

For Immediate Release

January 19, 2006

CONTACT:

Jennifer Mueller – (202) 797-6553

jmueller@fwwatch.org

Jessica Roach – (202) 797-6565

jroach@fwwatch.org

Congress Must Invest in America's Water to Keep it Clean and Safe

Statement of Food & Water Watch Executive Director Wenonah Hauter

Rather than engage in a politically charged debate every year about funding for water pipes and treatment plants around the country, Congress should protect America's water by establishing a trust fund that provides a designated revenue stream.

The United States has a growing population and aging water system. And yet, the Clean Water State Revolving Fund, the primary source of federal funds for wastewater projects, has actually decreased from \$1.35 billion in 2004 to less than \$700 million proposed for 2007. Congress must approve a dramatic increase in this critical funding.

Congress must also recognize that an annual political battle over funding for something as basic as water makes no sense. National priorities that transcend state and local boundaries should receive perpetual funding streams, immune from shifting political currents.

The National Botanic Garden has a trust fund to protect the Texas Prickly Pear and the Butterfly Weed. There is a South Dakota Terrestrial Wildlife Habitat Restoration Trust Fund. And there are trust funds for highways, airports and social security.

Water is a public responsibility. It's time for a trust fund that protects our water and keeps it clean and safe.

###

Food & Water Watch is a nonprofit consumer rights organization that challenges the corporate control and abuse of our food and water resources. Visit

www.foodandwaterwatch.org