

American Bottom Conservancy ♦ American Canoe Association ♦ American Rivers ♦ Cahaba River Society ♦ Chesapeake Bay Foundation ♦ Citizens Campaign for the Environment ♦ Clean Water Action ♦ Clean Water Network ♦ Defenders of Wildlife ♦ Delaware River Greenway Partnership ♦ Environmental Defense Fund ♦ Environment America ♦ Friends of the Earth ♦ Friends of Milwaukee's Rivers ♦ Gulf Restoration Network ♦ Kentucky Waterways Alliance ♦ Mystic River Watershed Association ♦ National Association of Clean Water Agencies ♦ Natural Resources Defense Council ♦ Northwest Environmental Advocates ♦ Oregon Environmental Council ♦ Sierra Club ♦ Smart Growth America ♦ Tennessee Clean Water Network ♦ Treasure Island Wetlands Project ♦ Trout Unlimited ♦ Waterkeeper Alliance ♦ Water Environment Federation ♦ The Wilderness Society

September 30, 2008

The Honorable James L. Oberstar
Chairman
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
2165 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John Mica
Ranking Member
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
2163 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Oberstar and Ranking Member Mica,

On behalf of our members and supporters we are writing to request that you hold a hearing on green infrastructure solutions to polluted stormwater runoff from transportation infrastructure. Roads and related infrastructure, such as parking lots, comprise two-thirds of all paved surfaces. These hard surfaces are the primary source of stormwater runoff, preventing rainfall from soaking into the ground and recharging aquifers and filtering pollutants. Roads collect pollutants from tailpipe emissions and brake linings along with other contaminants that wash into rivers and streams during storms, polluting those bodies of water.

Incorporating green infrastructure – such as infiltration swales, rain gardens, permeable pavement – into road designs can help reduce this polluted stormwater runoff, while also reducing flooding, air pollution, surface temperatures, and increasing wildlife habitat, as well as many other environmental benefits. Green infrastructure approaches are often cost-effective and their use can significantly extend the lifespan and capacity of sewers and treatment plants by reducing flows into these systems. This will become even more

critical in the face of extreme weather events and other hydrological alterations due to climate change.

As you prepare to reauthorize the Transportation bill in the 111th Congress, we urge you to hold a hearing on mitigating stormwater from roads and highways. A hearing on this topic is a critical first step to solving this important environmental problem.

Thank you for your consideration of this important issue

Sincerely,

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