



# LINCOLN CHAFEE

## U.S. SENATOR

### RHODE ISLAND

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## Senator Chafee Applauds Administration on Recent Clean Water Act Decision

I applaud the Bush Administration, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Army Corps of Engineers on their recent decision to ensure federal protections over all waters of the United States remain firmly in place.

As a member of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, with jurisdiction over the Clean Water Act, I support strong federal oversight over activities that have an impact on our nation's aquatic resources. The Supreme Court's decision in *Solid Waste Agency of Northern Cook County v. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers* (SWANCC) limited federal authority to regulate activities affecting isolated wetlands based solely on the Migratory Bird Rule. The EPA and the Army Corps of Engineers' recent decision not to proceed with redefining federally-protected streams and wetlands, and thereby altering the scope of the Clean Water Act, reaffirms our federal government's long-held commitment to "no net loss" of wetlands in the United States.

I believe our nation's aquatic resources are all intricately linked. Under the Clean Water Act, the federal government has a critical role in protecting waters ranging from our well-defined oceans, lakes and rivers, to the more ephemeral washes, intermittent streams and wetland habitats, all critical to maintaining the health and vitality of our aquatic resources and the life that depends upon those resources.

This is a momentous decision, and one that reaffirms the intent of the Clean Water Act and statutory authority for the federal government to work closely with states and localities in providing strong protections for our nation's wetlands and waterways. In the months ahead, as EPA and the Army Corps proceed with regulatory activities, I will urge them to take the next step and reissue federal guidance to regional offices and the states that narrowly interprets the SWANCC decision, and provides continued federal protections for streams and millions of acres of wetlands across the country.

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