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Environmental News

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

(Kansas City, Kan., August 13, 2010) - EPA has approved Kansas' 2010 list of impaired waters, which removes 264 waters from the previous impaired waters list and adds 468 waters. This brings the total number of impaired waters in the state to 1,387.

A water body is placed on the impaired waters list when monitoring finds that pollutant levels prevent the lake, river, or stream from attaining its beneficial uses. Beneficial uses include human recreation, fish consumption, and maintaining healthy aquatic life.

EPA Region 7 Administrator Karl Brooks said, "The Kansas Department of Health and Environment's extensive monitoring system helps locate waters in need of our attention. We now must take action to clean them up. The Clean Water Act was passed almost 40 years ago, and while we have made much progress in the last 40 years, we still have a great deal of work to do to make our waters safe and healthy."

The impaired waters list helps the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) set priorities for restoration activities to improve water quality in the coming years. Once a water body is included on the impaired waters list, development of a total maximum daily load (TMDL), a budget for water pollution, is necessary. TMDLs set the maximum amount of a pollutant that a water body can receive and still meet water quality standards. TMDLs also guide decision-making about how to improve water quality by looking at all the different sources of pollution.

"EPA is committed to working with KDHE and all interested parties to develop other innovative tools to keep pollutants out of the water," Brooks noted. "Kansas provides a great opportunity for water quality improvement because it has engaged citizens, creative leaders, and a real need for improvement."

KDHE submitted its impaired waters list to EPA for review and approval as required by the Clean Water Act (CWA). The CWA requires EPA to review the state's list of impaired waters to determine if the state reasonably considered available water

quality–related data, and identified waters to be listed.

EPA's August 12, 2010, decision letter provides a more detailed description of EPA's review and the basis for this action. The decision letter, including the 2010 impaired waters list, is available at http://epa.gov/region07/news_events/legal/ [1]

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More information [2] about water-related activities in EPA Region 7

SOURCE [3]

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