



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
REGION 6  
1445 ROSS AVENUE, SUITE 1200  
DALLAS, TX 75202-2733

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AUG 5 2008

Teresa Marks, Director  
Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality  
5301 Northshore Drive  
North Little Rock, AR 72118-5317

Dear Ms. Marks:

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) received a copy of your June 18, 2008, letter to Colonel Thomas Smith regarding the Bayou Meto Basin Project water quality certification. Your letter indicates that the Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) is certifying that "condition 1" of the referenced certification has been met. EPA would like to provide clarification of its action in reference to the site-specific revisions to Regulation No. 2, Bayou Meto Project.

In your letter to Colonel Smith, you outlined specific conditions pursuant to §401(a)(1) of the Clean Water Act for certification of the Bayou Meto Project including:

- 1) The mineral standards for chlorides and sulfates in the Delta Ecoregion Streams as identified in Regulation No. 2 must be revised prior to use of the water from the Arkansas River in the agricultural water supply portion of the project. There is ample time to accomplish this task. This action will need to be coordinated with the Water Division of the ADEQ.

In our May 23, 2008, letter and associated Record of Decision, EPA approved site-specific chloride and sulfate criteria of 95 mg/L and 45 mg/L, respectively, for Bayou Meto and only the portions of Bayou Two Prairie that do not have the Extraordinary Resource Water (ERW) designated use. EPA disapproved the revised site-specific chloride and sulfate criteria for the three miles of Bayou Two Prairie adjacent to Smoke Hole Natural Area. The ecoregion based minerals criteria remain in effect for the Smoke Hole Natural Area.

Although the site-specific chloride and sulfate criteria of 95 mg/L and 45 mg/L are approved for the portions of Bayou Two Prairie that do not have the ERW designated use, the ecoregion based minerals criteria must be met at the upper reach of the Smoke Hole Natural Area. Given the disapproval of the revised criteria for the Smoke Hole Natural Area, 'condition 1' of the certification referenced in your letter cannot be met for the entire project area. Please provide your rationale describing how the implementation and operation of the Bayou Meto Project will assure that the ecoregion based minerals criteria will be met at the upstream boundary of the Smoke Hole Natural Area.


Please contact me or have your staff contact Russell Nelson, Regional Water Quality Standards Coordinator, at (14) 665-6646 if you require additional clarification or assistance.

Sincerely,



Miguel I. Flores

Director



Water Quality Protection Division

cc: Col. Thomas P. Smith, District Engineer, Memphis District Corps of Engineers  
Ed Lambert, Project Manager, Memphis District Corps of Engineers  
J. Randy Young, P.E., Chairman, Technical Review Committee, ANRC  
Earl Smith, P.E., Arkansas Natural Resources Commission  
Craig Uyeda, Chief, River Basins Section, Arkansas Game and Fish Commission  
Gene Sullivan, Bayou Meto Water Management District  
Steve Drown, Chief, Water Division, ADEQ