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Response to Senator Inhofe's Misleading Report, "From Preventing Pollution of Navigable and Interstate Waters to Regulating Farm Fields, Puddles and Dry Land: A Senate Report on the Expansion of Jurisdiction Claimed by the Army Corps of Engineers and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency under the Clean Water Act."

In a story that should surprise absolutely no one, long-time Congressional opponents of strong clean water protections took a handful of stories from industry interest groups that shared their opinions, and produced a "report" that is highly critical of federal water pollution controls.

Today Republican Senator Inhofe, Chairman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, released a broadside attack on the EPA and Army Corps' critical and common sense Clean Water Rule that is nothing more than a repackaging of the same tired arguments we've seen from Big Polluters to weaken the law and enable them to pollute the waterways our families, economies, wildlife, and communities depend on.

This document relies on two false premises - that federal agencies implement clean water requirements too strongly today, and that they secretly implement a rule that is not in effect. The document bolsters these narratives with "examples" cherry-picked by opponents of the Rule and of the effective implementation of the Clean Water Act, along with those opponents' biased version of the facts and the relevant law. The truth is much different. For one, the cases cited in this report do not apply the requirements of the Clean Water Rule; many of them significantly pre-date the rule. Moreover, the Clean Water Rule, when implemented, will provide needed and more consistent direction for the agencies, communities that depend on clean water, and regulated industries.

In response to the Supreme Court and other stakeholder requests, the EPA and the Army Corps of Engineers finalized the Clean Water Rule in June of 2015 to give greater clarity to what is and what is not covered by the Clean Water Act. The final Clean Water Rule is based on sound science and received ample public and stakeholder input. To develop the Clean Water Rule, the agencies held more than 400 stakeholder meetings, provided more than 200 days for public comment, and conducted a detailed and open analysis and peer review of the science on which the rule is based. Over 800,000 people commented in support of the rule, and poll after poll has found small businesses, hunters and anglers, and a bipartisan majority of voters in favor of the Clean Water Rule and more protections for our water.

The Clean Water Rule protects tens of millions of acres of wetlands that provide important wildlife habitat and flood protection, and waters that help supply the drinking water of 117 million Americans. This important rule recognizes that the health of our nation's cherished waterways depends on the small upstream waters and wetlands that flow into them.

Despite the need for the Rule and the robust public process that went into its development, some members of Congress want to kill it and support legislation to roll back the Clean Water Act even further. Fortunately, those opponents repeatedly failed to achieve their dirty water goals. Today's "report" is just their latest attempt to advance that rollback agenda.