

Guide to TMDL Assessment Supporting Material on the MPCA Web site.

With increasingly wider interest in the Impaired Waters List, MPCA is continually working to improve the documentation of the assessment process. With each assessment cycle, more of the assessment information is captured in a way that makes it easy to share with citizens and interested organizations through the Web. For more information about the overall process, see the **2004 Guidance Manual for Assessing the Quality of Minnesota Surface Waters for the Determination of Impairment**, which can be viewed under “Publications” on the MPCA Web site (<http://www.pca.state.mn.us/publications/manuals/tmdl-guidancemanual04.pdf>).

Currently, there are two types of documents posted here that provide supporting information regarding specific assessment cycles. The first type, the **Process Transparency Documents**, is organized by major river basin, and are available for both the 2002 and 2004 cycles. These text documents list each of the stream reaches for which assessments were reviewed and finalized by the Professional Judgment Group. Any factors considered in the review, especially if they influenced a decision to adjust the preliminary assessment result, are noted here. It is helpful to look for a reach in order of the Assessment Unit ID (AUID), although these will not always be in strict order. See below for an example of how to use this document.

The second type is the **Preliminary Assessment Report**, also organized by major river basin, and available for the 2004 cycle. This report compiles summary assessment results for each type of monitoring information available for each assessment reach, organized by AUID. For instance, look at AUID 07010403-509 on page 1 of 17 in the St. Croix River Basin Report. For the Upper Tamarack River from the Minnesota border to the confluence at the St. Croix River, a reach that is 7.67 miles long, monitoring data is available from an MPCA location and a USGS location, both of which are described within the box. Below the site list box is a summary of assessment methodology outcome for each type of information available. There are 6 fish collection IBI scores available. With a breakpoint of 69, three of the collections indicated Full Support and three Non-support for Aquatic Life Use, with the actual score presented as well. The overall preliminary result for fish is “NS”, or Non-support, as listed in the column to the left.

The dataset also contains measurements of conventional parameters Dissolved Oxygen and pH, which are presented as a fraction of the number of exceedances per total number of observations. Use support is presented for each parameter as well as for all conventional parameters in the column to the left. Occasionally, data is considered that was not available to include in the Preliminary Assessment Report. This will be noted on the Process Transparency Document for this AUID, along with the final assessments determined with the PJG review.

Another type of information used is the Fish Consumption Advisory (FCA), which is presented for the next AUID on the list, 07030001-508. In this case, this is the only information available for this reach. Generally, when only FCA is available for an AUID,

