

# Notice of availability and request for comments on draft Cedar River - Upper Wapsipinicon Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategies (WRAPS) Report Update 2026 Cedar River Watershed Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Report 2026

## General information

**Public comment period begins:** June 22, 2026

**Public comment period ends:** July 22, 2026

### MPCA contact person:

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The draft reports for the Cedar-Upper Wapsipinicon 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. 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:** 07080201 Cedar River and 07080102 Upper Wapsipinicon

## Description of the Cedar-Upper Wapsipinicon Watersheds

The Cedar River Watershed (CRW) area drains 454,029 acres and is part of the greater Cedar-Iowa Rivers system, which drains to the Mississippi River in Iowa. Located in southern Minnesota, the CRW includes portions of Dodge, Freeborn, Mower, and Steele Counties as well as the City of Austin. Land use in the watershed is dominated by cultivated crops with 88% of the acreage used for agricultural purposes.

The Upper Wapsipinicon River Watershed is a headwater drainage located within Mower County in southern Minnesota. It begins as a group of small tributaries and ditches flowing south across the Minnesota/Iowa border. This watershed spans 13 square miles in Minnesota making up approximately 0.81% of the entire Wapsipinicon River Watershed. The greater Wapsipinicon River Watershed drains 991,980 acres of land across Minnesota and Iowa, eventually flowing into the Mississippi River near Clinton, Iowa. Three small ditched tributaries east of the Upper Wapsipinicon River flow across the Iowa border before joining the river's mainstem.

The Cedar and Wapsipinicon Rivers are important water resources for local communities. With the headwater portions of these watersheds in Minnesota, they can significantly impact water quality and beneficial uses downstream in the neighboring state of Iowa. These rivers provide considerable recreational opportunities such as fishing, canoeing, and kayaking. Gamefish species sought by anglers include northern pike, smallmouth bass, catfish, and walleye. Canoeing and kayaking are popular; portions of the Cedar River in Minnesota and Iowa, and the Wapsipinicon in Iowa are designated water trails. These rivers also provide important habitat and corridors for wildlife and aquatic communities. The second largest city in Iowa, Cedar Rapids, depends on the Cedar River for drinking water.

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 Update Report is the next iteration of the initial Cedar River WRAPS (2019) and Upper Wapsipinicon WRAPS (2020)

required by the state Clean Water Legacy Act. This update summarizes new water quality data and trend information to support watershed planning efforts. The objective of the WRAPS Update process is to provide updated information to further work to restore impaired waters and protect the unimpaired waters from degradation. This report is a collaborative effort between the MPCA, other state agencies, local government partners, and other stakeholders and supports the work planned under the One Watershed, One Plan program.

## 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 Justin Watkins  
7381 Airport View Dr SW  
Rochester, MN 55902-1847

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.