Implementing NPS TMDLs - Iowa’s New Strategy for Success

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Overview

- TMDL program history
- Program challenges and changes
- New program strategy
- Program connections
- How it all fits together
- Questions/discussion
Program History

- Born out of consent decree (2000)
- Merged with 319 program into new WIS in 2005
- Initial focus = CD/bean counting (2000 - 2007)
- 2006 – began planning for post-CD era
Program Challenges

• 303(d) list is growing (’06/279; ’08/439)
• No state support
• Shrinking federal support
• TMDL process can take several years to complete
• Limited staff resources
• Program capacity: 10-12 waterbodies/yr
Program Challenges

• Typically 90+ percent of pollutant load from NPS
• No state or federal regulatory incentives to implement NPS solutions
  – Rely on voluntary efforts
  – Must target for effective ROI
  – Can take years to implement
  – Measurable improvements can take even longer
  – Patience and long-view are important
### Recent TMDL Changes

- **Plan ahead 5 years**
- **Initially focus on**
  - Significant public lakes
  - Stream segments draining < 30,000 acres
- **Measure/monitor for WQ improvement**
  - Implementing annual monitoring plan
  - Invest for long-term
  - Monitor before TMDL; during & after implementation
New Program Strategy

- Complete TMDL prior to implementation
- Seek input from stakeholders
  - Coordinate and collaborate with 319, other programs
- Focus on state and local priority waterbodies
  - High value/need
  - Strong local support & commitment to improve WQ
  - Increased likelihood of measurable results in a reasonable time frame (i.e. small watersheds)
- Build foundation for WS Management Plans and successful implementation
…And How It All Fits Together

Monitor for improvement

Watershed Project(s)

Ongoing Monitoring

303(d) List

Restored to Intended use

TMDL

Watershed Planning & Assessment
Summary

• Absent regulatory incentives, successfully implementing NPS TMDLs takes considerable time and resources
• Must align TMDL priorities with local commitment
• Focus on small watersheds for measurable success
• Requires local planning and assessment
  – Use technology to your advantage
    • LiDAR (light detection and ranging)
    • Assessment tools (WS, stream, gully)
• Target implementation resources
  – Random acts of conservation vs. precision conservation
• Leverage all available program resources
Questions/Discussion
Thank You

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