

SUSQUEHANNA RIVER BASIN COMMISSION
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**SUSQUEHANNA COMMISSION REPORTS NITROGEN, PHOSPHORUS
AND SEDIMENT AMOUNTS FROM SUSQUEHANNA RIVER TO
CHESAPEAKE BAY CONTINUE TO DECLINE**

Reduced Pollutants in Susquehanna River Benefit Chesapeake Bay

HARRISBURG, Pa. – The Susquehanna River Basin Commission (SRBC) today announced that nutrient and suspended-sediment trends in the Susquehanna River Basin are improving. SRBC’s findings are based on analyses of flow-adjusted trends data from 1985 to 2008. Comparison of 2008 data with baseline data, collected from 1985 to 1989, also indicates reductions in sediment and nutrient loads.

Nutrients, including nitrogen and phosphorus, are point and non-point source pollutants that impair water quality. With the Susquehanna River being the largest tributary to the Chesapeake Bay – providing more than 50 percent of its fresh water inflows – reductions in nutrient and sediment loads in the river directly benefit the bay.

“The Commission’s findings do help validate the fact that the Commonwealth’s aggressive nutrient and sediment reduction efforts over the years are working and supporting bay restoration efforts,” said John Hines, Deputy Secretary for Water Management, Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection and SRBC’s Pennsylvania Alternate Commissioner.

SRBC’s long-term monitoring data and trends information are used by Pennsylvania, Maryland and New York and federal environmental resource agencies to determine the areas in which nutrient and sediment loads are decreasing or increasing, thereby helping them to assess and target management options.

“With nearly 25 years of uninterrupted monitoring, the Commission’s nutrient and sediment data for the Susquehanna basin are significant and invaluable for decision making,” said SRBC Executive Director Paul Swartz. “We started off with six long-term monitoring stations in Pennsylvania, and then added 17 more along smaller tributaries in Pennsylvania, New York and Maryland in 2004 and 2005.”

SRBC collects samples from the six long-term stations: Susquehanna River at Towanda, Danville and Marietta; West Branch Susquehanna River at Lewisburg; Juniata River at Newport; and Conestoga River at Conestoga. To establish annual loads and determine overall trends, SRBC routinely collects samples at the six sites every month, and also during and after storm events to determine the effect of flow on loads and yields.

The 2008 findings from the six long-term stations as well as the 17 additional stations are in SRBC's report *Nutrients and Suspended Sediment Transported in the Susquehanna River Basin, 2008, and Trends, January 1985 through December 2008*. The full technical report (Publication No. 267) and interactive map are available on SRBC's web site at www.srbc.net/programs/CBP/nutrientprogram.htm.

The Harrisburg-based SRBC (www.srbc.net) is the governing agency established by the federal government and the states of New York, Pennsylvania and Maryland to protect and wisely manage the water resources of the Susquehanna River Basin. The Susquehanna River starts in Cooperstown, N.Y., and flows 444 miles to Havre de Grace, Md., where the river meets the Chesapeake Bay.

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