

Barnett, Mary

From: Susan Gateley <sgateley55@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 10, 2018 1:59 PM
To: WaterbodyComments
Cc: hugh earnest; Susan Gateley
Subject: Proposed 2018 Impaired Waterbodies List
Attachments: A RESOLUTION REQUESTING ASSISTANCE ON Mulberry River Water Quality.docx

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September 7, 2018

Proposed 2018 Impaired Waterbodies List
ADEQ Headquarters
[5301 Northshore Drive](#)
North Little Rock, AR, 72118
303d Waterbody Comments
WaterbodyComments@adeq.state.ar.us

Director Keogh and Sarah Clem:

According to the ADEQ public notice, the Mulberry River, and its tributaries, Little Mulberry Creek and Friley Creek, are listed as Category 5, high impairment, and as such will require the development of TMDLs or other corrective action on declining pH. The proposed revisions to the impaired waterbodies list may be incorporated into the 2018 Arkansas Integrated Water Quality Monitoring and Assessment Report after approval by the ADEQ Director and the Region 6 Office of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Arkansas Pollution Control and Ecology Commission has established, in Regulation 2, the water quality standards for surface waters of the state of Arkansas, in accordance with the federal Clean Water Act. Within Chapter 2, the state sets up a three tier approach to antidegradation policy. The first level of protection is to maintain and protect existing uses and quality of streams. A second level of protection is meeting the goals of the Clean Water Act. Third tier protection is stated in Reg. 2.203 Outstanding Resource Waters:

“Where high quality waters constitute an outstanding state or national resource, such as those waters designated as Extraordinary Resource Waters, Ecologically Sensitive Waterbodies or Natural and Scenic Waterways, those uses and water quality for which the outstanding waterbody was designated shall be protected by (1) water quality controls, (2) maintenance of natural flow regime, (3) protection of instream habitat, and (4) encouragement of land management practices protective of the watershed.”

The Mulberry River is an Outstanding Resource Water, and is designated as an Extraordinary Resource Water and a National Scenic Waterway. It needs to be safeguarded as one of this state's highest quality waters.

When established biotic systems are disturbed and disrupted, the naturally balanced, pristine waters of streams are impaired. The Mulberry River is widening and creating shallower waters. Over the past 30 years of living in this watershed, we have seen a significant decrease in the number of deep holes of water through increased periods of drought and sediment deposition. Higher temperatures and sedimentation washing in from pastureland, logging projects, and increased recreational use (ATVs) may exacerbate the cumulative effects of impairment. This is **not** a simple problem and may be contributing to the declining pH. At this point, there is not a clearly defined cause. But we do know that optimal pH is between 6 and 9 for the Boston Mountain Region, and levels below 5 will not sustain fish and other aquatic life. The Mulberry River is truly impaired.

The Mulberry River Society, a 501c3 community organization dedicated to Conservation, Appreciation, Recreation, Education and Stewardship (CARES) of this river, is increasingly concerned about the declining quality of the river. In the interest of the most effective remedy for the pH impairment of the Mulberry

River and its tributaries, Little Mulberry Creek and Friley Creek, we have proposed a meeting of all local, state, and federal agencies having oversight relative to the water quality within the Wild and Scenic Mulberry River corridor (see attached Resolution). This meeting would set the groundwork for priority investigation, increased monitoring and the possibility of direct remedy. We suggest that ADEQ consider all available research, expert reports, and agency recommendations in identifying and reporting water quality impairments. Utilize other sources of data monitoring, such as Stream Team groups, through Game and Fish. Restoration approaches should be pursued as soon as possible before there is irreparable harm to the river. By taking direct actions to remedy the pH problem, ADEQ can help restore our clear mountain streams for fishing, recreation and help the small local family farms and businesses that depend upon them.

Sincerely,

Hugh Earnest
President
Mulberry River Society

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Mulberry River Society

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**A RESOLUTION REQUESTING ASSISTANCE ON
MULBERRY RIVER WATER QUALITY**

WHEREAS, The Mulberry River Society (herein after, MRS) has endeavored since its inception to focus on its mission of CARES (Conservation, Appreciation, Recreation, Education and Stewardship).

WHEREAS, MRS and others are aware of a growing and potentially detrimental concern relative to increasing acidity levels in the upper regions of the Mulberry River Watershed.

And,

WHEREAS, A general consensus of opinion of all those knowledgeable and concerned with the acidity issues feel this matter could best be resolved by convening a meeting of all local, state and federal agencies having oversight relative to the water quality within the Wild and Scenic Mulberry River corridor.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

The Mulberry River Society, by passage of this resolution, wishes to clearly express its support of such a meeting and to offer its assistance in any manner deemed appropriate.

Further, the Mulberry River Society respectfully suggests this meeting be held in early to mid-August of 2018.

7-21-18

Hugh Earnest

President

Mulberry River Society