



THE COUNTY OF CHESTER



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Overview of PADEP's "2020 Integrated Water Quality Report"

As part of the federal Clean Water Act, Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP) compiles a report every two years on whether streams, rivers and lakes are meeting state standards for drinking water, fish consumption, recreation, or supporting natural aquatic life. In December 2020, PADEP published the "2020 Pennsylvania Integrated Water Quality Monitoring and Assessment Report."

Of the 2,348 miles of streams in Chester County, PADEP periodically assesses 1,394 stream miles using an USEPA-approved assessment methodology to determine if a stream is meeting water quality standards. In the 2020 report, PADEP listed 957 miles of streams in Chester County as impaired which means they do not meet water quality standards.

For example, common impairments in Chester County include "siltation due to urban runoff/storm sewers" or "nutrients due to agriculture" although there are actually over two dozen unique impairment categories listed in Chester County. It is also possible for a stream to be listed by PADEP as impaired for two or more reasons if there are multiple impacts that result in the stream not attaining their designated use.

Summary of 2020 Report for Chester County Streams and Lakes and Changes from 2018 Report

1. Overall

- a. The total length of stream miles listed as impaired in Chester County is 961 miles, which is 69% of the streams that are assessed.
- b. There are a total of 3.8 new stream miles listed as impaired (or Non-attaining) in 2020.
- c. Some stream segments that were previously listed as impaired have had new, additional impairments identified (see breakdown below).
- d. No stream segments were removed.
- e. PADEP has updated their nomenclature on Sources and Causes of impairments to meet USEPA requirements.
- f. There are no changes to the impairments listed for lakes. The only two lakes listed as impaired are Marsh Creek Reservoir and Octoraro Reservoir.

2. Red Clay Creek watershed

Nearly all the streams in the watershed are now listed as Non-Attaining for Pathogens (source unknown) for the Recreational Use, in addition to other impairments listed in previous years.

3. Schuylkill River watershed

Three small unnamed streams that are direct tributaries to the Schuylkill River which were previously listed as Non-Attaining are confirmed as Non-Attaining with additional causes of impairments listed.

4. Trout Creek Watershed

3.8 miles of streams in Chester County that were previously listed as Attaining for Aquatic Life Uses are now listed as Non-Attaining. The impairments listed in the 2020 Report are:

- i. Urban Runoff/Storm Sewers – Flow Regime Modification,
- ii. Urban Runoff/Storm Sewers – Siltation,
- iii. Source Unknown – Cause Unknown.

5. White Clay Creek watershed

Nearly all the streams in the East Branch White Clay Creek watershed are now listed as Non-Attaining for Pathogens (source unknown) for the Recreational Use.

However, the East Branch White Clay Creek north of US 1 (above Loch Nairn Golf Links) are listed as Supporting for Recreation Use.

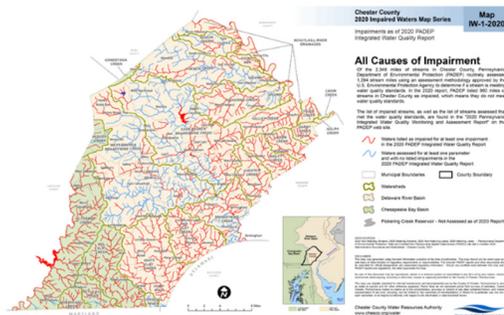
While this section is listed as Supporting for Recreational Use, it remains listed as Not Supporting for the Aquatic Life Use

6. Nomenclature Changes

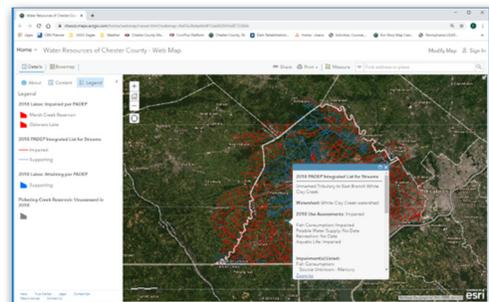
To meet USEPA requirements, several nomenclature changes to PADEP’s sources and causes were needed. The following changes were made, and noted with asterisks if they impact ChesCo. Moving forward, PADEP will only use source and cause nomenclature approved by USEPA. List of changes to Causes of Impairments that affect Chester County ...

Prior Cause Nomenclature	New Cause Nomenclature Name
Excessive Algal Growth	Algae
Flow Alterations	Flow Regime Modification or Dewatering
Organic Enrichment/Low D.O.	Organic Enrichment
Other Habitat Alterations	Habitat Alterations
Suspended Solids	Total Suspended Solids
Water/Flow Variability	Flow Regime Modification

7. Resources Available via CCWRA web site – chesco.org/ImpairedWaters



A series of 17 maps that illustrate causes of impairments listed by PADEP in 2020



Interactive maps where you can search by address and print custom maps.