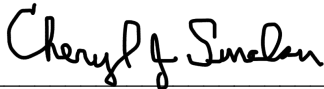


## RESPONSE JUSTIFICATION DOCUMENT

North Centre Township PFAS Investigation  
North Centre Township, Columbia County  
Northcentral Regional Office

### DEP APPROVAL

Based on the facts and findings outlined in this Response Justification Document, Further Investigation or response action is deemed appropriate, pursuant to Section 501(a) of the Hazardous Sites Cleanup Act.



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Cheryl Sinclair, Regional Group Manager  
Site Remediation Division

7/26/2024

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Date



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Randy Farmerie, Regional Program Manager  
Environmental Cleanup and Brownfields

7/26/24

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Date

### SUMMARY OF FACTS

DEP's Bureau of Environmental Cleanup and Brownfields (ECB) is investigating a PFAS groundwater plume in North Centre Township, Columbia County. ECB was notified by DEP's Safe Drinking Water program (SDW) that the Brookside mobile home park (MHP) had detections of PFOS and PFOA above the previous PA Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCLs) of 18 ng/L and 14 ng/L, respectively. As of June 25, 2024, PA DEP has adopted EPA's MCLs of 4 ng/L for both PFOS and PFOA.

The MHP is considered a public water supply (PWS) and is sampled routinely per their Comprehensive Monitoring Plan. The system is comprised of three (3) wells, two (2) of which are blended. 1<sup>st</sup> quarter 2024 sample results for entry point #1 (EP101) indicated a concentration of 2100 ng/L for PFOS and 390 ng/L for PFOA. Sample results for entry point #3 (EP103) indicated a concentration of 1100 ng/L for PFOS and 200 ng/L for PFOA.

The "Site" currently is considered some radial distance around the Brookside MHP. PADEP is currently conducting preliminary private water supply surveying and sampling in the immediate .5 – 1 mile radius around the Brookside MHP. Once preliminary sampling results are made available, a more refined boundary may be determined. Regardless, this tentative definition plots the Site within the Appalachian Mountain section of The Ridge and Valley Province. More specifically, the Site as it is currently known is located along the Berwick Anticlinorium. Bedding strike runs generally west – east, with a structural trend of N70 – 75°E. Bedding dip ranging from 35 to 45 degrees along fold limbs. The Light Street Thrust Fault is a notable feature located approximately 2000-ft north of the Brookside MHP. According to USGS groundwater resource reports, the major aquifers in the vicinity of the Site are bedrock. Groundwater is primarily found within secondary openings along fractures

and bedding planes. The two major contributing formations are the Wills Creek Formation and the Bloomsburg Formation.

Overall, the Site setting is rural with the most likely source contribution being application of biosolids to agricultural fields. Based on GIS Site Address Point data sourced by Columbia County and distributed by Pennsylvania Spatial Data Access (PASDA), there are 313 addresses within a 1-mile radius around the Brookside MHP.

To date, a total of nine (9) private water supply wells within a .5 – 1 mile radius around the Brookside MHP have been sampled by PADEP for EPA Method 537.1 analysis. Preliminary results indicate at least two (2) residential water supply wells with concentrations of PFAS above PADEP Medium Specific Concentrations (MSCs). The residents have been informed and PADEP has prepared to provide bottled water delivery as an interim measure. PADEP is awaiting final sample results for all samples to be reported by Bureau of Laboratories (BOL).

Potential threats to human health or welfare are clearly present within the Site via drinking water contaminated with PFAS. This comes in the form of residential water supply wells and potentially commercial and/or public entity water supply wells. There is potential for surficial soil contaminated with PFAS which may be an exposure pathway by direct contact. There is also potential for PFAS to impact surface water bodies in the vicinity of the Site (i.e., West Branch Briar Creek) by stormwater run-off and permitted discharges of wastewater containing PFAS.

To date, available groundwater sample results indicate the presence of PFAS at concentrations up to roughly 500 times current PA groundwater Medium Specific Concentrations (MSCs). Preliminary results from initial residential water supply samples submitted to the Bureau of Laboratories (BOL) indicate at least 2 residential water supply wells that have concentrations of PFAS above PA groundwater MSCs. Current data gaps exist for the vast majority of residential properties in the investigative area and, thus, is a basis for the justification of response.

Based on groundwater sample results, a clear indication of a release of a hazardous substance [PFOS, PFOA, PFHxS] which presents danger to public health and the environment exists at the Site.

## **RESPONSIBLE PERSONS**

The Responsible Persons, pursuant to Section 701 of HSCA, have yet to be identified. Investigation of the extent and potential source(s) of PFAS contamination in the groundwater is needed before a Responsible Person can be determined.

## **FINDINGS AND AUTHORITY TO ACT**

DEP has determined that PFOS, PFOA, PFHxS, and potentially other PFAS with applicable standards have been released at the site. These PFAS are hazardous substances as defined by the Hazardous Sites Cleanup Act. The concentrations of PFOS, PFOA, and PFHxS that have been released at the site exceed the Statewide Health cleanup standards under the Land Recycling and Remediation Standards Act. Based on these findings, DEP has determined that a Further Investigation or response is appropriate.

## **REFERENCES**

USEPA Final PFAS National Primary Drinking Water Regulation; effective June 25, 2024