

Dear Member:

On behalf of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) and its more than 19,000 members, I am writing to urge your support for H.R. 5078, the “Waters of the United States Regulatory Overreach Protection Act”. H.R. 5078 would prohibit the Environmental Protection Agency and Army Corps of Engineers from continuing its efforts to develop the proposed “Waters of the United States” rule. The GCSAA supports the Clean Water Act and can see that there is a need to clarify some of the jurisdictional questions, but this proposed regulation goes too far. It is not the answer.

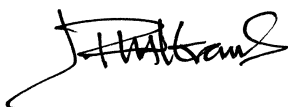
The “Waters of the United States” rulemaking, as presently published, will have a devastating economic impact on the golf course industry, threatening to economically weaken, if not eliminate, a significant number of golf courses, most of which are small businesses that generate jobs and tax revenue. It would include almost every river, stream, creek, wetland, pond, and ditch in the United States under the jurisdiction of the Clean Water Act. Golf courses that have these waters on or near them would now be required to obtain costly, federal permits for any land management activities or land use decisions made. And there is no guarantee that any of these permits would be granted.

One only has to look at a golf course’s operations to see the vital role water plays. Of the 150 acres on an average golf course, 11 are comprised of streams, ponds, lakes, and/or wetlands for a total footprint of 161,183 acres nationwide. Protection of these water bodies is paramount. Our superintendents are committed environmental stewards who already protect the quality of these waters by applying physical, agronomic and environmental Best Management Practices (BMPs), such as correct mowing, Integrated Pest Management/nutrient management and other environmental practices. Use of BMPs include wet ponds, infiltration controls, catch basins, water quality basins, and vegetative filter and buffer strips. Subjecting golf courses to an expensive and unpredictable federal permitting process will threaten all of this.

H.R. 5078 would require the EPA and Corps to work with state and local officials to formulate a new rule. This is a better alternative to categorically subjecting most waters in United States to federal oversight, which is what the proposed rule would do. Instead of a “one-size-fits-all” approach, we urge the EPA and Corps to work with all local stakeholders, including golf course superintendents, to formulate a better rule to protect “Waters of the United States.”

Please support H.R. 5078, the “Waters of the United States Regulatory Overreach Protection Act” an important piece of legislation to U.S. golf courses.

Sincerely,



J. Rhett Evans
GCSAA, Chief Executive Officer