

House Subcommittee Passes EPA Technical Assistance Funding Fix Bill: On Wednesday, the Environment and the Economy Subcommittee (Chaired by Rep. John Shimkus, IL) approved S. 611, The Grassroots Rural and Small Community Water Systems Assistance Act – companion legislation to H.R. 2853 (introduced by Subcommittee Vice Chairman Gregg Harper, MS). S. 611 would help alleviate the financial burden EPA’s drinking water regulations have placed on small and rural drinking water supply systems. There was quite a lot of discussion during the mark-up of the bill which you can review through the video ([YouTube](#)).

Looking for Help Convincing Senator Inhofe (OK): In response to last week's article on the new Water Infrastructure and Innovation Act (WIFIA), a reader lamented the news that one of our most supportive senators is in favor of the WIFIA provision in the Congressional transportation bill ([more](#)). It now appears that Senator Inhofe will be a determining factor in whether the WIFIA provisions become law. Last week, the House did NOT include the WIFIA provisions in its version of the transportation bill ([more](#)). The final determination of the WIFIA provisions will likely come down to the House-Senate conference committee with the House's rejection of WIFIA in competition with the Senate's support. Senator Inhofe will be the Senate Chairman of any such conference committee. If your Senator is interested in urging Senator Inhofe to reject the WIFIA provision that allows federal water infrastructure subsidies to circumvent eligibility of your state’s most needy communities ([more](#)), please contact us.

NRWA New Representative on AWWA Water Committee Reports: Utah Rural Water's Paul Fulgham was recently appointed to the AWWA Water Utility Council (WUC). The WUC is interested in many of the same regulatory issues as NRWA. See Paul’s very interesting and comprehensive report from the recent WUC meeting in Denver ([Fulgham report](#)). **PBS Covers New Cali Desalinating Water System:** Is desal the answer to California's drought ([PBS](#))? **Florida Rural Water Files Suit against EPA WOTUS Rule:** In the Sixth Circuit, FRWA officials filed suit stating they *"challenge the validity of a Final Rule [entitled the 'Clean Water Rule'] adopted jointly by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (collectively 'Respondents')."*

Wisc. Rural Water Announces (WRWA) New Funding Program: WRWA announced new financing options available to all Wisconsin units of Government called SIMPLE Loans. SIMPLE Loans are designed to be a quick, easy and low-cost alternative to conventional bond sales. WRWA can finance just about any project or asset as long as it is owned and

operated by a unit of government. These projects or assets include the following categories: sewer and water facilities, street & improvements, equipment, buildings & improvements, refunding of existing debt, temporary or construction financing, USDA interim loans and preliminary engineering costs ([more](#)).

Cyber Vulnerability: Flaws in Rockwell PLCs expose operational networks. Rockwell Automation released firmware updates and mitigations addressing several vulnerabilities in its 1400 programmable logic controllers (PLCs) and its MicroLogix 1100 products including a buffer overflow bug that remotely crashes affected devices or executes arbitrary code. The updates and mitigations also addressed a denial-of-service (DoS) bug dubbed “FrostyURL” that can be exploited to crash MicroLogix PLCs via a specially crafted uniform resource locator (URL) sent to victims through email, and a cross-site scripting (XSS) vulnerability that can be exploited to inject malicious JavaScript code in a device’s Web server, among others ([more](#)).

Congressional/White House Budget Deal Clears the Way for Appropriations Bills to Pass: The negotiated agreement would increase discretionary spending by \$80 billion above sequester-level spending caps, with the increase split evenly between defense and nondefense programs. Congress normally would pass 12 individual bills to fund each area of the federal government, but the Dec. 11 deadline virtually assures that Congress will instead approve a sweeping, all-inclusive omnibus appropriations bill.

Senate Passes Cybersecurity Bill: Last week, the Senate overwhelmingly passed the Cybersecurity Information Sharing Act which aims to help prevent massive data breaches of consumer data by offering legal protections to companies that would enable them to share more information about their networks and hacker threats with the government and other businesses. The White House has backed the legislation, giving the bill a good chance of being signed into law once it is reconciled with a similar version passed by the House earlier this year.

Wastewater Spill Threatens Private Wells: Nearly 2 million gallons of wastewater spilled into the Brazos River in Texas after heavy rains, Waco city officials announced October 26. Officials recommended that residents with private wells located within a half-mile of the plant’s location should only use distilled or boiled water, while crews worked to contain and disinfect the discharges ([more](#)).

Senate Leader to Push Bill on Rewrite of Waters Rule: Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (KY) plans to file a motion Nov. 2 to move a bill that would require a rewrite of a rule intended to clarify Clean Water Act jurisdiction over the nation's waters and wetlands. The bill would require the EPA and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to write a new clean water rule no later than Dec. 31, 2016, and include only streams that have enough flow to transport pollutants at levels that would impair traditional navigable waters.

National Rural Water Association

Contact: Mike Keegan, Policy Analyst <keegan@ruralwater.org>
(Washington, DC)