



REGION 5
CHICAGO, IL 60604

July 14, 2026

Mr. Glenn Skuta
Watershed Division Director
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
520 Lafayette Road North
St. Paul, MN 55155-4194

Dear Mr. Skuta:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency completed its review of the final Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) revision for the Buffalo River Watershed TMDL (originally approved in 2017), including supporting documentation. The revised TMDLs address changes to the bacteria and total suspended solids (TSS) allocations for five waterbodies. The revised TMDLs address the impaired Aquatic Recreation Use due to excessive bacteria and Aquatic Life Use due to excessive TSS.

The revised TMDLs meet the requirements of Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act and the EPA's implementing regulations set forth at 40 C.F.R. Part 130. Therefore, the EPA approves Minnesota's eight revised TMDLs for bacteria and TSS. All other aspects of the original TMDL approval remain the same. The EPA describes Minnesota's compliance with the statutory and regulatory requirements in the enclosed decision document.

The EPA acknowledges Minnesota's efforts in submitting this revised TMDL and look forward to future TMDL submissions by the State of Minnesota. If you have any questions, please contact Mr. David Werbach, at 312-886-4242 or Werbach.david@epa.gov.

Sincerely,

7/14/2026

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tera L. Fong", is written over a horizontal line.

Tera L. Fong
Division Director, Water Division
Signed by: TERA FONG

cc: Andrea Plevan, MPCA
Scott Schroeder, MPCA

2026 Buffalo River Watershed Revised TMDL Decision Document

TMDL: Revisions to the Minnesota “Buffalo River Watershed Total Maximum Daily Load ” (2017)

Approval Date: July 14, 2026

Background

On February 16, 2017, the United States Environmental Protection Agency approved the Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) for total phosphorus, *E. coli*, and total suspended solids (TSS) for waters in the Buffalo River Watershed (BRW) in the State of Minnesota.¹ For purposes of this Decision Document, the TMDLs approved on February 16, 2017, will be referred to as the “Original TMDL.” The Original TMDL addresses 14 lakes and 21 river segments for not meeting the aquatic recreation use or the aquatic life use water quality standards.

For the purposes of this amendment to the Original TMDL Decision Document, the EPA recognizes the revisions to eight waterbody segments² to the BRW TMDL, submitted to the EPA on June 24, 2026, as the 2026 Revision. This revision addresses the water body segments noted in Table 1 of this Revised TMDL Decision Document for *E. coli* and TSS.

The Original TMDL was developed by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) and established load allocations (LA) for nonpoint sources and wasteload allocations (WLA) to point sources. A margin of safety (MOS) was established for the Original TMDL.³

The BRW TMDL is being revised to update the allocation process used by MPCA to develop the wasteload allocations regarding four Wastewater Treatment Facilities (WWTFs) within the TMDL area (Tables 2-9 of this Revised TMDL Decision Document). After the approval of the BRW TMDLs in 2017, MPCA determined that the facilities noted below were either inadvertently included or excluded from the Original TMDL.

1. **Callaway WWTF:** MPCA determined that this facility is actually located in the White Earth Band of Ojibwe tribal lands, and therefore, not under the jurisdiction of the MPCA. Figure 2 of the Revised TMDL document shows the location of the Callaway WWTF.
2. **Glyndon WWTF:** This facility has an approved WLA for the -595 segment of the Buffalo River (to which it directly discharges) but MPCA determined it should also have been included as a source to the downstream segment -501 of the Buffalo River (Figure 2-5 of the Original TMDL).
3. **Lake Park WWTF:** MPCA found that this facility does not discharge to the Buffalo River -594 segment (Figure 2-5 of the Original TMDL).
4. **Spring Prairie Colony WWTF:** MPCA found that this facility does not discharge upstream of County Ditch 2 (segment -556) but instead discharges to County Ditch 3 (formerly segment -557 and now segments -614 and -615) (Figure 2-6 of the Original TMDL).
5. MPCA also noted that County Ditch 15 (segment -515) was split into two segments -606 and

¹ Buffalo River Watershed TMDL Decision Document dated February 16, 2017.

