To: Green, Holly[Green.Holly@epa.gov]
From: Albright, David
Sent: Thur 4/14/2016 1:35:26 PM
Subject: FW: Seeking comment on deadline re GAO report on EPA

Hi Holly,

Below is what Travis sent. And here is a link to the AP story.
http://abcnews.go.com/US/wireStory/feds-epa-fails-protect-water-oilfield-contamination-38371886

Thanks,
David

From: Loop, Travis
Sent: Wednesday, April 13, 2016 1:10 PM
To: Hull, George <Hull.George@epa.gov>; Zito, Kelly <ZITO.KELLY@EPA.GOV>; Lee, Monica <Lee.Monica@epa.gov>
Cc: Albright, David <Albright.David@epa.gov>; Keener, Bill <Keener.Bill@epa.gov>
Subject: RE: Seeking comment on deadline re GAO report on EPA

Here:

EPA appreciates GAO's review of the Underground Injection Control (UIC) Class II program. EPA has an important role in management of UIC Class II programs administered by states and regions, and acknowledges that oversight and data management are two long-term challenges. We are committed to ongoing enhancement of our activities to ensure protection of underground sources of drinking water. The agency is in the process of modernizing EPA's well-specific data collection and focusing its oversight resources on priority risks to public health. For aquifer exemptions, EPA regions hold the most current and comprehensive data, and EPA is currently centralizing selected data into a national data set that it plans to release publicly in 2016. The agency generally agrees with much of GAO's analysis and findings on the UIC Class II program and has agreed to take actions to best advance our data collection and oversight efforts. We will continue to work with GAO to most effectively apply the recommendations in their report.

Specific Recommendations

EPA agrees with GAO that having high quality data is an important part of EPA oversight activities. The agency's goal is to obtain inventory and compliance data to understand program activities at the well-specific level and we are working toward establishing a complete, regularly updated dataset. We will continue to work with our state partners to explore a variety of options to improve data collection and use existing tools in accordance with current reporting requirements. As recommended by GAO, we will also be providing guidance to improve consistency of the data reported on the form 7520-4, a key tool for tracking non-compliant injection wells.

EPA agrees that oversight is an important aspect of ensuring an effective UIC program. However, EPA does not believe that a workforce analysis is necessary to better assess the resources needed to oversee program implementation. In response to GAO's previous report, we are working to evaluate the effectiveness of our current oversight activities. We will assess, and if necessary, expand this current evaluation to include elements of inspection and enforcement.

The agency disagrees with GAO's assessment that EPA is deficient in its duties to maintain aquifer exemption records. EPA regions hold the most current and comprehensive data on aquifer exemption requests and approvals. EPA Headquarters is collecting selected data from the regions on approved aquifer exemptions throughout the nation, to develop a national data set that it plans to release publicly in 2016. We anticipate adding data for California as the region works with the state to clarify the boundaries of the agency's historic approvals and takes action on the state's requests for new exemptions.

Travis Loop

Director of Communications
Office of Water

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

202-870-6922

loop.travis@epa.gov

From: Hull, George

Sent: Wednesday, April 13, 2016 4:07 PM
To: Zito, Kelly <ZITO.KELLY@EPA.GOV>; Lee, Monica <Lee.Monica@epa.gov>; Loop, Travis <Loop.Travis@epa.gov>
Cc: Albright, David <Albright.David@epa.gov>; Keener, Bill <Keener.Bill@epa.gov>
Subject: RE: Seeking comment on deadline re GAO report on EPA

Travis,

I looked at the GAO report. The only reference I could find to a EPA statute is to the Safe Drinking Water Act. - George

From: Zito, Kelly
Sent: Wednesday, April 13, 2016 4:06 PM
To: Hull, George <Hull.George@epa.gov>; Lee, Monica <Lee.Monica@epa.gov>; Loop, Travis <Loop.Travis@epa.gov>
Cc: Albright, David <Albright.David@epa.gov>; Keener, Bill <Keener.Bill@epa.gov>
Subject: FW: Seeking comment on deadline re GAO report on EPA

Folks – AP is looking for both regional and national statement in the next 15 min…

kelly

From: Knickmeyer, Ellen [mailto:EKnickmeyer@ap.org]
Sent: Wednesday, April 13, 2016 1:00 PM
To: Zito, Kelly <ZITO.KELLY@EPA.GOV>; Keener, Bill <Keener.Bill@epa.gov>
Subject: RE: Seeking comment on deadline re GAO report on EPA

Hi, Kelly – thanks. I need comment on the March 28 GAO report that says EPA nationally is failing to do its job to enforce drinking-water laws when it comes to Class II injection wells. It cites the problems in California at length as partial evidence.

Need comment right now, like in next 15 minutes. I've been trying to reach EPA people for several hours now.

Best,

Ellen

From: Zito, Kelly [mailto:ZITO.KELLY@EPA.GOV]
Sent: Wednesday, April 13, 2016 12:56 PM
To: Knickmeyer, Ellen; Keener, Bill
Subject: RE: Seeking comment on deadline re GAO report on EPA

Hi Ellen – Thanks for the query. With a couple of people out, I can follow up on this.

What's your deadline? And I wasn't exactly sure about your first question. Can I call you?

Thanks-

Kelly

From: Knickmeyer, Ellen [mailto:EKnickmeyer@ap.org]
Sent: Wednesday, April 13, 2016 11:08 AM
To: Keener, Bill <Keener.Bill@epa.gov>
Cc: Zito, Kelly <ZITO.KELLY@EPA.GOV>
Subject: Seeking comment on deadline re GAO report on EPA

Hello,

Have called and emailed – just backstopping I'm seeking comment on deadline this morning on a GAO report critical of US EPA and California US EPA in particular regarding oversight of Class II injection wells.

Also would like to know if the Region 9 director's departure this week related to the report.

Thanks,

Ellen