

pH Criteria Revision

Background:

- Recent DRBC Assessments identified waters outside our pH criteria range, even where other evidence suggested good water quality and natural productivity
- Current DRBC pH criteria were adopted in 1967
- Since 1967, Basin States & EPA criteria have evolved
- DRBC criteria somewhat inconsistent with Basin States & EPA criteria

Jurisdiction	Existing pH Criteria		Applicable Waters
	Lower	Upper	
DRBC	6.0	8.5	Zone 1: non-tidal shared interstate waters
	6.5	8.5	Zones 2 – 6: tidal shared interstate waters
Delaware	6.5	8.5	All waters
New Jersey	6.5	8.5	FW2 in Delaware Basin above Trenton
	4.5	7.5	FW2 in Delaware Basin below Trenton
New York	6.5	8.5	Class A waters (including Delaware River)
Pennsylvania	6.0	9.0	All waters
USEPA	6.5	9.0	Freshwater

Recommendations (supported by unanimous vote of WQAC):

- i. Set consistent pH criteria for all interstate waters of 6.5 to 8.5
- ii. Add a narrative phrase in the criteria that pH conditions outside this 6.5 to 8.5 range will be considered a violation unless they are attributable to natural conditions: *“Between 6.5 and 8.5, inclusive, unless outside this range due to natural conditions”*