

Message Maps for Draft 2014 Impaired Waters List Rollout

Message Map 1 Audience: Public Date Updated: 1/30/14 Question or Concern: What has changed in this list compared to the previous list?		
Key Message 1 Of the 192 newly proposed waterbody listings, a majority (137) are waterbodies that exceed total phosphorus criteria.	Key Message 2 A total of 40 new waterbody listings are based on poor biological condition with unknown causes.	Key Message 3 Thirteen waters are proposed to be removed from the list.
Supporting Fact 1-1 New phosphorus listings may be the result of revised assessment methods or new data showing impairments.	Supporting Fact 2-1 These listings are based on health of aquatic life (fish and aquatic bugs) and levels of algal growth (chlorophyll).	Supporting Fact 3-1 One restored stream is proposed to be removed from the list, Argus School Branch in Green County, based on healthy physical habitat and biological conditions.
Supporting Fact 1-2 Targeted monitoring was conducted since the last impaired waters list to fill data gaps for waters suspected to be phosphorus impaired.	Supporting Fact 2-2 Measures of biological condition provide the most direct measure of a waterbody's ability to support aquatic life - one of the uses formally designated in WI's water quality standards.	Supporting Fact 3-2 Four beaches are proposed to be removed based on beach sample E. coli concentrations.
Supporting Fact 1-3 Watershed restoration studies (i.e. TMDLs) currently in development will address a portion (49, 36%) of the newly listed phosphorus impaired waterbodies.	Supporting Fact 2-3 The cause of the biological impairment will need to be identified before developing a restoration plan.	Supporting Fact 3-3 Eight waters are to be removed based on levels of mercury in fish tissue.

Message Map 2 Audience: Public Date Updated: 1/17/14 Question or Concern: How does Wisconsin compare to neighboring states in numbers of assessed and impaired waterbodies? Information sources: WI's 2010 and 2012 Integrated Report and EPA's ATTAINS website for other states* *Assessment data from other states not available for 2012 assessment cycle.		
Key Message 1 Neighboring states differ in the amount of surface waters present and funding available for monitoring, which affects the number/amount of waters that have been assessed. In 2010, we assessed approximately 13,800 stream miles and 762,700 acres of lakes. In 2012, we assessed approximately 15,600 stream miles and 752,500 acres of lakes.	Key Message 2 According to the US EPA's database, Wisconsin lists a proportionally smaller amount of assessed waterbodies as impaired compared to neighboring states. In 2010, we listed as impaired approximately 3,100 stream miles (22% of assessed) and 186,400 acres of lakes (24% of assessed). In 2012, we listed as impaired approximately 4,600 stream miles (30% of assessed) and 221,200 acres of lakes (29% of assessed).	Key Message 3
Supporting Fact 1-1 In 2010, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) assessed approximately 14,500 stream miles and 3,758,400 acres of lakes.	Supporting Fact 2-1 In 2010, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) listed as impaired approximately 11,600 stream miles (79% of assessed) and 3,589,300 acres of lakes (96% of assessed).	Supporting Fact 3-1
Supporting Fact 1-2 In 2010, Illinois Environmental Protection Agency assessed approximately 17,000 stream miles and 148,000 acres of lakes.	Supporting Fact 2-2 In 2010, Illinois Environmental Protection Agency listed as impaired approximately 9,600 stream miles (57% of assessed) and 144,200 acres of lakes (97% of assessed).	Supporting Fact 3-2
Supporting Fact 1-3 In 2010, Michigan Department of Environmental Protection assessed approximately 76,400 stream miles and 872,200 acres of lakes.	Supporting Fact 2-3 In 2010, Michigan Department of Environmental Protection listed as impaired approximately 53,700 stream miles (70% of assessed) and 311,200 acres of lakes (36% of assessed).	Supporting Fact 3-3

