

Water Policy Priorities and Issues in 2018

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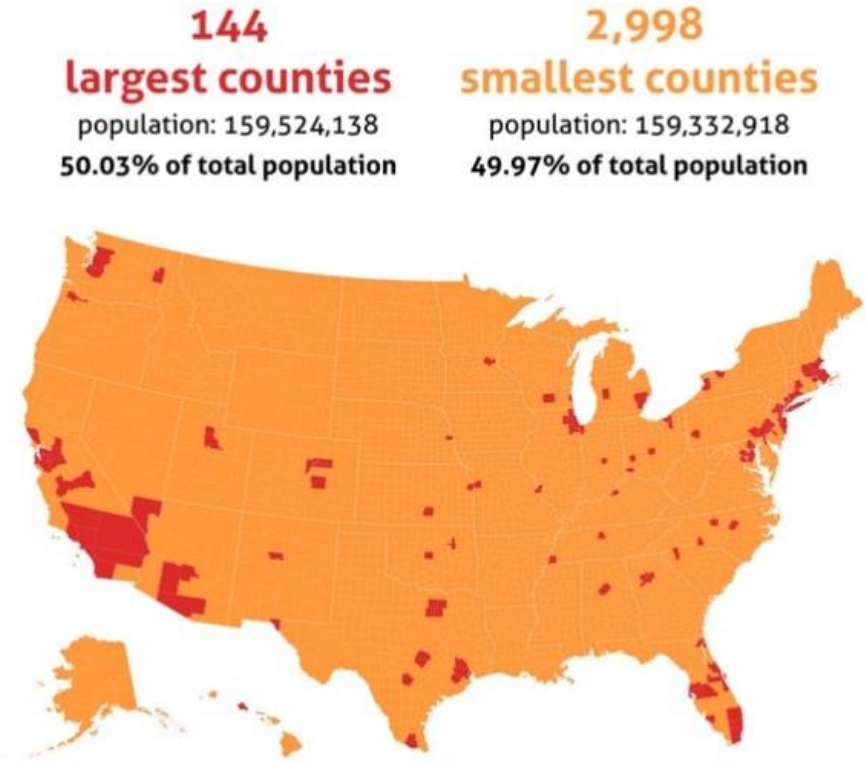
Water Policy Priorities and Issues | Overview

1. Counties Nationally
2. NACo's 2018 Legislative Priorities
3. Waters of the U.S.
4. Water Resources Development Act
5. Questions & Answers



Water Policy Priorities and Issues | Counties Nationally

- Counties, boroughs and parishes are functionally **equivalent subdivisions of the states**
- **Populations vary widely**, as does land mass
- **50 percent** of counties have less than 25,000 people
- 70 percent of counties are considered rural with populations **less than 50,000**



Water Policy Priorities and Issues | NACo's 2018 Legislative Priorities

1. Promote County Infrastructure Priorities

2. Support the Payment in Lieu of Taxes and Secure Rural Schools Programs
3. Support Policies to Promote Mental Health, Substance Abuse Treatment and Justice Reform
4. Protect the Federal-State-Local Partnership for Medicaid

5. Work Toward a More Effective Definition of Waters of the U.S.

6. Support County Authority to Collect Existing Sales Tax
7. Support Programs that Assist Counties to Prevent and Reduce Poverty
8. Support a Comprehensive Long-Term Farm Bill Reauthorization



Water Policy Priorities and Issues | Waters of the U.S.

- The term “waters of the U.S.” is a phrase that is used in various legal contexts to designate which bodies of water (and their tributaries) fall under federal permitting/regulatory authority
- In 2014, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Army Corps of Engineers offered a proposal to modify the current “waters of the U.S.” definition in the Clean Water Act”
- The rule was finalized in 2015 and is **VERY** controversial
- Lawsuits were filed immediately after the rule was finalized

Status of the withdraw/rewrite of the 2015 Waters of the U.S. (WOTUS) rule

- 1. PHASE ZERO: Extend applicability date of the 2015 rule**
 - Finalized: February 6, 2018
 - Lawsuits filed
- 2. PHASE ONE: Repeal and reinstate previous WOTUS regulations**
 - Administration Goal: Finalize in Spring 2018 concurrently with Phase Two
- 3. PHASE TWO: Replace the 2015 WOTUS rule**
 - Administration Goal: Propose replacement rule in Spring 2018

Water Policy Priorities and Issues | [Water Resources Development Act](#)

- **The Water Resources Development Act (WRDA)** is a biannual authorization bill for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for projects and policies related to harbors, ports, inland waterways, dams, levees, environmental restoration and emergency management
- **Timeline:** Senate committee to vote on their bill by April; House expected to introduce soon after
- **Tight deadline to get the bill done by the end of the year**
- **Key issues**

Collaboration & Local Governments | Thank you!



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