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## FACTS ABOUT: Maryland's Draft 2016 Integrated Report of Surface Water Quality

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### **WHAT IS THE INTEGRATED REPORT?**

The Integrated Report (IR) combines water quality reports required under sections 305(b), 314, and 303(d) of the federal Clean Water Act. Section 305(b) requires states, territories and authorized tribes to perform annual water quality assessments to determine the status of jurisdictional waters. Section 314 requires states, territories and authorized tribes to classify lakes according to eutrophic condition and to identify lakes known to not meet water quality standards. Section 303(d) requires states, territories and authorized tribes to identify waters assessed as not meeting water quality standards (see Code of Maryland Regulations 26.08.02). Waters that do not meet standards may require a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) to determine the maximum amount of an impairing substance or pollutant that a particular water body can assimilate and still meet water quality criteria. Historically, the 303(d) List, 305(b) report, and 314 report were submitted to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as separate documents but more recent guidance has called for combining these reports into a single biennial publication. Maryland's 2016 IR represents a fully combined 305(b), 314, and 303(d) report.

### **WHY COMPILE AN INTEGRATED REPORT?**

Besides being required by EPA, the IR serves many other purposes relating to water quality planning for a number of federal, state, county, local, and non-governmental organizations. By providing an update on the status of water bodies, the IR helps to prioritize which watersheds should be addressed by TMDLs or restoration and which watersheds are in need of protection.

### **WHAT IS THE SAME FOR 2016?**

The 2016 IR continues to use a multiple category reporting structure that includes the following 5 categories: *Category 1* – waterbodies that meet all water quality standards and no use is threatened; *Category 2* – waterbodies meeting some water quality standards and there are insufficient data and information to determine if other water quality standards are being met; *Category 3* – insufficient data and information are available to determine if any water quality standard is being met; *Category 4* – one or more water quality standards are impaired or threatened but a TMDL is not required either because one has already been completed, other technical solutions are expected to correct the impairment, or the water body is impaired due to pollution not caused by a pollutant (e.g. channelization); and *Category 5* [the historical 303(d) List] - waterbodies that are impaired, do not attain the water quality standard, and a TMDL is required.

### **WHAT HAS CHANGED FROM 2014 TO 2016?**

The 2016 IR incorporates several changes this year which include the implementation of revised assessment methodologies for bacteria and toxics data. In addition, the Department has expanded its trend analysis section with the intention of describing the incremental changes to pollutant concentrations in waters throughout the state. Continuing with this IR, Maryland has made significant efforts to incorporate non-state government data in ways that increase the resolution of the state's water quality assessments.

There are a total of 16 additions to the list of Category 5 (impaired, TMDL needed) waters in 2016. Nine of the new Category 5 waterbody-pollutant combinations (also referred to as listings or assessment records) resulted from MDE's Biological Stressor Identification Analyses. The purpose of these analyses is to identify the primary pollutants that are responsible for impairing watershed biological integrity. Of these 9 new 'biostressor' listings, four are for total suspended solids, three are for sulfates, and

two are for chlorides. In addition, there are four new PCB listings and three new fecal coliform listings in shellfish harvesting waters. It should be noted that additional impairment listings do not always indicate recent decline in the State's overall water quality but, in some cases, represent improvements to Maryland's water quality monitoring and assessment methodologies.

Other major changes to the 2016 IR include removal of eleven waterbody-pollutant combinations from Category 5 (impaired, TMDL needed). In addition, there were several other delistings from Categories 4a (impaired, TMDL approved) and 4b (impaired, technical fix implemented).

## **HOW ARE WE ADDRESSING THESE WATER QUALITY ISSUES?**

Since the 2014 IR, Maryland has continued to make progress in addressing impaired waters having completed a total of six TMDLs, two Water Quality Analyses and four Biostressor Identification Analyses in 2015 and 2016. Most notably, one of the TMDLs Maryland completed was one developed for trash in the Baltimore Harbor area. This is the second trash TMDL completed in Maryland and marks an important step forward in the effort to clean up the Baltimore Harbor. Another important development in Maryland's implementation of Clean Water Act Section 303(d) is the documentation of Maryland's prioritization of impairments for TMDL development. This documentation, included as Part G of this report, not only covers TMDL development priorities but also discusses Maryland's continuing work on the Chesapeake Bay and Tidal Tributary TMDLs and Watershed Implementation Plans (WIP). In addition, Part G provides summary information on the Chesapeake Bay TMDL 2017 Midpoint Assessment.

## **HOW CAN THE PUBLIC GET INVOLVED?**

There are a number of opportunities for the public to get involved in IR development. Data solicitations are conducted prior to the development of each IR during which volunteer groups, community groups, academia, local/State/federal governments and non-profits can submit data to be incorporated into the decision making process for the report. Draft methodologies for the determination of impairments are placed on the web for public comment. An informational meeting is also held in support of the draft methodologies and Integrated Report. Finally, the report itself is available for public review on the web (<http://www.mde.state.md.us/programs/Water/TMDL/Integrated303dReports/Pages/2016IR.aspx>) and by special request.

*MDE is conducting a public comment period for the Draft 2016 IR from December 23, 2016 through January 23, 2017. In addition, MDE is hosting an informational public meeting and conference call in Baltimore at 6pm on January 9, 2017. Any hearing impaired person may request an interpreter to be present at the meeting by giving five (5) working days notice to Ms. Rebecca Lang at [rebecca.lang@maryland.gov](mailto:rebecca.lang@maryland.gov) or by calling (410) 537- 3947. Anyone wanting to participate in this meeting via conference call should also contact Rebecca Lang in advance for instructions. Given enough interest, the Department may schedule additional meetings. Comments or questions may be directed in writing to Mr. Matthew Stover MDE, Science Services Administration, 1800 Washington Blvd., Baltimore Maryland 21230, emailed to [matthew.stover@maryland.gov](mailto:matthew.stover@maryland.gov), or faxed to the attention of Mr. Matthew Stover at 410-537-3873 on or before **January 23, 2017**. After addressing all comments received during the public review period, a final List will be prepared and submitted to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for approval.*

### **Public Meeting Announcement**

**Date:** January 9, 2017

**Time:** 6:00PM

**Location:** MDE Headquarters, 1800 Washington Blvd, Baltimore, MD 21230  
Lobby Conference Room (to the left after entering the front door)  
1800 Washington Boulevard  
Baltimore, MD 21230

**Parking:** Red Lot, Front (South) of Building