

REQUEST FOR COMMENT & NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING

Proposed Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) for the Birch Island Run Watershed in Clinton County.

Moshannon District Mining Office: 186 Enterprise Road, Philipsburg, PA 16866

The Department of Environmental Protection (Department) is holding a public meeting on Wednesday, July 14, 2004 beginning at 6:30 p.m. at the Multiservice Center in Clearfield, PA, to discuss and accept comments on a proposed TMDL. The proposed TMDL was established in accordance with the requirements of the 1996 Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act. Three stream segments in the Birch Island Run Watershed have been identified as impaired on the 1996, 1998, and 2002 Pennsylvania 303(d) lists due to high levels of metals and depressed pH. The listed segments and miles degraded are shown in the following table:

Stream Code	Stream Name	Miles Degraded
25529 (segment 7148)	Birch Island Run	6.2
25530 (segment 7149)	Little Birch Island Run	4.3
25544 (segment 7150)	Amos Branch	1.6

The proposed plan provides calculations of the stream's total capacity to accept metals (aluminum, iron, and manganese) and pH, and maintain levels below water quality criteria. The applicable water quality criteria are as follows:

Parameter	<i>Criterion Value (mg/l)</i>	<i>Total Recoverable/Dissolved</i>
Aluminum (Al)	0.75	Total Recoverable
Iron (Fe)	1.50	Total Recoverable
Manganese (Mn)	1.00	Total Recoverable
pH *	6.0-9.0	N/A

The pollutants come primarily from abandoned mine workings. Birch Island Run Watershed was surface mined as recently as the late 1980's. The effects of this mining are still present. The TMDL consists load allocations (LA), which are made to nonpoint sources of pollution and waste load allocations (WLA), which are made to point sources of pollution.

The TMDL was developed using Monte Carlo Simulation to determine long-term average concentrations that each stream segment could accept and still meet water quality criteria 99 percent of the time. Monte Carlo Simulation allows for the expansion of a dataset based on its statistical makeup. Since there was no critical flow condition where criteria were exceeded, the Department used the average flow to express the loading values in the TMDL.

The TMDL sets allowable loading rates for metals and acidity at specified points in the watershed. The basis of information used in the establishment of this TMDL is field data collected during the previous few years.

The data and all supporting information used to develop the proposed TMDL are available from the Department. To request a copy of the proposed TMDL and an information sheet, contact

John Mital, Geologic Specialist
Moshannon District Mining Office
186 Enterprise Road
Philipsburg, PA 16866
phone: (814)-342-8200
email: jmital@state.pa.us

The TMDL can be viewed and printed by accessing the Department's web site at www.dep.state.pa.us (PA Keyword: TMDL).

Written comments will be accepted at the above address and must be postmarked by August 12, 2004.

Persons who plan to make a presentation at the public meeting should notify the Department no later than 4:00 p.m. Wednesday, July 7th. The Department will consider all comments in developing the final TMDL, which will be submitted to the EPA for approval.