

Notice of availability and request for comments on the draft revision for Willow River, Swan River, and Tamarack River *E. coli* TMDLs in Mississippi River–Grand Rapids Watershed (2019) Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL)

General information

Public comment period begins: January 27, 2025

Public comment period ends: February 26, 2025

MPCA contact person:

Bonnie Goshey
Watershed Division
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
7678 College Rd, Ste 105
Brainerd, MN 56425-8625
Phone: 218-316-3897
Email: bonnie.goshey@state.mn.us
File manager phone: 651-757-2728 or 844-828-0942

The draft TMDL revision is 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. Following the comment period, the MPCA will revise the report 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: 07010103 Mississippi River - Grand Rapids Major Watershed

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.

A review of the Mississippi River–Grand Rapids Watershed TMDL Report¹ from September of 2019 discovered errors in three *Escherichia coli* (*E. coli*) TMDLs—Willow River (07010103-751), Swan River (07010103-753), and Tamarack River (07010103-758). The *E. coli* WLAs were miscalculated for the Marble Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP), Remer WWTP, and Cromwell WWTP. The errors include transcription errors and the use of incorrect flows for WLA calculation. This TMDL revision corrects the WLAs for these WWTPs, in addition to updating WLAs for the Nashwauk WWTP and Keewatin WWTP.

The approaches to calculating wastewater WLAs and load allocations (LAs) in the TMDL report (Section 4.2.3.5 and 4.2.2, respectively) were used to recalculate the TMDL tables presented here. Existing fecal coliform permit limits are consistent with *E. coli* WLA assumptions. The following TMDL table components did not change: loading capacity, WLAs for permitted stormwater, and margin of safety. The TMDL revisions do not change the implementation strategy in Section 8 of the approved TMDL.

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.

¹ MPCA 2019. Mississippi River–Grand Rapids Watershed Total Maximum Daily Load. Developed by Emmons & Olivier Resources, Inc. for the MPCA. Document #wq-iw8-58e. <https://www.pca.state.mn.us/sites/default/files/wq-iw8-58e.pdf>

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. U.S. Mail to the following address:

Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
c/o Bonnie Goshey
7678 College Rd, Ste 105
Brainerd, 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 report.
2. The action you wish the MPCA to take, including specific references to the section of the draft report you believe should be changed.
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.