

From: [Joanie Connors](#)
To: [ImpairedWaterbodies_Comments](#)
Subject: Buffalo River tributaries
Date: Tuesday, March 15, 2016 8:42:20 AM

March 15, 2016

Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ)
5301 Northshore Drive
North Little Rock, AR 72118-5317

Dear Director Keogh,

Thank you for providing an opportunity to comment on the 2016 proposed 303-d listing of water bodies in Arkansas.

The National Park Service, charged with protection of the resources, including water quality, scientific value, and the visitors experience at Buffalo National River (BNR) has been collecting water samples throughout the park for over 30 years. In October 2015, BNR Superintendent Cheri sent you an email calling attention to three tributaries of the BNR that are impaired for low dissolved oxygen or E.coli.

Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality's (ADEQ) list of impaired streams for 2016 did not include these three streams requested by the Park Service.

- E.coli is an indicator of fecal contamination and some forms can cause illness.
- Low dissolved oxygen kills aquatic life (fish, turtles, frogs) in streams.
- The Buffalo River and its tributaries are popular fishing destinations.
- The Buffalo River is the iconic symbol of Arkansas's motto "The Natural State" and is the reason why tourists spent over \$56 million, creating 890 jobs in 2014 in the Buffalo River watershed.
- Tourism is a vital part of Arkansas' economy and is highly dependent upon tourists recreating in clean waters-free of algae, harmful bacteria or other contaminants.
- The Buffalo River is categorized as an Extraordinary Resource Water with the highest level of protection within Arkansas Regulations.

Why isn't the state of Arkansas doing more to protect the river?

The National Park Service has provided this information to ADEQ to protect both the visitors' health and experience, and biological diversity in one of America's last free running streams. I ask you to please place these 3 streams on the list of impaired rivers so that the Buffalo River is afforded the protection it deserves.

Sincerely,
Joanie V. Connors, Ph.D.
20 year Arkansas resident
Silver City, NM 88061