short duration after rainfall. Federal regulations have never defined ditches and other upland drainage features as waters of the United States. But this proposed rule does, and it will have a huge impact on farmers, ranchers and small businesses that need to put a shovel in the ground to make a living.

Dennis knows what the true impact of this rule will be to rural communities. He is a fourth-generation rancher from Central, WY. Mr. Sun stated in his column that ''according to the EPA, the proposed definition of waters of the U.S. would increase predictability and consistency for CWA programs, and as a lot of folks see it—that's right—we know we would go out of business instead of just maybe.'''

Dennis goes on to say that ''our government has run amuck, and we shouldn't like it. . .'' He is right. This proposed rule by the administration is circumventing Congress by effectively writing navigable out of the Clean Water Act, thus allowing the EPA and Army Corps of Engineers to seize all wet areas of the States. Just as troubling as ignoring congressional intent, the proposed rule disregards the fundamental tenet embodied in two landmark cases decided by the U.S. Supreme Court that there are limits to Federal jurisdiction.

This unprecedented exercise of power will allow Environmental Protection Agency to trump States' rights and wipe out the authority of State and local governments to make local land and water use decisions. This is particularly troubling when we have seen no evidence that the States are misusing or otherwise failing to meet their responsibilities.

The uncertainty this rule creates only delays economic investment and job creation. It defies logic to think this proposed rule will benefit anybody but bureaucrats in Washington who are far removed from the communities between the coasts.

Mr. President, I urge my colleagues to stand with ranchers like Dennis Sun. Stand with those who understand the land best and not with extremists outside and within this administration who do not know how to run a farm, a ranch, or a small business.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Wyoming Livestock Roundup, June 21, 2014]

MUDDYING THE WATERS

(By Dennis Sun)

As we all realized on April 21, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers posted their proposed definition for ''waters of the U.S.'' protected under the Clean Water Act (CWA) in the Federal Register, and that triggered a 90-day public comment period.

EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy said during a Senate Appropriations Subcommittee hearing that current exemptions for the CWA permitting for normal farming, ranching and agricultural practices are kept intact in the proposal.

She added, ''If a farmer was not legally required to have a permit before, this rule does not change that status. The proposal does not add or expand the scope of waters protected under the CWA.''

Well, after those words, the fight was on by those in the farming and ranching industry, along with local governments and the nation's business community. According to the EPA, the proposed definition of waters of the U.S. would increase predictability and consistency for CWA programs, and as a lot of folks see it—that's right—we know we would go out of business instead of just ''maybe.''

At the same time, 231 U.S. Representatives sent a letter to the EPA and Corp of Engineers asking them to back off this proposed rule to expand federal control under the CWA. They said the proposed rule would redefine waters of the U.S. under the CWA based on a narrow opinion by Justice Anthony Kennedy in a 2006 Supreme Court decision that said an isolated water, like a stock pond or a ditch, doesn't have to have a surface water connection to a downstream navigable water to be considered a ''waters of the United States.''

Justice Antonin Scalia wrote the plurality opinion on the case, and his opinion differed from Kennedy's by saying that waters of the U.S. include only those relatively permanent, standing or continuously flowing bodies of water like streams, rivers and lakes. Justice Scalia specifically noted that waters of the U.S. do not include channels that only hold water periodically and are only wetlands with a continuous surface connection to bodies of water that are waters of the U.S.

The EPA and Corps chose to base the final rule on the Kennedy opinion. That was a concern that the Congressmen raised in their letter, which read, ''Contrary to your agencies' claims this would directly contract prior U.S. Supreme Court decisions which imposed limits on the extent of federal CWA authority. Based on legally and scientifically unsound view of the significant nexus concept espoused by Justice Kennedy, the rule would place features such as ditches, ephemeral drainages, ponds, natural and manmade, seeps, prairie potholes, flood plains and other occasionally or seasonally wet areas under federal control.''

There lies the fight. Congressman Chris Collins (R–N.Y.) said, ''Enough is enough with regard to federal overreach on U.S. farms and ranches. When the bureaucrats at the EPA decide to call a divot in the ground that fills with rain a navigable waterway under the CWA, we know that our federal government has run amuck.''

Well, our government has run amuck, and we shouldn't like it—that is all the reason to get your comments in before the Oct. 20 deadline. This deadline extension gives us a valuable opportunity so take advantage of it. If you're wondering just how to submit your comments, read more in this week's Roundup.

