Dear Mr. Doyle, Mr. Manning, and Mr. Carwile: the National Rural Water Association members (over 27,000 small and rural community water and wastewater supplies) are eager to collaborate with the agency on timely outreach/response to rural and small communities after disasters – and enhance rural and small community water supply resiliency.

The vast majority of U.S. water supplies are small, 94% or 47,495 of the 51,651 community water systems serve a population less than 10,000 people. Approximately 13,000 of the 16,255 public sewer systems serve less than 10,000 persons. As you know, DHS has declared that drinking water and wastewater supplies are critical infrastructure covered under their national priority initiatives/directives.

State rural water associations continue to be the primary first responders to natural disasters for rural and small communities with emergency water needs. In addition, they are the main source of assistance for compliance/education for security rules, polices, and initiatives. This was the case in recent storms in the southern and midwest states (as reflected in the attached USDA statement on rural community response). We are also interested in enhancing the protection of the technology used in managing these water supplies (cyber-security).

Thank you for your consideration and we look forward to collaborating with the agency to accomplish your objectives.