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National Wildlife Federation Welcomes New Guidance for Clean Water Act

“Clean water is a basic right for all Americans – a strong and enforceable Clean Water Act will make sure that right is never taken for granted”

Washington, D.C. (April 27, 2011) – A core American value is clean water access for all to sustain healthy communities and wildlife. The National Wildlife Federation applauds the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) for providing new guidance that affirms Clean Water Act protections for many of the streams and wetlands that cleanse our water, protect us from flooding, and support valuable fish and wildlife habitat.

“A strong Clean Water Act protects the lifeblood of our nation,” said Larry Schweiger, president and CEO of the National Wildlife Federation. “To fulfill a fundamental value to safeguard America’s clean water, this guidance is a very encouraging first step.”

The new guidance is grounded in law, science, and public health and more clearly identifies waters protected under the Clean Water Act. This guidance also more accurately adheres to critical aspects of two murky and divisive Supreme Court rulings undermining clean water protections and leaving our waters vulnerable to pollution and destruction. The current state of confusion places more than 20 million acres of wetlands and almost 60 percent of our streams at risk of losing Clean Water Act protections, hampers enforcement and cleanup efforts, and fosters wasteful and burdensome paperwork and litigation.

The next important step in restoring the Clean Water Act is a solid rulemaking that further clarifies and reinforces protections for our nation’s wetlands, streams, and other waters. Once finalized, the new guidance offers conservationists, agencies, manufacturers, and landowners clear, consistent, and commonsense direction regarding the scope of the Clean Water Act. Safeguards for clean water will once again clearly apply to the many small streams that feed the



public drinking water supplies of 117 million Americans and to the many wetlands and other waters that sustain critical habitat for wildlife and recreation.

“Clean water is a basic right for all Americans,” affirmed Larry Schweiger. “Having a strong and enforceable Clean Water Act will make sure that right is never taken for granted.”

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