



November 7, 2014

Take a Stand to Protect Local Water and Land Management

*Nebraskans can voice opposition to the EPA's Waters of the United States rule through midnight
Nov. 14, 2014.*

By Nebraska Attorney General Jon Bruning

For generations, Nebraska farmers and ranchers have been trusted stewards of the land, providing food for people across the globe. Despite drought, flood and market fluctuations, they persevere to increase agriculture production to meet a rising demand. Their work is hard. And, it's made harder by an overreaching federal government expanding its authority through increased, unnecessary regulation. That's why my office continues to fight to protect Nebraska's agriculture industries from unlawful expansions of federal power.

Last month, my office led a group of 11 state attorneys general to voice our opposition to the latest federal power grab by the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) proposed rule, Waters of the United States.

In April, the EPA proposed the rule to expand the definition of "waters of the United States" under the Clean Water Act. Enactment of the rule will lead to nearly limitless federal jurisdiction over local water and land use management. It brings virtually all bodies of water under the EPA's authority, including drains, creeks, streams and ponds. The rule's catch-all provision even sweeps in mostly-dry roadside ditches - so long as those ditches have a bank and, at some point, a minimum amount of water flow.

This rule provides no certainty that any Nebraska farm, ranch or backyard will ever be safe from federal regulation. And, the negative impact of this jurisdictional expansion will be felt for generations to come. It's time for Nebraskans to take a stand against this unlawful encroachment.

We don't need the federal government to tell us how to care for our lands or water.

I encourage Nebraskans to join me in voicing opposition to the EPA's proposed rule, Waters of the United States. Comments can be submitted online through November 14, 2014 by visiting regulations.gov or following the link on our website at ago.ne.gov.