

# PADEP Releases Draft 2022 Integrated Water Quality Monitoring and Assessment Report

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On January 15, 2022, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP) released in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin*, and requested public comment on, its draft 2022 Integrated Water Quality Monitoring and Assessment Report (2022 Integrated Report). See 52 Pa. Bull. 418 (Jan. 15, 2022). The draft 2022 Integrated Report, which PADEP is required to produce biennially pursuant to sections 303(d) and 305(b) of the Clean Water Act (CWA), 33 U.S.C. §§ 1313(d), 1315(b), and 40 C.F.R. pt. 130, identifies state waters that do not meet applicable water quality standards. Waters fall into three general statuses—attaining, impaired, or unassessed—and are further categorized according to uses, data, and whether a total maximum daily load (TMDL) is necessary (e.g., Category 1 waters are attaining for all uses, while Category 5 waters are impaired for one or more uses by a pollutant that requires a TMDL).

Pursuant to applicable regulations, PADEP assessed waters throughout the commonwealth for four uses: drinking water, fish consumption, aquatic life, and recreational use. 25 Pa. Code § 93.3. Similar to the 2020 Integrated Report, see Vol. XXXVII, No. 3 (2020) of this *Newsletter* (Pennsylvania—Mining report), PADEP identified acid mine drainage, agriculture, and stormwater runoff as the top known sources for waters impairment. PADEP conducted initial assessments on 5,844 stream miles and 25,742 public lake acres in addition to reassessing an additional 5,334 stream miles and 14,262 public lake acres. Waters were reassessed for a variety of reasons, including removal of potential discharge sources, identification of new discharge sources, or verification that source and cause of impairment are unchanged. The draft 2022 Integrated Report identified 27,886 impaired stream miles, 2,418 more than documented in the 2020 Integrated Report. The draft 2022 Integrated Report reflects the cumulative assessment of 99% (84,977 miles) of stream miles and 97% (109,819 acres) of lake acres statewide and is the fifteenth in a series of reports prepared and submitted to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) pursuant to the CWA.

Items of note in the draft 2022 Integrated Report include:

1. Since 2004, approximately 920 stream miles and 28,000 public lake acres have been restored.
2. Approximately 28,000 stream miles and 69,000 public lake acres are listed as impaired.
3. After PADEP completed the new assessments and reassessments, the percentage of impaired waters in Pennsylvania increased to 33%, up from 30% as documented in the 2020 Integrated Report.
4. The draft 2022 Integrated Report identified Lancaster (1,286 stream miles), Elk (1,126 stream miles), Chester (1,020 stream miles), Franklin (928 stream miles), and Allegheny (915 stream miles) as counties having the most miles of impaired streams.
5. PADEP delisted a total of 380 stream miles and 178 public lake acres. A total of 120 stream miles were fully restored, 78 stream miles had causes for impairment removed, and the remaining stream miles were delisted because of data refinement. Of the 178 public lake acres delisted, 95 acres were fully restored, 26 acres had causes for impairment removed, and the remaining acres were delisted because of data refinement.

PADEP is seeking general comments on the draft 2022 Integrated Report, and specific comments on waters listed as high priorities for TMDL development and on those selected for restoration through alternatives to TMDLs. PADEP is accepting comments on the draft 2022 Integrated Report through March 1, 2022. The final 2022 Integrated Report, including a list of Category 5 waters (requiring development of a TMDL), will be submitted to the EPA pursuant to sections 303(d) and 305(b) of the CWA.

