



WaterFront Bulletin

Water Restoration and Protection: Headlines and Deadlines

WaterFront is a web-based bulletin featuring updates on impaired waters, watershed project funding and water restoration and protection activities underway throughout the state. *WaterFront* is published to share information with internal MPCA staff and external watershed partners.

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MPCA WATERSHED STAFF: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Results from a 2007 survey of internal MPCA staff and external partners in the pass-through funding system indicate that some program participants are unclear about the roles and responsibilities of various MPCA staffing units. A brief overview follows.

Statewide Administration Unit

(Watershed Section, Regional Division, St. Paul MPCA office)

- Manage and coordinate, statewide, the federal Section 319 (319) grants, state Clean Water Partnership (CWP) grants and loans, and state Clean Water Legacy Act (CWLA) funding
- Track submittal requirements including semiannual and annual progress reports, final reports, eLINK, and STORET
- Develop the annual Watershed Achievements report
- Develop watershed administrative guidance and policy – provide assistance where needed
- Facilitate the Clean Water Council and ensure CWLA reporting requirements are met
- Coordinate updating and management of the Minnesota Non-point Source Management Program Plan
- Coordinate MPCA involvement in Local Water Management Planning
- Provide internal and external training, communication, and assistance
- Process payments and manage administrative data

Watershed Project Managers

(Watershed Units, Regional Division, MPCA St. Paul and regional offices around the state)

- Work with local project sponsors to develop and manage proposals, work plans and contracts
- Work with local project sponsors to meet and manage all program requirements including timely submittal of semiannual and annual progress reports, final reports,

- Ensure that all best management practices (BMP) information is entered into eLINK, and that all monitoring data from projects is entered into STORET
- Develop and maintain local capacity to complete and implement project work
- Form external partnerships, facilitate stakeholder involvement, and facilitate internal and external project teams
- Ensure projects are on schedule and funds are spent according to the work plan
- Review and approve invoices, work plans, and reports
- Conduct mid-project reviews and attend project meetings
- Ensure monitoring stations are installed and maintained
- Complete implementation plans (local governmental units and/or contractors heavily involved) and guide implementation

Watershed Supervisors

(Watershed Units, Regional Division, MPCA St. Paul and regional offices around the state)

- Participate in prioritizing projects and seek sources of funding
- Approve funding and assign project managers
- Ensure timelines for proposal submittal, work plan submittal, and contract and program requirements are met
- Approve contract work plans
- Ensure contract payments and budgets are up-to-date and that contract payments are not made if grantees or contractors do not meet program requirements
- Manage project managers within the unit to complete assigned projects
- Evaluate performance of project managers
- Ensure that defined processes are being followed and hold staff accountable for their process responsibilities

Contract Specialists

(Contract Unit, Operational Support Division, MPCA St. Paul office)

- Ensure the Scope of Work (SOW) for contracts meets basic requirements for contract agreement. If modifications needed, contact project manager
- Write and review contract. Work closely with program while ensuring that State requirements are met
- Prepare final contract document, ensure contract is encumbered, and route for signature
- Distribute final executed contract documents to project sponsor and program coordinator
- Assist with processing contract amendments
- Address project manager contract questions and provide consistency among different contracts
- Provide support with resolving any performance issues and track performance
- Provide monthly reports to Division Leadership regarding contract status
- Oversee development and administration of the TMDL Master Contract

PROGRAM UPDATES

Draft 2008 TMDL List of Impaired Waters Sent to EPA

Minnesota's 2008 Draft List of Impaired Waters was forwarded to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for approval last month. The response from EPA is expected in six to eight weeks. The submitted list is available online at <http://www.pca.state.mn.us/water/tmdl/tmdl-303dlist.html>. For additional information, contact Howard Markus, MPCA, 651-296-7295 or howard.markus@pca.state.mn.us.

TOOLS YOU CAN USE

MPCA Developing "Backgrounders" on Conventional Parameters

The MPCA is developing background papers providing a general overview of conventional impairments. To date, a paper outlining Phosphorus impairments is completed. Bacteria and Excess Nutrient papers are next in line, respectively. The backgrounders can be used at public meetings, stakeholder gatherings and during other educational opportunities to help explain what an impairment is and how it can affect a waterbody. The Phosphorus backgrounder is available on the MPCA Web site Impaired Waters, Publications and Guidance, page at <http://www.pca.state.mn.us/water/tmdl/tmdl-publications.html>.

