

**SUSQUEHANNA RIVER BASIN COMMISSION**  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**SRBC ISSUES WATER AVAILABILITY STUDY FOR DEER CREEK**  
**Projected 24 Percent Population Growth Expected To Intensify Water Demand Conflicts**

HARRISBURG, Pa. – The Susquehanna River Basin Commission (SRBC) today released a study projecting water use demands on Deer Creek Watershed through the year 2025 and detailing the limits of Deer Creek to meet water supply demands during low flows. The population of this rapidly developing bi-state watershed is projected to undergo another 24 percent increase by the year 2025. The increase is currently fueled by growth and development around Shrewsbury in York County, Pennsylvania, and Bel Air in Harford County, Maryland, and will be further intensified by the military base realignment plan for Aberdeen Proving Ground. The *Deer Creek Water Availability Study* is available on SRBC's web site at [www.srbc.net/planning](http://www.srbc.net/planning).

“The Commission's overall conclusion is that there are limits to the water resources in Deer Creek, particularly in summer and early fall when flows are normally at their lowest,” said SRBC Maryland Commissioner Dr. Robert Summers (Deputy Secretary, Maryland Department of the Environment). “The projected growth and urbanization likely to be realized over the next 20 years in the Deer Creek Watershed will only add to current water availability problems and stresses on aquatic resources.”

In the 171-square-mile watershed, water is used largely for domestic, commercial, industrial and agricultural purposes. In light of the projected growth and development, SRBC evaluated a number of factors to determine potential conflicts over future water availability, including the region's geology, precipitation intake and natural losses (such as evaporation), percentage of groundwater and surface water contributing to Deer Creek, and frequency of and impacts from past drought events.

SRBC Executive Director Paul Swartz said, “Based on existing and projected water demands versus availability, it is not prudent for communities in and around the watershed to rely on Deer Creek as a stand-alone water supply source. Instead, they should look to the creek as part of a conjunctive system, where multiple sources are combined to meet the area's water needs.”

In light of the growing water needs and concerns over availability, SRBC presented a number of recommendations in the Deer Creek study. The recommendations include:

- Continue collecting reported water use data;
- Monitor tributary flows and groundwater levels in high demand and sensitive areas;
- Implement stormwater management to maintain aquifer recharge and base flows;
- Encourage water conservation;
- Develop site-specific use standards to enhance the protection of all streams in the Deer Creek Watershed; and
- Compile information on seasons and hydrologic conditions associated with recreational needs.

Swartz said, “In addition to serving interests in and around the Deer Creek Watershed, SRBC will use the findings from this study to shape our own regulatory and planning decisions affecting this watershed.”

SRBC ([www.srbc.net](http://www.srbc.net)) is the governing agency established under a 100-year compact signed on December 24, 1970, 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 the Chesapeake Bay at Havre de Grace, Md.

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