

# Notice of availability and request for comments on draft Mississippi River - St. Cloud Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategies Report Update 2024, Total Maximum Daily Load 2024, and Donovan Lake TMDL Revision

## General information

**Public comment period begins:** May 13, 2024

**Public comment period ends:** June 12, 2024

### MPCA contact person:

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The draft WRAPS and TMDL reports for the Mississippi River - St. Cloud (MRSC) Watershed are available for review on the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) draft/public noticed [MPCA Public Comments webpage](#), or at the MPCA office address listed under the MPCA contact person above. Also available for review is a revision to the original Donovan Lake nutrient/eutrophication biological indicator impairment total maximum daily load (TMDL), which was approved by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in 2015. Following the comment period, the MPCA will revise the report(s) and submit the final TMDL to the 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.

**An informational meeting about the Mississippi River-St. Cloud Watershed project will be held on Thursday, May 23, from 9-11 a.m.** This virtual meeting is open to the public and will be hosted via WebEx. Please visit the watershed web page at [www.pca.state.mn.us/watershed-information/mississippi-river-st-cloud](http://www.pca.state.mn.us/watershed-information/mississippi-river-st-cloud) for more information and instructions on how to participate.

**Watershed:** 07010203 Mississippi River - Saint Cloud Major Watershed

## Description of the Mississippi River - St. Cloud (MRSC) TMDL Report 2024, Donovan Lake TMDL revision and WRAPS Report Update 2024

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 water body 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 MRSC TMDL Report addresses several water quality impairments within the MRSC Watershed. These impairments include high levels of the bacteria *Escherichia coli* (*E. coli*), total suspended solids (TSS), and total phosphorus (TP), affecting aquatic recreation (AQR) and aquatic life (AQL) designated uses. Seventeen TMDLs were developed through the project: 10 *E. coli* stream TMDLs, 1 TSS stream TMDL and 6 TP lake TMDLs. In addition, a revision to the original Donovan Lake TMDL, which was approved by EPA in 2015, is included as a component of this project. In the TMDL revision, the Donovan Lake drainage area was corrected based on information provided from the City of St. Cloud, and the Donovan Lake TMDL table was revised. The Donovan Lake TMDL revisions are allocation transfers; the loading capacity did not change. Other corrections include county and Minnesota Department of Transportation (MNDOT) wasteload allocations (WLAs), and an improvement of the method used to approximate regulated Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4) areas.

The MRSC WRAPS Report Update 2024 is authorized by the state Clean Water Legacy Act and uses TMDL and other information in the development of strategies for addressing point and nonpoint pollution sources. The objective of the WRAPS process is to provide information to support the development of 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 MRSC WRAPS Report Update 2024 is an update of the 2015 MRSC WRAPS Report. This WRAPS report update summarizes water quality findings and provides recommendations from the second round of Intensive Watershed Monitoring (IWM) and the

associated water quality restoration and protection related processes. The goals of this updated WRAPS report are to:

- Highlight differences and trends in the MRSC Watershed conditions since the first IWM Cycle, which was completed in 2009 - 2010. This includes summarizing key findings from the associated MRSC Watershed monitoring and assessment along with stressor identification processes.
- Serve as a companion document to the MRSC Watershed TMDL Report, which is being developed concurrently with the WRAPS Update Report.
- Provide water quality information and recommendations in the effort to help support the ongoing and future comprehensive local water planning efforts (e.g., MRSC Watershed One Watershed, One Plan [1W1P]), which is currently under development and is planned for completion in the fall of 2024.
- Serve as an informational and educational resource to help inform readers and stakeholders of various water quality resources and tools available to support MRSC Watershed water quality restoration and protection efforts.
- Spotlight some of the ongoing water quality implementation and public outreach activities occurring over the past decade, including some noteworthy water quality success stories.

## 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](http://www.pca.state.mn.us/publiccomments)
2. U.S. Mail to the following address:

Minnesota Pollution Control Agency  
c/o Phil Votruba  
7678 College Rd, Ste 105  
Baxter, MN 56425-8625

To submit comments or petitions online or by mail to the MPCA, 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.