MEDICARE'S 49TH BIRTHDAY

Mr. NELSON. Madam President, this week Medicare is turning 49 years old. Since July 1965, Medicare has provided critical access to health care benefits for older Americans and people with disabilities. Florida alone is home to over 3.5 million Medicare beneficiaries.

Medicare has become a landmark program based on its popularity among beneficiaries and the comprehensive benefits offered. In 1959, almost 4 out of 10 Americans over age 65 were living below the poverty line, as compared with about 1 in 10 seniors living in poverty in 2000. Prior to Medicare, seniors paid almost half of the cost of their health; in 1997, seniors paid only 18 percent of their health care costs. Medicare pulled millions of Americans out of poverty by not only providing them with important health benefits, but also by enabling seniors to use their hard-earned retirement savings for needs other than their health care.

As chairman of the Senate Aging Committee, I understand that Medicare is essential to the Nation, particularly as the baby boom generation enters retirement. Those served by Medicare often have modest incomes and complex health conditions that depend on these lifesaving benefits. As a committee, we have looked at Medicare's prescription drug benefit, researched ways to eradicate fraud and waste in the program, and ensured that seniors have access to quality, affordable care. In fact, just yesterday, the committee convened a hearing about how to improve Medicare beneficiaries' access to skilled nursing care.

The Affordable Care Act has helped to reduce costs, increase benefits, and improve health care delivery for Medicare beneficiaries. Earlier this year, Derrick in Tampa wrote to me about how much the ACA has meant to his family in providing care for his mother. His mother was the victim of gun violence and will need extensive medical care for the rest of her life. So Derrick wrote that when Congress passed the ACA, ''I was excited for my mother and the many others'' who will benefit from the improvements in providing health care to America's seniors. For example, thanks to a provision I fought for in the ACA, Floridians have saved more than $756 million on their prescription drugs.

While we can still make improvements, the Medicare trustees report, released earlier this week, reported that the Medicare hospital insurance trust fund solvency has been extended by 4 additional years from last year's estimate and 13 years longer than it was prior to the passage of the Affordable Care Act. Today, Medicare is more solvent than it was in 1965.

It is our job, in Congress, to ensure that Medicare is available for all Americans when they need it and, as was the case for Derrick's mother, when they are impacted by ''circumstances not of their own doing.'' Though the new projections are encouraging, we must continue to work to preserve Medicare for generations to come.

WAINWRIGHT DEW LINE LAND ACQUISITION ACT

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Madam President, I have introduced legislation to authorize the Federal Government to dispose of a piece of property on Alaska's North Slope that it no longer needs or wants but is of great importance to the Inupiat residents of the North Slope.

Specifically, I am introducing a companion bill to legislation that has also

been introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives by my friend and fellow Alaskan, Congressman DON YOUNG. This legislation would enable the Olgoonik Native Village Corp. of Wainwright, AK to purchase at fair market value the 1,518-acre Wainwright Short Range Radar Site, SRRS, located in northern Alaska.

Originally deployed as the location for a Distant Early-Warning, DEW, Line radar station in northern Alaska, President Harry Truman withdrew the site for use as a military radar station during the Cold War in 1952. That station expanded in 1957 to enable the Air Force to track aircraft or rockets entering U.S. air space from the polar region. The station at Wainwright actually had a rather short lifespan, as its radars were replaced by more powerful systems in other locations starting in 1963.

In the years since then, the buildings and a fuel tank farm near an airstrip at the site—located several miles southeast of the village of Wainwright on Wainwright Inlet—have been abandoned by the U.S. Air Force. In 1974, the site was given to the Federal Bureau of Land Management, BLM, to manage. In 1976, the lands, then located in the Naval Petroleum Reserve No. 4, were formally transferred from the Air Force to Department of the Interior's control when the area was renamed as part of the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska. While the site over the years was used by the National Weather Service as a short range radar site, the land is no longer in Federal use and has undergone environmental cleanup and restoration efforts. Those efforts began in 1998 and were completed in August 2013, with final testing and removal of contaminated soils expected to be finished by the end of summer 2014.

Management of the lands around the site has changed significantly with time. With passage of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act in 1971, the Wainwright Native Village Corporation, Olgoonik, received title to the surface estate of about 175,000 acres surrounding the village. The subsurface of the lands were owned by the Arctic Slope Regional Corp., ASRC, part of the nearly 5 million acres that ASRC received from the lands claims settlement for the benefit of its nearly 8,000 Native shareholders who live in Arctic Alaska.

