



Clean Water Fund

What's the issue?

The state Clean Water Legacy Act and the federal Clean Water Act require the state to make reasonable progress in assessing waters of the state for impairments and in developing plans for restoring waters to their intended uses. Additional funding is needed to ensure the continued systematic progress we are making to assess Minnesota's lakes, rivers, and streams. This funding will support our work with local partners, continue restoration of impaired watersheds, and protect watersheds that are unimpaired.



What we propose

We are requesting an appropriation of \$29.325 million in each of FY 2016 and FY 2017 from the Clean Water Fund to our Water Program.

- 1. Continue monitoring and assessment efforts to meet the 10-year cycle (\$16.9 million):** Statewide monitoring and assessment work is on track to meet the 10-year schedule in law, at a rate of about 10% of the watersheds each year. Assuming that pace continues, all 81 major watersheds will be completed by 2017. Intensive watershed monitoring provides biological, chemical, and habitat data. Assessments determine if waters are impaired and serve as a basis for further analysis of watershed problems, protection options, and overall watershed planning efforts. Additionally we are monitoring for contaminants of new and emerging concern.
- 2. Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategies: TMDL and WRAP development (\$21.2 million):** Watershed restoration and protection strategies (WRAPS), including total maximum daily loads (TMDLs), are developed with local partners to set strategies for impaired waters and unimpaired waters by setting reduction and protection goals, milestones, and measures to guide state and local government implementation efforts.
- 3. Groundwater assessment (\$2.9 million):** Funding for this component will be used to monitor and enhance the ambient groundwater well network. The network is used to collect critical water quality data needed for drinking water protection and surface water impact analysis, including modeling to support TMDL stressor identification, and to identify contaminants of emerging concern.
- 4. Enhanced county septic system activities (\$7.5 million):** This funding supports technical assistance and county implementation of septic system program requirements (under M.S. 115.55), including issuing permits, conducting inspections, identifying and resolving non-compliant septic systems, and revising and maintaining septic system ordinances.
- 5. Great Lakes restoration project (\$1.5 million):** This is for Great Lakes restoration projects in the St. Louis River area of concern, planned and carried out with local and federal partners. These funds will leverage an additional \$2.79 million in federal Great Lakes Restoration Initiative funds to implement the St. Louis River Area of Concern Remedial Action Plan.

6. Clean Water Partnership (\$3.0 million): Funding provides grants to study and implement solutions that protect basins and watersheds before waters are impaired.

7. Watershed research and database development (\$2.3 million): Funding will be used to develop an integrated watershed data management system (Watershed Data Integration Project or WDIP). This project will interface with existing systems and give us and the public a central location for reporting, analysis, and management of watershed data. This improves our ability to track progress and manage Clean Water-funded projects, and meet the reporting requirements included in the 2009 Clean Water Legacy Act (CWLA) amendments.

8. Wastewater treatment system design and technical assistance (\$0.80 million): The MPCA will work with regulated parties to identify new or more efficient ways of meeting standards at wastewater treatment facilities (municipal and industrial).

9. Stormwater research and guidance (\$0.55 million): This funding will measure the performance of existing stormwater infiltration sites, as identified in the Minimal Impact Design Standards (MIDS) project. Our staff will monitor the range of existing infiltration devices and compare these to design criteria, maintenance records, and quantify year-round infiltration rates. Part of this effort is to develop and refine pretreatment options and standards for municipal stormwater treatment systems.

10. National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) wastewater/stormwater TMDL implementation (\$1.9 million): This component will fund our staffing costs needed to implement response actions to total maximum daily loads requiring reductions from these point sources as a result of the additional information gathered from our watershed approach.

11. Clean Water Council Operations (\$0.1M): Expenses over the biennium for Council operations.

How it will help

This funding request enables us to continue our work toward the goals of the Clean Water Legacy Act, and to complete WRAPS and TMDL studies that identify the pollution reduction needed to restore a water body or protect watersheds. It will enable us to continue work on a data system to improve assessment and project management efforts, and to meet reporting requirements adopted by the Legislature in 2013. Funding will also continue to leverage available federal money to restore the St. Louis River Basin in Lake Superior, a source of drinking water for the City of Duluth.

Contact

Greta Gauthier • Legislative Director • Minnesota Pollution Control Agency

greta.gauthier@state.mn.us

Office: 651-757-2031 • Cell: 651-338-8955 • Fax: 651-296-6334

Our performance report is available on the Minnesota's Legacy website:

<http://www.legacy.leg.mn/funds/clean-water-fund/clean-water-fund-performance-reports>

This report uses 18 factors to gauge progress on protecting and restoring the state's water resources.