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Message Map 3 Audience: Public Date Updated: 1/30/14 Question or Concern: What are the implications of impaired waters listings?		
Key Message 1 States are required to develop pollution reduction plans, known as Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs), for each impaired waterbody and pollutant combination on the impaired waters list.	Key Message 2 Before a TMDL is developed, new and existing point source dischargers with a reasonable potential to cause or contribute to an impairment are required to have water quality-based effluent limits (WQBELs) equal to the phosphorus criterion of the receiving water.	Key Message 3 Negative perceptions of the impaired waters program include the perceived stigma of an impaired waters designation.
Supporting Fact 1-1 TMDLs set the amount of pollutants a waterbody can receive from identified sources and still meet water quality standards.	Supporting Fact 2-1 A discharger's phosphorus loads may be offset through a phosphorus trade or other means with another discharge of phosphorus to the impaired waterbody.	Supporting Fact 3-1 Declining property values is a concern for some landowners with properties (particularly lakeshore properties) near impaired waters.
Supporting Fact 1-2 The proposed 2014 listing updates include 137 new waterbody phosphorus listings. Of these, 49 (36%) will be addressed by TMDLs in development.	Supporting Fact 2-2 Of approximately 2,400 point source dischargers in the state, only 56 are direct dischargers to newly proposed phosphorus impaired waters.	Supporting Fact 3-2 Declining property values can affect individual landowners and economics of entire communities; but with property rights, come property responsibility.
Supporting Fact 1-3 Approximately 15% of the comprehensive listings of impaired waters are currently addressed by existing EPA-approved TMDLs.	Supporting Fact 2-3 More than half of these discharges (34) are in areas where TMDLs are actively being developed for phosphorus. For these facilities, phosphorus permit limits would be based on the pollutant load allocations included in the TMDLs.	Supporting Fact 3-3 Policy questions include whether restoring impaired waters generates more benefits than costs and how to distribute the costs equitably. Those who receive economic benefit from the source of the impairment may be more likely to oppose an impaired waters listing.

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Message Map 4 Audience: Public Date Updated: 1/17/14 Question or Concern: What are the benefits of impaired waters listings?		
Key Message 1 Impaired waters listings provide impetus for restoring impaired waters.	Key Message 2 Federal and state cost-share grants may be available to landowners for projects that address nonpoint sources of pollution, and some grants provide incentives for restoration of impaired waters.	Key Message 3 The amount (acres/miles) of impaired waters determines the amount of The EPA-administered Section 106 grant allocation to states.
Supporting Fact 1-1 Impaired water listings may serve as a springboard for development of watershed-based restoration plans.	Supporting Fact 2-1 Landowners applying for USDA's Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) incentive payments for land that adjoins impaired waters have a greater chance of receiving funding.	Supporting Fact 3-1 Currently, of the factors considered in the grant allotment calculation, water quality impairments are weighted highest (35%).
Supporting Fact 1-2 States develop Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) studies, a type of watershed restoration plan, for impaired waters that establish pollutant loads reductions to impaired waters.	Supporting Fact 2-2 Eligible recipients of Targeted Runoff Management (TRM) grants are selected based on an application score, and projects that would implement practices that help to address water quality impairment for listed waters adds 35 points to the total score.	Supporting Fact 3-2 These grant funds are used, in part, to support DNR's surface water quality monitoring program.
Supporting Fact 1-3 Impaired waters designations have led to the formation of local lake, stream or watershed organizations and partnerships. These groups are often involved in restoring impaired waters.	Supporting Fact 2-3 For TRM projects to also qualify for Section 319 federal funding, the project <i>must</i> reduce pollutant(s) to an impaired water.	Supporting Fact 3-3

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Message Map 5 Audience: Public Date Updated: 1/17/14 Question or Concern: Do the added impaired water listings mean that water quality is getting worse?		
Key Message 1 The impaired waters list is not a good measure of statewide water quality trends.	Key Message 2 When a waterbody is added to the list, it does not necessarily mean the condition of the waterbody has recently gotten worse.	Key Message 3 Overall water quality in the state is improving in many ways due to efforts resulting from the Clean Water Act, Wisconsin's Priority Watershed Program, and new approaches for controlling water pollution.
Supporting Fact 1-1 Changes in the number of listed waters can be driven by several factors, including changes in water quality standards, assessment methods and monitoring strategies.	Supporting Fact 2-1 Factors such as the timeframes over which a waterbody was monitored and changes in the way DNR assesses waterbodies can result in listing status changes for a particular waterbody.	Supporting Fact 3-1 Water quality trends have been both positive and negative at long-term river monitoring stations over the last 20 years.
Supporting Fact 1-2 DNR's surface water monitoring strategy intentionally targets waterbodies that are suspected to be impaired , which allows DNR to identify more waters needing restoration.	Supporting Fact 2-2 Many impaired waters already have restoration plans in place, some of which are currently being implemented, but full restoration is not expected to occur in the near term.	Supporting Fact 3-2 Phosphorus, ammonia and suspended solids (sediment) concentrations have decreased at a majority of long-term trend river monitoring stations. Nitrate and chloride concentrations have increased at a majority of long-term trend river monitoring stations.
Supporting Fact 1-3 Water quality standards are reviewed and may be updated every three years; assessment methods are reviewed and may be updated every two years. These updates can result in listing changes.	Supporting Fact 2-3 Some impaired water restorations can occur over relatively short time frames (i.e. several years), but others can take decades to be fully achieved.	Supporting Fact 3-3 Past efforts have reduced the amount of phosphorus from Wisconsin watersheds to the Mississippi River by about 23% and to Lake Michigan by about 27%.