

March 15, 2011

Dear Senator:

On behalf of the America's Great Waters Coalition, we urge you to reject extreme provisions in the House-passed Continuing Resolution that threaten to undermine the restoration and protection of our Great Waters and the millions of jobs and other economic opportunities that depend on them. Far from a legitimate effort to cut wasteful federal spending, the House CR cuts restoration funding by more than 50 percent and includes anti-restoration riders that block our efforts at reducing pollution and otherwise ensuring safe and clean drinking water for communities all across the country.

America's Great Waters are essential to our nation's growth and prosperity. Great rivers like the Ohio, Colorado, Missouri, Mississippi, and Rio Grande; giant freshwater ecosystems like Lake Champlain, the Everglades, and the Great Lakes; and coastal bays, estuaries, and gulfs like Chesapeake Bay, Puget Sound, and the Gulf of Maine are vital for transportation, commerce, food, water, power, recreation, and our national identity. Alarming, with \$2.5 billion in cuts to clean water and restoration programs, the House CR represents a retreat from what has been a national commitment to ensure the health and vitality of these natural systems.

The reduction of investment in our restoration efforts will have a direct correlation to the slowing of pollution reduction and job creation, impacting many sectors including the construction sector which was heavily hit in the recent economic downturn. We all are combating threats like polluted runoff, sewage overflows, and invasive species while at the same time trying to restore our ecosystems in order to protect the drinking water for millions of Americans. We cannot afford not to protect our Great Waters. The longer we wait the more expensive and difficult it will be to solve the problems we all face.

In addition to funding cuts and their impacts to clean water and the economy, the CR also includes language to block EPA from using its authority under the Clean Water Act to ensure that our waterways are safe for drinking, swimming, and recreation. Two of the most egregious anti-environmental riders would block efforts to reduce pollution in the Chesapeake Bay and in Florida including the Everglades. These riders are not just cause for concern in the affected states but to all of us seeking to protect and restore our Great Waters.

The health of America's Great Waters is directly linked to the nation's economic recovery and the creation of jobs. A recent report by Mather Economics found that every \$1 invested in Everglades restoration generates \$4 in return. A study by The Brookings Institution found that restoring the Great Lakes will bring the eight-state region at least \$2 in economic benefits for every \$1 of federal investment. Cutting funding slows down our restoration efforts, letting problems get worse and more expensive to solve and costing us opportunities to create hundreds of thousands of jobs.

Our Great Waters sustain this nation physically and financially. Whether it is for drinking, fishing, transportation, recreation, trade, or energy, keeping them clean and accessible is essential to our health, happiness, and financial wellbeing. Turning our backs on restoration

efforts long underway jeopardizes not only the health of our waters, but also our prior investment in saving them.

Again, we urge you to reject the cuts to restoration programs and the anti-restoration riders in the House CR and work to restore the investment in our great waters.

Sincerely,

1000 Friends of Maryland
Alliance for the Great Lakes
American Bottom Conservancy
American Canoe Association
American Rivers
Anacostia Watershed Society
Arkansas Wildlife Federation
Audubon
Audubon Connecticut
Audubon Minnesota
Audubon New York
Audubon Society of Northern Virginia
Biodiversity Project
Blue Ocean Institute
Blue Water Baltimore
Buffalo Audubon Society
Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper
Caloosahatchee River Citizens Association
Chapman Forest Foundation
Chesapeake Bay Foundation
Chester River Association
Citizens Campaign for the Environment
Citizens for a Fort Monroe National Park
Citizens for Pennsylvania's Future (PennFuture)
Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana
Colorado Watershed Assembly
Conservancy of Southwest Florida
Corsica River Conservancy
Eastern Pennsylvania Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation
Endangered Habitats League
Environment America
Environment Maryland
Environment Virginia
Environmental Defense Fund
Everglades Foundation
Florida Audubon Society
Florida Conservation Alliance
Florida Wildlife Federation

Friends of Rock Creek
Friends of the Arthur R Marshall Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge
Friends of the Chemung River Watershed
Friends of the Everglades
Friends of the Rivers of Virginia
Friends of the Upper Delaware River
Galveston Bay Foundation
Gas Drilling Awareness Coalition
Gulf of Maine Research Institute
Gulf Restoration Network
Illinois Council of Trout Unlimited
Iowa Environmental Council
Izaak Walton League of America
Kentucky Resources Council
Lake Champlain Committee
Lake Erie Region Conservancy
Lake Erie Waterkeeper Inc.
Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation
Lower Mississippi River Foundation
Lynnhaven River NOW
Maryland League of Conservation Voters
Maryland Sierra Club
Mattawoman Watershed Society
Milwaukee Riverkeeper
Minnesota Environmental Partnership
Missouri River
National Mississippi River Museum and Aquarium
National Parks Conservation Association
National Wildlife Federation
Nature Abounds
New Mexico Wildlife Federation
New York League of Conservation Voters
Niagara Watershed Alliance
Northeast Great Waters Coalition
Northeast Pennsylvania Citizens in Action
NY/NJ Baykeeper
NYC Environmental Justice Alliance
Ocean River Institute
Ohio Environmental Council
Ohio River Foundation
Passaic River Coalition
Peach Bottom Concerned Citizens Group
PennEnvironment
Penns Valley Conservation Association
Pennsylvania Council of Churches
Piedmont Environmental Council

Planning and Conservation League
Potomac Riverkeeper
Prairie Rivers Network
Regional Plan Association
Restore America's Estuaries
Rio Grande Return
Rio Grande-Rio Bravo Watershed Alliance
River Alliance of Wisconsin
River Network
Rockfish Valley Foundation
Safe Food and Fertilizer
Santa Fe Watershed Association
Sassafras River Association
Savage River Watershed Association
Save the Bay - San Francisco
Save the Dunes
Save the Sound, a Program of Connecticut Fund for the Environment
Save Western Maryland
Shenandoah Riverkeeper
Shenandoah Valley Network
Smart Growth America
Spokane Riverkeeper
St. Mary's River Watershed Association
The Wetlands Initiative
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership
Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council
Trout Unlimited
Upstate Forever
Virginia League of Conservation Voters
Washington Wildlife Federation
Watershed Center - Grand Traverse Bay
WE ACT for Environmental Justice
Wicomico Environmental Trust
Yell County Wildlife Federation