**MEMO**

**TO** Patrick McDonnell

 Director

 Policy Office

**FROM** Lee A. McDonnell

 Director

**THROUGH** Kelly Jean Heffner

 Deputy Secretary for

 Water Management

 Kimberly Childe

 Director

 Bureau of Regulatory Counsel

**DATE** August 18, 2015

**RE** Request to Public Participate the 2015 Assessment Methodology

**MESSAGE:**

The 2015 Assessment Methodology will consist of multiple assessment protocols used to assess the designated use attainment status of Commonwealth surface waters. These methods are the basis for listing waters as attained or impaired for the Pennsylvania Integrated Water Quality Monitoring and Assessment Report (Integrated Report) as required by section 303(d) of the Federal Clean Water Act.

The 2013 Assessment Methodology needs updating to reflect newer science and improved methods. As required by the Integrated Report, DEP must public participate the Assessment Methodology when it is updated or new protocols added. EPA may comment at that time but they do not approve or disapprove the protocols. We are asking approval to begin a 45-day comment period of the new and updated portions of the Assessment Methodology. The draft public notice is attached to this memo.

The Assessment Methodology consists of many sections and as a result it is made available to the general public and stakeholders thorough DEP’s public website. The current 2013 Assessment Methodology consists of nineteen protocols and six appendices. The home page can be viewed using the following link.

http://www.depweb.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/water\_quality\_standards/10556/2013\_assessment\_methodology/1407203

The draft 2015 Assessment Methodology consists of several new and substantively revised protocols (attached) as well as unchanged protocols from the 2013 Assessment Methodology. Only the new and substantively revised protocols will be public participated by directing persons to our DEP public website where it will be posted in this same format. These revised protocols include the following and are in red text on the attached draft 2015 Assessment Methodology webpage:

* Nutrient Assessment Protocol for Wadeable Streams
* Cause and Effect Surveys
* Bacteriological Sampling Protocol
* Lake Assessment Protocol
* Aquatic Macrophyte Cover
* Plankton Sampling
* Chlorophyll-a Sampling

If you have any questions, contact Gary Walters by e-mail at gawalters@pa.gov or by telephone at 717.783.7964.

Attachments

Nutrient Assessment Protocol for Wadeable Streams

Cause and Effect Surveys

Bacteriological Sampling Protocol

Lake Assessment Protocol

Aquatic Macrophyte Cover

Plankton Sampling

Chlorophyll-a Sampling

 Pa Bulletin Notice

 Draft 2015 Assessment Methodology webpage

bcc: POLICY

 REG CNSL

 OWM

 BPNSM Reading

Mr. McDonnell

 Mr. Kime

 Mr. Walters

 File

 30-day File

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| **Reviewed & approved by:** | **GES No:** | **DEP No:** | **Date Logged:** | **Date Due:** |
| Name | **Mr. Walters**EGM | **Mr. Kime**EPM | **Mr. McDonnell**Director | **Ms. Heffner**Deputy Sec’y. | **Ms. Childe**Director | **Mr. McDonnell**Director |
| Office | **BPNSM-WQS****Assessment** | **BPNSM-WQS** | **BPNSM-DIR** | **OWM** | **Reg Cnsl** | **POL** |
| Date |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Initials |  |  |  |  |  |  |