



**Conservatives  
for  
Property Rights**

November 15, 2018

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Majority Leader  
S-230 The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Paul Ryan  
Speaker of the House  
H-232 The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Majority Leader and Mr. Speaker:

Conservatives for Property Rights, a coalition of conservative and libertarian organizations dedicated to first principles of private property rights, urges you to include language repealing the Waters of the United States, or WOTUS, rule in a must-pass legislative vehicle acted on before the conclusion of the current lame-duck session.

CPR emphasizes the central importance of private property in all its forms — physical, personal, and intellectual. The right to private property ranks among the unalienable rights the Founders referenced in the Declaration of Independence.

Our coalition urges you to prioritize the restoration of the pre-2015 interpretation of the Clean Water Act. Under the WOTUS rule devised by the Obama Environmental Protection Agency and the Corps of Engineers, more than 60 percent of the nation's streams and millions of acres of wetlands are swept under federal jurisdiction. This rule compounds the regulatory vagueness and expands the EPA's and the Corps' discretion far beyond what is reasonable — tantamount to a wholesale taking without just compensation.

The Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals has lifted a nationwide stay that had held up this federal taking of private property and state property. In January, the EPA finalized a rule delaying by two years the WOTUS rule's implementation. However, the agency's move has been attacked by environmentalists and liberal state attorneys general.

Given legal machinations, judicial activism, and the coming House majority following the midterm elections, this Obama aggression requires Congress's making this a top priority. As you know, WOTUS repeal language is included in two House-passed measures currently in conference committee: House Interior Appropriations (H.R. 6147) and the Farm Bill (H.R. 2). Thus, it is imperative that Congress act immediately to relieve permanently this threat to fundamental property rights.

Whereas President Obama in 2016 vetoed Congressional Review Act legislation that would have stopped the overreaching WOTUS rule, President Trump will sign a repeal bill. Right now presents the last, best chance to complete this job. Circumstances dictate immediate congressional action.

In conclusion, Conservatives for Property Rights strongly supports immediately repealing the WOTUS rule. We cannot allow this opportunity to secure property rights to pass without success. Thank you!

Sincerely,

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Executive Director  
Conservatives for Property Rights

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