

## SOUTH DAKOTA'S LONG-TERM VISION STRATEGY

Section 303(d) of the CWA provides for an opportunity to more effectively restore and protect South Dakota's waters by using a systematic process of prioritizing TMDL development and implementing alternative approaches and protection activities. A Long-Term Vision Strategy (hereafter referred to as the Vision) was developed by the EPA and six actions were identified as being important to this process. South Dakota developed a state-specific Vision strategy to address the six action items.

### *Engagement*

The Vision for the CWA 303(d) Program asks EPA and the states to actively engage the public and other stakeholders to improve and protect water quality, as demonstrated by documented, inclusive, transparent, and consistent communication; requesting and sharing feedback on proposed approaches; and enhanced understanding of program objectives.

South Dakota uses multiple means to engage the public and stakeholders and these will be used as part of the Vision. The NPS Task Force will be a primary means of getting information about the Vision to the stakeholders. The NPS Task Force is a citizen's advisory group containing approximately twenty-five agencies, organizations, and tribal representatives. The NPS Task Force meetings are open to the general public. The NPS Task Force provides a forum for the exchange of information and activities about NPS-related activities, as well as providing recommendations for projects applying for CWA Section 319 funds. DANR gave a presentation about the Vision to the NPS Task Force on December 9, 2014. The EPA also participated in the meeting and responded to questions during the presentation. There was much discussion of the Vision, the TMDL Prioritization Scheme, and how the Vision would impact NPS Implementation Projects. A presentation was also given during the NPS Coordinators meeting on April 22, 2015. Additional presentations about the Vision will occur as needed.

A September 2015 EPA/State joint Nonpoint Source Pollution and Water Quality Meeting was held in Rapid City, South Dakota and brought together the states in EPA Region 8, as well as other regional interests. The Vision plans for each state were presented and each state responded to questions/comments about their Vision plan.

The public notice process used to announce the availability of the Integrated Report (IR) is the primary forum used to engage the public regarding the Vision Strategy. The public notice process allows the public and stakeholders the opportunity to formally comment on contents of the IR and the Vision Strategy. Additional efforts to inform the public and stakeholders about the Vision will occur in response to requests by stakeholders and the public.

Some elements of the Vision, such as Alternative or Protection activities, may be incorporated into NPS Implementation projects. If these projects request CWA Section 319 funds, these projects will be presented to the NPS Task Force as well as the South Dakota Board of Water and Natural Resources for review and approval of funding. This provides additional opportunities for public comment. The Vision Strategy will also be included in the South Dakota NPS Management Plan.

### *Prioritization*

The Vision prioritization process focused on waters considered *High Priority* for TMDL development following the criteria described in the 2022 IR. The original Vision priority waters were those not supporting designated beneficial uses for bacteria, TSS, temperature (waters designated coldwater fish life propagation), and mercury in fish tissue. The current Vision priority waters and status are documented in Table 3.

EPA declared an open season for states to make changes to the Vision priority waters list. States' revised Vision priority lists were due to EPA in August of 2018. South Dakota removed 25 waters from the original Vision priority list during the open season. The main changes included removal of waters delisted during the 2018 reporting cycle. In addition, seven waters were removed due to TMDL development data needs and unspecified reasons. The revised Vision priority list included 44 waterbodies with varying TMDL completion status.

EPA also granted limited opportunity for states to make final adjustments to Vision priorities following the 2020 reporting cycle. The main purpose of this limited adjustment opportunity was to compensate for delisting that occurred during the 2020 reporting cycle. EPA encouraged states to replace waters removed from the priority with impaired waters of similar size (acres/miles) to maintain a similar universe size from that finalized during the 2018 open season adjustment. South Dakota removed 4 waterbodies from the 2018 priority list and replaced them with 18 waterbodies. The final Vision priority list includes 58 waterbodies with varying TMDL completion status (Table 3). Changes to the final TMDL priority list are open for public comment as part of the IR public participation process (Section V, page 7). South Dakota is on pace to complete the Vision priority TMDLs by September 30, 2022.

### *Protection*

This element is intended to encourage management actions that prevent impairments to waters not currently impaired. South Dakota is receptive to this concept and will consider providing technical or financial assistance to these types of projects. There is no anticipation of a large number of requests for "protection" activities and DANR will consider each as they become known. Requests for funding for CWA Section 319 funds will follow the same protocols as other projects requesting these funds and the "protection" activities must be identified as such. Protection activities within an existing implementation project must also identify those activities as "protection" activities.

