

Drinking Water/2018 Farm Bill: American Water Works Association Recommendations



Walter Wright, Jr.
wwright@mwlaw.com
(501) 688.8839

11/15/2017

A key United States Congressional endeavor in 2018 will be the reauthorization of the Farm Bill.

The American Water Works Association (“AWWA”) noted in a November 8th news release its interest in ensuring that the Farm Bill reauthorization advances collaborations between farmers and water providers to protect source water.

AWWA cited a speech by David White (former Chief of the United States Department of Agriculture’s Natural Resources Conservation Service) before the Governor’s Conference on the Future of Water in Kansas in which he is stated to have explained:

. . . how water providers and farmers can form partnerships that are supported by NRCS and other USDA programs.

White noted:

Every year, voluntary, private land conservation programs spend about \$6 billion and make incredible advances in natural resource protection. . . The American Water Works Association is seeking to ensure that at least 10 percent of those funds – some \$600 million a year – is spent on protecting the drinking water that Americans use every day.

AWWA is requesting that Congress reauthorize the Farm Bill to:

- Provide robust funding for the conservation title;
- Emphasize protecting water to safeguard public health
- Expand opportunities for the Natural Resources Conservation Service to work with water systems to prioritize source water protection activities in each state;
- Increase benefits for farmers who employ practices that benefit downstream water quality; and
- Ensure at least 10 percent of conservation program funds, Title II in the Farm Bill, is focused on the protection of drinking water

AWWA previously quoted Allan Fortenberry, who is Chief Executive Officer of the Beaver Water District in Northwest Arkansas, as stating:

The Farm Bill currently provides the best opportunity to bring significant resources to the table to protect drinking water.

[Copies of the November 8th and October 10th AWWA news releases referencing this information can be found here.](#)

