Notice of availability and request for comments on draft
Mississippi River - Sartell
Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategies (WRAPS)
Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL)

General information
Public comment period begins: September 14, 2020
Public comment period ends: 4:30 p.m. on October 14, 2020

MPCA contact person:
Phil Votruba
Watershed Division
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
7678 College Rd, Ste 105
Baxter, MN 56425-8625
Phone: 218-316-3901
Email: phil.votruba@state.mn.us
File manager phone: 651-757-2728 or 844-828-0942

Draft reports for the Mississippi River - Sartell Watershed are available for review on the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) draft/public noticed TMDL and WRAPS webpage at https://www.pca.state.mn.us/water/total-maximum-daily-load-tmdl-projects 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: 07010201 Mississippi River - Sartell Major Watershed

Description of the Mississippi River - Sartell WRAPS and TMDL

The Mississippi River - Sartell Watershed (MRSW) is located in central Minnesota as part of the Upper Mississippi River Basin and spans approximately 1,020 square miles. The watershed is composed of portions of Morrison, Benton, and Stearns counties and also contains smaller sections of Crow Wing, Mille Lacs, and Todd counties. The MRSW consists of 879 total river miles, and includes 43 named stream assessment units. There are 232 lakes within the watershed covering a total of 13,319 acres. According to new draft reports released by the MPCA, surface waters in the MRSW are in fair condition, but phosphorus and E. coli pollution are threatening aquatic life and recreation in several streams and lakes.

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 the sources of the pollutant causing an impairment and quantifies necessary reductions among the sources. TMDL studies were developed for 15 E. coli impaired stream segments and 2 phosphorus impaired lakes: Two Rivers Lake and Platte Lake. These studies identify known and likely sources of the pollutants and reductions needed to bring these waterbodies back into compliance with state standards.

The WRAPS report is also required by the state Clean Water Legacy Act and uses TMDL and other information to develop strategies for addressing point and nonpoint pollution sources. The objective of the WRAPS process is to develop strategies that not only restore impaired waters, but also protect the unimpaired waters from degradation. This report is a collaborative effort between the MPCA, other state agencies, local government partners, and other stakeholders.

The MRSW restoration strategies in the WRAPS report focus on addressing the impairments of E. coli bacteria in several stream reaches and excess nutrients in lakes. Strategies to address sources of E. coli to streams include: feedlot management practices; septic system maintenance and upgrades; pasture management; and stormwater control measures in urbanized areas. Restoration practices for phosphorus reduction to impaired lakes include: internal lake and shoreline management; cover crops and living cover; tillage management; nutrient and fertilizer management; buffers; pasture management; and septic system maintenance and upgrades. A reach of the Platte River was classified as an exceptional use stream and is a focus for protection. While all waters in the MRSW require protection in some capacity, to better focus implementation of the WRAPS, protection considerations were given for high value and high quality waters, and waters at risk of impairment.

While several waterbodies within the MRSW are impaired, a number of streams and lakes are demonstrating improving trends in...
water clarity. The diverse surface water resources throughout the watershed provide important recreational opportunities and economic benefits to citizens and visitors. Water quality conditions of the MRSW are also critically important to the downstream receiving waters and drinking water supplies for St. Cloud and the Twin Cities.

**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**
To submit comments or petitions to the MPCA through the mail or email 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.