

March 5, 2016

Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality

Water Division 5301 Northshore Drive

North Little Rock, AR 72118-5317

Dear Jim Wise and Director Keogh,

The Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) is the state's main environmental protection agency, charged with protecting, enhancing, and restoring the environment for Arkansans. (Heading from the ADEQ website.)

The National Park Service (NPS) requested that three tributaries of the Buffalo National River be placed on the "Impaired Waterbodies" list pursuant to Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act.

Yet the ADEQ declined to do so despite the abundance of data from the National Park Service and the United States Geological Survey (USGS). This decision does not fit with the ADEQ obligation above.

I request that the three streams, Big Creek, Mill Creek and Bear Creek be placed on the 2016 impaired list.

It would serve the people of Arkansas to investigate the submitted NPS and USGS data now.

ADEQ has a responsibility to follow up on warnings of impairment from long and trusted sources such as the National Park Service.

ADEQ needs to take heed of the NPS warnings, increase its monitoring of these streams, and take all the steps necessary to determine the sources of impairment and then eliminate their impact on the Buffalo National River.

If ADEQ does not do the above, I request that a clear public explanation be given as to why such robust data would not be used in every way possible to protect one of Arkansas's finest natural and economic resources.

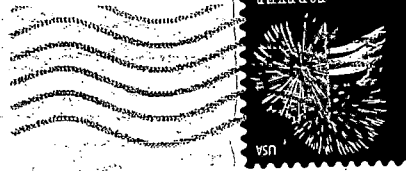
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