

## **The Clean Water Act and the Need for a New Water Rule**

### **Key Messages:**

- Farmers and ranchers want clean water and clear rules. They need a new common-sense water rule that protects water quality and gives them clear rules they can follow.
- Farmers and ranchers care about clean water. They want to preserve their land to pass it down to their children and future generations.
- Farmers and ranchers should be able to look at their land and know what is and is not a Water of the U.S. under the Clean Water Act.
- Farm Bureau supports common-sense regulations that protect and improve water quality on our nation's farms and ranches.
- Agriculture continues to enhance sustainability by reducing the environmental footprint of farming and ranching.

### **General Points to Make:**

- Farmers and ranchers have every incentive to leave their land and natural resources in better shape for the next generation. Many farms have been in the family for several generations, and most states have programs to recognize farms that have been owned by the same family for more than 100 years.
- Land is almost always farmers' and ranchers' largest asset and primary source of income. Farm Bureau supports landowners' right to use their land responsibly while protecting and enhancing water resources.
- Modern agriculture is environmentally sustainable. Farmers strive to constantly improve the environmental resources in their care.
- Farmers understand the things they do to enhance the environment often improve their bottom line. They continually search for ways to do both.

### **More points to make: (by topic)**

#### **The Need for a New Water Rule**

- Farm Bureau supports clean water and clear rules. Farmers and ranchers need a new water rule that protects water quality and provides clear rules that they can follow.
- A new water rule must be clear and specific. Farmers and ranchers should not have to hire teams of consultants and lawyers just to know if they can farm their own land.
- Clean Water Act rules today define regulated waters too broadly. They needlessly disrupt and penalize many commonplace and harmless activities on the land—even conservation activities.
- The 2015 WOTUS rule was blocked by the courts within days of its effective date based on its legal flaws and was never implemented nationwide.

#### **Safe Drinking Water Act:**

- The Safe Drinking Water Act is the primary statute that assures the safety of our nation's public drinking water supplies.

## Talking Points

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- The Clean Water Act was designed to regulate *any addition of almost any material*—no matter how small or inconsequential—into the nation’s navigable surface waters.
- Changes to Clean Water Act regulations do not restrict or diminish Safe Drinking Water Act protections.