

Notice of availability and request for comments on draft Redwood River

Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategies (WRAPS) Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL)

General information

Public comment period begins: February 21, 2023

Public comment period ends: 11:59 p.m. on March 23, 2023

MPCA contact person:

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Draft reports for the Redwood River Watershed are available for review on the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) [Public Comments webpage](#) or at the MPCA office address listed under the MPCA contact person above. Following the comment period, the MPCA will revise the report(s) and submit the final TMDL to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for approval. Comments, petitions, and other requests must be received at the MPCA in writing on or before the public comment period end date and time identified above.

Watershed: 07020006 Redwood River Major Watershed

Description of the Redwood River Watershed TMDL and WRAPS

Required by the federal Clean Water Act, a TMDL is a scientific study, conducted on waters assessed to be impaired, that calculates the maximum amount of a pollutant that a waterbody can receive and still meet water quality standards for that pollutant. The TMDL study is a process that identifies all the sources of the pollutant causing an impairment and quantifies necessary reductions among the sources.

The WRAPS report is required by the state Clean Water Legacy Act and uses TMDL and other information to develop strategies for addressing point and nonpoint pollution sources. The objective of the WRAPS process is to develop strategies that not only restore impaired waters, but also protect the unimpaired waters from degradation. This report is a collaborative effort between the MPCA, other state agencies, local government partners, and other stakeholders.

The Redwood River Watershed drains 447,513 acres in southwest Minnesota including parts of Lyon, Redwood, Lincoln, Pipestone, Yellow Medicine, and Murray Counties. The Redwood River flows from its headwaters in the Coteau de Prairies to its confluence with the Minnesota River near the city of Redwood Falls, Minnesota. The dominant land use is agriculture, and the balancing of agricultural production and environmental conservation is necessary for improved water quality. The WRAPS report determined this can be accomplished through implementation of several best management practices including increased diversity in cropping systems, reduced tillage, better nutrient and manure management, and improved hydrology with more water storage on the landscape. Much of this work has been ongoing through the efforts of local resource professionals and farmers in the watershed. The TMDL report addresses nine turbidity/TSS impaired reaches, two bacteria impaired reaches, one chloride impaired reach, and six nutrient impaired lakes in the Redwood River Watershed. Based on analysis in the TMDL, ranges of 5% to 57% reduction in turbidity/TSS, 55% to 73% reduction in bacteria, 50% reduction in chloride, and 14% to 54% reduction in phosphorus are needed for the various waterbodies addressed in the report.

Procedure for public participation

As stated in Minn. R. chs. 7000 and 7001, there are three formal procedures for public participation in the MPCA's consideration of this matter. Interested persons may:

- (1) Submit written comments on the draft reports.
- (2) Petition the MPCA to hold a public informational meeting.
- (3) Petition the MPCA to hold a contested case hearing.

Submitting written comments

Comments may be submitted to the MPCA by the two methods below:

1. Online at www.pca.state.mn.us/publiccomments
2. US Mail to the following address:

Minnesota Pollution Control Agency

Michael Weckwerth

504 Fairgrounds Rd, Ste 200

Marshall, MN 56258

To submit comments or petitions to the MPCA through the mail or email you must state:

- (1) Your interest in the draft TMDL or WRAPS reports.
- (2) The action you wish the MPCA to take, including specific references to the section of the draft report(s) you believe should be changed. It is important to clearly specify which of the two reports the comments pertain to since the reports will proceed along separate tracks for final approval.
- (3) The reason(s) supporting your position, stated with sufficient specificity as to allow the MPCA to investigate the merits of the position.

Public informational meeting

A public informational meeting is an informal meeting during which interested persons can ask questions concerning the proposed project. The MPCA staff will be present to provide information. If an interested person would like the MPCA to hold a public informational meeting, the person should include all information identified above and in addition include a statement of the reasons the person desires the MPCA to hold a public informational meeting and the issues that the person would like the agency to address at the public informational meeting.

Contested case hearing

A contested case hearing is a formal proceeding before an administrative law judge empowered to advise the MPCA regarding issues of fact. As described in Minn. R. 7000.1800, persons who submit petitions for a contested case hearing must also state the issues they propose to address in a contested case hearing, the specific relief requested or resolution of the matter, and the reasons (which may be in the form of proposed findings) supporting an MPCA decision to hold a contested case hearing. Failure to comply with these rules exactly may result in a denial of the request. To the extent known, the petitioner may also submit a list of prospective witnesses to be called at a hearing, a proposed list of publications, references, or studies to be introduced at a hearing and the approximate time required for the petitioner to present the matter at a hearing. The decision whether to hold a contested case hearing will be made under Minn. R. 7000.1900.