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Delivered via U.S. Mail & Electronic Mail

Honorable Michael S. Regan, Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Mail code: 1101A
Washington, D.C. 20460
Regan.Michael@epa.gov

Honorable Daniel Blackman, Regional Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency – Region 4
Sam Nunn Atlanta Federal Center
61 Forsyth Street, SW
Atlanta, Georgia 30303-8960
Blackman.Daniel@epa.gov

Re: Florida Water Quality Criteria for Toxic Pollutants to Protect Human Health

Dear Administrator Regan and Regional Administrator Blackman:

This letter, submitted by the Environmental Defense Alliance and Waterkeepers Florida, requests that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency take immediate action to ensure the adoption of new and revised water quality criteria for toxic pollutants to protect human health in Florida.

As you know, States are required to conduct a review of water quality standards, including water quality criteria, at least once every three years (the "triennial review"). Clean Water Act § 303(c)(1), 33 U.S.C. § 1313(c)(1); 40 C.F.R. § 131.20. Whenever a State conducts such a triennial review or revises or adopts new standards, it is required to adopt criteria for all toxic pollutants listed pursuant to Clean Water Act § 307(a)(1), 33 U.S.C. § 1317(a)(1), for which criteria have been published under Clean Water Act § 304(a), 33 U.S.C. § 1314(a), the discharge or presence of which in the affected waters could reasonably be expected to interfere with those designated uses adopted by the State,

as necessary to support such designated uses. States should establish numerical criteria based on EPA recommended criteria published under Clean Water Act § 304(a), 33 U.S.C. § 1314(a), EPA recommended criteria modified to reflect site-specific conditions, or other scientifically defensible methods. 40 C.F.R. § 131.11(b). States are required to adopt water quality criteria, based on sound scientific rationale and sufficient parameters or constituents, that protect the designated uses of water bodies. Clean Water Act § 303(c)(2)(A), 33 U.S.C. § 1313(c)(2)(A); 40 C.F.R. § 131.11(a).

The Clean Water Act directs the Administrator to promptly prepare and publish proposed regulations setting forth revised or new water quality standards for the navigable waters involved in any case where the Administrator determines that a revised or new standard is necessary to meet the requirements of the Clean Water Act. Clean Water Act § 303(c)(4)(B), 33 U.S.C. § 1313(c)(4)(B). A State's failure to complete the timely review and adoption of appropriate standards required by Clean Water Act § 303(c)(2)(B), 33 U.S.C. § 1313(c)(2)(B), constitutes a failure "to meet the requirements of the Act" and is a sufficient basis for the Administrator to make a determination under Clean Water Act § 303(c)(4)(B), 33 U.S.C. § 1313(c)(4)(B), that new or revised water quality criteria are necessary to ensure designated uses are adequately protected. *Water Quality Standards; Establishment of Numeric Criteria for Priority Toxic Pollutants; States' Compliance – Final Rule*, 57 Fed. Reg. 60848, 60857 (Dec. 22, 1992); *Water Quality Standards; Establishment of Numeric Criteria for Priority Toxic Pollutants for the State of California – Final rule*, 65 Fed. Reg. 31682, 31687 (May 18, 2000).

Despite numerous triennial reviews, the adoption of numerous new or revised water quality standards, and the consideration of a rulemaking petition, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection has failed to adopt new or revised water quality criteria necessary to protect drinking water consumption uses and fish and shellfish consumption uses of navigable waters in Florida. Specifically, the Department has failed to adopt new water quality criteria for 67 toxic pollutants (see **TABLE 1** enclosed) without demonstrating that these toxic pollutants are not present in the navigable waters of Florida or could not reasonably be expected to interfere with the designated uses of such waters; the Department has adopted water quality criteria for 19 toxic pollutants that are less stringent than EPA's recommended national water quality criteria (see **TABLE 2** enclosed) without demonstrating that the criteria are based on site-specific conditions or other scientifically defensible methods; and the Department has failed to revise existing water quality criteria for 32 toxic pollutants that are no longer based on sound scientific rationale (see **TABLE 3** through **TABLE 9** enclosed).

To ensure adequate protection of human health from the consumption of water, fish and shellfish in Florida, your immediate action is needed. Accordingly, we request

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that you make a determination that new and revised water quality criteria are necessary to meet the requirements of the Clean Water Act in Florida.

We request the opportunity to meet with you and your staff concerning this matter.

Sincerely,

Environmental Defense Alliance

By: David A. Ludder
Attorney for Environmental Defense Alliance
https://www.environmentaldefensealliance.org
Law Office of David A. Ludder, PLLC
9150 McDougal Court
Tallahassee, Florida 32312
davidaludder@enviro-lawyer.com
Phone: (850) 386-5671

Waterkeepers Florida

By: Jen Lomberk, Esq.
Chair of Waterkeepers Florida
http://waterkeepersflorida.org
Matanzas Riverkeeper
291 Cubbedge Road
St. Augustine, Florida 32080
Jen@MatanzasRiverkeeper.org
Phone: (904) 471-9878

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cc: ***Via Electronic Mail Only***

Hon. Radhika Fox, Assistant Administrator
Immediate Office of the Assistant Administrator for Water
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Mail code: 4101M
Washington, D.C. 20460
Fox.Radhika@epa.gov

Ms. Deborah Nagle, Director
Office of Science and Technology
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Mail code: 4301M
Washington, D.C. 20460
nagle.deborah@epa.gov

Ms. Sara Hisel-McCoy, Director
Standards and Health Protection Division
Office of Science and Technology
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Mail code: 4301M
Washington, D.C. 20460
hisel-mccoy.sara@epa.gov

Ms. Betsy Behl, Director
Health and Ecological Criteria Division
Office of Science and Technology
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Mail code: 4301M
Washington, D.C. 20460
behl.betsy@epa.gov

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Ms. Jeaneanne Gettle, Director
Water Division
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency – Region 4
Sam Nunn Atlanta Federal Center
61 Forsyth Street, S.W.
Atlanta, Georgia 30303-8960
Gettle.Jeaneanne@epa.gov