

Public Notice: Comment Period Extension

Proposed TMDLs for the Malheur River Basin

Proposed TMDLs and Water Quality Plans available for public review and comment until July 30, 2010

Comments due

DEQ has extended the public comment period in response to requests from stakeholders. The comment period will now close at 5:00 p.m., Friday, July 30, 2010

Proposal

DEQ is seeking comments on draft documents describing pollution limits and plans to improve water quality in the Malheur River Basin and adjacent Middle Snake-Payette subbasin.

The federal Clean Water Act requires DEQ to develop plans that include goals and pollution control targets for improving water quality in these watersheds. DEQ is doing this by first establishing limits known as Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) for each pollutant entering the water system.

Prior to the preparation of the TMDL DEQ identified five water quality problems in streams within the Malheur River Basin and Middle Snake-Payette subbasin: low dissolved oxygen, high levels of chlorophyll from excessive algae growth, high levels of bacteria, pesticide pollution, and high water temperatures.

Pollutant sources in the Malheur River basin and the Middle Snake Payette subbasin include nutrients such as phosphorus, sediment, bacteria, and pesticide residues which are often the result of excess erosion from agricultural practices, road construction, and other ground disturbing activities. Riparian vegetation removal is also an important factor which increases erosion rates and reduces the shading of streams. Reductions in shade, combined with widening of stream channels from erosion, causes increased stream temperatures.

The TMDLs require reductions in phosphorus and bacteria loading to streams in order to meet dissolved oxygen, chlorophyll and bacteria water quality standards. Streamside vegetation goals were developed to address water temperature issues.

How to comment

Send comments to John Dadoly, DEQ Eastern Region – Pendleton Office, 700 SE Emigrant, Suite 330, Pendleton, OR 97801, by e-mail john.dadoly@deq.state.or.us or fax to 541-278-0168

How to review documents

Copies of draft documents are available upon request by contacting John Dadoly at 541-278-4616 or 800-304-3513. A fact sheet regarding the water quality plans is also available. DEQ encourages individuals with computer capabilities to view the documents directly on the DEQ Web page at: <http://www.deq.state.or.us/WQ/TMDLs/malheurriver.htm>

The draft TMDL document will also be available at:

- DEQ Pendleton Office, 700 SE Emigrant, Suite 330, Pendleton, OR 97801, (541) 276-4603
- Malheur County Library, 388 SW 2nd Ave., Ontario, OR 97914
541-889-6371
- Harney County Library, 80 West D St., Burns, OR 97720
541-573-6670

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.

People with hearing impairments may call 711.



State of Oregon
Department of
Environmental
Quality

Water Quality
Division
700 SE Emigrant,
Ste. 330
Pendleton, OR 97801
Phone: (541) 276-4603
(800) 304-3513
Fax: (541) 278-0168

Contact: John Dadoly
www.deq.state.or.us