### *Integration*

DANR has very good working relationships with other programs, and regional, state and federal agencies. The NPS Task Force is a major forum for interaction between the various federal, state, regional, and local agencies, as well as the general public. The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is the primary federal agency that DANR interacts with on NPS implementation projects. CWA Section 319 funds are often used in concert with NRCS funds to more efficiently use both funding sources to combat NPS pollution. The U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, or Bureau of Land Management may also be involved in DANR's NPS control effort when activities will occur on or impact lands managed by these agencies. USGS provides essential water flow and water quality data in certain rivers and streams in South Dakota and has been a partner in various water quality assessment activities.

Regional or local agencies are often project sponsors for NPS assessment or implementation projects. Water development districts, conservation districts, cities, and locally based partnerships have all interacted with DANR and have integrated into NPS assessment and

implementation projects. Universities have been involved in South Dakota's NPS control effort through research studies that help the state assess water or biological quality of our streams.

#### *Alternatives*

In addition to TMDLs, alternative approaches that incorporate adaptive management or are tailored to specific circumstances may be used. Alternative approaches may be better suited to implement priority watershed or water actions to restoration under certain circumstances. DANR requires a TMDL to be developed before funds are allocated towards a NPS 319 Implementation Project. Consideration will be given to projects or cases where a relatively simple or straight-forward solution can be reached without going through the full TMDL development process. Requests for funding for CWA Section 319 funds will follow the same protocols as other projects requesting these funds and the "alternative" activities must be identified as such. DANR also supports an Information and Education Project that may be useful in circumstances where public outreach and education can help to identify alternative approaches to resolving water quality issues.

#### *Assessment*

The goal of this element is to identify the extent of healthy and impaired waters in each State's priority watersheds or waters through site-specific assessments. South Dakota uses different methods and data sources to assess waters including:

- Fixed ambient monitoring of rivers and streams. The major rivers and streams in the state are sampled monthly;
- Data obtained from regional sources or federal agencies (e.g. the USGS or volunteer monitoring programs);
- A subset of lakes sampled multiple times annually as part of the Statewide Lakes Assessment (SWLA) project;
- Intensive lake and stream monitoring conducted on a two-year rotating basis within major river basins through partnerships with water resource entities;
- Random statistical surveys in conjunction with EPA's National Lakes Assessment and National Rivers and Streams Assessment;
- Site-specific assessments if more general data methods/surveys do not provide adequate data.

South Dakota's assessment strategies provide water quality data for 303(d) assessment and TMDL development. Several monitoring and assessment strategies are designed to provide flexibility to meet data needs of individual waters as 303(d) priorities change. Intensive monitoring and assessment strategies will help to guide future Vision priorities including protection and alternative approaches.

DANR worked with EPA Region 8 to develop chlorophyll-a targets for lake 303(d) nutrient-related assessments. Chlorophyll-a targets serve as TMDL endpoints to evaluate nutrient-related narrative standards and associated use attainment. Chlorophyll-a targets were finalized for three main lake classes; Black Hills Lakes, Western Lakes and Eastern Lakes. South Dakota will likely focus on lake impairment and TMDL development in the next Vision cycle.

South Dakota has a well-documented history of doing site-specific assessments and will continue to develop and schedule assessment projects where data are deemed lacking for waters needing a TMDL. Site-specific assessments are either done by DANR personnel if the waterbody is within reasonable travel distance or by a regional entity/contractor if funds are

available and direct DANR involvement is not the best option. Computer modelling, scientific literature, and reference conditions may also be used to assess waters.

### *Vision Summary*

The South Dakota strategy for the Long-Term Vision under the CWA Section 303(d) Program contains the six elements stressed by EPA. The primary goal is to prioritize TMDL development for the Vision where implementation activities can be focused to provide a better chance of improving water quality. South Dakota may also prioritize TMDLs that are considered of state importance and require immediate action. South Dakota's current Long-Term Vision priority waters and status are documented in Table 3. The Vision is open to public comment as part of the IR public participation process (Section V, page 7).

