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Contact Congress to Reform the Renewable Fuel Standard: In an email we received from BOATING UNITED, a Take Action notice was sent out by the National Boating Federation to all our members nationwide. As there are 12 million boats in the US, we are well aware of the damage E15 Ethanol causes in marine engines that the notice cited.

A deal is being pushed in the Senate that would overturn a rule on **methane emissions in exchange for the ability to push more E15 into your gas pumps nationwide.** This backroom deal by pro-corn Senators, would put millions of boaters at risk. We know that E15 is destructive to marine engines and the 97% of boaters that fill up at gas stations. With more E15 in the fuel supply, the risk of misfueling your marine equipment increases and the ability to find ethanol free fuel will diminish. **Politicians should not be gambling** on recreational boating and putting more consumers at risk.

We have received many acknowledgements from our Congressmen that they received our submissions.

Congress Agrees on Spending Package: Congress has agreed to a spending bill, which will fund the Government through the rest of FY 17, which ends September 30. Unlike President Trump's previous budget submission which increased Defense and made significant cuts to non-Defense Government agencies, the bill (H.R. 244) now leaves largely intact funding for Government agencies that Trump wanted to cut. The FY17 budget for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is \$8.06 billion which is a 1% reduction, not 31%; the Department of the Interior's budget will be \$1.3 billion, an increase of \$42 million and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is budgeted for \$5.99 billion, a \$535 million increase from FY16.

The U.S. Government Agencies mentioned above and their increased budgets, will affect a major portion of the waterways in the U.S. Most significant is the EPA, which provides funding for the Chesapeake Bay Restoration, Puget Sound Restoration, Great Lakes Restoration and invasive species and emission levels and standards. Also those with an impact on boating are the Department of the Interior, which is funded at \$1.3 billion, an increase of \$42 million, the National Park Service, which is funded at \$2.9 billion, an \$81 million increase and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service which has an \$11 million increase.

This is indeed good news for the entire boating community, since President Trump's earlier Budget Blueprint submission would have had a major negative effect on boating. Our thanks to the members of Congress who passed H.R. 244 and hopefully it will be signed by the President.

Trump Asking States to Help Re-Write Clean Water Act: As reported in THE HILL, the Trump administration is reaching out to state governors for help in rewriting former Past President Barack

Obama's controversial water pollution rule. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) head Scott Pruitt, along with acting Assistant Secretary for the Army Douglas Lamont, sent a letter to governors asking for their "input and wisdom" on what bodies of water should be regulated by the Federal Government in the Clean Water Act. The letter went to the governors of each state and U.S. territory.

Following an executive order President Trump signed in February, the EPA and the Army Corps of Engineers are working on a two-step process to rewrite the Obama regulation known as the Clean Water Rule, which asserted Federal power over small bodies of water such as wetlands and stream headwaters. The agencies are first formally repealing that rule, and will then write a new version with a smaller reach to define the jurisdiction of the Federal Clean Water Act.

The Trump administration officials said they are prioritizing the role of states throughout the process, something they have accused Obama of not emphasizing. Thirty-one states, mostly led by Republicans, sued the Obama administration to stop the 2015 rule, joining with business and industry groups.

"EPA is restoring states' important role in the regulation of water," Pruitt said in a statement. "Like President Trump, I believe that we need to work with our state governments to understand what they think is the best way to protect their waters, and what actions they are already taking to do so. We want to return to a regulatory partnership, rather than regulate by executive fiat." "We believe this is an important step in the process prior to proposing regulations that may have implications on federalism," Pruitt and Lamont wrote.

The February executive order asks the agencies to write their new rule in the framework laid out by the late Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia in *Rapanos v. United States*, and Pruitt and Lamont told the states they are carrying out that mission. Scalia said in a 2006 plurality opinion that the Clean Water Act should only cover waterways that are "relatively permanent." Scalia's opinion was only joined by four justices, and subsequent Federal court decisions have not relied on that test. So the Obama administration instead followed a separate concurrence by Justice Anthony Kennedy, who concluded that waters with a "significant nexus" to navigable waterways should be covered.

The EPA started the outreach process to states last month in a meeting with state and local environmental regulators, during which EPA officials discussed possible approaches to the new rule under Trump's executive order. The administration plans to eventually propose a formal regulation to enforce its new definition, at which point it will invite public comments, making any necessary changes and then make the rule final.

A Federal Appeals Court put a hold on the Obama rule in 2015, blocking its enforcement before it could take effect.

Isobutanol Cleared for Marine Use in Maryland: As reported in *Chesapeake Bay Magazine*, due to the efforts of the Marine Trades Association of Maryland (MTAM) and Executive Director Susan Zellers, Marylanders may finally have a feasible and better alternative to ethanol in our boat fuel tanks.

Ethel alcohol (ethanol), which is used as a biofuel additive to gasoline, is the same alcohol found in alcohol beverages. Many boaters who have had unpleasant and costly experiences with the blend would agree that we should have left that combustible in our drinks. Issues with engine failure, fuel line deterioration and useless water-soaked E-10 fuel on board have been persistent.

After extensive testing by the National Marine Manufacturers Assoc. in collaboration with the Department of Energy and the Argonne National Laboratory, isobutanol-blended fuel (i12.5) presents a solution to the problems. Higher-chain alcohols such as this are not as volatile or corrosive as ethanol, and they do not absorb – the three main complaints about ethanol-blended fuel (E-10).

A list of **Isobutanol Advantages**

- + Ethanol-free
- + No phase separation
- + No water solubility issues
- + 30% higher energy content than ethanol
- + High octane
- + Reduced emissions
- + Made from renewable resources

Now it's a matter of switching over, which will take some time as marine fuel distributors and outlets develop the supply chain. And there is the question of price, which is unknown at the moment and will certainly fluctuate with supply and demand. The first operational outlet is expected to be on 29 September, Memorial Day, at the Annapolis Harbour Yacht Basin.

Interested marine fuel venders with questions should contact Greg Roda, groda@gevo.com, at Biofuel Producer Gevo.