



**CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION**  
***Saving a National Treasure***

Dana  
Lee McDonnell

Acting Secretary Patrick McDonnell  
Rachel Carson State Office Building  
400 Market Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17101

September 9, 2016

Dear Acting Secretary McDonnell:

The results are in: **the Lower Susquehanna River is sick and must be listed as impaired** as it relates to the struggles of its smallmouth bass population.

The Pennsylvania Office of the Chesapeake Bay Foundation (PA CBF) has collected **6,204 signatures** of concerned citizens who have signed our petition to add the Lower Susquehanna River to the 2016 Integrated Water Quality Monitoring and Assessment Report. An impaired listing would allow the restoration process to begin in earnest, designating the river for additional study and new levels of investment in restoration. **The time is now!**

While the latest report recommends that four miles of the Susquehanna River be impaired for recreational use and includes an impairment for consumption of channel catfish, these listings are not directly related to the condition of the smallmouth bass population in the river.

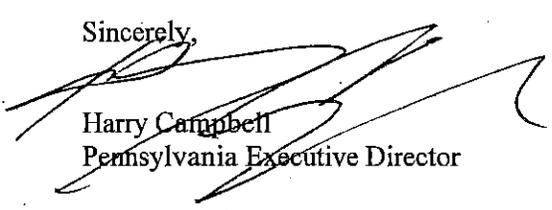
As you know, since 2005 diseased and dying smallmouth bass have been found in the lower sections of the River. In what was once a world-class bass fishery, fish continue to bear sores and lesions. Young-of-year smallmouth bass remain at dangerously low survivorship rates. And researchers have found widespread intersex characteristics—adult male bass with female eggs in their testes—in smallmouth bass.

Most recently, a multi-agency study led by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection found that endocrine-disrupting compounds, herbicides, and pathogens and parasites are the most-likely causes of diseased and dying smallmouth bass in the Lower Susquehanna. Diseased, weakened and stressed smallmouth bass is not the norm — **we know things aren't right**. And, thousands of Pennsylvania's citizens agree.

In order to ensure that the voices of concerned citizens are heard, CBF submits the attached petition as comments to the 2016 Draft Pennsylvania Integrated Water Quality Monitoring and Assessment Report. CBF would also like to include the names of more than 1,9014 residents of York County and 30 supporting businesses and organizations who joined with CBF recently to say that Clean Water Counts to the residents of York County. Those on this bi-partisan list of Pennsylvanians believe that the administration must produce a strong plan to protect Pennsylvania's rivers and streams. Clean Water Counts to the citizens of the Commonwealth.

Listing the Lower Susquehanna as impaired will begin the process of developing a plan to fix it. The river, the critters that live in it, and the communities that rely on it are worth the investment.

Sincerely,

  
Harry Campbell  
Pennsylvania Executive Director

SECRETARY'S OFFICE

Cc: Governor Tom Wolf

SEP 12 2016