

# Public Notice: Public Hearing and Request for Comments

## Proposed Pollution Limits and Water Quality Plans for the Lower Grande Subbasins

Proposed plans available for public review and comment

The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality seeks comments on draft documents describing pollution limits and plans to improve water quality in the Lower Grande Ronde, Wallowa River and Imnaha River Subbasins located in northeast Oregon. The Imnaha River and Grande Ronde River both flow into the Snake River. These subbasins are collectively called the Lower Grande Ronde Subbasins.

Many of the streams in the subbasins do not currently meet water quality standards for temperature. The Wallowa River, Spring Creek and Prairie Creek in the Wallowa Subbasin also do not meet water quality standards for bacteria.

The pollution limits and plans for the Lower Grande Ronde Subbasins are designed to ensure rivers and streams in this subbasin are healthy for fish and wildlife, and safe for fishing and swimming.

**Notice issued:** May 28, 2010

**Comments due:** 5 p.m., Thursday, July 29, 2010

### Information meeting and hearing:

DEQ will hold an information meeting and public hearing on **Wednesday, July 7, 2010** in Enterprise at Toma's Conference Room, 309 S. River St., Enterprise, OR.

- 6 p.m.: Informational Presentation – Question and Answer Session
- 7 p.m.: Public Hearing

### Where can I send comments and get more information?

DEQ accepts comments by mail, fax and e-mail. Please send comments and direct questions to:

Don Butcher

**Phone:** (541) 278-4603 or

Toll free in Oregon (800) 452-4011

**E-mail:** [butcher.don@deq.state.or.us](mailto:butcher.don@deq.state.or.us)

**Mailing address:** DEQ, 700 SE Emigrant, Suite 330, Pendleton, OR 97801

**Fax:** (541) 278-0168

NOTE: Send comments via e-mail in Microsoft Word, Adobe Acrobat (.pdf) or

plain text format. If there is a delay between servers, e-mails may not be received before the deadline.

### How can I review documents?

View the entire document and a fact sheet at: <http://www.deq.state.or.us/WQ/TMDLs/granderonde.htm>. DEQ encourages individuals with computer capabilities to view the documents directly at this website.

Hard copies of the draft document are available for review at the following locations. Please call to make a review appointment:

- DEQ Pendleton Office, 700 SE Emigrant, Suite 330, Pendleton, OR 97801  
Phone: (541) 278-4603
- Enterprise Public Library, 101 NE 1<sup>st</sup>. St., Enterprise, OR 97828  
Phone: 541-426-3906
- Wallowa Public Library, 201 East 1<sup>st</sup> St., Wallowa, OR 97885  
Phone: 541-886-4265
- Wallowa Soil and Water Conservation District, 88401 Hwy 82., Enterprise, OR 97828  
Phone: 541-886-4265

To discuss the documents, or to request that a CD or paper copy be mailed directly to you call Don Butcher at the number indicated above.

### What are DEQ's responsibilities?

The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) is the regulatory agency that helps protect and preserve Oregon's environment. The federal Clean Water Act requires Oregon to develop plans that include goals and pollution control targets for improving water quality in impaired water bodies. DEQ is doing this by establishing limits known as total daily maximum loads (TMDLs) for each pollutant entering the water system. The U.S. EPA must approve or disapprove TMDLs submitted by a state.

### What is proposed?

DEQ proposes to issue TMDLs for temperature and bacteria. A TMDL document uses scientific data collection and analysis to determine the amount and source of each pollutant entering the river system, and allocates pollutant loads to each source at levels that would ultimately restore water quality to clean water standards. A



State of Oregon  
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Environmental  
Quality

### Water Quality Division

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load is the amount of each pollutant a waterway can receive and not violate water quality standards. A TMDL takes into account the pollution from all sources.

Water temperature is greatly affected by a variety of human activities associated with how land is used for forestry, agricultural, residential, urban and industrial purposes. The principal cause of stream heating has been the removal of trees and other shade-producing woody vegetation from stream banks. Wastewater discharges can contribute to stream heating, as well.

Wastewater discharge from industry and sewage treatment facilities may cause bacterial contamination. Runoff from farms and urban areas, and natural sources such as wildlife can also contribute to bacterial contamination.

### **Who is affected?**

The TMDLs affect local public and private landowners, managers of industrial and municipal facilities in the subbasins as well as people interested in water quality and fisheries. A water quality management plan was developed in conjunction with the TMDLs which identifies strategies and approaches for accomplishing water quality improvements. The plan identifies local, state and federal government with responsibility for addressing pollution under their control. The management plan specifically identifies Wallowa County, and its cities, as well as state and federal government agencies with land use authority as designated jurisdictions responsible for implementing measures to meet clean water goals. These jurisdictions will identify appropriate limits, best management practices, measures and approaches to best meet the TMDL.

### **What happens next?**

DEQ will review and consider all comments received during the public comment period. Following this review, DEQ will modify the TMDL and water quality management plan if necessary and approve them as an order. DEQ will then submit the documents to EPA for approval.

After the order is signed, DEQ will notify all commenters and affected parties that the TMDL has been finalized and a summary of responses to comments is available. If you do not comment and are not an affected party but want to receive notification, please contact DEQ as indicated previously in this notice.

### **Accessibility information**

*DEQ is committed to accommodating people with disabilities at our hearings. Please notify DEQ of any special physical or language accommodations or if you need information in large print, Braille or another format. To make these arrangements, contact DEQ Communications & Outreach 503-229-5696 or toll free in Oregon at 800-452-4011; fax to 503-229-6762; or e-mail to [deqinfo@deq.state.or.us](mailto:deqinfo@deq.state.or.us).*

*People with hearing impairments may call 711.*