



Department of Geosciences

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March 11, 2016

Becky Keough, Director
Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality
5301 Northshore Drive
North Little Rock, AR 72118-5317

Dear Director Keough:

Having just read Charles J. “Chuck” Bitting’s eloquent and moving letter describing facts regarding the decision of your agency to ignore data collected after March 31, 2015, and not list Mill Creek, Big Creek, and Bear Creek as being impaired, I am disheartened and deeply disappointed. I am a 25⁺-year citizen of Arkansas, a Research Scientist Emeritus (water scientist) of the U.S. Geological Survey, and a Professor Emeritus at the University of Arkansas (Karst Hydrogeologist), having devoted the last 25⁺ years to studying the waters of our Natural State. I have seen these streams, I have been in the field with some of the scientists who have collected these data, and they have been thorough and accurate and fair. These are meaningful data. I feel compelled to add my voice to request strongly that you reconsider this decision, for it flies in the face of Regulation 2, it flies in the face of the science of data collected by the U.S. Geological Survey and the National Park System, and it gives the appearance of political favoritism that ignores the natural environment of our beautiful state. It comes at the expense of negatively impacting tourism that contributes tens of millions of dollars to this fiscally depressed region. Please place Mill Creek, Big Creek, and Bear Creek on the 303(d) list as required by Regulation 2. Please join all Arkansas citizens in collaborating with science and common sense. Please.

Sincerely yours,

John Van Brahana, Professor Emeritus
Department of Geosciences, University of Arkansas
Research Hydrologist Emeritus
U.S. Geological Survey

cc delivered via email:

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- US Senator John Boozman c/o Phillip Moore. phillip_moore@boozman.senate.gov
- US Senator Tom Cotton. tom.cotton@cotton.senate.gov
- US Representative Steve Womack c/o Amanda Ladden-Stirling.
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