

# Draft Assessment Book and Integrated Water Quality Report

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## Draft Assessment Book and Integrated Water Quality Report

On October 28, 2023, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP) published a notice in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin* announcing the [Draft 2024 Integrated Water Quality Monitoring and Assessment Report](#) (Integrated Report). See 53 Pa. Bull. 6782 (Oct. 28, 2023). The public comment period was open from October 28, 2023, through December 11, 2023. PADEP sought comments on the general nature of the Integrated Report, as well as on the waters listed as high priorities for total maximum daily load development and the waters selected to be restored through advance restoration plans. A comment-response document will be made available to the public once the Integrated Report is finalized.

The Integrated Report is Pennsylvania's biennial update on the health of streams and lakes throughout the commonwealth, as required by sections 303(d) and 305(b) of the federal Clean Water Act (CWA). In the proposed Integrated Report, PADEP expanded the assessment of waterways with 7,566 stream miles and 103,777 public lake acres newly assessed or reassessed for a use—drinking water, fish consumption, aquatic life, and recreational use. The Report also shows water quality restoration, noting that since 2004 approximately 967 miles of streams and 28,727 acres of public lakes have been restored. The Report reflects the cumulative assessment of 99% of stream miles and 99% of lake acres statewide since Pennsylvania began reporting for the CWA.

PADEP is also in the process of updating their Water Quality Assessment Methodology for Surface Waters (Assessment Book), the current version of which was published in 2021. See PADEP, [“Assessment Methodology for Streams and Rivers”](#) (2021). The Assessment Book describes current methods used by PADEP to assess the surface waters of Pennsylvania as required by sections 303(d) and 305(b) of the CWA. Notable updates include new assessment methods (Wadeable Freestone Acidification Assessment Method, Physicochemical Potable Water Supply Assessment Method, and Bacteriological Source Method), updated assessment methods (General Source and Cause Method, Eutrophication Cause Method), and the inclusion of Lake Assessment Methods.

As of the time of this report, public comment has not yet opened on the 2024 Draft Assessment Book.

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