: 'Amy Harder' <amy.harder@wsj.com>
Subject: Statement on GAO

See below. I'd ask that you please refer to the rule as the Clean Water Rule not by WOTUS. That is language and a scare tactic that groups who are opposed to the rule intentionally use when putting out statements to make it appear as if we are regulating all waters in the United States, which is not true. This in turn, further politicizes the issue.

Statement

We disagree with their assessment, and we will fulfill whatever reporting requirements are necessary.

We maintain that using social media to educate the public about our work is an integral part of our mission. We have an obligation to inform all stakeholders about environmental issues and encourage participation in the rulemaking process. We use social media tools just like all organizations to stay connected and inform people across the country about our activities.

Our social media activity simply directed the recipient to the general webpage about the Clean Water Rule. EVERY stakeholder and EVERY stakeholder group --- whether they supported or opposed the rule --- was provided the same link to the general webpage on education and outreach materials, emails, and presentations, and were told the deadline for submitting public comments and how to do so.

At no point did the EPA encourage the public to contact Congress or any state legislature.

The purpose of providing information on the Clean Water Rule and all such proposals is to invigorate the process with new information and new perspectives. The public comment process is not only required by law, in this instance, but most often leads to stronger and better rules, based on science and the law. The agency learns from an engaged citizenry, and to do this, we ask for their input.

Additional Points from GAO Opinion

- GAO agrees that EPA's #DitchtheMyth was legal under the provisions
- GAO agrees that EPA's #CleanWaterRules was legal under the provisions
- GAO agrees that EPA did not mention any specific legislation in any of its social media