



For Immediate Release

DELAWARE RIVERKEEPER NETWORK: WHITE HOUSE SHOULD ISSUE EXECUTIVE ORDER MAKING WATER A NATIONAL PRIORITY, SHIFTING U.S. TO CLEAN ENERGY FUTURE

Delaware Riverkeeper Network Joins Over 200 Groups Urging Action by President Obama

NY, NJ, PA, DE – July 16, 2013 – A detailed executive order making water a major national priority and moving the nation to a clean energy future is being submitted today to the White House for the consideration of President Obama. The effort is supported by the Delaware Riverkeeper Network which works throughout the Delaware River watershed, working to protect this precious natural resource for the benefit of all.

As composed by the Committee for an American Clean Energy Agenda (ACEA), which represents 120 citizen organizations with nearly 2 million members in 33 states and the District of Columbia, the draft executive order would require: (1) the completion of a long-overdue national water census; (2) the creation of a “U.S. Water Budget”; and (3) a plan for a shift by 2030 from fossil fuel and nuclear power to clean energy, increased energy efficiency, and enhanced energy storage technologies in key watersheds identified by the US Geological Survey. The executive order can be found at <http://www.americancleanenergyagenda.org/news/>

Maya van Rossum, the Delaware Riverkeeper said: **“Water is among our most precious resources, vital for protecting health and life of all. The draft Executive Order would ensure that federal policy makers are making informed choices about energy and water and the future of our country. Right now, without the vital information and deliberate planning called for in the draft Executive order, federal policy makers are flying blind when it comes to developing an energy policy reliant on the availability of fresh water. America should have an energy policy that protects our communities, and that means protecting and ensuring our access to clean and safe water. The draft executive order outlines a process for getting that important job done now while there is still time to do so.”**

Ms. van Rossum added: **“The Delaware River watershed already had a battle over water decades ago – it is important we learn the lesson: the waters of the Delaware River watershed need to be available and protected for the good of the community and that means not allowing the influx of an industry or user that would diminish its quality, quantity or availability to serve the drinking, food, and health needs of our human communities or ecological systems. When it comes to protecting water and making ‘water smart’ energy choices, we already are far behind where we need to be as a nation. The Department of Energy has delayed for years delay the release of the ‘Water Nexus’ roadmap. We are already at the point where energy production increasingly threatens water quality and quantity across the country, including in places where water is scarce. We need to start planning now if we want to avoid disaster.”**

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In its most recent report to Congress, the U.S. Geological Survey identified three critical watersheds as the subjects of their initial studies. These include the Delaware River Basin, the Apalachicola-Chattahoochee-Flint (ACF) River Basin, and the Colorado River Basin that encompass many smaller, impaired bodies of water. USGS chose these watersheds due to their importance to the country and because they represent “watersheds with potential water-use conflicts.” USGS also found in its report to Congress that thermoelectric power and irrigation are the largest users of water in the Nation.

Titled “*Identification of Critical Water Resources and Mitigation of Water Use Competition in Vulnerable Watersheds*,” ACEA’s draft executive order for consideration by President Obama would do three things:

1. Complete the federal government water budget study (the National Water Census) for the United States for water management purposes ordered by Congress in the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 (Public Law 111-11, also known as the SECURE Water Act) as quickly as practicable and take steps to reduce water consumption, especially in vulnerable watersheds.
2. Create the Water Budget Planning Commission. The Commission would consist of the Departments of Agriculture, Energy, Defense, Interior, EPA and the Council on Environmental Quality and make recommendations for water use mitigation approaches consistent with the sustainability criteria established in this Order. The Commission would establish recommendations to address the growing competition for water by thermoelectric power plant use (including fuel extraction to operate thermoelectric power plants such as mining and fracking) and farming through mitigation efforts that reduce the burden on water resources without threatening the food supply.
3. Reduce or eliminate, to the extent practicable, by 2030 water-intensive, steam-cycle coal-fired, nuclear and natural-gas fired power plants that derive water from or impact the three river basins cited above (Apalachicola-Chattahoochee-Flint (ACF) River Basin, the Delaware River Basin, and the Colorado River Basin) with the less water-intensive optimal electric generation mix of: (1) End Use Energy Efficiency; (2) Solar PV and Wind Power (non-combustion renewables, both utility-scale and distributed); (3) Distributed Power Technologies; (4) Demand Response; (5) Storage Technologies; and (6) Simple cycle and combined cycle natural gas-fired power plants, with the goal of limiting deployment of these resources as much as practicable. Recommend the optimal electric generation mix cited above to reduce or eliminate the water-intensive, electric generation resources cited above to be completed within 12 months of adoption of this order. In recommending the optimal electric generation mix, the subcommittee would select technologies that are affordable or have the greatest potential to come down in cost, use and consume the least amount of water, generate the least pollution, effectively reduce greenhouse gas emissions and maintain grid reliability.

