

SUSQUEHANNA RIVER BASIN COMMISSION
1721 North Front Street • Harrisburg, PA 17102-2391 • www.srbc.net

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 26, 2009

CONTACT: Susan Obleski

Director of Communications

Office: (717) 238-0423, x316 Cell: (717) 215-7278

**SRBC ASSESSING WATER RESOURCE
AVAILABILITY AND CHALLENGES IN MORRISON COVE**

Best Management Practices to Be Recommended to Reduce Impacts on Water Resources

HARRISBURG, Pa. – The Susquehanna River Basin Commission (SRBC) is studying the watersheds within Morrison Cove to assess the area’s water resource availability, challenges and potential conflicts. The Cove covers portions of Bedford and Blair Counties and includes the Roaring Spring community, which SRBC in 2005 identified as a potentially water resource stressed area.

“Over the years, Morrison Cove has experienced water resource related problems in certain areas,” said Thomas Beauduy, SRBC Deputy Director and Counsel. “The problems include reduced surface water and groundwater quality, water shortages during droughts in 2001 and 2002 and known conflicts from increasing water demand from industrial, commercial and residential growth.”

With funding from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, SRBC initiated the two-year *Morrison Cove Water Resources Study* in early 2009. The purposes of the project are to quantify the amount of groundwater available in the Morrison Cove area, identify which areas have larger or smaller groundwater reserves, determine the impact on water resources from increased demands and provide recommendations for managing the resources.

Among the major study activities, SRBC and its consultant will:

- Continuously monitor all major outflows from Morrison Cove.
- Measure groundwater levels in wells during a dry season.
- Measure stream flows on the trunk streams and all major tributaries during a dry season.
- Produce a report that summarizes the study methods and results and provides recommendations for best management and land development practices to minimize impact to water resources.

Beauduy said, “The goal of this study is to provide local government, industry and recreational users the information they need to make informed decisions and plan for sustainable water use.”

Local stakeholders, including representatives of various water-use sectors, state and municipal officials and interested conservation groups, have been asked to participate throughout the project to provide information and local perspectives and to review and comment on SRBC’s final report. SRBC recently held its first stakeholders’ meeting in mid-May to provide an overview of the project and its purposes and to exchange information with the stakeholders.

Morrison Cove is a 186-square-mile valley containing four large watersheds: Halter, Yellow, Clover and Piney Creeks. The largest population centers are Roaring Spring and Martinsburg. The primary land uses are agriculture and forested land.

The Harrisburg-based SRBC (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, New York, and flows 444 miles to Havre de Grace, Maryland, where the river meets the Chesapeake Bay.