

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 14, 2024

The Honorable Michael S. Regan
Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Office of the Administrator – 1101A
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Administrator Regan,

We write to you regarding the Sole Source Aquifer Review (SSAR) on the proposed multi-purpose machine gun range (MPMGR) at Camp Edwards on Joint Base Cape Cod (JBCC). We commend EPA Region 1 for the decision to conduct the SSAR and for the draft determination released in April 2023.¹ Even as the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) continues its work toward a final determination in the coming months, we respectfully request that the EPA provide us with an update on the SSAR.

Cape Cod's sole source aquifer (SSA) provides 100 percent of the region's drinking water, serving fifteen municipalities in Barnstable County, more than 210,000 year-round residents, and a summer population that swells with seasonal residents, tourists, and workers.² Cape Codders access SSA drinking water from both public water systems and thousands of private wells dispersed across the region.³ Regrettably, following decades of contamination from military and other activities, the SSA's water quality in the Upper Cape region is degraded and has required extensive and ongoing remediation efforts, including through JBCC's Installation Restoration Program.⁴

Knowing the critical importance of the aquifer and its historical pollution from various JBCC activities, Cape Cod residents, elected officials, and other stakeholders have expressed significant concerns to the delegation about the potential public health impacts from the installation of the proposed MPMGR. Because the EPA's efforts to protect the aquifer's water

¹ Press Release, Environmental Protection Agency, EPA Proposes Draft Determination to Protect Cape Cod's Sole Source of Drinking Water; Seeks Public Input on Groundwater Impacts from Proposed Machine Gun Range Project (Apr. 27, 2023), <https://www.epa.gov/newsreleases/epa-proposes-draft-determination-protect-cape-cods-sole-source-drinking-water-seeks>.

² Cape Cod's Sole Source Aquifer, Cape Cod Commission, <https://www.capecodcommission.org/our-work/sole-source-aquifer/> (last visited Mar. 12, 2024).

³ Cape Cod Aquifer, Cape Cod, Massachusetts, United States Geological Survey, <https://www.usgs.gov/publications/cape-cod-aquifer-cape-cod-massachusetts#:~:text=Private%20wells%20on%20Cape%20Cod,unconfined%20or%20water%2Dtable%20conditions> (last visited Mar. 12, 2024).


⁴ 2021 Groundwater Plume Maps and Information Included, Installation Restoration Program at Joint Base Cape Cod, <https://www.massnationalguard.org/JBCC/afcec-documents/FINAL%20PLUME%20BOOKLET%20High%20Quality%201SEP21-1.pdf> (last visited Mar. 12, 2024).


quality are of paramount importance for the region's environmental and public health, we urge the EPA to remain steadfast in carefully and methodically conducting the SSAR, with a timeline driven solely by scientific considerations.

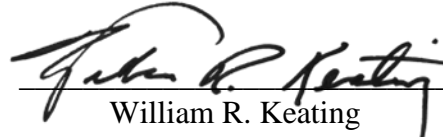
Again, we deeply appreciate the EPA's decision to conduct the SSAR in order to protect the Cape's drinking water for future generations and to determine the potential contamination and any public health hazards associated with the proposed MPMGR. In the EPA's response to our request for an update on the ongoing SSAR, we respectfully request that you include any information that the EPA can share about the draft determination released in April 2023, the public process that followed, and any requests by the Department of Defense or Army National Guard to expedite the review. Please provide us as much detail as possible on the status of this review.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and for your ongoing commitment to sound science and environmental protection.

Sincerely,


Edward J. Markey
United States Senator


Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator


William R. Keating
Member of Congress