### Draft Assessment and Listing Methodology Notice of Availability for Public Comment

The Department of Environmental Protection (Department) is making available for public comment its draft 2015 Assessment and Listing Methodology (methodology). Sections 303(d) and 305(b) of the Federal Clean Water Act require states to report on the condition of all their waters in the biennial Integrated Report (report). The methodologies referred to in this public notice will be used, when finalized, to assess the quality of Pennsylvania’s waters pursuant to this legal mandate.

Stream and lake evaluations presented in the report must be supported by assessment methodologies based on sound science and technical procedures that are clear and complete. The methodology is a compilation of the protocols being used to assess waters that may appear in the 2016 Pennsylvania Integrated Water Quality Monitoring and Assessment Report.

The protocols comprising the methodology describe the field data collection procedures and data analysis methods used to obtain and evaluate water quality data. The individual protocols apply to a wide range of water resource types, data sources and environmental indicators.

The draft methodology is available on the Department's eComment System http://www.ahs.dep.pa.gov/eComment. Because of the large number of pages, the methodology will not be available in hardcopy.

The Department will accept comments on the new assessment documents including: *Nutrient Impact Assessment*, *Cause and Effect Surveys,* and *Bacteriological Sampling Protocol*. The Department will also accept comments on the following amended assessment methods from the 2013 Assessment Methodology: *Lake Assessment Protocol; Aquatic Macrophyte Cover; Plankton Sampling;* and *Chlorophyll-a Sampling*. The Department will consider all public comments regarding the appropriateness of the narrative, collection methods and data analyses protocols contained in the methodology.

Interested persons may submit written comments on this Draft Assessment and Listing Methodology by Tuesday, November 17, 2015. Comments submitted by facsimile will not be accepted. All comments, including comments submitted by electronic mail, must include the originator’s name and address. Commentators are encouraged to submit comments using the Department’s online eComment System at [www.ahs.dep.pa.gov/eComment](http://www.ahs.dep.pa.gov/eComment). Written comments should be submitted to Department of Environmental Protection, Policy Office, Rachel Carson State Office Building, P.O.Box2063, Harrisburg, PA17105‑2063, or by email to ecomment@pa.gov.

Persons in need of accommodations as provided for in the American with Disabilities Act of 1990 should contact Gary Walters at (717) 787-9637 or through the Pennsylvania AT&T Relay Service at (800) 654-5894 (TTD) to discuss how the Department may accommodate their needs.

John Quigley,

Secretary