BACKGROUND

On May 24, 2013, leaders of the Committee for the American Clean Energy Agenda praised Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-TX) and 22 of her House colleagues for publicly urging U.S. Energy Secretary Ernest Moniz to release a long-overdue “road map” of how to manage the development of U.S. energy resources without harming the quality and supply of water supplies. These water-related recommendations were required by the Energy Policy Act of 2005 and have yet to be submitted to Congress.

A January 2013 ACEA national opinion survey found that 92 percent of Americans think “U.S. energy planning and decision making” should be based on “a comprehensive understanding of what our national water resources are” – a national water roadmap that Congress asked for, but which was never produced. The national water roadmap attracts the support of 92 percent of Republicans, 89 percent of Independents, and 94 percent of Democrats. For more information about the full survey, go to <http://www.americancleanenergyagenda.org/poll-water-is-high-priority-for-bipartisan-majority-of-americans/> on the Web.

In the US Energy Policy Act of 2005, Congress instructed the Secretary of Energy submit a report assessing the state of water supply and demand and recommending future actions. DOE split the report into two parts: a general review of the connections between water and energy in the US and recommendations to offer Congress guidance in policy making. The general review portion was submitted to Congress in 2007. However, the recommendations part, called the “Roadmap” has still not been released, though it was prepared some time ago.

ABOUT THE GROUPS

The Delaware Riverkeeper Network (www.delawareriverkeeper.org) champions the rights of our communities to a Delaware River and tributary streams that are free-flowing, clean and healthy. The Delaware Riverkeeper Network, a 501(c)(3) non-profit environmental organization, has been working since 1988 throughout the 4 states of the Delaware River watershed including New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania and Delaware. We help decisionmakers and citizens consider and address threats in their own communities; restore damaged streams, wetlands and ecosystems; collect water quality data needed to secure sound decision-making; and when necessary enforce the environmental protection laws that keep us all safe.

The Committee for an American Clean Energy Agenda (www.americancleanenergyagenda.org) is comprised of 120 citizen organizations with nearly 2 million members in 33 states and the District of Columbia. Organized by the nonprofit Civil Society Institute and the Environmental Working Group, it is committed to promoting new, grassroots-driven politics to bring about a renewable energy future that goes beyond “business as usual”. Instead, taxpayer dollars should support an energy system that prevents degradation of the environment, protects public health, preserves access to clean water, sustains the electric grid and combats global climate change, all while laying the basis for an adequate standard of living for today’s populations and future generations.

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Executive Order

Identification of Critical Water Resources and Mitigation of Water Use Competition in Vulnerable Watersheds

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, and in order to reduce the competition for water resources from electricity production in vulnerable watersheds, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. – Policy. The U. S. Geological Survey reported this year that “the Nation faces an increasingly large set of water-resource challenges as water shortages and water-use conflicts become more commonplace.” The agency also found that “national water availability and use have not been comprehensively assessed since 1978.” Since this assessment more than 30 years ago and earlier analyses, the U.S. Geological Survey found that “competition for water resources has increased greatly and considerably more importance is attached to the availability of water for environmental and ecosystem needs, in addition to human use.”

The United States can ill-afford to continue to withdraw and consume water at current rates. Increasing population, energy and agricultural demands as well as climate change’s contribution to drought are driving the rising competition for water resources. Key regions of the United States are faced with declining water supplies and attendant intra- and interstate conflicts over its use. Over the next 20 years, the U.S. Geological Survey and Department of Defense project that water scarcity and competition will spread to most regions of the country. We must act to avoid, eliminate or mitigate these regional water budget issues beginning now before we are faced with a true crisis.

Therefore, it is critical that the federal government ascertain the water budget in the United States for management purposes by completing the National Water Census ordered by Congress in the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 (Public Law 111-11, also known as the SECURE Water Act) as quickly as practicable and take steps to reduce water consumption, especially in vulnerable watersheds.

In its most recent report to Congress, the U.S. Geological Survey identified three critical watersheds as the subjects of their initial studies. These include the Apalachicola-Chattahoochee-Flint (ACF) River Basin, the Delaware River Basin, and the Colorado River Basin that encompass many smaller, impaired bodies of water. USGS chose these watersheds due to their importance to the country and because they represent “watersheds with potential water-use conflicts.” USGS also found in its report to Congress that thermoelectric power and irrigation are the largest users of water in the Nation.

Section 2. U.S. Water Budget. (a) The Department of Interior is directed to make the completion of the National Water Census prior to 2020 its highest priority. All

available discretionary funds shall be directed toward implementation of this program.

(b) The Water Security Campaign (the Campaign) is established. The Campaign shall consist of a public education component and a recommendation component for the electric generation mix, with the goal of reducing the water-intensity of the power sector.