**Table 3: South Dakota's Final (2022) Vision Priority Waters and Status**

ASSESSMENT UNIT ID (AUID)	CAUSE NAME	STATUS
SD-BF-L-NEWELL_01	Mercury in fish	TMDL Completed and approved
SD-BF-R-BELLE_FOURCHE_01	<i>E. coli</i>	TMDL Completed and approved
SD-BF-R-DEADWOOD_01	<i>E. coli</i>	TMDL Completed and approved
SD-BF-R-WHITEWOOD_04	<i>E. coli</i>	Draft-development
SD-BS-L-BITTER_01	Mercury in fish	TMDL Completed and approved
SD-BS-L-ISLAND_N_01	Mercury in fish	TMDL Completed and approved
SD-JA-L-LARDY_01	Mercury in fish	TMDL Completed and approved
SD-BS-L-LONG_COD_01	Mercury in fish	TMDL Completed and approved
SD-JA-L-MID_LYNN_01	Mercury in fish	TMDL Completed and approved
SD-BS-L-MINNEWASTA_01	Mercury in fish	TMDL Completed and approved
SD-JA-OPITZ_01	Mercury in fish	TMDL Completed and approved
SD-BS-L-REID_01	Mercury in fish	TMDL Completed and approved
SD-BS-L-SWAN_01	Mercury in fish	TMDL Completed and approved
SD-BS-L-TWIN_01	Mercury in fish	TMDL Completed and approved
SD-BS-L-TWIN_02	Mercury in fish	TMDL Completed and approved
SD-BS-R-BEAVER_02	<i>E. coli</i>	TMDL Completed and approved
SD-BS-R-BIG_SIOUX_01	<i>E. coli</i>	TMDL Completed and approved
SD-BS-R-BIG_SIOUX_05	TSS	Draft-development
SD-BS-R-BIG_SIOUX_06	TSS	Draft-development
SD-BS-R-BRULE_01	TSS	Draft-development
SD-BS-R-BRULE_01	<i>E. coli</i>	TMDL Completed and approved
SD-BS-R-SIXMILE_01	<i>E. coli</i>	Draft-development
SD-BS-R-SKUNK_01	<i>E. coli</i>	Draft-development
SD-CH-R-RAPID_04	<i>E. coli</i>	TMDL Completed and approved
SD-CH-R-SPRING_01	<i>E. coli</i>	Draft-development

**Table 3: South Dakota's Revised (2022) Vision Priority Waters Status (continued)**

ASSESSMENT UNIT ID (AUID)	CAUSE NAME	STATUS
SD-JA-L-ELM_01	Mercury in fish	TMDL Completed and approved
SD-JA-R-JAMES_11	TSS	Draft-development
SD-JA-R-WOLF_01	<i>E. coli</i>	TMDL Completed and approved
SD-JA-R-WOLF_02	<i>E. coli</i>	TMDL Completed and approved
SD-MI-L-HURLEY_01	Mercury in fish	TMDL Completed and approved
SD-MI-L-ROOSEVELT_01	Mercury in fish	TMDL Completed and approved
SD-MN-R-WHETSTONE-S-FORK-01	<i>E. coli</i>	Draft-development
SD-MN-R-WHETSTONE-S-FORK-02	<i>E. coli</i>	Draft-development
SD-MN-R-YELLOW_BANK_N_FORK_01	<i>E. coli</i>	TMDL Completed and approved
SD-MN-R-YELLOW_BANK_S_FORK_01	<i>E. coli</i>	TMDL Completed and approved
SD-MU-L-COAL_SPRINGS_01	Mercury in fish	TMDL Completed and approved
SD-VM-R-LONG_01	<i>E. coli</i>	TMDL Completed and approved
SD-VM-R-VERMILLION_03	<i>E. coli</i>	Draft-development
SD-VM-R-VERMILLION_E_FORK_01	<i>E. coli</i>	TMDL Completed and approved
SD-VM-R-VERMILLION_W_FORK_01_USGS	<i>E. coli</i>	TMDL Completed and approved
SD-BS-R-BIG_SIOUX_08	<i>E. coli</i>	TMDL Completed and approved
SD-BS-R-BIG_SIOUX_08	TSS	TMDL Completed and approved
SD-BS-R-BIG_SIOUX_10	<i>E. coli</i>	TMDL Completed and approved
SD-BS-R-BIG_SIOUX_10	TSS	TMDL Completed and approved
SD-BS-R-BIG_SIOUX_11	<i>E. coli</i>	TMDL Completed and approved
SD-BS-R-BIG_SIOUX_11	TSS	TMDL Completed and approved
SD-BS-R-BIG_SIOUX_12	<i>E. coli</i>	TMDL Completed and approved
SD-BS-R-BIG_SIOUX_12	TSS	TMDL Completed and approved
SD-BS-L-GRASS_01	Mercury in fish	Draft-development
SD-BS-L-SCOTT_01	Mercury in fish	Draft-development
SD-CH-L-DURKEE_01	Mercury in fish	Draft-development
SD-CH-L-NEW_WALL_01	Mercury in fish	Draft-development
SD-GR-L-EAST_LEMMON_01	Mercury in fish	Draft-development
SD-JA-L-CLEAR_M_01	Mercury in fish	Draft-development
SD-JA-L-ROY_01	Mercury in fish	Draft-development
SD-JA-L-STINK_01	Mercury in fish	Draft-development
SD-MI-L-POTTS_01	Mercury in fish	Draft-development
SD-NI-L-DOG_EAR_01	Mercury in fish	Draft-development