

TMDL Vision Checkup

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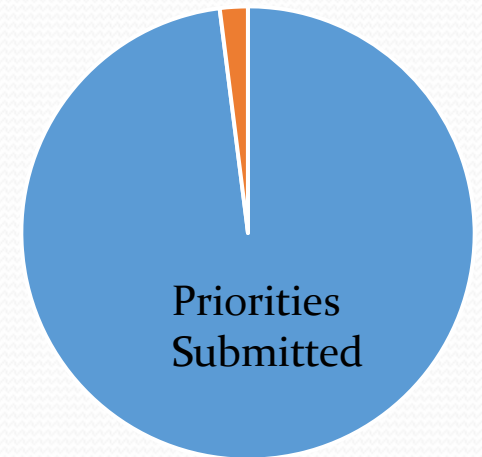
P R I O R I T I Z A T I O N

A L T E R N A T I V E S

Drs. Jeff
Berckes &
Tom Stiles

Hindsight is 20/20 - Prioritization

- State Priority Submittals:
 - 49/50 States submitted approved priorities on time
 - Wide Variety of approaches including focus on certain pollutants or designated uses
 - Common priorities include: Pathogens, Nutrients, Organic Enrichment, Metals
 - Strong focus on state-specific concerns and waterbodies



Hindsight is 20/20 - Prioritization

- WQ27 – States and EPA worked together to implement new 303d Program Measure to track completed TMDLs/Alternative designated as Priorities
- Calls over Winter with States indicated vast majority of States were still utilizing TMDLs in some capacity to address impairments



20/20 Vision - Integration

- Establishing Partnerships and Improving Communication
- Strengthening old relationships and establishing new ones
- Looking for new ways to improve communication



20/20 Vision - Integration

- Many states used integrated work groups to set priorities
- Greater outreach between CWA program and with implementing programs and outside partners
- Reliance on local capacity to implement TMDLs or alternatives has become paramount factor in prioritization



Still a Little Blurry – Focus Issues

- Non Point Sources
- Stormwater: MS₄, Ag and Other
- Non-traditional issues
 - Mining
 - Waste Cleanup Sites
 - Hydrologic Alteration
- These are active areas for States that will require innovative approaches for either TMDLs or Alternatives



Still a Little Blurry – Focus Areas

- Engagement
 - States looking for ways to improve communication and engagement
 - Need to develop a standard set of simple messages
 - Need visual aids to help show complex data
 - Identify tools and techniques for effective communication
 - Webinar: September 8, 2-4 Eastern. Building Consensus for Better Water Quality Outcomes. Sponsored by EPA and NEIWPC

Still a Little Blurry – Focus Areas

- Alternatives
 - Ability to solve problems with an adaptive management approach
 - Most states (80%) either are or would like to use Alternatives
 - Need WQ28 or similar tool to help states tell their story above and beyond WQ27
 - Need interim milestones to demonstrate progress in improving water quality without a TMDL

Still a Little Blurry – Focus Areas

- Alternatives
 - ELI developed a Compendium of Approaches
 - Focus on non-TMDL approaches
 - Living document that provides States a way to share best practices
 - Please encourage your staff to help build this body of work
 - Subject of next Watersheds Committee call: August 25th 2:30 Eastern



Still a Little Blurry – Focus Areas

- Telling Your State's Story
 - Integrating transparency, accountability, collaboration and communication
 - Address interim progress and project milestones
 - Highlight state priorities and activities
 - Reaching out beyond the Integrated Report audience

Still a Little Blurry – Focus Areas

- EPA has draft measure WQ28 which is still in progress but might not do the job for states
- Areas for future conversation with Watershed Committee
- State examples are emerging...dashboards

Very Blurry – Off in the Future

- Protection
 - Has not been well defined
 - 25-30% of states working on Protection Plans with another 50% interested in doing so in the future
 - Topic for future ACWA calls with states
 - Great opportunity to shape this part of the 303d program
 - May represent a shift in defining success, given the difficulties of restoration

Your Prescription

- Your priorities are set and ready to be tackled
- Continue to add to the tool box
 - Alternatives, Engagement, Communication
- Start telling your story of success and challenges with or without EPA's assistance
- Work toward defining what future protection TMDLs/plans will look like
- Encourage Staff Participation in Future Watersheds Committee Calls
 - 4th Thursday of the Month. 2:30-4 Eastern
 - Calls will focus on topics for implementing Vision in the States