



# washington dc update

## EPA Administrator Declares LA River to Be Navigable

July 8, 2010

Yesterday, USEPA Administrator Lisa Jackson declared the Los Angeles River navigable. By doing so, she extended Clean Water Act protections not only to the River, but to the entire 834 square mile watershed.....otherwise known as “Los Angeles.”

Now anybody who has ever watched Hollywood movies is aware of what the Los Angeles “River” looks like. It is a lined concrete ditch which is usually empty but which during storm events can briefly become a raging torrent.

We have attached the EPA press release for Administrator Jackson’s announcement yesterday as well as the headline from today’s LA Times. Rather than report further we suggest that you pause and ask yourself a few questions concerning this announcement:

- Do you consider the LA “River” to be navigable in terms of the Clean Water Act?
- If you do, then how might this affect future Federal designations of “navigable” waters in your agency?
- Is this an example of the Executive Branch of government taking preemptive action in response to the legislative process being broken?
- With key legislation on navigable waters being bottled up in Congress, will we see more of the kind of announcements that we did yesterday in Los Angeles?

Food for thought.

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