



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION III
1650 Arch Street
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103-2029

Ms. Kelly Jean Heffner
Deputy Secretary for Water Management
Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection
Rachel Carson State Office Building
P.O. Box 2063
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17105-2063

MAY 09 2013

Dear Ms. ^{Kelly}Heffner:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has conducted a review of the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection's (PADEP) 2012 Section 303(d) list and supporting documentation and information. Based on our complete review, EPA has determined that Pennsylvania's list of water quality-limited segments still requiring Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) meets the requirements of Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act and EPA's implementing regulations. Therefore, with this letter (including the rationale set forth in the enclosure to this letter) EPA fully approves Pennsylvania's 2012 Section 303(d) list as submitted electronically to EPA on January 29, 2013. This approval action and EPA's March 11, 2013 approval of the assessment status of the Paxton Creek and Monongahela River closes out the 2012 Integrated Report review process. The statutory and regulatory requirements, as well as an analysis of Pennsylvania's 2012 Section 303(d) submittal, are described in the enclosure.

EPA appreciates the significant effort by PADEP in responding to the comments by EPA and others on the draft 2012 303(d) list. We note several updates in listing status and in the identification of causes for listed impairments. EPA supports, as explained in the enclosure, the PADEP decision to move portions of the Susquehanna River to Category 3 due to lack of adequate data to make aquatic life use and recreational use assessment determinations. EPA is concerned about the health of smallmouth bass in the Susquehanna River and is encouraged by the intense monitoring efforts undertaken by the PADEP in 2012 and planned for in 2013 on the Susquehanna River. The monitoring efforts and coordination with other federal, state and local partners will hopefully yield sufficient information to determine possible stressors impacting smallmouth bass in the near future.

EPA looks forward to working with PADEP staff on future assessment reports and appreciates the cooperation of PADEP staff to provide additional materials requested during our report review. If you or your staff has any questions, please feel free to contact Mr. Larry Merrill at 215-814-5452, or Mr. William Richardson at 215-814-5675.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jon M. Capacasa".

Jon M. Capacasa, Director
Water Protection Division

Enclosure

