



Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission

For Immediate Release

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CONTACTS:

DEP: Katy Gresh
Southwest Regional Office
400 Waterfront Drive
Pittsburgh, PA 15202
(412) 442-4183

PFBC: Eric Levis
(717) 705-7806
elevis@state.pa.us

DEP, Fish and Boat Commission Monitoring Dunkard Creek Fish Kill

PITTSBURGH – The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection and the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC) have announced that officials are working with West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to address a fish kill in Dunkard Creek, first detected in West Virginia on Sept. 1 and reported to DEP on Sept. 8.

More than 30 stream miles in Pennsylvania and West Virginia have been impacted by a discharge, which is originating from West Virginia and contains high levels of total dissolved solids (TDS). At least 16 species of freshwater mussels and at least 18 species of fish were killed by this pollution event in Dunkard Creek. The main stem of Dunkard Creek, located in Pennsylvania, is designated as a warm water fishery.

DEP is collecting water quality data which will track the progress of the pollutant and its impact on Dunkard Creek, while the PFBC has established multiple sampling stations to conduct biological assessments that include counts of dead aquatic life and the condition of living fish in the stream.

“The damage done to Dunkard Creek is substantial and tragic. DEP will continue to monitor water quality so that when the responsible party is determined by West Virginia and EPA, we are positioned to take appropriate enforcement action,” said Acting Southwest DEP Regional Director Ronald Schwartz. “We appreciate the continued cooperation and efforts by West Virginia and EPA officials.”

“Our staff has documented numerous species of gamefish killed by the pollution event, including muskellunge, smallmouth bass, and flathead catfish, and various species of redhorses, minnows, darters, freshwater mussels, and mudpuppies – also known as aquatic salamanders,” said PFBC Southwest Regional Law Enforcement Manager Emil Svetahor. “We are working closely with DEP and other partners to conduct the ongoing investigation.”

The West Virginia and Pennsylvania forks of Dunkard Creek merge in Shamrock, Pennsylvania, to form Dunkard Creek, which meanders nearly 38 miles along the southwest

Our Mission:

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To protect, conserve and enhance the Commonwealth's aquatic resources and provide fishing and boating opportunities.



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border of the commonwealth and West Virginia, before its confluence with the Monongahela River just downstream of Point Marion.

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