

SECTION .0300 - ASSIGNMENT OF STREAM CLASSIFICATIONS

15A NCAC 02B .0301 CLASSIFICATIONS: GENERAL

(a) The classifications assigned to the waters of the State of North Carolina are set forth in river basin classification schedules provided at <https://deq.nc.gov/about/divisions/water-resources/water-planning/classification-standards/river-basin-classification> and in Rules .0302 to .0317 of this Section. These classifications are based upon procedures described in Rule .0101 of this Subchapter.

(b) Classifications. The classifications assigned to the waters of North Carolina are denoted by the letters C, B, WS-I, WS-II, WS-III, WS-IV, WS-V, WL, SC, SB, SA, SWL, Tr, Sw, NSW, ORW, HQW, and UWL. The "best usage", as defined in Rule .0202 of this Subchapter, for each classification is defined in the rules as follows:

- (1) Fresh Waters Classifications:
 - (A) Class C: Rule .0211 of this Subchapter;
 - (B) Class B: Rule .0219 of this Subchapter;
 - (C) Class WS-I (Water Supply): Rule .0212 of this Subchapter;
 - (D) Class WS-II (Water Supply): Rule .0214 of this Subchapter;
 - (E) Class WS-III (Water Supply): Rule .0215 of this Subchapter;
 - (F) Class WS-IV (Water Supply): Rule .0216 of this Subchapter;
 - (G) Class WS-V (Water Supply): Rule .0218 of this Subchapter; and
 - (H) Class WL (Wetlands): Rule .0231 of this Subchapter.
- (2) Tidal Salt Waters Classifications:
 - (A) Class SC: Rule .0220 of this Subchapter;
 - (B) Class SB: Rule .0222 of this Subchapter;
 - (C) Class SA: Rule .0221 of this Subchapter; and
 - (D) Class SWL: Rule .0231 of this Subchapter.
- (3) Supplemental Classifications:
 - (A) Class Tr (Trout Waters): Rule .0202 of this Subchapter;
 - (B) Class Sw (Swamp): Rule .0202 of this Subchapter;
 - (C) Class NSW (Nutrient Sensitive Waters): Rule .0223 of this Subchapter;
 - (D) Class ORW (Outstanding Resource Waters): Rule .0225 of this Subchapter;
 - (E) Class HQW (High Quality Waters): Rule .0224 of this Subchapter; and
 - (F) Class UWL (Unique Wetlands): Rule .0231 of this Subchapter.

(c) Water Quality Standards. The water quality standards applicable to each classification assigned are those established in the rules of Section .0200 of this Subchapter.

(d) Index Number. The index number is an identification number assigned to each stream or segment of a stream, indicating the specific tributary progression between the main stem stream and tributary stream. The index number can be referenced to the Division's river basin classification schedules (hydrologic and alphabetic) for each river basin.

(e) Classification Date. The classification date indicates the date on which enforcement of the provisions of General Statutes 143-215.1 became effective with reference to the classification assigned to the various streams in North Carolina.

(f) Unnamed Streams.

- (1) Any stream that is not listed in a river basin classification schedule carries the same classification as that assigned to the stream segment to which it is tributary except:
 - (A) unnamed freshwaters tributary to tidal saltwaters will be classified "C"; or
 - (B) after November 1, 1986, any areas of tidal saltwater created by dredging projects approved in accordance with 15A NCAC 07H .0208 and connected to Class SA waters shall be classified "SC" unless case-by-case reclassification proceedings are conducted per Rule .0101 of this Subchapter.
- (2) In addition to Subparagraph (1) of this Paragraph, for unnamed streams entering other states, tribes approved for treatment as a state and administering a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency approved water quality standards program, or for specific areas of a river basin, the following Rules shall apply:
 - (A) Hiwassee River Basin (Rule .0302 of this Section);
 - (B) Little Tennessee River Basin and Savannah River Drainage Area (Rule .0303 of this Section);
 - (C) French Broad River Basin (Rule .0304 of this Section);

- (D) Watauga River Basin (Rule .0305 of this Section);
- (E) Broad River Basin (Rule .0306 of this Section);
- (F) New River Basin (Rule .0307 of this Section);
- (G) Catawba River Basin (Rule .0308 of this Section);
- (H) Yadkin-Pee Dee River Basin (Rule .0309 of this Section);
- (I) Lumber River Basin (Rule .0310 of this Section);
- (J) Roanoke River Basin (Rule .0313 of this Section);
- (K) Tar-Pamlico River Basin (Rule .0316 of this Section); and
- (L) Pasquotank River Basin (Rule .0317 of this Section).

History Note: Authority G.S. 143-214.1; 143-214.5; 143-215.1; 143-215.3(a)(1);
Eff. February 1, 1976;
Amended Eff. August 1, 1995; August 3, 1992; August 1, 1990; October 1, 1989;
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