



For Immediate Release

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Contact:

Faith Zerbe, Director of Monitoring with the Delaware Riverkeeper Network, 610-291-1403 (cell), faith@delawareriverkeeper.org

**PADEP Recommends and the EQB Votes to Protect
Aquatic Life and Streams Against Mining Pressure**

This Week's Manganese Standard and Final Rule-Making Clears the Next Hurdle

Harrisburg - This past Tuesday, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP) recommended and the Environmental Quality Board (EQB) approved in a 16 to 3 vote a stricter manganese standard to protect the State's waters. The new 0.3 mg/L human health toxics standard for manganese is stricter and replaces the prior 1.0 mg/L potable water supply standard. Manganese is a toxic chemical that is often a byproduct of mining operations and abandoned mine discharges, and can enter waterways as dissolved liquid or as particulate matter. Over time, manganese accumulates in the bodies of both fish and humans, disrupting enzyme activity. Despite pressure from the mining industry, the EQB's decision mandates that the point of compliance is retained at the discharge point rather than moved downstream to drinking water withdrawals, which would have shifted the burden and cost of manganese removal to public water utilities and downstream consumers while also harming aquatic life.

"The EQB's vote on Tuesday marks a major hurdle cleared towards better protection of aquatic life across the state," remarked **Maya van Rossum, the Delaware Riverkeeper and Leader of the Delaware Riverkeeper Network**, "I'm glad the DEP listened to the public in support of stricter standards, its sister agencies, the science and health threats, and withstood pressure from mining companies to ultimately recommend this change. This ruling will make some mining companies responsible for monitoring and removing their own manganese discharge at a more protective level, companies who have damaged our state's waterways for far too long."

The Delaware Riverkeeper Network, the PA Campaign for Clean Water's Exceptional Value Team, and others have been advocating for the protection of the Delaware River's aquatic life

from manganese and other toxic pollutants for over a decade. Next, the final rulemaking will be considered by the Independent Regulatory Review Commission (IRRC) at its public meeting scheduled for September 15th.

To read the full decision, please visit:

<http://www.irrc.state.pa.us/regulations/RegSrchRslts.cfm?ID=3271>

Delaware Riverkeeper Network is a nonprofit membership organization working throughout the four states of the Delaware River Watershed, including Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, and New York. Delaware Riverkeeper Network provides effective environmental advocacy, volunteer monitoring programs, stream restoration projects, public education, and legal enforcement of environmental protection laws. To learn more about our work, please visit:

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