

## 8.0 MONTANA’S NONPOINT SOURCE PRIORITIES AND ACTION PLAN

The goal of Montana’s Nonpoint Source Management Program is to provide a clean and healthy environment by protecting and restoring water quality from the harmful effects of NPS pollution. The short-term (5-year) goal of the Plan is to demonstrate significant progress in restoring and protecting Montana’s water quality from nonpoint sources of pollution, measured by achieving the actions outlined in this Plan.

### 8.1 FIVE-YEAR ACTION PLAN AND PRIORITIES

Tables 8-1 through 8-3 describes DEQ’s 5-year action plan for addressing NPS pollution, including specific audiences, actions, and outcomes for evaluating success. These 5-year goals meet EPA’s NPS Program guidance requiring explicit short-term goals.

**Table 8-1: DEQ’s 5-year Action Plan for addressing NPS Pollution - Resource Related Actions**

<i>No.</i>	<i>Responsible Party</i>	<i>Actions (Outcomes/Objectives)</i>	<i>Measurable Milestones/Outputs</i>
R1*	DEQ, EPA	Complete Water Quality Improvement Plans (WQIPs) and necessary TMDLs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At least 500 additional TMDL pollutant-waterbody combinations between 2012 and 2014</li> </ul>
R2*	DEQ	Conduct statewide water quality assessments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>130 water quality assessments completed by 2014</li> </ul>
R3*	DEQ	Review/update Water Quality Integrated Report (305(b)/303(d)).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Updated reports in 2014 and 2016</li> </ul>
R4	DEQ	Re-evaluate the chemical, physical, and biological condition of reference sites.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At least 100 reference sites re-evaluated by 2017</li> </ul>
R5*	DEQ	Work with watershed groups to develop watershed restoration plans (WRPs).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>20 DEQ-accepted WRPs by 2017</li> </ul>
R6*	DEQ	Encourage and fund WQIP and WRP-directed NPS watershed restoration projects, including demonstration projects, for adoption of new technology.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annually fund on-the-ground watershed restoration activities</li> </ul>
R7	DEQ	Identify the TMDL Planning Areas having WQIPs and TMDLs in which at least some implementation activity has occurred during the previous calendar year.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual reporting spreadsheet included in NPS Annual Report</li> </ul>
R8*	DEQ	Develop and implement a monitoring strategy for Section 319 restoration activities for effectiveness and pollutant load reductions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approved monitoring strategy by 2017</li> <li>100% of projects for nutrient and sediment reduction reported to EPA Grant Reporting and Tracking System</li> </ul>
R9*	DEQ	Conduct TMDL implementation evaluations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete 20 reviews by 2017</li> </ul>
R10	DNRC	Work with forest agency partners (especially DNRC Forestry Assistance) to ensure effective forestry BMP and SMZ activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Biannual reports on forestry BMP audits</li> </ul>
R11	DNRC	Work with forest agency partners to develop assessments to ensure BMPs and SMZs are protecting riparian and wetland functions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assessment of BMP and SMZ adequacy for riparian and wetland functions</li> </ul>

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<b>No.</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Actions (Outcomes/Objectives)</b>	<b>Measurable Milestones/Outputs</b>
R12	DNRC, Plum Creek	Assess the effectiveness of SMZ and HCPs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reporting from the resource agencies on SMZ and HCPs by 2017</li> </ul>
R13*	DEQ	Provide reviews and comment on outside agency proposed projects that may have an effect on NPS pollution.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reviews completed and comments provided as appropriate</li> </ul>
R14	DEQ	Develop, maintain, and enhance Clean Water Act Information Center (CWAIC online) to provide public access.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>System operable and available to public</li> </ul>
R15	DEQ	Administer MT-eWQX water quality database system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Upload all ambient water quality monitoring data collected by DEQ, its contractors, or data partners to EPA National STORET/WQX water quality data warehouse</li> </ul>
R16	DEQ	Administer electronic data deliverables (EDD) submittal process for non-DEQ eWQX data submittals using EQUIS data management tools.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide Web access to data submittal process information, data management tools and training, and technical assistance to data partners and contractors</li> </ul>
R17*	DEQ	Develop nutrient models for large rivers (e.g., Missouri, Yellowstone).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Models developed for at least 2 large river segments by 2017</li> </ul>
R18*	DEQ	Protect, restore, and create riparian and wetland buffers designed to prevent or reduce NPS pollution.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3 miles of riparian and/or wetland buffers as part of Section 319 contracts</li> </ul>
R19	DEQ	Identify watersheds where NPS pollution from AFOs can be reduced.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify 3 high-priority watersheds for restoration work by 2017</li> </ul>
R20	DEQ	Encourage additional stormwater quality improvement projects funded through the state revolving fund program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At least 4 stormwater projects funded by 2017</li> </ul>
R21*	DEQ	Manage and implement the NPS program in efficient and effective manner, including fiscal management.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide consistent guidance on state reporting requirements</li> <li>Conduct contract "kick-off" meetings</li> <li>Ensure 75% of 319 contracts are closed by initially-agreed date</li> <li>Refine watershed project field evaluation form</li> </ul>

