

## DEQ update to the Montana Watershed Coordination Council – January 25, 2006 Water Quality Planning Bureau

### Standards Section

Technical basis for **Numeric Water Quality Nutrient Standards** have been developed. The analysis was based on stressor response and reference site data. The current focus is how this will be implemented. For questions regarding the development of numeric water quality nutrient standards contact Mike Suplee at [msuplee@mt.gov](mailto:msuplee@mt.gov) <<mailto:msuplee@mt.gov>>.

**Reference sites for wadeable streams** - A document has been published describing the MT Department of Environmental Quality's endeavor to identify and assess reference sites for wadeable streams (2000-2005). It can be found at: <[http://www.deq.mt.gov/wqinfo/Standards/Refsites\\_writeup\\_FINALPrintReady.pdf](http://www.deq.mt.gov/wqinfo/Standards/Refsites_writeup_FINALPrintReady.pdf)>. If you have questions, please contact Mike Suplee at [msuplee@mt.gov](mailto:msuplee@mt.gov)

Refinement of the **periphyton metrics** is currently in progress. A report is expected by 2007.

**Triennial Review of the Water Quality Standards, including WQB-7** – New things are happening with the Montana Water Quality Standards. A few of the proposed changes include:

- Renaming the Circular WQB-7 to Circular DEQ-7
- Revising standards for 92 substances in DEQ-7 to reflect EPA water quality changes
- Changing the human health bacteria standard from fecal coliform to E-Coli
- Revising the State's current human health standard for arsenic from 18 to 10 mg/L

For a complete list of the proposed changes visit the website at

[http://www.deq.mt.gov/wqinfo/Standards/Puboutreachsum3rev\\_files/WQB7.pdf](http://www.deq.mt.gov/wqinfo/Standards/Puboutreachsum3rev_files/WQB7.pdf) or contact Chris Levine at [clevine@mt.gov](mailto:clevine@mt.gov)

**DEQ's Macroinvertebrate Assessment Methods** are in the process of being improved and updated. Multimetric and a multivariate approaches were used to develop water quality assessment methods. For questions about these methods contact Dave Feldman at [dfeldman@mt.gov](mailto:dfeldman@mt.gov)

**Ann Harrie** is the new Water Quality Standards Fish Specialist. Ann was previously with the DEQ Enforcement Division, and has a background in fisheries biology and environmental health. This position will provide support to the TMDL Section. Ann can be reached at [aharrie@mt.gov](mailto:aharrie@mt.gov).

### Monitoring and Assessment Section

**Reassessments** - Updating the 303(d) list for those waters listed on the reassessment list (Appendix B-2004 Water Quality Integrated Report). This will be reflected on the 2006 Water Quality Integrated Report.

**Reference conditions** - Continuation and refinement of the reference project. Projected areas for 2006 are the NW Rockies ecoregion and SE Montana. Expected number of reference sites to be sampled, 30, 3 times per year. Chlorophyll, nutrients, periphyton, macroinvertebrates, metals, flow, Rosgen, and quantitative habitat information is collected at each site.

**Lake monitoring** - Continuation and refinement of the lake project. Projected number of lakes to be sampled across the state in 2006 -18 to 20, 3 times per year. Chlorophyll, nutrients, metals, Secchi depth, and habitat assessments are collected at each site.

## **TMDL Planning**

**TMDLs completed** - Watersheds with completed TMDLs over the past year include: Big Spring; Bitterroot Headwaters; Bobtail; Dearborn; Flathead Headwaters, Grave, Ninemile; and Sun.

Three recent TMDL documents out for **public review** (Lake Helena, Ruby and Prospect (Metals)).

Existing TMDL planning areas with **ongoing focused efforts** include: Blackfoot (Nevada/Middle & Lower), Bitter (below headwaters), Boulder/Big Timber, Beaverhead, Big Hole (Upper, North Fork, Middle & Lower), Upper Clark Fork, Lower Clark Fork tributaries, Cutbank/Two Medicine, Flathead/Stillwater, Upper Gallatin, Prospect (metals), Redwater, Shields, St. Regis, and Yaak.

## **Watershed Protection Section**

**New staff** – Ann Storrar, Water Quality Specialist, comes from Idaho, where she worked for the Nez Perce tribe on TMDLs, and other water quality issues. Andrew Jakes, NPS Pollution Outreach and Education Coordinator, has worked for the MT FW&P for several years on the State’s conservation Strategy.

**2006 319 Grants** - We have about \$500,000 for nonpoint source protection and restoration projects. Ten projects will be considered on January 25<sup>th</sup> by the WAWG. 2006 project needs total \$710,531.

**2006 NPS Plan Update** – The Section is making progress on the update of the State’s 2001 Nonpoint Source Management Plan.

## **Data Management Section**

**Bureau Librarian**, Pam Arroues - is developing a “Request For Information” form that will be available from Intra and Internet (internal and external); we are planning to link our library with MSL for public access and querying.

**STORET**: Jolene Berscheid is the contact on STORET (DEQ/EPA’s water quality database) questions.

**Modeling**: SWAT, HSPF/LSPC, or other appropriate model - no golden tool; re-enforce the need to 319 contractors/grantees to provide basic information for GRTS modeling; building high-level modeling plans/strategy for CFR, Flathead, long range plans for Yellowstone and Missouri

**2006 Integrated Report (305, 303)** – 2006 Report will have fully developed 305b Sections and improved access through CWAIC (see below).

**EnviroNet changing to Clean Water Act Information Center (CWAIC)**: url not know yet but will have a forwarding from current EnviroNet url; currently in beta; planned public release not firm, but hope by May of this year.

**Quality Assurance**: DEQ is operating under an EPA-approved QMP, all subcontractors and grant recipients must conform.