

Please Note: Our New Fax Number is 717-772-5748

April 26, 2000

«Addressee»

Dear «Salutation»:

While water is one of Pennsylvania's most abundant and valuable resources, we do little to manage our use of it. Pennsylvania currently has no comprehensive water management system. We do not have a solid understanding of the amount of water available, the amount needed to support human and aquatic health, or the amount and location of water available for future uses.

In addition, the entire Commonwealth currently remains in a "drought watch," never having fully recovered from the drought conditions of the last two years. The projected drought across the southern United States and much of the mid-west (affecting states as close as Ohio) can only worsen the situation.

As we enter the new millennium, Pennsylvania is not in a position to effectively manage future development of water resources. As a result, growth and development in the state are and will continue to occur with little regard for water resource availability or impacts.

To redress this shortcoming, the Citizens Advisory Council¹ to the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection has issued a statement calling for Pennsylvania to adopt a comprehensive and integrated system of water resource management. This report is enclosed for your review and information.

Without an integrated approach, severe shortages and over-use may render water resources incapable of meeting essential needs, cause conflicts among users, disrupt or damage economic activities, destroy aquatic organisms and contribute to environmental degradation, pollution and unsanitary conditions. All of these are detrimental to the health, safety and welfare of Pennsylvanians and to Pennsylvania's economy.

¹ The Council is a legislatively created advisory committee charged with reviewing all environmental issues, legislation, regulations, policies and programs relating to Pennsylvania. Council members are appointed volunteers who serve staggered 3-year terms. Council provides its advice to the Department, the General Assembly, the Governor and the Commonwealth's citizens.

Council's water committee has been studying this issue for nearly a year, meeting with various interest groups, affected parties, and experts. The Council reviewed relevant materials from other jurisdictions and organizations before reaching its conclusions. The Council's position builds on the recommendations made by the Governor's 21st Century Environment Commission.

The Council asks that you consider our findings and recommendations in your deliberations over this critical issue. Please call me at 717-234-5550, or Sue Wilson, Council's Executive Director at 717-787-4527 if you have any questions or if we can provide further assistance.

Sincerely,

Jolene E. Chinchilli
Chairperson

Enclosure