



**Association of State and Interstate
Water Pollution Control Administrators**

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October 31, 2008

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**State and Interstate Water Quality Officials Call for Overhaul
of Relationship with EPA**

Washington, D.C.: Over 55 State and Interstate water pollution control organizations are calling for dramatic changes in the way the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) works with the States to implement and enforce the Federal Clean Water Act.

The Association of State and Interstate Water Pollution Control Administrators (ASIWPCA) has adopted an action plan, “A Call for Change: Water Quality Improvement in the 21st Century”, which maps out a wide range of concerns and action items, most dealing with improving the deteriorating relationship between EPA and State and Interstate water pollution control organizations.

“When Ed Muskie was working with Howard Baker and the bipartisan coalition in Congress to pass the Clean Water Act in 1971, he was very clear that ‘the States shall lead the national effort to prevent, control, and abate water pollution.’ He and his colleagues saw the EPA as supporting the States in their frontline work. That relationship, which served us well in the past to improve the nation’s water quality, has in recent years stopped working effectively,” noted Ellen Gilinsky, Water Division Director for the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality and newly elected President of ASIWPCA.

For three decades, the States, Interstates and EPA worked together in a collaborative partnership to address critical environmental issues. EPA provided assistance to States to achieve significant improvements in water quality through a combination of sound policy, regulation, and funding. But in recent years increased and unwarranted administrative program requirements, coupled with decreased Federal funding, are crippling States’ abilities to maintain and improve water quality. “States have taken 100% of the budget reductions applied to the EPA, and we have no say in how the Agency allocates its budget. That’s not a partnership that works,” commented Tom Porta, Deputy Administrator Nevada Division of Environmental Protection and ASIWPCA Vice-president.

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Under the guise of efficiency, consistency and optimization, EPA has instituted a number of new program requirements, performance measures, rules and initiatives without meaningful consideration of State and Interstate input.

ASIWPCA and the States and Interstates it represents believe a “Call for Change” is necessary to reverse this troubling trend and ensure water quality improvements that were accomplished over the past few decades remain intact. Together, as partners, the States and EPA must pursue adequate funding and restore an effective, collaborative State-EPA partnership under the following principles:

- ❖ States are Equal Partners with the EPA
- ❖ Current One Size Fits All Priorities, Solutions, and Reporting Do Not Work
- ❖ The Funding Gap between the CWA Requirements and Current Funding must be Closed
- ❖ Communication on Performance to the Administration and Congress Should be Collaborative

“We have a number of serious concerns that we want addressed in 2009, and we also have many constructive ideas and State-driven solutions to bring to the table. We look forward to many constructive conversations over the next six months to improve how we do our work,” noted Linda Eichmiller, the Association’s Executive Director.

For more information on ASIWPCA’s “Call for Change” please visit our website at www.asiwPCA.org.

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About ASIWPCA

The Association of State and Interstate Water Pollution Control Administrators (ASIWPCA) is the national, nonpartisan, professional organization of the State water quality program directors responsible for the day-to-day implementation of the Clean Water Act and other water quality related programs. Since its inception in 1961, ASIWPCA has served as a liaison between and among the States & Interstates and facilitates interaction with the Administration, Congress, other national organizations, and the private sector.