Comment Response Document
Regarding the Water Quality Analysis of Cadmium in Lower North Branch Potomac River, Allegany County, Maryland

The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) has conducted a public review of the proposed Water Quality Analysis (WQA) of Cadmium in the Lower North Branch of the Potomac River. The public comment period was open from June 1, 2006 through June 30, 2006. MDE received one set of written comments.

Below is a list of commentors, their affiliation, the date comments were submitted, and the numbered references to the comments submitted. In the pages that follow, comments are summarized and listed with MDE's response.

List of Commentors

Author	Affiliation	Date	Comment Number
Jennifer Sincock	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 3	June 14, 2006	1 through 3

Comments and Responses

1. The commentor references Section 3.1, page 7, first paragraph. MDE conducted a data solicitation for metals and considered all readily available data from the past five years. Did MDE receive any data during this solicitation from outside sources? Table 4 only shows data from 2004 to 2005.

   Response: No additional data was received from outside sources. The only available data is from MDE's North Branch Potomac River Chemical Contaminant Survey.

2. The commentor references Section 3.2, page 12. The Interagency Review Draft had a paragraph discussing statistical analysis performed on the toxicity test data to determine if control and field sediment samples were statistically different. This paragraph was deleted in the Public Notice Draft. Please explain why this paragraph was deleted. Also, please provide EPA with all data, statistical analyses, or other information used to support the sediment toxicity toxicity test results. Please include the results of these analyses within the report or within an appendix.

   Response: Consistent with the level of technical detail reported in other comparable WQAs, the Department determined that the referenced paragraph was overly technical and unnecessary to explain its conclusions. Accordingly, the paragraph was removed. None of the field sediment results for survival and growth were significantly different that the control sediment samples. The Department, therefore, concluded that no toxicity exists. An analysis of significant differences was conducted using statistical software packages. The sediment toxicity report written by Daniel J. Fisher, Ph.D., Senior Research Scientist, University of

Maryland does not contain the statistical software output and only states which values are significantly different. However, the report has been added as an appendix to the document.

3. The commentor references Table 5, pages 10-11. This table showing Lower North Branch Potomac River sediment toxicity results has additional data that was not included in the Interagency Review Draft. Figure 1 is referenced in the text, Figure 1 is referenced as showing the station locations. However, the locations of samples 01, 09, 20, 31, 33 and 37 were not included. Please include these sample stations in a figure. There are also Wills Creek samples listed in the table.

   Response: A table formatting error led to the display of sediment toxicity data for stations 1, 9, 20, 31, 33, and 37, which are located outside of Wills Creek. These data were not meant to be displayed. This has been corrected. Stations 33 and 37 are located in the Lower North Branch of the Potomac River and are displayed in Figure 1.