(1) Water Security Campaign Public Education Initiative. Within four months of adoption of this Order, the Office of the Water Budget Planning Commission established under subsection (2) (the Commission) shall implement a public information campaign to educate the public as to the current view held by the U.S. Geological Survey, Department of Defense, and Sandia Laboratory with respect to the country's water budget, the ultimate difficulties we face as a nation due to current withdrawal and use rates, and the importance of completing the National Water Assessment. This effort shall be designated as the Water Security Campaign. The main focus of the campaign shall be to highlight the two largest water users in the country, thermoelectric power plants and agriculture, identify the withdrawal and use rates by region of the country, identify increasing uses associated with energy generation in the foreseeable future, discuss the impacts of climate change on water availability, and identify approaches to prevent a water budget crisis. For thermoelectric power plants, proposed recommendations shall be consistent with the sustainability criteria established by this order.

The Commission shall conduct 12 regional meetings within 18 months beginning on implementation of the Campaign to educate the public and receive input from the public as to the water budget issues local residents are facing.

(2) The Water Budget Planning Commission (the Commission) is established. The Commission consists of the Departments of Agriculture, Energy, Defense, Interior, EPA and the Council on Environmental Quality and shall make recommendations for water use mitigation approaches consistent with the sustainability criteria established in this Order. The Commission shall establish recommendations to address the growing competition for water by thermoelectric power plant use (including fuel extraction to operate thermoelectric power plants such as mining and fracking) and farming through mitigation efforts that reduce the burden on water resources without threatening the food supply.

The following sustainability criteria are established to address power sector water withdrawal and consumption rates. Technologies and the ultimate mix of electric generation technologies should be those that:

- 1) are affordable or have the ability to decline in cost and are less prone to cost overruns;

- 2) use and consume the least volume of water resources (including a technology's fuel cycle from resource extraction through operation and combustion);
- 3) generate the least amount of pollution in terms of air emissions, water discharges, deforestation, stormwater runoff and waste generation (including a technology's fuel cycle);
- 4) generate the least amount of greenhouse gases (including a technology's fuel cycle); and,
- 5) maintain grid reliability.

With respect to residential and industrial uses, the Commission shall emphasize actionable water conservation practices.

Section 3. Mitigation of thermoelectric water use in critical basins. In order to mitigate or avoid water use competition in the United States and in keeping with Executive Order 13514 (October 5, 2009), the federal government, in cooperation with regional, state and local government entities, NGOs, and business organizations, shall reduce or eliminate, to the extent practicable, by 2030 water-intensive, steam-cycle coal-fired, nuclear and natural-gas fired power plants that derive water from or impact the three river basins cited above (Apalachicola-Chattahoochee-Flint (ACF) River Basin, the Delaware River Basin, and the Colorado River Basin) with the less water-intensive optimal electric generation mix of:

- 1) End Use Energy Efficiency;
- 2) Solar PV and Wind Power (non-combustion renewables, both utility-scale and distributed);
- 3) Distributed Power Technologies;
- 4) Demand Response;
- 5) Storage Technologies;
- 6) Simple cycle and combined cycle natural gas-fired power plants, with the goal of limiting deployment of these resources as much as practicable.

This electric generation mix comports with the sustainability criteria established by this Order.

(a) The charter of the Subcommittee on Water Availability and Quality (Subcommittee) of the National Science and Technology Council's Committee on Environment and Natural Resources is hereby renewed.

(b) The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission is added to the membership of the Subcommittee.

(c) The Subcommittee shall conduct a study to: (1) recommend the optimal electric generation mix cited above to reduce or eliminate the water-intensive, electric generation resources cited above to be completed within 12 months of adoption of this order. In recommending the optimal electric generation mix, the subcommittee shall select technologies that are affordable or have the greatest potential to come

down in cost, use and consume the least amount of water, generate the least pollution, effectively reduce greenhouse gas emissions and maintain grid reliability.

(2) assess the cost, water impacts (including atmospheric deposition of pollutants), and feasibility of 50 percent, 80 percent and 100 percent phase-out of water-intensive, steam-cycle coal-fired, nuclear, utility-scale biomass-fired, oil-fired and natural-gas fired power plants by 2030. Externality costs shall be assigned where feasible.

(3) assess the technological requirements of achieving these percentage reductions for federal RD&D purposes.

(4) assess the policies required to achieve these reductions.

(d) Upon completion of the study, the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources shall take the necessary steps to coordinate with regional, state and local government entities, NGOs, and the business community to implement the stated federal policy in this Order to the extent feasible and utilize all federal authority to support this policy.

Section 4. General Provisions. (a) This order shall be implemented in a manner consistent with applicable law and subject to the availability of appropriations.

(b) Nothing in this order shall be construed to impair or otherwise affect the functions of the OMB Director relating to budgetary, administrative, or legislative proposals.