



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

SEP 6 2002

OFFICE OF
WATER

Mr. Ken Kirk
Executive Director
Association of Metropolitan Sewerage Agencies
1816 Jefferson Place, NW
Washington, DC 20036-2505

Dear Mr. Kirk:

Thank you for your letter of August 7, 2002, to Administrator Whitman expressing concern that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) may not be proposing a rule for the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) program.

Over the last year and a half, EPA has been holding public meetings and listening sessions to learn how to improve the TMDL program and avoid problems that the controversial TMDL rulemaking encountered in 2000. Our goal is to strengthen the science and improve accountability to clean up impaired waters more quickly and effectively. We believe the best way to proceed is by publishing a proposed watershed rule that lays out our thinking at this point based on all the input we have received.

The next step will be the publication of a proposed rule, which will fully outline the details of our ideas about how the program may be improved. This proposal will be subject to public review and comment, with additional public meetings and outreach, and significant opportunities for additional input.

I appreciate your personal interest and involvement and the participation of the members of the Association of Metropolitan Sewerage Agencies (AMSA) in helping improve the TMDL program. I look forward to continuing to work with you and AMSA as we strive to restore and maintain our nation's waters.

Sincerely,



G. Tracey Mehan, III
Assistant Administrator