



REGION 6

DALLAS, TX 75270

May 21, 2026

TRANSMITTED VIA EMAIL

Bailey Taylor
Chief Administrator of Environment and
DEQ Director Energy and Environment
5301 Northshore Drive
North Little Rock, Arkansas 72118-5317

RE: Arkansas 2024 and 2026 Integrated Water Quality Monitoring and Assessment Reports

Dear Ms. Taylor:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (the EPA) has reviewed the 2024 and 2026 State of Arkansas Clean Water Act (CWA) § 303(d)/§ 305(b) Integrated Water Quality Monitoring and Assessment Reports, which contain Arkansas's Section 303(d) lists of water quality limited segments. The EPA received Arkansas's 2024 303(d) list on July 31, 2025, and received Arkansas's 2026 303(d) list on April 1, 2026. The EPA is taking action to approve all waterbodies identified by Arkansas as impaired on the Section 303(d) lists.

In accordance with 40 C.F.R. § 130.7(b)(5), States are required to "assemble and evaluate all existing and readily available water quality-related data to develop the list" required by Section 303(d) of the CWA and 40 C.F.R. §130.7(b)(1). The EPA concludes that Arkansas has met the requirements of 40 C.F.R. § 130.7(b) with regard to all of the waterbody/parameter combinations listed by the State. Therefore, the EPA approves the State's decision to list these waters.

While the EPA is approving all impairments identified by the State of Arkansas on the Section 303(d) lists, the EPA is taking no action and requesting additional information from Arkansas regarding the development and application of water quality standards on the State's waterbodies subject to minerals Ecoregional Reference values. As discussed with you on September 16, 2025, the EPA appreciates the ongoing work being done by the Arkansas Division of Environmental Quality (DEQ) to consider potential updates to water quality standards pertaining to minerals, and DEQ's expressed commitment to continue working to address minerals issues. In addition, the EPA is also taking no action and seeking additional information on waters subject to the site-specific minerals criteria that are not on the list based on those criteria. The EPA is committed to engaging with the State to bring the ongoing work to completion to assure achievement of the State's water quality goals and CWA requirements.

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The EPA is also taking no action at this time and requesting additional information from Arkansas on a small number of waterbody/parameter combinations. The EPA requests additional information from the State regarding the impairment status of Poinsette Lake (Enclosure 1). The EPA is also requesting clarification from the State regarding the appropriate application of water quality standards and assessment methodology to assess Ouachita Lake for mercury (Enclosure 1).

The EPA appreciates DEQ's effort to develop the 2024 and 2026 Integrated Water Quality Monitoring and Assessment Reports. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Elijah Klopp, of my staff, at (214) 665-7149 or via email at klopp.elijah@epa.gov.

Sincerely,

Troy C. Hill, P.E.
Director
Water Division

Enclosure

cc: Stacie Wassell, Associate Director, OWQ
Joe Martin, Deputy Associate Director, OWQ
Felicia Osburn, Ecologist Coordinator, OWQ
Brie Lusk, Branch Manager, OWQ