



WATER IS LIFE.  
It's Our Duty to Protect It.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
March 13, 2023

Contacts:

Rachel Conn, Amigos Bravos, 575-770-8327, [rconn@amigosbravos.org](mailto:rconn@amigosbravos.org)

Joe Zupan, Amigos Bravos, 512-296-4497

### **House Votes to Weaken Clean Water Protections**

*Dirty water move by Congress endangers New Mexico's Rivers*

On March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2023 the U.S. House of Representatives voted to appeal EPA's Clean Water Restoration Rule that protects many of the nation's wetlands and streams under the Clean Water Act. The Senate is expected to vote on the measure next week. [Biden is expected to veto the appeal measure](#). After the House vote, Amigos Bravos Deputy Director issued the following statement:

“New Mexico has been in the crosshairs of Dirty Water actions by the federal government for far too long. Water here in New Mexico is too precious to risk unregulated dumping of pollution. It is time that we as a state step up to protect our own waters.”

All three New Mexico members of the house voted against the appeal and New Mexico [Representative Melanie Stansbury spoke passionately on the floor](#) against the measure, “In New Mexico water is life, water is sacred, water is culture, water is sacred to everything that we do and everything that we are,” said Representative Stansbury, adding “For years our state and our communities have ridden the roller coaster of regulatory rollbacks on the Clean Water Act.”

The [rule](#) that the House voted to appeal on Thursday would clarify that some waters that had lost protections under the Trump Administration are in fact protected under the federal Clean Water Act. The back and forth over the past decade on which waters are protected under the Act has disproportionately impacted New Mexico due to its large percentage of ephemeral/intermittent streams and closed basins (watersheds that do not feed traditional navigable waterways). Furthermore, New Mexico is only one of three states that does not have its own surface water permitting program, meaning New Mexico relies on the EPA to permit point-source discharges and does not have the infrastructure in place protect state waters that aren't protected by EPA, which under recent federal actions have been up to 96% of New Mexico's waters.

This magnifies the need for New Mexico to create its own surface water permitting program and secure primacy for regulating discharges to the waters in our state.

---

Amigos Bravos | PO Box 238 | 114 Des Georges Place | Taos, NM 87571 | 575.758.3874



[amigosbravos.org](http://amigosbravos.org)



[facebook.com/amigosbravos](https://facebook.com/amigosbravos)



[Twitter.com/amigosbravos1](https://twitter.com/amigosbravos1)



[instagram.com/amigosbravos](https://instagram.com/amigosbravos)

By pursuing surface water permitting development, New Mexico can finally take a leadership role in protecting our surface water quality and remove its reliance on federal policies which continue to fluctuate and do not adequately protect the watersheds of New Mexico.