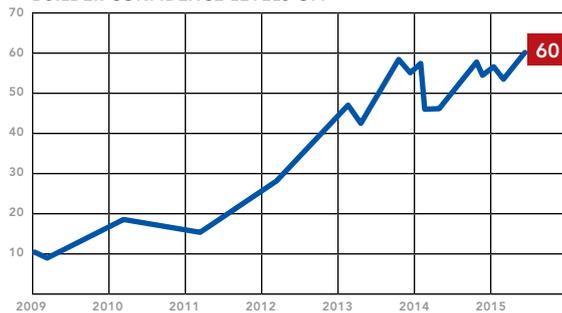
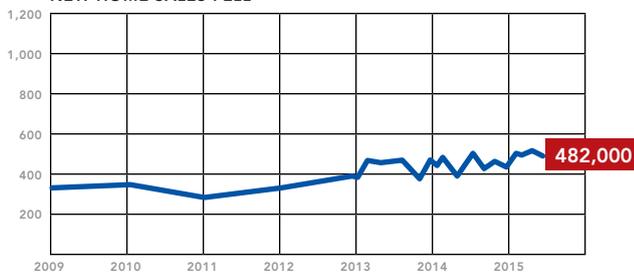


HOUSING MARKET SNAPSHOT

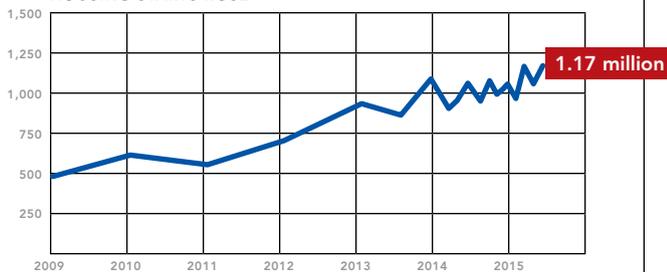
BUILDER CONFIDENCE LEVELS OFF



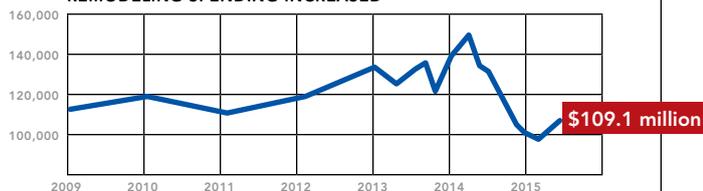
NEW-HOME SALES FELL



HOUSING STARTS ROSE



REMODELING SPENDING INCREASED



According to the NAHB/Wells Fargo Housing Index, builder confidence was steady in July, remaining at 60. June new-home sales dropped 6.8 percent from May to an annual rate of 482,000 homes while new-home starts increased 9.8 percent during the same period to an annual rate of 1.17 million. Remodeling spending in May edged up 0.7 percent to \$109.1 million.

NAHB: EPA'S REGULATION A 'FEDERAL LAND GRAB'

The NAHB is calling on the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to immediately withdraw final regulations that would dramatically expand the definition of "waters of the United States" under the Clean Water Act.

This call is based on new evidence that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers believes shows the EPA used flawed technical and scientific analysis in crafting the regulation. Feeling that the rule was indefensible, the Corps demanded that it be distanced from the rule.

"It is bad enough that EPA would push through new regulations that would put millions of additional acres of private land under federal control, needlessly raise housing costs, and add more regulatory burdens to small businesses," NAHB Chairman Tom Woods said. "But it is absolutely scandalous that EPA disregarded the objections of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, which expressed strong concerns that the rule was arbitrarily written, legally indefensible, and would be extremely difficult to implement. We call on EPA to act immediately to withdraw this rule and put an end to this federal land grab."

Newly released documents reveal that senior Corps officials concluded that the water rule contains serious flaws, contradicts long-standing Clean Water Act legal principles, and greatly differs from the proposed rule provided for public comment.

Moreover, the EPA failed to consult with state and local governments, confer with business stakeholders, comply with the requirements of the Regulatory Flexibility Act, or produce an accurate cost-benefit analysis—all steps that are required by law.

With the rule set to take effect on Aug. 28, Woods added that it will not only exacerbate regulatory uncertainty but will also impede the housing recovery and economic growth by vastly extending the areas in which home builders and other landowners are required to obtain wetlands permits.

"Even before it was known that the Corps so strongly disagreed with the final water rule, 34 states had formally requested that the rule be withdrawn and 31 state attorneys general had filed suit calling for the rule to be rescinded," Woods said. "EPA must act in the best interests of the American public and terminate this rule before it can take effect." **PB**

ABOUT NAHB: THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF HOME BUILDERS IS A WASHINGTON, D.C.-BASED TRADE ASSOCIATION REPRESENTING MORE THAN 140,000 MEMBERS INVOLVED IN REMODELING, HOME BUILDING, MULTIFAMILY CONSTRUCTION, PROPERTY MANAGEMENT, SUBCONTRACTING, DESIGN, HOUSING FINANCE, BUILDING PRODUCT MANUFACTURING, AND OTHER ASPECTS OF RESIDENTIAL AND LIGHT COMMERCIAL CONSTRUCTION. FOR MORE, VISIT NAHB.ORG.