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September 12, 2022

Independent Regulatory Review Commission  
333 Market Street  
14<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Harrisburg, PA 17101

**RE: Regulation #7-553: Water Quality Standard for Manganese and Implementation**

Dear Commissioners:

LCT Energy, LP is an independent coal producer in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania with 200+ employees. LCT Energy writes to express concerns with the Environmental Quality Board's Water Quality Standard for Manganese and Implementation Regulation #7-553 (IRRC #3260) and strongly suggests that the Independent Regulatory Review Commission reject the final rulemaking.

LCT Energy has done its own independent analysis of the financial cost associated with lowering the 1.0 mg/L standard and replacing it with a 0.3 mg/L toxicity standard. LCT Energy studied two separate sites where treatment for Manganese is occurring to assess the impact of the proposed change.

**Site 1**

The first site studied was a treatment system at a surface mine that treats water with a relatively low Mn concentration slightly exceeding 1.0 mg/L. LCT increased the chemical reagent feed rate to achieve a concentration of 0.3 mg/L over several months and compared the reagent cost data to the months prior to the test. **Conclusion – For a site with slight Mn concentrations in the raw water, the data indicates the cost increase multiplier will be 3.3x to bring the effluent water into compliance under the proposed new standard.** See Attached Graph for “Site 1 - Mn Concentration vs Cost”.

**Site 2**

The second site studied was a coal cleaning plant where a substantial Mn concentration in the raw water exists and averages between 20 – 30 mg/L. Utilizing curves developed from the test procedure described above, LCT estimated that water treatment costs in 2020 would have escalated from \$99,000/year to \$546,000/year. **Conclusion – For a site with substantial Mn concentrations in the raw water, data indicates the cost increase multiplier will be 5.5x to bring the effluent water into compliance under the proposed new standard.** See Attached Graph for “Site 2 - Mn Concentration vs Cost”.

LCT Energy, LP further believes that coal refuse disposal facilities face the largest impact from the proposed rule. Given the potential for higher Mn concentrations in the raw water from coal refuse, LCT fears the cost multipliers for those facilities will be even higher than the 5.5x figure stated above.

**In summary, LCT Energy firmly believes the financial cost of the proposed rule is being severely understated and will significantly impact Pennsylvania coal producers, tilting the playing field to favor producers in neighboring states. Therefore, we strongly urge you to reject the final-form rulemaking.**

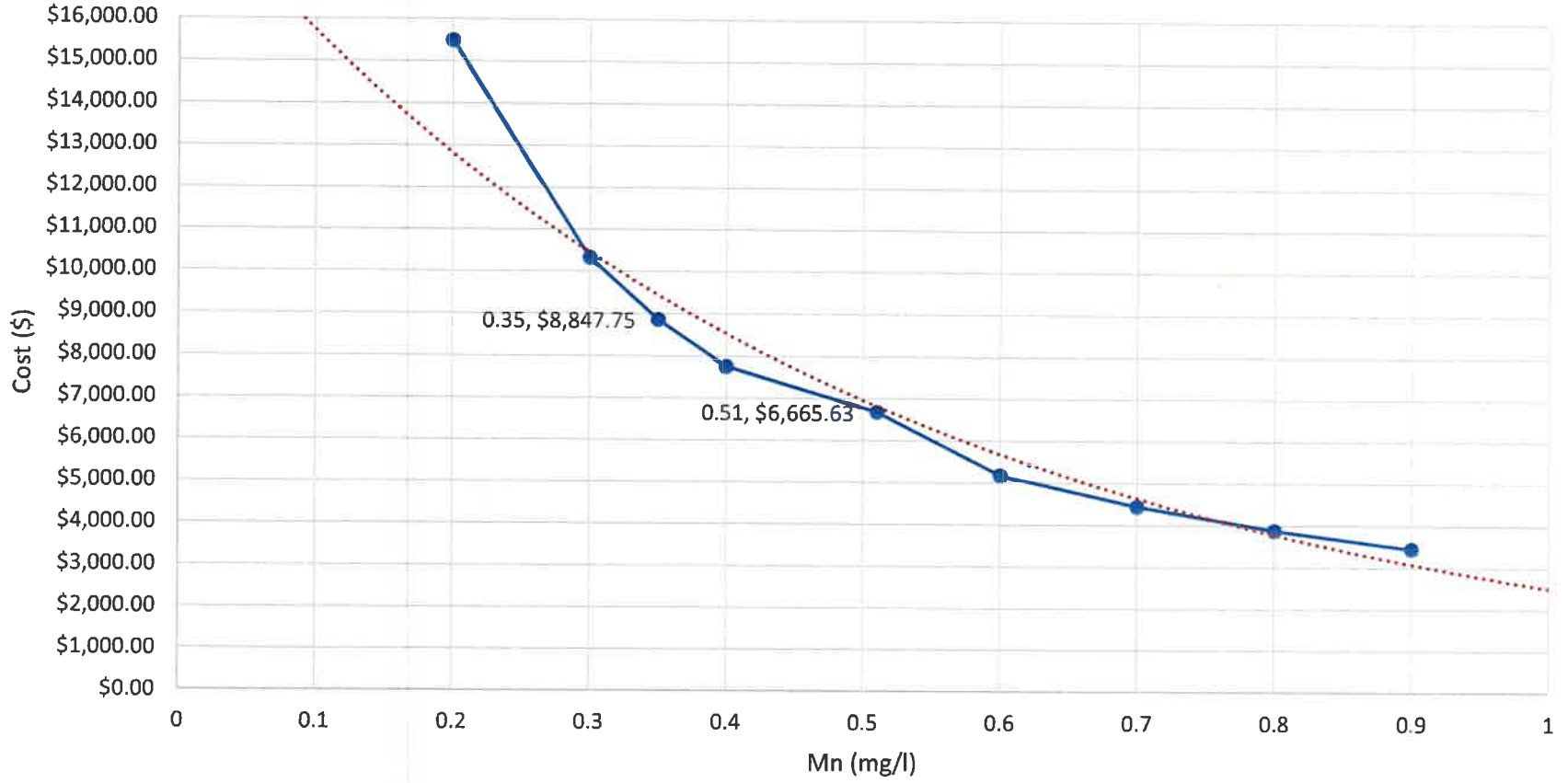
Sincerely,



Kenneth P. Yingling  
Project Engineer

Attachments

Site 1 - Mn Concentration vs Cost



Site 2 - Mn Concentration vs Cost

