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Sarah Rispin, Potomac Riverkeeper: 202-556-2930, sarah@potomacrriverkeeper.org
Peter Cleary, Waterkeeper Alliance: 212-737-0622, ext. 154, pcleary@waterkeeper.org
Angie Rosser, West Virginia Rivers Coalition: 304-637-7201, arosser@wvrivers.org

STATEMENT OF POTOMAC RIVERKEEPER, INC., WEST VIRGINIA RIVERS COALITION and WATERKEEPER ALLIANCE ON DISMISSAL OF APPEAL IN ALT V. EPA

In light of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) decision to withdraw its appeal of the West Virginia district court decision in the case of Alt v. EPA, Environmental Intervenors, Potomac Riverkeeper, Inc., Food & Water Watch, West Virginia Rivers Coalition, Waterkeeper Alliance, and Center for Food Safety, have today asked the court to dismiss their appeal. Environmental Intervenors, who were represented in the case by Earthjustice, the Columbia Environmental Law Clinic, and the Center for Food Safety, are deeply disappointed in the EPA’s decision to drop its appeal of a ruling that misapplied Clean Water Act permitting requirements for a confined poultry growing facility. In the suit, the facility admitted it discharges pollutants into a tributary to the Potomac River.

Environmental Intervenors urge EPA to step up enforcement of the Clean Water Act by ensuring that large confined animal feeding operations (CAFOs) obtain permits to control discharges of animal waste. Although CAFOs remain one of the largest unaddressed sources of pollution in the United States, EPA reported in 2013 that only 36 percent of the largest identified CAFOs have obtained Clean Water Act permits. Unregulated animal waste discharges from CAFOs are substantial contributors to water quality problems, including harmful algae blooms and dead zones, in the Potomac River and Chesapeake Bay watersheds.

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