

April xx, 2007

The Honorable Norm Dicks  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Interior Appropriations  
B-308 RHOB  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Todd Tiahrt  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Interior Appropriations  
1016 LHOB  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Dicks and Ranking Member Tiahrt,

Wet weather pollution is a large and rapidly growing source of pollution in U.S. rivers, lakes, and coastal waters. As a result, States and local governments will need to invest more than \$140 billion over the next 20 years to upgrade sewage systems.

This is an incredible financial burden, and these communities are looking for creative and cost effective ways to reduce stormwater pollution, minimize combined sewer overflows, and ensure that there will be safe and clean water resources for the future. For this reason, we ask that you allocate some of the Environmental Protection Agency's funding in the Fiscal Year 2008 (FY 08) Interior Appropriations Bill for the implementation of green infrastructure, which EPA has recently recognized as a cost effective means of addressing water pollution and achieving other environmental, public health, economic, and community benefits as well.

Many communities recognize the benefits of using green infrastructure, water quality and habitat to urban and suburban watersheds, to control wet weather pollution at a lower cost than traditional approaches, and to restore the natural hydrology. However, existing regulations do not adequately encourage the use of these approaches and are not designed to consider the full range of benefits that they provide. For instance, federal regulators' lack of data, modeling tools, and familiarity with green infrastructure often stymie community efforts to implement these practices.

On April 19, 2007, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) made a significant first step to improve this situation. EPA signed an agreement (copy attached) with the Natural Resources Defense Council, the National Association of Clean Water Agencies, the Association of State and Interstate Water Pollution Control Administrators, and the Low Impact Development Center on behalf of any even broader array of supporting groups to establish a public-private partnership to promote green infrastructure approaches to control sewer overflows and stormwater pollution.

As you draft the FY08 Interior Appropriations bill, we hope that you will provide a directive to the EPA to use some of its appropriated funds to implement this partnership. This should include directing EPA to identify a full-time senior staff member to coordinate implementation of this initiative nationally, regional coordinators, and \$10 million in grants for green infrastructure pilot projects.

Thank you for considering this request. We look forward to working with you to expeditiously implement this partnership, and to help our communities improve water quality in a sustainable manner. If you have any questions or would like to discuss this proposal further, please contact John Sherry with Representative Allyson Y. Schwartz at 202-225-6111 or [john.sherry@mail.house.gov](mailto:john.sherry@mail.house.gov).

Sincerely,