NPDES PERMITS & TMDLS BRANCH
WEEKLY ACTIVITY REPORT FOR WEEK ENDING 02/12/16

ILLINOIS RIVER WATERSHED TECHNICAL WORKGROUP MEETING: On February 11-12, 2016, the Cherokee Nation will host the Illinois River Watershed Technical Workgroup. The meeting will center on refinements to the watershed and Lake Tenkiller models. EPA Region 6 will lead a discussion on comments received from the principals including Arkansas and Oklahoma state agencies. An anticipated outcome of the meeting is a defined path forward with the models which would represents a consensus within the principal group. The discussion will also focus on target setting regarding the Oklahoma scenic rivers phosphorus criteria and climate concerns raised by the Cherokee Nation. Additionally, a tentative public meeting in the watershed will be discussed with input from the principals. **Taimur Shaikh, 665-7181; Richard Wooster, 665-6473**

PESTICIDE GENERAL PERMIT; REQUEST FOR 401 CERTIFICATION: Representatives of the NPDES Permits & TMDL Branch issued fourteen (14) Request for 401 Certification letters to tribal and state agencies for the 2016 proposed Pesticide General Permit. The permit was published in the Federal Register January 26, 2016, and requires coverage for point source discharges from the application of pesticides into waters of the U.S. As part of the permitting reissuance process and in accordance with Section 401 of the Clean Water Act, the EPA must obtain 401 certification from tribal and/or state entities to ensure conditions of the proposed permit are protective of state's/tribal water quality standards and laws. **Kilty Baskin, 665-7500; Paul Kaspar, 665-7459**

CHURCHILL DOWNS/FAIR GROUNDS RACE COURSE, NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA: The Region 6 (R6) NPDES Permits and TMDL Branch participated in a conference call with the Department of Justice (DOJ) and the R6 Water Enforcement Branch on February 10, 2016. Churchill Downs/Fair Grounds (Churchill) has been referred to DOJ to resolve ongoing enforcement concerns at the racetrack. One of the DOJ discussion topics included a Louisiana Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (LPDES) permit modification request submitted by Churchill to the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ). As requested, the permit modification action would not comply with applicable technology standards for containment of process wastewaters. Coordination between NPDES Permits and Water Enforcement will continue as the potential issuance of this permit modification could lead to the need to object to permit issuance during EPA's oversight review. **Paul Kaspar 665-7459**

DRAFT PERMIT PROPOSES INCREASED LOADINGS TO IMPAIRED BAYOU MACON: The NPDES Permits and TMDL Branch is reviewing and coordinating with the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ) regarding the proposed permit for the Town of Delhi. The proposed permit would significantly increase the current authorized loadings for TSS and BOD due to wastewater received from ConAgra's sweet potato processing facility. The receiving water, Bayou Macon, is currently impaired for several pollutants including dissolved oxygen and turbidity. The TMDL for Turbidity, TSS, and Siltation which was finalized in 2002 chose to pursue reductions in inorganic suspended solids from non-point sources to alleviate the impairment. We would like to determine if organic suspended solids from point sources may be contributing to the continued impairment. **Kay Schwab, 665-6635; Paul Kaspar 665-7459; Taim Shaikh, 665-7181; Rich Wooster, 665-6473**

NEW MEXICO BLUEWATER LAKE NUTRIENT TMDLs: The New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) has publicly noticed its first Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) for nutrient impairment of a lake. Written to address an impairment caused by total nitrogen (TN), the Bluewater Lake TMDL also establishes a protective target level for total phosphorus (TP). Region 6 has provided NMED written and oral comments on an earlier draft of the TMDL and intends to submit further comments prior to the February 19, 2016, closing of the public comment period. **Miranda Hodgkiss, 665-7538; Richard Wooster, 665-6473**

ARKANSAS 303(d) LIST OUT FOR PUBLIC NOTICE: In January, ADEQ public noticed the Draft 2016 Impaired Waterbodies List. A public hearing will be held at the ADEQ office March 1, 2016. The public notice

will end March 11, 2016 and a staff member plans to attend the public hearing. A comment letter is being drafted and portions of the letter are under review by legal staff. Several staff members are currently reviewing data from the 2016 period of record to determine concurrence with proposed listings. **Laura Hunt, 665-9729; Selena Medrano 665-2776**

