



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION III
1650 Arch Street
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103-2029
2/20/2003

Richard Eskin, Deputy Director
Technical and Regulatory Services Administration
Maryland Department of the Environment
1800 Washington Boulevard, Suite 450
Baltimore, Maryland 21230-1718

Dear Mr. Eskin:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Region III has reviewed the Draft Final report entitled, "Water Quality Analysis of Metals for the Little Gunpowder Falls in Harford and Baltimore Counties, Maryland," submitted by the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) for final Agency review on December 24, 2002.

EPA concurs with MDE's determination that the recent data show that a heavy metals total maximum daily load (TMDL) is not necessary for Little Gunpowder Falls. Little Gunpowder Falls was first listed by Maryland on its 1996 Section 303(d) list of water quality-limited segments as impaired by heavy metals and nutrients. The nutrients impairment is to be addressed separately at a future date.

The monitoring data collected show that Maryland's acute and chronic freshwater aquatic life criteria for dissolved metals are being met for this waterbody. The data from 2001 and 2002 for arsenic, cadmium, chromium-III, copper, mercury, nickel, lead, selenium, and nickel were all found to be below the criteria for those metal species, which were hardness-adjusted as appropriate. The ranges of concentrations were as follows:

- Arsenic: 0.06 to 0.24 ug/l
- Cadmium: nondetect
- Chromium: 0.04 to 0.29 ug/l
- Copper: 0.37 to 0.88 ug/l
- Mercury: 0.00044 to 0.00102 ug/l
- Nickel: 0.08 to 0.53 ug/l
- Lead: 0.03 to 0.07 ug/l
- Selenium: 0.14 to 0.3 ug/l
- Zinc: 0.25 to 0.87 ug/l



Cadmium was nondetect in all samples. Antimony and beryllium were not monitored because they were not expected to be present. If in the future evidence suggests that metals from Little Gunpowder Falls watershed are contributing to water quality problems, then action will have to be taken.

If you have any questions, please contact me at (215) 814-5715 or Mr. Thomas Henry, TMDL Program Manager, at (215) 814-5752.

Sincerely,

Signed

Joseph Piotrowski,
Associate Director
Water Protection Division
Office of Watersheds

cc: James George, MDE