UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
Region 6
1445 Ross Avenue, Suite 1200
Dallas, Texas 75202 - 2733

FEB 09 2016

Mr. Caleb Osborne, Associate Director
Office of Water Quality
Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality
5301 Northshore Drive
North Little Rock, Arkansas 72118

Dear Mr. Osborne:

We understand that the state of Arkansas's planning process for the fiscal year (FY) 2017 Clean Water Act (CWA), Sections 106 and 604(b) funding may be underway. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) appreciates the State's water quality protection and restoration efforts in FY 2015, and the Region continues to focus on improving the water quality of our nation's rivers and streams as set forth in EPA's Strategic Plan.

Enclosed is a list of priorities that we ask you to include in your FY 2017 CWA, Sections 106 and 604(b) work plans. The Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) FY 17 Section 106 funding target is $2,077,000 and the FY 17 funding target for Section 604(b) is $100,000. The suggested targets are based on the FY 2016 allotments and are strictly for planning purposes since the FY17 budget has not yet been approved. The Region asks ADEQ to submit the FY 17 application and work plan by July 1, 2016.

As you are aware, your grant has a programmatic condition that requires EPA to determine if sufficient progress is being made to complete work commitments and to draw down the funds within the project period. The cooperative agreement terms require close collaboration between our agencies to effectively implement the scope through routine communication, coordination and technical assistance. To facilitate those efforts, my staff is always available to assist your staff as they work to complete these projects.

You may contact Claudia Hosch at (214) 665-6464, or have your staff contact their project officer with any questions about Sections 106 and 604(b) for FY17. We appreciate the efforts of your Agency in protecting the environment and public health.

Sincerely yours,

William K. Honker, P.E.
Director
Water Division

Enclosure

ecc: Ms. Sarah Clem, ADEQ

CLEAN WATER ACT, SECTION 106/604(b) FY 17 PRIORITIES FOR THE ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

1/29/16

Priority Areas	EPA/ADEQ FY 17 Surface Water Program Priorities
I. Water Quality Standards:	**1.Water Quality Standards:** • Expedite adoption of appropriate aquatic life and recreation uses and supporting water quality standards for Coffee Creek and Mossy Lake, and other waters lacking these uses; coordinate with EPA on Ouachita River Keeper Petition • Update and revise CPP guidelines for developing site-specific minerals criteria • Examine communication 3rd party rulemaking process and take steps to enhance communication and coordination If state opts to revise minerals criteria, develop a plan and timeline; consider options for criteria development. **2. Nutrients:** • Collaborate with EPA on nutrient criteria development projects for ERWs and the Red River • Develop interim* nutrient translators of the narrative nutrient WQS suitable for assessment purposes for all water body types by fall of 2017 • Participate in stressor/response criteria development project to ensure sound N and P criteria development Work with ANRC to refine the nutrient reduction strategy to reduce nutrients to the Gulf
II. Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL)	Consistent with the new Clean Water Act Section 303(d) Vision, States will develop Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) and TMDL alternatives. The State will develop the *number* of Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) and/or TMDL alternatives according to the TMDL priority ranking list estimated for 2017. **Outputs include:** 1) A responsiveness summary; 2) if requested by EPA, copies of all comment letters received; 3) technical support information such as the applicable water quality standard, source assessment, data analysis, water quality monitoring and modeling assumption, and calculation methods; and 4) as appropriate, the loading capacity analysis (i.e., model), supporting input data, and a modeling report.

III. National Pollutant Discharge Permits	1. Commitment to meet Regional Current Permit Issuance Rate of 90% and a work plan deliverable detailing the number of permits to be issued to maintain the 90% permit issuance rate. 2. Commitment to meet Region Priority Permit Issuance identified through the EPA Priority Permit Selection Process. 3. Provide EPA with periodic reporting (at a minimum, semi-annually) required for EPA's Program Activity Measures by reporting on overall permit universe, permit issuance, MS4 coverage, MSGP coverage, CGP coverage, CAFO, SIUs, CIUs, priority permits. 4. Assist EPA with the State appropriate phases of planning, conducting and report review for the EPA Region 6 lead Permit Quality Review effort. 5. Travel for state staff participation in Region 6 MS4 Operators Conference
IV. Monitoring and Assessment	1. Commitment to implement state-wide statistically-valid monitoring surveys. The results from the surveys are to be reported as a component of the state's Integrated Report/305b/303d (narrative form) and/or in the probability survey module of the Assessment Database. Outputs: 1) provide a summary of state-scale survey data availability; and 2) If applicable implement state-wide statistically-valid monitoring surveys. 2. Identifying Specific Causes of Water Quality Impairment for Waterbody Classification and Restoration Planning. Outputs: 1) develop and submit a process to target these impaired waters with impairments which are unknown, a 2) provide a timeline to evaluate waters identified as impaired for which specific causes of impairment are unknown, for causal analysis.
Priority Area	**EPA/ADEQ FY 17 Ground Water Program Priorities**
I. Source Water Protection Plans	The Region recommends that states continue to develop source water protection plans. These are protection plans for ground water and surface water bodies that serve as a source for drinking water.