



Catherine McCabe, Acting Administrator
Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Ave NW, Washington, DC 20004

26 January 2017

Acting Administrator Catherine McCabe:

On behalf of the American Geophysical Union (AGU), whose mission is to promote discovery in Earth and space science for the benefit of humanity, and its 60,000 Earth and space scientist members, I'm writing to express concern about federal agency directives to cease communications with the public. We have seen reports in the media and heard from AGU members.

We are concerned that such directives flout principles of sound scientific integrity, which includes transparency, and may even violate your agency's scientific integrity policy. Perhaps more importantly, science plays a critical role in advancing national security, a strong economy, public health, and food security, and as such, scientists must be allowed to share their work directly and openly with the public.

Science that is communicated to the public improves and informs myriad aspects of everyday life. Earthquake hazard mapping and information protects 79 million people in 39 states. Hurricane forecasting, tracking, and landfall prediction provides advance warning to communities to allow them to take preventive action. And the U.S. agriculture industry sees \$460 million in annual savings from accurate El Niño and La Niña forecasting alone. Scientific data has also provided our military with maps that have been vital to the missions in Iraq and Afghanistan.

These types of scientific information and more need to be publicly available to help farmers, industry, health workers, and the general public.

We urge you to reverse the restrictions as quickly as possible and to not reinstate them in the future. Anything less would have a long-term and chilling effect on the scientific enterprise. We look forward to seeing the restrictions lifted soon so that critical, up-to-date scientific information remains readily available to the public. We stand ready to assist you as you assume responsibility for EPA and would welcome an opportunity to meet at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Christine W. McEntee". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Christine W. McEntee
CEO/Executive Director
American Geophysical Union

CC: Mike Flynn