The nation’s water and wastewater infrastructure is aging.

Regions need adequate resources to ensure they can meet current and future wastewater and stormwater needs. The nation’s wastewater and stormwater infrastructure is aging and much of it needs repair or replacement. According to the 2017 American Society of Civil Engineers Infrastructure Report Card, more than 56 million new users will be connected to centralized treatment systems over the next two decades, resulting in a $271 billion price tag to meet current and future demands. Additionally, the nation’s inland waterways, which received a D grade in the Report Card, are affected by the quality of stormwater infrastructure. Whether in combined sewer or separated areas, stormwater management is necessary to improve the quality of local waterways and progress towards water quality standards. Significant federal investment, distributed to the local level, would improve the functionality and resilience of our water systems.

Invest in regional water infrastructure projects.

Congress should invest in state, local, and regional government infrastructure to maintain a clean and safe supply of drinking water and properly manage wastewater. Congress should also recognize the work of the regional councils and other regional organizations that assist local governments in addressing quality and supply issues and increase the funding available for planning, technical assistance, and response to emerging water issues, including at the regional level.
Congress should support regional drinking water and wastewater development in the following ways:

Authorize and increase funding for the Clean Water State Revolving Fund to provide adequate resources for wastewater storage and treatment facilities in both urban and rural regions. Expand opportunities for intermunicipal agencies and interstate agencies to participate in CWSRF lending, including supporting pass-through arrangements like sub-state revolving funds and interstate lending.

Incentivize coordination by local governments to develop regional wastewater treatment plants and other infrastructure that serves multiple jurisdictions. Support regional efforts to coordinate above-ground transportation infrastructure improvements with underground water infrastructure improvements.

Support efforts to reduce the potential of per-and polyfluoroalkyl substance (PFAS) contamination in drinking water and provide federal funding for researching, testing, and remediation of contamination caused by PFAS substances. Encourage the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to strengthen federal regulations on PFAS by establishing drinking water standards. Provide funding to support water and wastewater treatment plant upgrades to handle emerging contaminants in source water in addition to those waste streams generated from those treatment processes.

For additional information please contact Jessica Routzahn, NARC's program manager at jessica@narc.org.