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Mr. Craig Hooks
Director
Office of Wetlands, Oceans, and
Watersheds (OWOW)
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20460

Dear Mr. Hooks:

On behalf of the Local Government Advisory Committee (LGAC), we would like to 'thank' you for the presentation on September 6, 2007, on EPA's Watershed Plan Builder led by Mr. Stuart Lehman. It was informative, and we also thank you for the opportunity to have the LGAC review and provide comments on the Watershed Plan Builder.

The LGAC strongly believes that watershed planning is a key tool for managing and sustaining environmental protection at the local level. We commend EPA's Office of Wetlands, Oceans, and Watersheds efforts to build watershed tools to promote collaborative partnerships within the watershed context. The tool serves as a valuable clearing house of watershed information which will allow small communities particularly to avail themselves of various partnership grants and other resources.

While we strongly endorse watershed planning, we believe this particular version of the Watershed Plan Builder is perhaps too comprehensive and complex for many local governments to utilize and apply effectively.

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We highly recommend that you supplement this tool with a more general brochure that identifies the importance of integrated planning targeted at communities with few or relatively modest resources so that more communities can understand the value of watershed planning. We are particularly concerned that small communities which most often need a watershed planning tool lack the necessary resources and environmental professionals to apply such a model for their tailored needs or even know where to turn for support.

This Committee strongly believes that watershed planning is the answer to solve and overcome many environmental challenges, while at the same time promoting wise use of resources, strategically and economically. The LGAC's Watershed and Coastlines workgroup (WAC) would like to offer our assistance in promoting the value of watershed planning and highlighting it to local governments. We would like to work with your office to promote the concept and use of watershed planning and look forward to a personal meeting or conference call with you to discuss on how to best achieve our common objectives.

Sincerely,



B. Roy Prescott
Chair, LGAC
Chair, LGAC



Jimmy Kemp, Chair
Watersheds and Coastlines
Workgroup

cc: Benita Best-Wong
Dov Weitman
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