



State of Wisconsin \ DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

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March 31, 2010

Division of Water - W-15J
US Environmental Protection Agency, Region 5
Chicago, IL 60604-3507

Subject: State of Wisconsin Submittal of the 2010 Integrated Report

Dear Ms. Hyde:

Enclosed for your review and approval is Wisconsin's 2010 Water Quality Report to Congress (Integrated Report), in fulfillment of federal reporting requirements under Sections 303(d) and 305(b) of the Clean Water Act.

In preparation of this report, WDNR acted on three primary goals:

1. That the assessment process be data-driven through use of improved, consistent methodology,
2. That the process have increased public involvement and transparency, and
3. That the Integrated Reporting package be submitted to US EPA in a timely manner – by the due date of April 1, 2010.

We are very pleased to report success on each of these fronts, as well as to share some of our more significant recent milestones in managing Wisconsin's waters.

Improved Methodology

WDNR has spent several years preparing improved methodology for assessing and listing our waterbodies. For the first time this year, portions of this methodology were combined into a guidance document called Wisconsin's Consolidated Assessment and Listing Methodology (WisCALM). Use of this new guidance brought our program significantly ahead of where we have been in past years in making consistent, data-driven decisions.

Using the WisCALM methodology, our 2010 update to the 305(b) Impaired Waters List proposes the removal of 41 water/pollutant combinations and the addition of 53 water/pollutant combinations. In total, the 2010 list includes:

- 728 Category 5A water/pollutant combinations (waters needing a TMDL other than mercury);
- 202 Category 5B waters listed for mercury from atmospheric deposition; and
- 84 Category 4a water/pollutant combinations (impaired waters with an approved TMDL)

Over the years, 129 water/pollutant listings have been restored and moved off the Impaired Waters List.

Increased Public Involvement

We improved the transparency of our listing process and opportunities for public involvement in several ways:

- A 30-day **public solicitation period** for submittal of public data began on June 16, 2009.
- A 45-day **public comment period** for the 2010 draft Impaired Waters List began on December 1, 2009.
- WDNR's **Impaired Waters web pages** received extensive enhancements prior to the public comment period (http://dnr.wi.gov/org/water/condition/2010_IR/index.htm). Information about each waterbody on the list was provided online.
- A **public 'Webinar'** (a live online presentation) was held on Dec. 15, 2009, attended by approximately 65 people.

Public comments from approximately 75 citizens or organizations were received. A summary of these comments and WDNR's responses is provided as Attachment G of this submittal.

Timely Submittal

We are pleased to submit Wisconsin's first biennial Integrated Report to you in a timely manner for 2010. Our submittal is being provided to you both electronically and in hardcopy.

The submittal package includes the following:

- **Attachment A:** 2010 *Wisconsin Water Quality Report to Congress* (Integrated Report)
- **Attachment B:** Proposed 2010 Impaired Waters List
- **Attachment C:** 2010 Modifications to the Impaired Waters List
- **Attachment D:** Data Documentation Sheets for all 2010 modifications to Impaired Waters List
- **Attachment E:** Final 2010 *Wisconsin Consolidated Assessment & Listing Methodology* (WisCALM)
- **Attachment F:** EPA comments on WisCALM guidance and WDNR responses
- **Attachment G:** Public Data Solicitation: a) Public notice, b) Targeted email solicitation, c) List of external parties contacted
- **Attachment H:** Public notice for the public comment period
- **Attachment I:** Summary of Public Comments and WDNR's Responses to Comments
- **Attachment J (electronic submittal only):** Electronic Files including all attached above plus:
 - XML format transmittal files for statewide dataset (all waters)
 - Impaired waters data subset (Microsoft Excel/PDF)
 - GIS shape file of all assessed waters
 - GIS shape file of impaired waters dataset
 - WATERS reference tables
 - 2008 Category 5A Federal-State Validation.

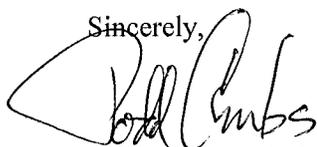
Significant Progress on Managing Wisconsin's Waters

Wisconsin has some of the most extraordinary water resources in the nation. In addition to sitting on top of some of the largest quantities of groundwater found throughout the United States, Wisconsin also has over 15,000 lakes and more than 54,000 discrete rivers and streams. As you read this report I ask you to keep this in mind when evaluating how we've done over the past several years in our efforts to assess and improve water quality. Advancements in study design, monitoring technologies (i.e., satellite imagery) and data analysis are reviewed regularly by staff and are used whenever resources allow. In recent years, networks have been established with trained volunteers to allow us to increase the number of water bodies with baseline data. Altogether, this has allowed Wisconsin to assess approximately 4,200 lakes (23% of the total number of lakes in the state and ~80% of lake acres) and approximately 2,700 rivers and streams (5% of the total number of rivers and streams in the state and 16% of river/stream miles). I am hopeful that we can continue to increase those numbers and will work with staff to ensure that our resources are used as efficiently as possible to do so.

As this 2010 Integrated Report is being completed, I am proud to say that Wisconsin is making great progress in adding several new water quality improvement tools to our program. After many years of hard work, Wisconsin is about to usher in new shoreland zoning requirements that will provide significant protection to surface waters throughout the state. In addition, thermal water quality standards have recently been approved and will be used in our WPDES permit program later this summer. Wisconsin is poised to revise both urban and agricultural nonpoint source performance standards – already among the most progressive in the entire nation – to help address the runoff of sediment and nutrients to our waterways. Lastly, Wisconsin will soon be seeking adoption of water quality criteria and implementation rules for the regulation of phosphorus in surface waters – a very important effort that began in the 1980's that has the potential to be inexorably linked to improvements in water quality throughout the state.

All told, I hope you'll agree that Wisconsin is taking a very active and progressive approach to assessing and improving water quality. This report characterizes the Wisconsin program comprehensively. If you have any questions or concerns after reviewing any of the information contained in it, please feel free to contact Russ Rasmussen (608.267.7651) or Bob Masnado (608.267.7662) of my staff.

Sincerely,



Todd Ambs, Administrator
Division of Water

Attachments

Cc without Attachments:

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