DRAFT JANUARY 2016 WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT PLAN (WQMP) UPDATES FOR TECHNICAL REVIEW: On February 5, 2016, the Assessment, Listing, and Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Section received the draft January 2016 WQMP from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ). The WQMP document contains updates for nine TMDLs, including updated projected effluent limits. It also contains a summary of planning information and designated management agencies. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has 30 days to conduct a technical evaluation and provide comments to TCEQ. TCEQ will then submit a final January 2016 WQMP Update document, including responses to EPA's comments, to the EPA for review and approval. **Linda Adams, 665-6646**

APPROVAL OF UPDATES TO THE OKLAHOMA WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT PLAN: NPDES Permits Branch personnel has reviewed the Waste Load Evaluation for the Ottawa County Rural Water and Sewer District #1, (Ottawa County RW&SD #1, Permit #OK0028291) and technically accepted for projected effluent limit update. This update will become part of the WQMP Update after completion of its public participation process, certification by the ODEQ, and approval by the Environmental Protection Agency. Syed Shahriyar, 665-2783

NEW MEXICO 303(d) LIST OUT FOR PUBLIC NOTICE: In February, NMED public noticed the Draft 2016-2018 State of New Mexico Clean Water Act (CWA) Sections 303(d)/305(b) Integrated List of Assessed Surface Waters. The public notice will end March 18, 2016. A draft was provided and comments were submitted by staff to NMED prior to the public notice. **Laura Hunt, 665-9729**

ANALYTICAL DATA RECEIVED FOR LOUISIANA OFFSHORE OIL PORT (LOOP): EPA and LDEQ are drafting a joint reissuance permit for LOOP which discharges into both Federal and State waters. EPA has concerns regarding possible toxicity at Outfall 004 which is proposed to discharge brine from the Brine Storage Reservoir. Biomonitoring is typically used to ensure the state's water quality standard for "no discharge of toxics;" however, the permittee requested that other options be explored. Since the application only provided data on the levels of TDS and chlorides, additional analytical data was requested to determine what other pollutants are being discharged. EPA and LDEQ are currently reviewing the recently received results. **Paul Kaspar, 665-7459; Isaac Chen, 665-7364; Taimur Shaikh, 665-7181; Kay Schwab 665-6635**

URBAN WATERS SMALL GRANT REVIEW: Reviewed proposals received for the Urban Waters Small Grant program. Staff completed reviewing assigned proposals and will attend a review panel meeting March 1, 2016 to discuss assigned proposals. **Selena Medrano, 665-2776**

FEBRUARY 2016 NATIONAL POLLUTANT DISCHARGE ELIMINATION SYSTEM PUBLIC NOTICE: Staff members from the NPDES Management Section have scheduled the next public notice for Saturday, February 27, 2016. NPDES permits will be public noticed and posted to the web page so that the public can review the draft permit package and submit comments, if appropriate. The comments for these notices will be due March 28, 2016. **Evelyn Rosborough, 665-7515; Stacey Abbott; La Gayla Johnson, 665-7517**

NPDES REGIONAL WEBPAGES CONFERENCE CALL: The Permits and TMDLs Branch, along with Bruce Fitch of External Affairs, participated in a nationwide call led by OWM regarding migration of NPDES web pages to Drupal. OWM-WPD is targeting March 31, 2016, as the final day for content to reside at a temporary home on ww3, requiring Region 6 Permits and TMDLs Branch to expedite our content review. Discussions are ongoing between OWM and OEI about final presentation and future management of regional

web content. More information will follow regarding options. **Stacey Dwyer, 665-6729; Paul Kaspar 665-7529; Nelly Smith, 665-7109; Denise Hamilton, 665-2775**

NOTICE TEAM CHARTER: Staff member from the NPDES Management Section have been selected to be a part of the Lean Public Notice Team Charter. This project "Public Notice for Agency Actions/Rulemaking", will examine Region 6's current practices for providing information about our actions and explore more effective and cost efficient means of communicating significate actions to our customers, as well as hear from them about the effectiveness of our communication with them. The chartered team will host its first meeting on Wednesday, February 10, 2016. **Evelyn Rosborough, 665-7515**