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Public comment sought on draft bacteria TMDL reports for 90 stream segments in the Big Sandy River, Little Sandy River, Tygarts Creek and Kentucky River basins

Comment period ends July 19, 2021

The Kentucky Division of Water has opened a 30-day comment period on two draft Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) reports that address bacteria impairments in surface waters in Kentucky within the Big Sandy River, Little Sandy River, Tygarts Creek, and Kentucky River basins. Comments received by email or mail must be dated or postmarked no later than July 19, 2021. Comments on the draft reports may be sent:

- Via email (*preferred method*) to: TMDL@ky.gov (Subject line: "Statewide Bacteria TMDL")
- Via U.S. Mail to: Water Quality Branch (ATTN: Statewide Bacteria TMDL)
Kentucky Division of Water
300 Sower Blvd., 3rd Floor
Frankfort, KY 40601

The reports are available at <https://eec.ky.gov/Environmental-Protection/Water/Pages/Water-Public-Notices-and-Hearings.aspx>. They add new river-basin-focused appendices to the Kentucky Statewide Bacteria TMDL report, which is available at <https://eec.ky.gov/Environmental-Protection/Water/Protection/TMDL/Pages/BactTMDL.aspx>.

"Total Maximum Daily Load" is a term used to describe the amount of a pollutant a waterbody can receive and still meet water quality standards. These standards protect beneficial uses of the water, or "designated uses." Standards for *E. coli* and fecal coliform bacteria are intended to protect the health of those using surface water for swimming, wading, boating, and other recreation.

The Clean Water Act requires each state to periodically identify waters where designated uses are not being met and water quality impairments exist. The state is also required to prioritize the list of impaired waters, develop a TMDL of pollutants for those waters, and devise plans to improve the water quality.

The Kentucky Statewide Bacteria TMDL report, approved in 2019, outlined a streamlined method for developing these TMDLs and contains key background information on bacteria-impaired waters in Kentucky, including sources of bacteria pollution, how bacteria enter surface waters, and what stakeholders can do to improve water quality. Appendices containing TMDLs for impaired stream segments in the Green River (Appendix D) and Tradewater River basins (Appendix M) were approved in 2019. The two new draft reports in this public notice address impaired streams in the Big Sandy River, Little Sandy River, and Tygarts Creek basins (Appendix C, G and N, included in a single report), and the

Kentucky River basin (Appendix E, included in a second report). Together, these two reports will complete TMDLs for 90 impaired stream segments in 26 counties: Bell, Boyd, Boyle, Breathitt, Carter, Casey, Clark, Clay, Estill, Fayette, Floyd, Franklin, Garrard, Grant, Jessamine, Johnson, Lawrence, Leslie, Letcher, Lincoln, Madison, Martin, Mercer, Perry, Pike, and Wolfe.

Additional appendices addressing impaired streams in other basins will be added to the Kentucky Statewide Bacteria TMDL report under future public notices.

Revisions to these draft reports may be made following the public comment period before submitting to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for approval. Comments and Division of Water responses will be published in the final reports.