



**NORTH DAKOTA**  
DEPARTMENT of HEALTH

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SECTION  
Gold Seal Center, 918 E. Divide Ave.  
Bismarck, ND 58501-1947  
701.328.5200 (fax)  
www.ndhealth.gov



September 14, 2010

Brian M. Frazer, Chief  
Wetlands & Aquatic Resources Regulatory Branch  
Office of Wetlands Oceans & Watersheds  
U.S. EPA Headquarters  
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW (MC 4504T)  
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Mr. Frazer:

The North Dakota Department of Health completed the state portion of the triennial review of Water Quality Standards and is awaiting final EPA approval. An important component of the triennial review is the removal of municipal water supply designation for the Sheyenne River from its headwaters to 0.1 mile downstream from Baldhill Dam. Furthermore, the sulfate criterion was changed from 450 milligrams per liter (mg/L) (30-day arithmetic average) to 750 mg/L. The department's analysis shows this is protective of all designated uses including protection of aquatic life.

In addition to the issues associated with the Triennial Review, we have requested that EPA allow us to amend stream standards for sulfate downstream of the Baldhill Dam and along the Red River. Above-normal precipitation, saturated conditions in the upper basin, and the ever-increasing risk of an uncontrolled discharge from Stump Lake necessitates immediate government action. An uncontrolled discharge from Stump Lake through Tolna Coulee to the Sheyenne River would result in the loss of all designated water quality uses in the Sheyenne River as well as a substantial reach of the Red River of the North.

In order to accommodate increased flows from Devils Lake and greatly reduce the risk of an uncontrolled discharge of very poor water quality, a change in the numeric criterion in the lower Sheyenne River for sulfates from 450 mg/L (30-day arithmetic average) to 750 mg/L is necessary. Furthermore, EPA must work with the state to adjust the sulfate water quality standard for the Red River which could be up to 500 mg/L, to accommodate moving water out of Devils Lake.

To follow up on our previous request, due to the increasing flood impact experienced in the Devils Lake region and concern over increasing lake elevations for the upcoming winter and spring, immediate action is needed to modify the sulfate standards. I can be reached at 701.328.5152.

Sincerely,

L. David Glatt P.E., Chief  
Environmental Health Section  
North Dakota Department of Health

LDG/MTS:cc

Environmental Health  
Section Chief's Office  
701.328.5150

Division of  
Air Quality  
701.328.5188

Division of  
Municipal Facilities  
701.328.5211

Division of  
Waste Management  
701.328.5166

Division of  
Water Quality  
701.328.5210