² A segment is considered to be a waterbody pollutant combination. There are eight TMDLs on five assessment units; five for *E. coli* and three for TSS.

³ MPCA, *Buffalo River Watershed Total Maximum Daily Load Study*, December 2016, <https://www.pca.state.mn.us/sites/default/files/wq-iw5-06e.pdf>.

-607 by the State after the Original TMDL was approved. The Original TMDL for segment -515 now applies to segment -607. In addition to the split, the Callaway WWTF was removed from the Revised TMDL (Table 6 of this Revised TMDL Decision Document). Segment -606 has not been assessed as impaired by MPCA.

Table 1: Permitted facilities included in these 2026 Revisions of the 2017 approved Buffalo River Watershed TMDL. (discharge assessment unit impacts)

Facility	Permit number ¹	EPA-approved <i>E. coli</i> WLA (billions of bacteria/day) ²	EPA-approved TSS WLA (tons/day) ³	Original TMDL report - impaired segment (09020106-XXX) ⁴	Revised impaired segment (09020106-XXX)
Callaway WWTF	MNT022985	2.70	0.11	-501, -515, -594, -595	None ⁶
Glyndon WWTF	MN0020630	7.90	0.31	-595	-501, -595
Lake Park WWTF	MNG580157	6.30	0.25	-501, -511, -594, -595	-501, -511, -595
Spring Prairie Colony WWTF	MN0070467	1.00	0.04	-501, -556	-501
Holcim-MWR Inc. – Pit 21 ⁵	MN0069515	Not applicable	0.21	-501, -595	-501, -595

1. Permit numbers as provided in the original Buffalo River Watershed TMDL. The permit number for Lake Park WWTF has since changed to MNG585157; the permit for Spring Prairie Colony WWTF is in the process of reissuance as MNG585387.
2. As provided in Table 14 of the Buffalo River Watershed TMDL: EPA Approval Letter and Decision Document.
3. As provided in Table 15 of the Buffalo River Watershed TMDL: EPA Approval Letter and Decision Document.
4. As provided in Table 3 and Table 4 of the Buffalo River Watershed TMDL: EPA Approval Letter and Decision Document.
5. The operator and permit holder for this facility has changed since the 2017 TMDL approval from Aggregate Industries to Holcim-MWR Inc. No other revisions associated with this facility are included in this memo.
6. Callaway WWTF was removed from the Original TMDL.

As a result of these revisions, the WLA, LA and MOS have been revised to account for the updated information. The overall Loading Capacity as well as all other portions of the Original TMDL, remained unchanged and are still in effect.

2026 Revisions to the BRW TMDLs

The EPA is approving the 2026 Revision to the BRW TMDL Summary Tables of the Original TMDL based on the information submitted by the State of Minnesota on June 24, 2026. MPCA provided revised allocations for *E. coli* and TSS based upon the changes discussed above and in the Revised TMDL Document. Tables 2-9 of this Revised Decision Document contain the revised allocations for the segments identified in Table 1 of this Revised TMDL Decision Document.

MPCA explained that reasonable assurance that the pollutant reductions will occur is addressed through the Original TMDL document. MPCA noted that additional reasonable assurance is demonstrated through the *Buffalo River and Upper Red River of the North Watersheds Total Maximum Daily Load Report 2025*, developed and submitted at the same time as this Revised TMDL. This new TMDL effort addresses additional impairments in the Buffalo River Watershed for total

phosphorus and TSS. MPCA discussed the ongoing efforts and funding available to reduce pollutants in the watershed.

Additional reasonable assurance is provided by the Buffalo-Red River Watershed District (BRRWD), who developed a Watershed Management Plan in 2020. This plan documents existing and planned implementation activities, goals, measurable endpoints, and funding mechanisms to reduce pollutants in the Buffalo River and Upper Red River watersheds (<https://www.brrwd.org/watershed-management-plan>).

