Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Overview

Credit River Turbidity TMDL TAC Meeting
February 12, 2009

Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
The Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Program:

A Brief Overview
Legal Authority

Federal Clean Water Act (CWA) of 1972 – framework for protecting, restoring water quality

Focus:
CWA Section 303 – establishes national water quality standards and Impaired Waters (TMDL) programs
The Impaired Waters List

303(d) Lists:
- Inform/educate the public
- Ensure that *further study* of impaired waters occurs *(the TMDL Study)*
- Encourage action to restore water quality

**Minn. 2008 Impaired Waters List**
To date- 2,575 impairments on 1,382 water bodies

(As of 6/18/2008)
What is a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL)?

- It is a process
- It is a formula
TMDLs – The Process

1. Assess waters
2. Determine if impaired
3. Place water on 303 (d) list
4. Monitor, study water body further
5. Complete pollutant load allocation formula
6. Develop restoration plan
7. Implement plan
8. Monitor changes in water quality
9. Next steps – Delist?
A TMDL Study must complete this pollution load allocation formula:

\[ LA(s) + WLA(s) + \text{Margin of Safety} + \text{Reserve Capacity} = \text{Total Maximum Daily Load} \]

Where:
- LA = Load allocations from nonpoint sources
- WLA = Waste load allocations from point (permitted) sources
- Margin of Safety = to account for potential scientific error
- Reserve capacity = set aside for future development
The allocation formula determines ... 

the maximum amount of a specific pollutant that can be discharged to a waterbody and still meet water quality standards.
TMDLs require technical skills and people skills

A quantitative analysis which determines the maximum amount of a specific pollutant that a waterbody can safely handle and still meet beneficial uses.

A collaborative process bringing together
- Citizens
- Industry
- Agriculture
- Local, state and federal governments
- Forestry
to solve a water quality problem.
Project Website & Contact Info.

http://www.pca.state.mn.us/water/tmdl/project-creditriver.html

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