THE CLEAN WATER ACT (CWA)
The cornerstone of water quality protection in the U.S.

The CWA employs **regulatory & nonregulatory** tools
- to restore & maintain the chemical, physical, & biological integrity of the nation’s waters
- to support protection & propagation of fish, shellfish, wildlife & recreation in & on the water

CWA regulatory & nonregulatory tools are used to:
- reduce direct pollutant discharges to waterways
- finance municipal wastewater treatment facilities
- manage polluted runoff

### SOME CWA REGULATORY TOOLS:

(CWA§402) NATIONAL POLLUTION DISCHARGE ELIMINATION SYSTEM (NPDES) PERMIT PROGRAM
- **Regulates point source** discharges of pollutants into waters of the U.S. via an NPDES permit
- NPDES permits set discharge limits, monitoring & reporting requirements, & special conditions

**Some Point Source Discharges**
- **Pipe discharging treated wastewater**
- **Construction site**
- **Illegal disposal to a storm drain**

- **Point Source**: Any discernible, confined, & discrete conveyance from which pollutants are/may be discharged (any pipe, ditch, channel, tunnel, conduit, well, discrete fissure, container, rolling stock, concentrated animal feeding operation (CAFO), landfill leachate collection system, vessel or floating craft). Excludes return flows from irrigated agriculture or agricultural stormwater runoff.

- **Pollutant**: Dredged spoil, solid waste, incinerator residue, filter backwash, sewage, garbage, sewage sludge, munitions, chemical wastes, biological materials, certain radioactive materials, heat, wrecked or discarded equipment, rock, sand, cellar dirt, and industrial, municipal, and agricultural waste discharged into water.

### SOME CWA NONREGULATORY TOOLS

**that provide assistance** to establish & implement programs:
- (CWA §106) **water pollution control**
  - Monitoring, analysis & reporting of data, pollution control activities, training & outreach
- (CWA §319) **Nonpoint Source (NPS)** control
  - Identifying NPS pollution problems, implementing & evaluating measures that reduce/eliminate NPS pollution, training & outreach

* “Nonpoint Source (NPS) Pollution”: comes from diffuse sources and is caused by rainfall, snowmelt, or irrigation that runs over land or through the ground, picks up pollutants, and deposits them into rivers, lakes, oceans, or groundwater.