The EPA Assessment:

The EPA finds the State's calculation of adjusted WLA, LA, and MOS for water bodies in the BRW as noted below to be reasonable and appropriate. MPCA provided the basis for their calculations, as well as additional reasonable assurance to account for the shift of loads from LA to WLA.

Public Participation for the 2026 Revisions

MPCA put the revised BRW TMDL on public notice from April 6, 2026, to May 21, 2026, to seek comments on the revision to the TMDL. The draft document was posted at: <http://www.pca.state.mn.us/water/tmdl>. No comments were received by MPCA.

The EPA Assessment:

The EPA reviewed the public participation information submitted by the State, and also reviewed information made available by MPCA to the EPA and to the public for review and comment, and the MPCA's announcement of the public comment period. The EPA finds that the State of Minnesota's public participation processes for the 2026 Revisions to the BRW 2017 TMDL were appropriate and that MPCA provided the general public with reasonable opportunity to review and comment on the proposed revisions to the TMDL.

Conclusion

The EPA has completed a full review of the information provided by MPCA on June 24, 2026, and other appropriate supporting information. The EPA finds that pursuant to Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act (CWA), 33 U.S.C. Section 1313(d), and the EPA's implementing regulations at 40 C.F.R. Part 130, the 2026 Revisions satisfy the elements of an approvable revised TMDL. This approval addresses changes to five *E. coli* TMDLs and three TSS TMDLs (Tables 2-9 of this revised TMDL Decision Document). No other elements or documentation relating to the original or subsequent approvals of this TMDL are being revised.

Tribal Consultation

Pursuant to Executive Order 13175, *Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments* and the *EPA Policy on Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribes* (December 2023), EPA invited the White Earth Band of Ojibwe to consult on EPA's review of the 2026 Revisions to the BRW TMDLs. EPA did not receive any response from the White Earth Band of Ojibwe in its invitation to engage in consultation on the 2026 Revisions.

The EPA's approval of this TMDL extends to the water bodies which are identified above with the exception of any portions of the water bodies that are within Indian Country, as defined in 18 U.S.C. Section 1151, and as further discussed in our Decision Document. The EPA is taking no action to approve or disapprove TMDLs for those waters at this time. The EPA, or eligible Indian Tribes, as appropriate, will retain responsibilities under the CWA Section 303(d) for those waters.

E. coli TMDLs in the 2026 Revisions:

Buffalo River (09020106-594) E. coli TMDL

Table 2: Revised Table 4-5: *E. coli* loading capacities and allocations for AUID 09020106-594 using geometric mean criteria.

<i>E. coli</i>	Flow Condition				
	High Flows	Moist Conditions	Mid-range Flows	Dry Conditions	Low Flows
	Billion organisms per day				
Loading Capacity (LC)	1,031.1	338.5	201.7	118.0	56.4
Boundary Condition: White Earth (BC)*	396.2	130.1	77.5	45.3	21.7
State Loading Capacity (SLC = LC – BC)	634.9	208.4	124.2	72.7	34.7
Wasteload Allocation**					
Audubon WWTF	6.8	6.8	6.8	6.8	6.8
Baers Poultry Co – Old Barn Site	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Jona Baer Inc.	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Load Allocation	564.6	180.8	105.0	58.6	24.4
Margin of Safety (SLC * 10%)	63.5	20.8	12.4	7.3	3.5

* - estimated loads; not included in the TMDL approval

** - reflects removal of the Callaway and Lake Park WWTFs

Buffalo River (09020106-595) *E. coli* TMDL

Table 3: Revised Table 4-6: *E. coli* loading capacities and allocations for AUID 09020106-595 using geometric mean criteria.