\* Indicates a high priority for the NPS Program

**Table 8-2: DEQ's 5-year Action Plan for addressing NPS Pollution - Policy Related Actions**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Actions (Outcomes/Objectives)</b>	<b>Measurable Milestones/Outputs</b>
P1*	DEQ, FWP, MWCC, USACE, USFS, NRCS, BLM, DNRC, Individual watershed groups, private consulting firms, USFWS, MACD, others	Develop an interagency policy for river restoration work, emphasizing restoration of natural processes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interagency policy supported by a wide range of government, nonprofit, and private entities by 2017</li> </ul>
P2*	DEQ in collaboration with agencies, watershed groups, and other interested parties	Develop and implement a strategy for identifying priority watersheds on which to focus technical and financial resources leading to two 12-digit HUC watersheds achieving water quality standards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategy document, set of action items, and at least 1 action item completed by 2017</li> </ul>
P3*	DEQ	Develop and implement DEQ water quality improvement MOUs with agencies, including USFS, BLM, DNRC, MDT, NRCS, and MFWP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 MOUs established or revised by 2017</li> </ul>
P4	DEQ	Assist in efforts to develop cumulative effects assessment strategies for groundwater in high-density septic/development areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide assistance with developing 5 assessment strategies</li> </ul>
P5	DEQ, DNRC, NRCS, irrigation districts, CDs, watershed groups, private landowners	Provide technical and/or financial support to efforts designed to reduce irrigation-induced NPS pollution.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technical and/or financial support provided to at least 3 projects</li> </ul>
P6*	DEQ	Develop numeric nutrient water quality standards and implementation procedures for surface waters.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standards and implementation procedures in place by 2012</li> <li>• BER-approved nutrient trading policy for point/nonpoint sources</li> </ul>
P7*	DEQ	Develop technical basis for a lake classification system based on nutrient status.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lake classification system by 2017</li> </ul>

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<b>No.</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Actions (Outcomes/Objectives)</b>	<b>Measurable Milestones/Outputs</b>
P8*	DEQ	Develop and circulate numeric standards for all pesticides identified in Montana groundwater and surface waters.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adoption of numeric standards for all pesticides within 4 years of DEQ notification of detection in state waters</li> </ul>
P9	counties, with DEQ support	Encourage the establishment of additional Water Quality Protection Districts (WQPD) within urban areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One additional WQPD established by 2017</li> </ul>
P10*	cities and counties	Incorporate NPS pollution prevention into city and county planning processes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By 2017, 3 additional communities have incorporated NPS pollution prevention into local planning processes</li> </ul>
P11	DEQ	Support improved urban stormwater management and information sharing through the MS4 task force.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Active MS4 task force by 2013</li> </ul>
P12*	DEQ, MWCC, collaborate with other federal, state, and local agencies	Develop a system or network for long-term monitoring that will produce data to evaluate water quality trends in waterbodies with completed TMDLs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop system/network architecture by 2015</li> <li>Begin implementation by 2017</li> </ul>
P13	DEQ	Develop guidance for water quality monitoring.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Guidance for monitoring under Section 319 contracts</li> <li>QAPP guidance</li> <li>SAP guidance</li> </ul>
P14	DEQ, MWCC, MSUEWQ	Provide technical and financial support to volunteer monitoring groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue funding for laboratory analysis</li> <li>Provide on-going technical support for development of QAPPs and SAPs</li> </ul>
P15	DEQ	Develop a nutrient trading policy that encourages nutrient load reductions consistent with WQIP/TMDLs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nutrient Trading Policy and demonstrated effective trades</li> </ul>

