Correction
In the final rule, FR Doc. 2016–30211, published on December 16, 2016, at 81 FR 90979 make the following correction: 1. On page 90979 in the heading of the final rule, revise “Amendment No. 121–397” to read as “121–377”.

Issued in Washington, DC, under the authority provided by 49 U.S.C. 106(f), on December 22, 2016.

Lirio Liu,
Director, Office of Rulemaking.

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DELAWARE RIVER BASIN COMMISSION
18 CFR Parts 401 and 420
Regulatory Program Fees and Water Supply Charges

AGENCY: Delaware River Basin Commission.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: The Commission amends the Rules of Practice and Procedure and the Basin Regulations—Water Supply Charges, respectively, to adopt a new project review fee structure and provide for automatic inflation adjustments. These changes are also incorporated into the Commission’s Comprehensive Plan.

DATES: This final rule is effective January 1, 2017.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Richard C. Gore, Director of Administration and Finance, 609–883–9500, ext. 201.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:
Background. The Delaware River Basin Commission ("DRBC" or "Commission") is a Federal-interstate compact agency charged with managing the water resources of the Delaware River Basin on a regional basis without regard to political boundaries. Its members are the governors of the four basin states—Delaware, New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania—and on behalf of the federal government, the North Atlantic Division Commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. By Resolution No. 2016–8 on December 14, 2016 the Commission approved a comprehensive revision of its project review fee structure, including an automatic annual indexed inflation adjustment for most fees. An inflation adjustment was also approved for DRBC’s water supply charges rates applicable to consumptive and non-consumptive surface water withdrawals. The changes to DRBC’s regulatory

program fees are designed to provide a more predictable and sustainable source of revenues and to close the annual gap in funding needed to support DRBC’s project review program. They also adjust the fees program to better align with the One Process/One Permit Program instituted earlier in 2016. The changes to DRBC’s water supply charges regulations are designed to help revenues assigned to DRBC’s Water Supply Storage Facilities Fund keep pace with inflation.

Public Process. A Notice of Proposed Rulemaking and Public Hearing was posted to the Commission’s Web site on May 9, 2016. A detailed set of questions and answers about the proposal (“FAQs”) and a press release accompanied the May 9, 2016 web posting. On May 10, 2016, an email alert, including a link to the notice and supporting documents, was transmitted to all parties subscribed to DRBC’s list serve. Notice of the proposed rules was published in the Federal Register at 81 FR 35662, June 3, 2016 and appeared in the Delaware Register of Regulations, 19 DE Reg., 1052, June 1, 2016; New Jersey Register, 48 N.J.R. 949, June 6, 2016; New York State Register, May 25, 2016 (page 1); and Pennsylvania Bulletin, 46 Pa.B. 2967, June 11, 2016. DRBC staff hosted a public informational meeting on the proposal on Wednesday, June 15, 2016 in Washington Crossing, Pa., including presentations by staff and informal questions and answers. The FAQs posted on the Commission’s Web site were thereafter supplemented with questions and responses offered during the informational meeting. A public hearing on the proposed amendments took place at the Commission’s office building in West Trenton, N.J. on July 27, 2016 and written comments were accepted through August 12, 2016.

In response to the written and oral comments submitted on the draft rules, staff developed a detailed comment and response document, including modest changes to the rule text. After careful consideration and consultation with staff on the comments and proposed changes to the draft rules, the Commissioners determined that the changes were appropriate, responsive to the public’s concerns and a logical outgrowth of the rules as proposed. The changes and the staff response to comments were adopted by unanimous vote of the Commissioners to approve Resolution No. 2016–8 at the Commission’s public business meeting on December 14, 2016.

Additional materials. The following additional materials can be found on the Commission’s Web site, www.drbc.net: