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VIA DOCKET UPLOAD (www.regulations.gov)

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
EPA Docket Center
Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-OW-2019-0415
Mail Code 28221T
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20460

Re: Water Quality Trading Under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Program, Docket EPA-HQ-OW-2019-0415

To Whom It May Concern:

The Association of Ohio Metropolitan Wastewater Agencies (“AOMWA”) appreciates the opportunity to comment regarding Water Quality Trading under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (“NPDES”) Program with respect to policy approaches for addressing “baseline” issues in watersheds with an approved Total Maximum Daily Load (“TMDL”) or watershed action plan. AOMWA is a not-for-profit trade association that represents the interests of public wastewater agencies across the state of Ohio, serving more than 4 million Ohioans and successfully treating more than 300 billion gallons of wastewater each year.¹ As stewards of Ohio’s water resources, AOMWA is supportive of a broad, well-defined definition of “baseline” that incentivizes a point source, like the wastewater utilities that make up our membership, to promote water quality improvements through water quality trading with non-point sources by allowing for credits from approved water quality programs to offset NPDES permitting requirements.

Water quality trading between point and nonpoint sources presents a significant opportunity for cost-effective water quality improvements, and we write to express our support for the comments submitted by the Lower Great Miami River (LGMR) group, which are hereby incorporated herein. The LGMR sewer authorities include several members of AOMWA: the City of Dayton, the City of Fairfield, City of Middletown and Butler County. In Ohio, the LGMR has worked extensively with the Miami Conservancy District to create a model point source to nonpoint source nutrient trading program, but unfortunately, this innovative program has been

¹ AOMWA members include Akron, Avon Lake, Bowling Green, Butler County, Canton, City of Hamilton, Columbus, Dayton, City of Fairfield, Hamilton County, Lancaster, Lima, Metropolitan Sewer District of Greater Cincinnati, Middletown, Newark, Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District, Portsmouth, Solon, Springfield, Summit County, Wadsworth and Warren.

unable to gain traction because credits purchased by participating sewer authorities have not, to date, been approved for use to offset NPDES nutrient reduction requirements. By adopting a definition of “baseline” that incentivizes and facilitates water quality improvements through water quality trading programs such as the one developed by the LGMR, U.S. EPA can help encourage states such as Ohio to follow suit and incorporate similar such changes into its water quality trading rules. AOMWA therefore joins the LGMR sewer authorities in commending U.S. EPA’s efforts to support and expand the use of water quality trading, and requests that the Agency give consideration to the LGMR sewer authorities’ comments in defining the term “baseline.”

AOMWA appreciates your consideration of these comments and those submitted by the LGMR sewer authorities as well as EPA’s willingness to engage stakeholders on this important issue. Should you have any questions, please contact Rees Alexander at rees.alexander@squirepb.com or (614) 365-2798. Thank you for your attention to and consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,



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cc: (via e-mail)
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