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Comment submitted by Peg Rooney, President, Arkansas Valley Audubon Society

This is a Comment on the **Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Proposed Rule: Revised Definition of Waters of the United States**

For related information, [Open Docket Folder](#) 

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Comment

The Clean Water Act's goal is the restoration and protection of the country's waters. To limit the definition of 'waters of the U.S.' is short-sighted at best and dangerous at worst. Navigable waters should continue to be defined as rivers, streams that contribute 'perennial or intermittent flow to downstream traditional navigable waters, AND ephemeral streams having water in them only immediately after it rains, ditches, lakes, ponds and, importantly, wetlands that do not abut or do not have a direct hydrological connection to jurisdictional waters.'

To narrow the definition of what counts as 'waters' will endanger the drinking water sources for millions of people, and will jeopardize wildlife habitat, outdoor recreation, and the safety of people who depend on healthy wetlands and natural ecosystems to minimize flood damage.

More than one-third of the United States' threatened and endangered species live only in wetlands, and nearly half use wetlands at some point in their lives. Many other animals and plants depend on wetlands for survival. Many of the U.S. breeding bird populations-- including ducks, geese, woodpeckers, hawks, wading birds and many song-birds-- feed, nest and raise their young in wetlands.

Migratory waterfowl use coastal and inland wetlands as resting, feeding, breeding or nesting grounds for at least part of the year. Some species of migratory birds are completely dependent on certain wetlands, and would become extinct if those wetlands were developed.

Members of the Audubon Society in southern Colorado bird and recreate in wetlands and areas with ephemeral streams, ponds, and lakes. Birders contribute millions of

dollars to local economies throughout the nation. They don't go out to see oil/ gas wells, methane flares, dirt, noise, and pollution. Protect the waters of the U.S. as currently defined.