



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Arizona's Drinking Water, Waterways at Risk After Supreme Court Case Decision**

*Key Sources of Drinking Water, Flood Protection are Threatened as the Supreme Court Limits Powers of the Clean Water Act*

Maricopa (May 25, 2023) — Thousands of acres of wetlands and hundreds of miles of Arizona streams that ultimately provide clean drinking water to most Arizonans could lose critical protections after the Supreme Court decision today in the case, "*Sackett v. Environmental Protection Agency*".

As part of the ruling, 5 of the 9 Supreme Court justices agreed that the Clean Water Act only protects waters and wetlands with a continuous surface connection to Waters of the United States. With that definition, roughly half the nation's streams and wetlands and a majority of Arizona's streams and wetlands could now lose protection. For Arizonans, we must now grapple with the potential loss of protections for many of our wetlands and streams including both ephemeral and intermittent streams that flow after rain and year-round, respectively — as a result of this decision.

Those types of streams account for 79% of the total streams in Arizona that provide drinking water. The Clean Water Act is the reason that our waters cannot have toxic waste and sewage dumped into them. It is the reason that in Arizona, we have productive, healthy waterways, areas safe for fishing and swimming, and increased fish and fish-dependent populations like Arizona river otters.

"Over the past five decades, the Clean Water Act has revitalized and protected the most vulnerable waters and wetlands of Arizona and across the U.S.," said Scott Garlid, Arizona Wildlife Federation's Executive Director. "These waterways act as the kidneys of larger rivers and lakes, filtering water and safeguarding the health and safety of millions of Arizonans. Now state and local agencies must step in to ensure our drinking water supplies, flood protection, and critical habitats are secure for future generations."

*The [Arizona Wildlife Federation](https://www.azwildlife.org/) is a non-profit organization dedicated to educating, inspiring, and assisting individuals and organizations to value, conserve, enhance, manage, and protect wildlife and wildlife habitat. Follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#).*