<i>E. coli</i>	Flow Condition				
	High Flows	Moist Conditions	Mid-range Flows	Dry Conditions	Low Flows
	Billion organisms per day				
Loading Capacity (LC)	1,719.0	586.7	382.3	243.4	114.0
Boundary Condition: White Earth (BC)*	418.4	142.8	93.0	59.2	27.7
State Loading Capacity (SLC = LC – BC)	1,300.6	443.9	289.3	184.2	86.3
Wasteload Allocation**					
Hawley WWTF	10.3	10.3	10.3	10.3	10.3
Glyndon WWTF	7.9	7.9	7.9	7.9	7.9
Lake Park WWTF	6.3	6.3	6.3	6.3	6.3
Audubon WWTF	6.8	6.8	6.8	6.8	6.8
Livestock facilities requiring NPDES permit	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Load Allocation	1,139.2	368.2	229.1	134.4	46.4
Margin of Safety (SLC * 10%)	130.1	44.4	28.9	18.4	8.6

* - estimated loads; not included in the TMDL approval

** - reflects removal of the Callaway WWTF

Buffalo River (09020106-501) *E. coli* TMDL

Table 4: Revised Table 4-8: *E. coli* loading capacities and allocations for AUID 09020106-501 using geometric mean criteria.

<i>E. coli</i>	Flow Condition				
	High Flows	Moist Conditions	Mid-range Flows	Dry Conditions	Low Flows
	Billion organisms per day				
Loading Capacity (LC)	4,834.0	840.4	397.6	204.5	97.9
Boundary Condition: White Earth (BC)*	422.8	73.5	34.8	17.9	8.6
State Loading Capacity (SLC = LC – BC)	4,411.2	766.9	362.8	186.6	89.3
Wasteload Allocation**					
Hawley WWTF	10.3	10.3	10.3	10.3	10.3
Glyndon WWTF	7.9	7.9	7.9	7.9	7.9
Lake Park WWTF	6.3	6.3	6.3	6.3	6.3
Audubon WWTF	6.8	6.8	6.8	6.8	6.8
Hitterdal WWTF	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3
Spring Prairie Colony WWTF	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Barnesville WWTF	18.7	18.7	18.7	18.7	18.7
Livestock facilities requiring NPDES permit	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Load Allocation	3,916.8	636.9	273.2	114.6	27.1
Margin of Safety (SLC * 10%)	441.1	76.7	36.3	18.7	8.9

* - estimated loads; not included in the TMDL approval

** - reflects removal of the Callaway WWTF

County Ditch 2 (09020106-556) *E. coli* TMDL

Table 5: Revised Table 4-9: *E. coli* loading capacities and allocations for AUID 09020106-556 using geometric mean criteria.

<i>E. coli</i>	Flow Condition				
	High Flows	Moist Conditions	Mid-range Flows	Dry Conditions	Low Flows
	Billion organisms per day				
Loading Capacity	355.4	49.5	13.9	4.9	0.2
Wasteload Allocation*					
Livestock facilities requiring NPDES permit	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Load Allocation	319.9	44.6	12.5	4.4	0.2
Margin of Safety	35.5	4.9	1.4	0.5	0.0

*- reflects removal of the Spring Prairie Colony WWTF

Becker County Ditch 15 (09020106-515) *E. coli* TMDL

Table 6: Revised Table 4-25: *E. coli* loading capacities and allocations for AUID 09020106-607 (*child of retired parent AUID 09020106-515*) using geometric mean criteria.

<i>E. coli</i>	Flow Condition				
	High Flows	Moist Conditions	Mid-range Flows	Dry Conditions	Low Flows
	Billion organisms per day				
Loading Capacity (LC)	434.3	102.4	70.4	45.2	23.9
Boundary Condition: White Earth (BC)*	48.6	11.5	7.9	5.1	2.7
State Loading Capacity (SLC = LC – BC)	385.7	90.9	62.5	40.1	21.2
Wasteload Allocation**					
Audubon WWTF	6.8	6.8	6.8	6.8	6.8
Load Allocation	340.3	75.0	49.4	29.3	12.3
Margin of Safety (SLC * 10%)	38.6	9.1	6.3	4.0	2.1

* - estimated loads; not included in the TMDL approval

** - reflects removal of the Callaway WWTF

TSS TMDLs in the 2026 Revisions:

Buffalo River (09020106-594) TSS TMDL

Table 7: Revised Table 4-27: TSS loading capacities and allocations for AUID 09020106-594.

