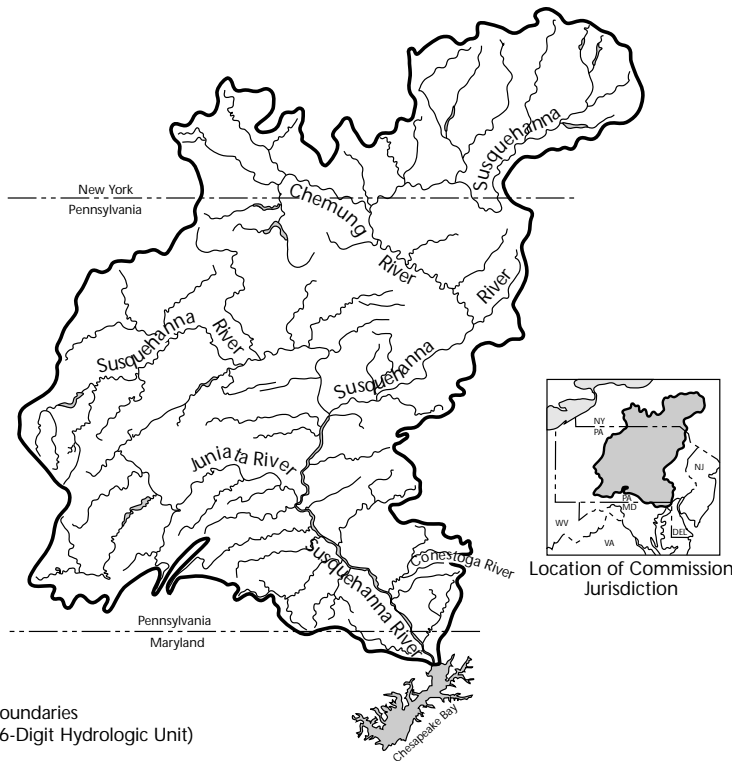


US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

Susquehanna River Basin Commission



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Surface Water Quality

The Susquehanna River drains 27,510 square miles from parts of New York, Pennsylvania, and Maryland, and delivers over half of the fresh water entering the Chesapeake Bay. The Susquehanna River Basin Commission (SRBC) surveyed 17,464 miles of the 31,193 miles of rivers and streams in the Susquehanna River Basin. Over 90% of the surveyed river miles fully support designated uses, 4% partially support uses, and 6% do not

support one or more designated uses. Metals, low pH, and nutrients are the primary causes of stream impacts in the Basin. Coal mine drainage is the source of most of the metals and pH problems degrading streams. Sources of nutrients include municipal and domestic wastewater discharges, agricultural runoff, and ground water inflow from agricultural areas.

During past reporting cycles, SRBC did not conduct any lake or reservoir assessments. However, a 2-year project funded by EPA and Pennsylvania should provide a foundation of lake data upon which SRBC can launch its lake assessment program.

Ground Water Quality

Ground water in the Basin is generally of adequate quality for most uses. Many of the ground water quality problems in the Basin are related to naturally dissolved constituents (such as iron, sulfate, and dissolved solids) from the geologic unit from which the water originates. The SRBC is concerned about ground water contamination from septic systems and agricultural activities.

Programs to Restore Water Quality

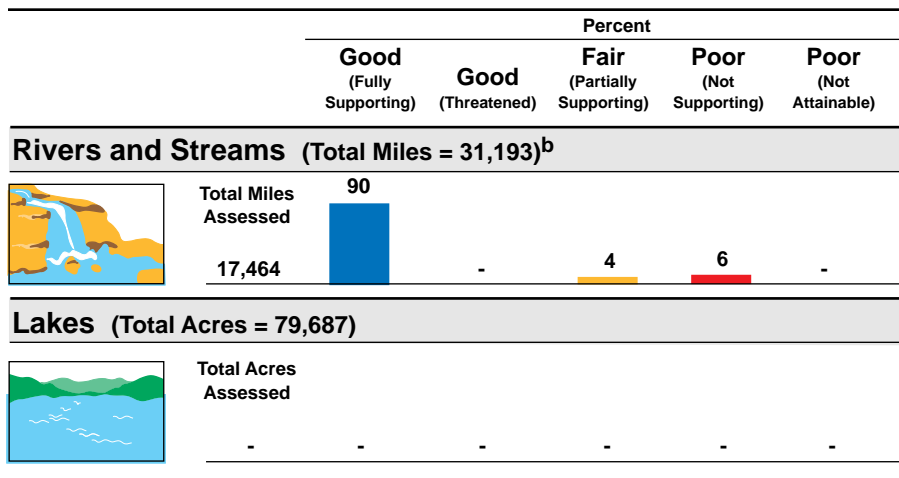
The Susquehanna River Basin Compact assigns primary responsibility for water quality management and control to the signatory States. The SRBC's role is to provide a

regional perspective for coordinating local, State, and Federal water quality management efforts. For example, the SRBC reviews proposed discharge permits (issued by the States) and evaluates potential interstate and regional impacts. The SRBC also recommends modifications to State water quality standards to improve consistency among the States.

Programs to Assess Water Quality

The SRBC's role in interstate and regional issues shaped the Commission's monitoring program. The SRBC's fixed-station monitoring network collects base flow data and seasonal-storm nutrient data on the Susquehanna mainstem and major tributaries to assist the Chesapeake Bay Program in evaluating nutrient reduction projects. The SRBC also established an interstate stream water quality network to evaluate streams crossing State boundaries for compliance with State water quality standards. Biological monitoring is conducted annually at 29 sites. The SRBC also conducts intensive subregional surveys to analyze regional water quality and biological conditions.

Overall^a Use Support in the Susquehanna River Basin



- Not reported.

^a Overall use support is presented in this figure because the Commission did not report individual use support in their 1994 Section 305(b) report.

^b Includes nonperennial streams that dry up and do not flow all year.