



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

12/16/2005

Dr. Richard Eskin, Director
Technical and Regulatory Services Administration
Maryland Department of the Environment
1800 Washington Boulevard, Suite 540
Baltimore, MD 21230

Dear Dr. Eskin:

On September 27, 2005, the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) received two revised Water Quality Analysis (WQA) Reports from the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE). The WQAs evaluated the pH impairments in the Evitts and Willis Creek Watersheds.

Evitts Creek (basin code 02-14-10-02) was identified on Maryland's 1996 Section 303(d) list as impaired by low pH, nutrients and sediments. Lake Habeeb a sub-basin was listed in 1998 for nutrients as well. The WQA evaluated the low pH impairment in the watershed, TMDLs will be required to address the other impairments. Two hundred and thirteen pH samples were collected from multiple monitoring stations within the watershed from 1996 through 2004. A total of 13 violations were reported within the watershed, a violation rate of six percent. A closer inspection of the data reveals that seven of the violations were recorded in the Rocky Gap Run sub-basin. Of the 66 samples collected from Rocky Gap Run, seven violated the criteria. There were five sampling locations within Rocky Gap Run and the violations were all recorded in stations RKG0023 and RKG0025. Five of the remaining violations were observed in Evitts Creek, but this represented well below 10 percent of the samples required for Section 303(d) listing. The remaining violation was observed in Elk Lick Run at a monitoring station with only six water quality observations. EPA concurs with MDE's determination that a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) is not necessary for the eight digit basin of Evitts Creek. However, as stated in the WQA, the 12 digit Rocky Gap Run Basin is impaired and will remain on the state's list of impaired waters until a TMDL is developed. Elk Lick Run will be placed on category three, insufficient data, of the state's next Integrated Report since more data is needed to determine if an impairment exists.

Willis Creek (basin code 02-14-10-03) was first identified on Maryland's 1996 Section 303(d) list for cyanide, sediment and nutrients. Low pH and biological impairments were added in 1998 and 2002 respectively. Two 12 digit basins, Unnamed Tributary (UNT) to Jennings Run and Jennings Run, were added as being impaired by low pH in 2002 and 2004 respectively. Six hundred and eleven water quality samples were taken from the Willis Creek Watershed from 1996 through 2004. Fourteen of these samples were above the maximum pH of 8.5. These violations occurred at several sampling locations but none of them had a violation rate exceeding



seven percent. There were 36 violations of the minimum pH all but one of these were recorded in the Jennings Run Basin which had a violation rate of 31 percent. EPA concurs with MDE that a TMDL is not necessary for pH impairments observed in the eight digit Willis Creek Basin. However, as stated in the WQA the 12 digit UNT Jennings Run and Jennings Run Basins should remain on the state's impaired waters list until TMDL development.

If you have any questions or comments concerning this letter, please do not hesitate to contact Mr. Thomas Henry at (215) 814-5752.

Sincerely,

Signed

Jon M. Capacasa, Director
Water Protection Division

Enclosure

cc: Melissa Chatham, MDE-TARSA

10/12/2006

Erratum: Willis Creek should be Wills Creek.