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**Table 8-3: DEQ's 5-year Action Plan for addressing NPS Pollution - Education and Outreach Actions**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Actions (Outcomes/Objectives)</b>	<b>Measurable Milestones/Outputs</b>
EO1*	MTWC, DEQ	Incorporate school lesson plans that address water resources and NPS pollution issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Incorporate up to 20 lessons into the appropriate units of study at 60 elementary schools, 30 middle schools, and 20 high schools</li> </ul>
EO2*	MWCC	Provide support and promote the development and coordination of watershed groups through MWCC activities, training workshops, advertising campaigns, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual watershed coordinator training</li> <li>Annual watershed tour</li> <li>Bi-weekly newsletter</li> <li>Coordinate a volunteer water monitoring group to collect water quality data and human-effects info within specific watersheds.</li> </ul>

**Table 8-3: DEQ's 5-year Action Plan for addressing NPS Pollution - Education and Outreach Actions**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Actions (Outcomes/Objectives)</b>	<b>Measurable Milestones/Outputs</b>
EO3*	DEQ	Support riparian and wetland buffer education campaigns.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support 5 county-wide campaigns by 2017</li> </ul>
EO4	DEQ, MDT, MSU	Promote and support BMP training for road maintenance personnel.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compile library of training materials</li> <li>• Bi-annual training for road maintenance personnel</li> </ul>
EO5	DEQ	Develop and deliver multi-media presentations that teach basic concepts in reducing NPS pollution from agricultural sources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop at least 2 presentations</li> <li>• Deliver each presentation twice by 2017</li> </ul>
EO6	DEQ	Support conferences that address stormwater pollution prevention and control strategies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two stormwater conferences held between 2012 and 2017</li> </ul>
EO7	DEQ	Identify and/or develop monitoring and assessment methods for private landowners to inform land management decisions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop self-assessment tool for private landowners by 2017</li> </ul>
EO8	DEQ, MWCC, MSUEWQ	Provide training opportunities for volunteer monitors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training provided to 10 watershed groups by 2017</li> </ul>
EO9	DNRC, Montana Logging Assoc., and MSU Forestry Ext.	Promote and conduct forestry BMP and stewardship educational workshops and programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual BMP/SMZ education workshops for loggers and landowners</li> <li>• Forest stewardship program targeting small landowners throughout Montana</li> </ul>

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## SECTION 10.0 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION RESOURCES

No comments.

## SECTION 11.0 REFERENCES

No comments

## APPENDICES

**Comment:** *Appendix A – Forestry BMPs. The DNRC should have an update to the BMPs made in 2011. Rob Ethridge at DNRC would be the contact here.*

**DEQ Response:** The most recent DNRC Forestry BMPs were published in 2006.

**Comment:** *Appendix A – Best Management Practices. Please include some mention and discussion of using a systems approach or combination of practices. Most practices do not work effectively unless they are used within a system of practices.*

**DEQ Response:** DEQ views BMPs as measures that can be taken to reduce nonpoint source pollution. Best Management Practices, collectively applied in a systematic fashion constitutes what Montana law and administrative rules refer to as “reasonable land, soil, and water conservation practices”. The Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM) define reasonable land, soil, and water conservation practices as “methods, measures, or practices that protect present and reasonably anticipated beneficial uses. These practices include, but are not limited to, structural and nonstructural controls and operation and maintenance procedures. Appropriate practices may be applied before, during, or after pollution-producing activities.” Note that these practices protect present **and reasonably anticipated beneficial uses** [bold added]. This clarification will be added to Section 3.0 under the **Best Management Practices** heading.

**Comment:** *Appendix C, page C-32. Updates to Page C-32 relative to Plum Creek are as follows: Note that these changes are not shown as strikeout and underline due to the number of edits.*

**DEQ Response:** DEQ will update Plum Creek’s description as requested.