Total Suspended Solids	Flow Condition				
	High Flows	Moist Conditions	Mid-range Flows	Dry Conditions	Low Flows
	Tons per day				
Loading Capacity (LC)	57.95	19.84	11.48	6.35	3.07
Boundary Condition: White Earth (BC)*	22.27	7.62	4.41	2.44	1.18
State Loading Capacity (SLC = LC – BC)	35.68	12.22	7.07	3.91	1.89
Wasteload Allocation**					
Audubon WWTF	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27
Construction/Industrial Stormwater	0.05	0.02	0.01	0.005	0.002
Load Allocation	31.79	10.71	6.08	3.245	1.428
Margin of Safety (RL * 10%)	3.57	1.22	0.71	0.39	0.19

* - estimated loads; not included in the TMDL approval

** - reflects removal of the Callaway and Lake Park WWTFs

Buffalo River (09020106-595) TSS TMDL

Table 8: Revised Table 4-28: TSS loading capacities and allocations for AUID 09020106-595.

Total Suspended Solids	Flow Condition				
	High Flows	Moist Conditions	Mid-range Flows	Dry Conditions	Low Flows
	Tons per day				
Loading Capacity (LC)	96.49	34.50	22.41	14.12	6.27
Boundary Condition: White Earth (BC)*	23.48	8.40	5.45	3.44	1.53
State Loading Capacity (SLC = LC – BC)	73.01	26.10	16.96	10.68	4.74
Wasteload Allocation**					
Hawley WWTF	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40
Glyndon WWTF	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31
Lake Park WWTF	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25
Audubon WWTF	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27
Holcim-MWR Inc. – Pit 21	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21
Construction/Industrial Stormwater	0.09	0.03	0.02	0.01	0.00
Load Allocation	64.18	22.02	13.80	8.16	2.83
Margin of Safety (SLC * 10%)	7.30	2.61	1.70	1.07	0.47

* - estimated loads; not included in the TMDL approval

** - reflects removal of the Callaway WWTF

Buffalo River (09020106-501) TSS TMDL

Table 9: Revised Table 4-29: TSS loading capacities and allocations for AUID 09020106-501.

Total Suspended Solids	Flow Condition				
	High Flows	Moist Conditions	Mid-range Flows	Dry Conditions	Low Flows
	Tons per day				
Loading Capacity (LC)	462.71	78.35	37.55	18.73	9.59
Boundary Condition: White Earth (BC)*	40.47	6.85	3.28	1.64	0.84
State Loading Capacity (SLC = LC – BC)	422.24	71.50	34.27	17.09	8.75
Wasteload Allocation					
Hawley WWTF	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40
Glyndon WWTF	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31
Lake Park WWTF	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25
Audubon WWTF	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27
Hitterdal WWTF	0.09	0.09	0.09	0.09	0.09
Spring Prairie Colony WWTF	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.04
Barnesville WWTF	0.73	0.73	0.73	0.73	0.73
Holcim-MWR Inc. – Pit 21	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21
Construction/Industrial Stormwater	0.41	0.07	0.03	0.01	0.01
Load Allocation	377.31	61.98	28.51	13.07	5.56
Margin of Safety (SLC * 10%)	42.22	7.15	3.43	1.71	0.88

* - estimated loads; not included in the TMDL approval

** - reflects removal of the Callaway WWTF and the addition of the Glyndon WWTF

Attachments

Attachment 1: The EPA's February 16, 2017, approval of the Buffalo River Watershed TMDL