

# DRAFT AND DELIBERATIVE

## 2014 New Jersey Integrated Water Quality Assessment Report December 2015

### OVERVIEW

New Jersey's surface waters provide much of the water used for drinking water supplies, recreation, fishing, boating, swimming, commercial fisheries including shellfish, and tourism. Protecting and restoring water quality has a direct and positive impact on these uses, the State's economy, and the quality of life for all its residents and visitors.

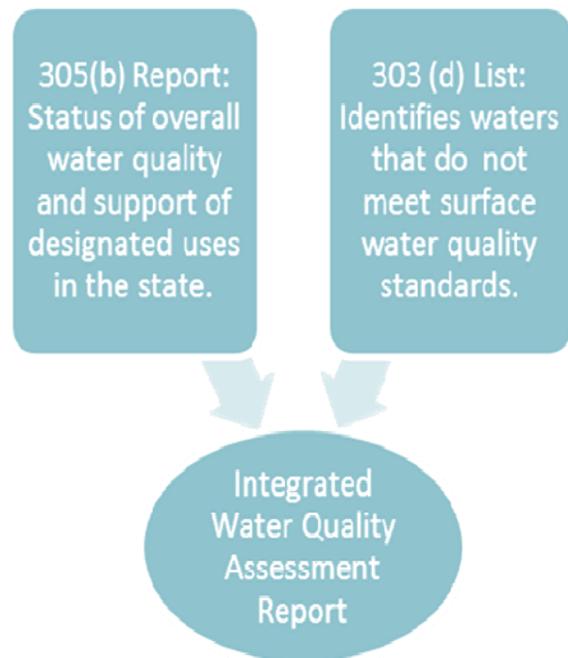
*Overall statewide water quality has improved or remained stable overtime; localized changes in water quality are usually associated with changes in land uses. Generally, water quality declines as the proportion of land use increases. The largest concentration of high quality waters are located in the least developed regions of the state.*

The 2014 New Jersey Integrated Water Quality Assessment Report (Integrated Report) describes the overall quality of New Jersey's surface waters based on existing and readily available monitoring data. The majority of the data used to prepare the Integrated Report is collected by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection with contributions from various data partners.

#### NEW FOR THE 2014 INTEGRATED REPORT:

- ◆ Rotating Basin Approach
- ◆ 958 Assessment Units (AUs)
- ◆ Comprehensive Assessment of Atlantic Coastal Water Region
- ◆ 303(d) List contains three new subparts:
  - Sublist 5A (arsenic naturally occurring)
  - Sublist 5L (legacy pollutants)
  - Sublist 5R (watershed restoration)

The Integrated Report assesses the health of New Jersey's waters, as required under Sections 303(d) and 305(b) of the federal Clean Water Act and the New Jersey Water Quality Planning Act.



This Report provides the information about New Jersey's water resources, current water quality conditions, and causes and sources of water quality impairment needed to inform and guide water quality monitoring, restoration, and protection efforts conducted at the state, regional, watershed, and local levels. This information is also used to establish funding and implementation priorities for enhancing and protecting waters of the State and the uses and benefits (public health, environmental, and economic) they offer.



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## NEW JERSEY WATER QUALITY KEY FACTS AND FINDINGS

205 Miles of Rivers and Streams and 2,197 Acres of Lakes

Fully Support All Designated Uses.\*

2,111 Miles of Rivers and Streams and 11, 917 Acres of Lakes

Fully Support the General Aquatic Life Use.

55% of New Jersey 's Assessment Units (AUs)

Fully Support At Least One Designated Use .

The Public Water Supply Use Has the Highest Amount of

Designated Use Support Statewide.

The Statewide Net Decrease in *Enterococcus* Listings Reflects the Excellent Recreational Water Quality in New Jersey's Ocean Waters, As Well As Improvements in Bays and Estuaries.

80% Fewer Metals on the 303(d) List Since 1998.

Approximately 30% of the 2104 303(d) List will be addressed by Alternatives to TMDLs (Sublist 5A, 5R and 5L).

The Atlantic Coastal Water Region (293 AUs) has the highest amount of fully supported designated uses of NJ's five Water Regions.

\*Except for fish consumption

The 2014 Integrated Report launches a comprehensive, regional approach to water quality assessment that supports identification of specific causes and sources and the development of management measures that are tailored to the unique circumstances of one of New Jersey's five Water Regions each assessment cycle. The Atlantic Coastal Water Region is the focus of the 2014 Integrated Report. The comprehensive assessment of the Atlantic Coastal Region utilized the extensive monitoring and research efforts conducted under the governor's Barnegat Bay Action Plan to concurrently address multiple water resource concerns and enhance confidence in assessment decisions through a more robust assessment of environmental conditions affecting the entire Region. Subsequent Integrated Reports will focus on different Water Regions, resulting in a comprehensive assessment of statewide water quality every ten years.