



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 4
ATLANTA FEDERAL CENTER
61 FORSYTH STREET, SW
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30303-3104

June 7, 2023

Ms. Kim Shugar
Director
Division of Environmental Assessment & Restoration
Florida Department of Environmental Protection
Mail Station 3000
2600 Blair Stone Road
Tallahassee, Florida 32301

Dear Ms. Shugar:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has completed its water quality standards review of the document titled *Hierarchy I Numeric Nutrient Criteria for Sweetwater Branch (Alachua County): Level II Water Quality Based Effluent Limitations for Gainesville Regional Utilities' Main Street Water Reclamation Facility and Kelly Generating Station (WBID¹ 2711)*. The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) submitted the Sweetwater Branch Water Quality Based Effluent Limitations (WQBELs), including the numeric nutrient criteria (NNC) for the subject water, in a letter to the EPA dated April 21, 2023 as WQBELs that would constitute new or revised water quality standards (WQS) with the necessary supporting documentation and certification by FDEP General Counsel, pursuant to Title 40 of the Code of Federal Regulations part 131.

As referenced in paragraph 62-302.531(2)(a), the FDEP intends for the submitted NNC to serve in place of the otherwise applicable criteria for streams set out in paragraph 62-302.531(2)(c). The total nitrogen and total phosphorus WQBELs for Sweetwater Branch, combined with concentration-based total phosphorus and chlorophyll *a* criteria would also constitute a site-specific numeric interpretation of the narrative nutrient criterion set forth in paragraph 62-302.530(48)(b), for this waterbody.

The FDEP submitted the Sweetwater Branch WQBELs to the EPA for review pursuant to Clean Water Act (CWA) section 303(c) since the WQBELs will also act as Hierarchy 1 (H1) site-specific interpretations of the state's narrative nutrient criterion pursuant to 62-302.531(2)(a)1.a. The enclosed WQS decision document summarizes the EPA's review and approval of the WQS contained in the submitted report. The EPA's decision document memorializes the EPA's review and approval of the WQS, in accordance with section 303(c) of the CWA. The FDEP will use this approved WQS to develop water quality based effluent limits in applicable NPDES permits.

¹ WBID refers to **waterbody identification**

In accordance with section 303(c) of the CWA, I am hereby approving the revised WQS for total nitrogen, total phosphorus, and chlorophyll *a*. Any other criteria applicable to this waterbody remain in effect. The requirements of paragraph 62-302.530(48)(a) also remain applicable.

If you have any comments or questions relating to the approval of the H1 WQS, please contact me at (404) 562-9744, or have a member of your staff contact Dr. Katherine Snyder in the WQS program at (404) 562-9840.

Sincerely,

Cesar Zapata, Acting Director
Water Division

Enclosure

cc: Mr. Kenneth Hayman, FDEP
Ms. Nijole Wellendorf, FDEP
Ms. Kaitlyn Sutton, FDEP