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April 17, 2025

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
EPA Docket Center, Water Docket
Mail Code 28221T
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Washington, DC
Submitted via Federal eRulemaking Portal: <https://www.regulations.gov>

RE: Comments – Implementation of the Definition of Waters of the United States-
Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-OW-2025-0093

The Southeast Stormwater Association (SESWA) appreciates the opportunity to submit comments on the Proposed Implementation of the Definition of Waters of the United States (WOTUS).

SESWA, which covers eight states in the southeast region, has over 226 member organizations, mostly consisting of municipal and county governments, private sector, and academia. With over 1,700 individuals actively working in the stormwater sector, many are deeply involved with the permitting and designation of wetland designation.

Members of SESWA recognize the crucial role that wetlands play in stormwater management efforts. We are calling for updated federal requirements and guidance to ensure adequate protection of existing wetlands in our region. Our members, located in the heart of Appalachia, to our southern coasts, understand the complexities of developing a comprehensive approach that can be applied effectively to all areas. We welcome changes that can streamline the permitting process, while also protecting wetlands. The proposed focus on wetlands with direct surface connections to navigable waters raises concerns about the protection of isolated wetlands, both in the inland to coastal areas. It is important to consider the protection of isolated wetlands, as they can have significant ecological value and serve as a resource.

SESWA acknowledges and appreciates the efforts made by EPA in providing public listening sessions and seeking feedback on the proposed revisions. Local government stakeholders are crucial to ensure that the revised definition considers on-the-ground realities and the diverse functions that various water bodies serve.

John Butler

President

Gwinnett County, GA

Lisa Wells

Secretary-Treasurer

W.K. Dickson (an Ardurra Company)

Kimberly Washok-Jones

Board Representative

Town of Bluffton, SC

Danielle Hopkins

Executive Director

Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-OW-2025-0093

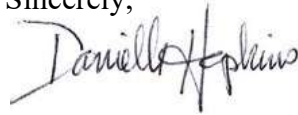
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Collaboration between federal, state, and local agencies will be essential to achieving the goals of the Clean Water Act and we request that clear guidance, training, and financial assistance is developed for all stakeholders to best understand and implement these new rules.

SESWA is dedicated to supporting its members as they navigate various water resource policies at the local, state, and federal levels. Our goal is to ensure that these policies align with stormwater management practices without imposing unnecessary burdens. SESWA stands ready to assist EPA with any comments or questions concerning how these updated definitions and wetland regulations may impact members. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Danielle Hopkins". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Danielle Hopkins
Executive Director