

Chiques Creek

Chiques Creek (known as Chickies Creek until 2002) is a 65 square mile watershed that begins in West Cornwall Township, Lebanon County and flows downstream into the Susquehanna River along the border of West Hempfield Township and Marietta Borough in Lancaster County. It is a direct tributary to the Susquehanna River. Land use consists of approximately 75% agriculture, with the remaining 25% being split between developed and forest. Major tributaries include Little Chiques Creek, Donegal Creek, Dellinger Run, Boyer Run, Rife Run and Shearers Creek. In 1996 and 1998, the mainstem of Chiques Creek and several tributaries were placed on PADEP's 303(d) list of impaired waters. The aquatic life use was listed as impaired due to agricultural activities. The watershed had a completed Chiques Creek TMDL in 2001; however, due to watershed changes over time and new point source discharges the TMDL needed major revisions and was withdrawn by PADEP in October 2015.

In 2014 PADEP, SRBC, EPA, Lancaster County Conservation District and numerous stakeholders began a series of meetings to discuss the path forward to restore the watershed to provide clean water. PADEP resurveyed and assessed the watershed in 2015 to confirm existing impairments and added additional miles for aquatic life use and water contact recreation. The stakeholder group continues to have meetings on a quarterly basis and several smaller workgroups have been formed to identify problems and solutions to provide clean water. As a result of these activities and interest by local stakeholders, it was determined that this watershed was a good candidate for an alternative approach to the traditional TMDL. More information regarding the watershed activities can be found on the SRBC website under the Chiques Creek Restoration Initiative.