Urban BMP Assessment

The U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has created a new web-based tool to provide stormwater professionals with easy access to approximately 220 studies which assess the performance of more than 275 stormwater Best Management Practices (BMPs). The tool provides access to studies covering a variety of traditional and low impact BMP types, including retention and detention ponds, biofilters, grassed filter strips, porous pavement, wetlands, and others. Users will also find a series of essays aimed at improving understanding of BMP performance and the importance of volume reduction/infiltration in these assessments. EPA plans to add more studies over the coming year, focusing on expanding the collection of studies of low impact development or green infrastructure BMPs. The Urban BMP Performance Tool is available online at <http://www.epa.gov/npdes/urbanbmptool>.

PROJECT UPDATES

Pomme de Terre Fecal Coliform Implementation Planning

The Pomme de Terre River is located in west central Minnesota. It originates in southern Otter Tail County, flows south through Grant and Steven counties and enters the Minnesota River in Swift County. In December 2007, the Pomme de Terre River Fecal Coliform Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) received approval from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). This TMDL is for the 17-mile impaired reach from Muddy Creek to Marsh Lake.

Implementation planning, coordinated by Marilyn Bayerl of Bayerl Water Resources, has begun. A stakeholder meeting was held on Feb. 21, 2008. Stakeholders indicated that priority areas for implementation should include riparian protection and Individual Sewage Treatment System upgrades. Additional meetings are planned to finalize the implementation plan before sending it to the MPCA for final approval. A TMDL for turbidity is also under development for this reach of the Pomme de Terre River. For more information contact Katherine Pekarek-Scott, MPCA, 507-537-6379 or katherine.pekarek-scott@pca.state.mn.us or Kris Beuckens, Watershed Coordinator, at 320-589-4886 ext. 109.

EVENTS

Hazardous Algal Blooms Workshop: March 4, 5, 6

Worried about blue-green algae blooms? Not sure what conditions are likely to promote algal toxicity? Wondering about the potential human or animal health risks or where to turn for assistance? Then this workshop is for you. This workshop is designed for local decision-makers who deal with blue-green algal blooms, potential human and animal health risks, and public outreach. This workshop will be offered from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the following locations.

March 4: Sauk Centre - Gerards Restaurant, 1225 Timberline Drive

March 5: North Mankato – Best Western, 1111 Range Street

March 6: St. Paul - MN Pollution Control Agency, 520 Lafayette Road

The March 6 workshop will also be webcast at www.pca.state.mn.us.

For more information and online registration visit www.seagrant.umn.edu/news.

Erosion Control and Stormwater Management Conference & Trade Show: March 6-7

Join professionals from around the state for Minnesota Erosion Control Association's 19th Annual Erosion Control and Stormwater Management Conference & Trade Show, March 6-7, 2008 at the Doubletree Park Place Hotel in St. Louis Park. Hear presentations on the stormwater pollution prevention plan for the 35W Bridge, recovering from the southeast Minnesota floods, best management practices for construction sites, the affects of road salt in our water, low-impact development, planting for stormwater design, new products and more. Pre-conference training and certification sessions also scheduled March 4-5. Visit www.mnerosion.org for the conference brochure and registration information, or call MECA at (763) 478-3267.

Understanding the August 2007 Flood in SE MN: April 4

This event is sponsored by the SE MN Water Resources Board and Winona State University and provides an opportunity to exchange technical information on the August 2007 flood in Southeastern Minnesota. It will be held from 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. in the Winona State University Science Laboratory Center Auditorium. The intent is to develop a better understanding of stream physical changes and biological impacts and recovery. This event is designed for public officials, planning and water committee members, water management professionals and environmental consultants with a technical understanding of water systems. For more information, contact Bea Hoffman, SE MN Water Resources Board, at 507-457-5223 or via email at bhoffmann@winona.edu.

Protecting the St. Croix: April 15

The 9th Annual Protecting the St. Croix Conference, sponsored by the interagency St. Croix Basin Water Resources Planning Team, will be held on Tuesday, April 15, 2008, at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls. This year's conference will highlight the 40th anniversary of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act and the creation of the National Park Service's St. Croix National Scenic Riverway. The conference will also provide updates on efforts to achieve the 20% phosphorus reduction goal set by the 2006 Minnesota-Wisconsin Nutrient Agreement. Complete agenda and registration materials will be available in March. For more information, contact Craig Affeldt, MPCA St. Croix Basin Coordinator, at 651-296-6062 or via email at craig.affeldt@pca.state.mn.us.