



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 4
ATLANTA FEDERAL CENTER
61 FORSYTH STREET
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30303-8960

MAY 01 2015

James A. (Jac) Capp, Chief
Watershed Protection Branch
Environmental Protection Division
Georgia Department of Natural Resources
2 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, Suite 1152 East
Atlanta, Georgia 30334

Dear Mr. Capp:

The United States Environmental Protection Agency has completed its review of amendments to Chapter 391-3-6-.03 of Georgia's Rules and Regulations for Water Quality Control. Georgia Environmental Protection Division held thirteen public meetings from May of 2009 until June of 2012 regarding development of these revised water quality criteria. EPD held six public meetings regarding West Point Lake, six regarding Lake Lanier and one regarding Carters Lake to present model development and results, and solicit input from the public, including dischargers, government agencies, and environmental groups. The proposed revisions were publically noticed on EPD's website on May 22, 2013, and the public comment period ran through July 16, 2013. The State held public hearings on the proposed revisions on July 10, 2013. The revisions were adopted by the Board of Natural Resources on August 27, 2013, and became effective October 22, 2013. EPD submitted new and revised water quality standards (WQS) to the EPA by letter dated August 4, 2014, which was received by the EPA on August 7, 2014. The State's submittal included a certification from Samuel Olens, Georgia Attorney General, that the revisions were duly adopted in accordance with State law.

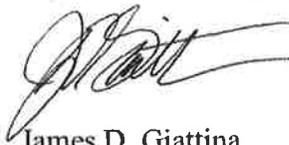
As laid out in the enclosed decision document, titled *Decision Document of the United States Environmental Protection Agency Review of Amendments to Georgia's Water Quality Regulations at Chapter 391-3-6-.03 Under § 303(c) of the Clean Water Act*, we are approving all new and revised WQS as documented in Chapter 391-3-6-.03, section (17) "Specific Criteria for Lakes and Major Lake Tributaries." These revisions include amendments to: Subparagraph (a)(i) West Point Lake chlorophyll *a* criteria; Subparagraphs (e)(i)(2) and (e)(i)(3) Lake Sidney Lanier chlorophyll *a* criteria; and Subparagraphs (f)(i)(1) and (f)(viii)(2) Carters Lake chlorophyll *a* and total phosphorus criteria.

In addition to our review pursuant to section 303 of the Clean Water Act, section 7(a)(2) of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) requires federal agencies, in consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (and National Marine Fisheries Service where applicable), to ensure that their actions are not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of federally listed species or result in the destruction or adverse modification of designated critical habitat of such species. The Agency consulted under section 7 of the ESA on its decision to approve revisions within Georgia's Water Quality Regulations contained in Chapter 391-3-6-.03. In a letter dated February 6, 2015, Donald Imm, Field Supervisor of Georgia Ecological Services, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, concurred with the EPA's determination that the

WQS revisions for the aforementioned lakes and their tributaries were not likely to adversely affect federally listed species.

We would like to commend you and your staff for your continued efforts to protect and enhance Georgia's waters during this rulemaking. We appreciate Georgia's efforts throughout the WQS development process. If you have questions regarding this action by the EPA, please contact me at (404) 562-9345 or have a member of your staff contact Mr. Stephen Maurano at (404) 562-9044.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Giattina", with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

James D. Giattina
Director
Water Protection Division

Enclosure

cc: Elizabeth Booth, EPD