Olgoonik Corp., which has a variety of subcompanies, won the Air Force contract through its Specialty Contractors subsidiary, to demolish, clean up, and remediate the DEW Line site. Its development corporation has also acquired a lease on 27.5 acres of the site to allow its use for economic activities of benefit to the villagers. The company is now seeking to pay fair market value to buy the entire site, which would allow use of the existing fuel tank farm near the site's 6,000-foot runway. The site could well be used in the future to support activities in the Arctic Ocean, a northern port becoming an issue of great interest in Alaska given the reduction in the Arctic ice pack and concerns about greater maritime transit of the Northwest Passage.

Normally, legislation would not be needed to permit the sale of a surplus tract because BLM could use its existing authority to surplus the site and dispose of it. However, in passage of the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska Act, NPR–A, in 1976 Congress included a provision that does not permit the BLM to dispose of property inside the NPR–A without congressional approval. Thus, legislation in this case is needed simply to permit disposition of the surplus tract.

Under my legislation, Olgoonik will be allowed to purchase the site but only after the corporation pays for a required land survey and pays for an appraisal, based on fair market value for the property. I should add that this legislation is only being introduced after talks among the village and regional Native corporations, the city of Wainwright, and the Wainwright Traditional—tribal—Council resulted in signed resolutions of support for Olgoonik's acquisition of the site. All Native entities supported the legislation during a formal BLM tribal consultation effort that occurred on June 23, 2014, reaffirming a November 2013 resolution that supported the legislation and land sale/purchase. All parties agreed to support the land acquisition after careful consideration of the environmental issues involved with future management of the tract.

Clearly, the legislation is best for the BLM as it will relieve the agency of the cumbersome effort to manage the isolated parcel, which is located far away from other BLM land holdings inside NPR–A. It is best for the environment as the agreement among the corporation, city, and tribe will guarantee that no activities occur on the land that are not acceptable to village residents—the land's need for subsistence hunting being best protected by ownership by the Native Corporation. And the land sale will be best for the citizens of Wainwright and the entire North Slope as it will guarantee that any development activities will be controlled by residents of the village and not outside interests.

This is the best outcome for all concerned, and I hope this legislation will be given swift consideration and passage by Congress.

VIETNAM WAR COMMEMORATIVE PARTNER PROGRAM

Mr. TOOMEY. Madam President, it is a privilege to be a part of the national commemoration that will honor the service of our Vietnam veterans and their families.

During this conflict, nearly 350,000 Pennsylvanians served their Nation. Of that number, 3,149 paid the ultimate sacrifice, giving their lives for the United States of America.

I deeply appreciate the Commonwealth's participation in The Vietnam War Commemorative Partner Program that thanks our Vietnam veterans for their service. Although no commemoration can fully honor the profound sacrifice of those who served in Vietnam, I strongly believe we should use the war's 50th anniversary as an opportunity to further honor those who saw our Nation through one of its most troubling conflicts and ensure that their legacy is not forgotten.

A grateful nation thanks the veterans of this war, some never to return to the families they left behind. We should all hope to live our lives in a manner that befits their service and sacrifice.

WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT

Mr. SCOTT. Madam President, I am pleased the President signed the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, WIOA, into law last week to improve job training in the United States. WIOA is the result of a commitment in both parties and both Chambers to modernize our workforce development system to ensure American competitiveness. The last time a Workforce Investment Act reauthorization was signed into law was in 1998, far too long ago, and the significant skills gap we face as a nation is evidence that our fragmented system simply is not working.

Despite the billions of taxpayer dollars we invest annually on Federal job training programs, there are 4.5 million unfilled jobs and a staggering 10 million unemployed Americans. We need to bridge this gap, and WIOA helps get us there by reducing bureaucracy and providing American workers with a more flexible and effective workforce training system. Over the past year, I have heard from businesses, elected State and local leaders, and families back home about the critical need for reforms to our job training system, and I am glad to have had the chance to work on this bill and be a part of this process in the Senate.

This legislation incorporates many reforms contained in the SKILLS Act, which I introduced in the Senate earlier this year, including the elimination of 15 programs identified as duplicative or ineffective and countless Federal mandates on States and local boards. In addition, WIOA establishes common performance metrics and requires independent evaluations every 4 years of all workforce programs to ensure effectiveness and accountability to taxpayers. By reducing bureaucracy and enhancing flexibility, WIOA eliminates delays that hinder job seekers from immediately accessing job training services and reentering the workforce.

I thank Senators ALEXANDER, HARKIN, ISAKSON, and MURRAY and Representative FOXX for their leadership on this issue and am pleased to see this