

# OUR BEAUTIFUL BUFFALO RIVER

## RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

The Buffalo River algal blooms are increasing in density, the number of river miles impacted and their duration, which now extends well into fall and winter months. The algal blooms are not only a nuisance, but also devastating to aquatic life such as macroinvertebrates, fish and turtles. There is also confirmation of algae toxic to humans and pets and increased reports of irritation and illness.

***Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality (“ADEQ”) reports there was a 20 mile stretch of algae last year and now it is 70 miles long getting closer to the White River.***

According to Jessie Green, Executive Director of White River Waterkeepers (WRW) in a July 20, 2018 news release, “Following multiple reports of probable illnesses from suspected contact with harmful algae in the Buffalo National River (BNR), WRW is reminding the public to be mindful of harmful algal blooms (HABs) in rivers, lakes, and streams, and to keep dogs, children, and individuals with compromised immune systems away from these blooms if seen.

ADEQ has recently proposed that approximately 14 miles of the Buffalo River from Hasty to below Mr. Hersey and 6 miles of Big Creek above Mt. Judea near the C&H hog CAFO to the confluence with the Buffalo River be listed as “impaired” – “polluted” and be added to ADEQ’s “Impaired Water Body” list as a 303d Category (4) impairment. Category (4) does not require ADEQ to determine the source of the pollution, however and does not require ADEQ to take corrective action.

**Category 5 listing would require ADEQ to identify the sources of impairment and take corrective action.**

ADEQ has a public comment period open until September 10<sup>th</sup> for comments related to the proposed listing of the Buffalo River and Big Creek being listed as impaired”. Please contact ADEQ and urge them to list the sections of Buffalo River and Big Creek as impaired Category 5. Email comments to: [WaterbodyComments@adeq.state.ar.us](mailto:WaterbodyComments@adeq.state.ar.us). <https://>

Also please join me in [contacting Governor Hutchison](#) at and our state representatives and local quorum court justices of the peace to voice our concerns.

If you would like to discuss this or have questions regarding your options for responding, please call Sam Cooke, immediate past president of FNWR at 870-307-8922 or me.



**WRW REMINDS THE PUBLIC TO BE AWARE OF HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOMS AND REQUESTS REPORTING OF WATER QUALITY CONDITIONS AND ILLNESSES POTENTIALLY ASSOCIATED WITH SURFACE WATER CONTACT.”**

You can contact Jessie Green at: Jessie J. Green, Waterkeeper & Executive Director, 870.577.5071,

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Photos courtesy of Carol Bitting