



## TOTAL MAXIMUM DAILY LOADS

America's Clean Water Foundation  
750 First Street, NE Suite 1030  
Washington, DC 20002

Phone: (202)898-0908 Fax: (202)898-0977  
www.tmdls.net



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### SUMMARY

#### TMDL Forum in Seattle

#### ***January 14 – 16, 2002***

ASIWPCA held the fourth in its series of Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Forums in Seattle, Washington on January 14-16, 2002. The Association and USEPA sponsored these sessions to provide State/Interstate program staff and USEPA personnel the opportunity discuss share effective approaches, discuss current issues and explore future directions in the TMDL program.

Representatives from the USEPA Office of Wetlands, Oceans and Watersheds, opened the session with an overview of current TMDL program improvements and a status report on the new TMDL rule. Discussions highlighted the recently issued EPA guidance which allows Integrated Water Quality Reporting combining Sec. 305(b) and Sec. 303(d) processes, along with Sec. 319 Guidance supporting TMDL implementation. Work is still underway on the CALM guidance. Some of the guidance may be carried forward into the new TMDL rule. As with the previous Forums, the agenda included presentations on State's experience with TMDLs. State, USEPA, and other participants engaged in a dialogue to share lessons learned, discuss the complexities of developing and implementing effective TMDLs, and explored new approaches for streamlining the TMDL process.

Representatives from states within Regions 8, 9, and 10 made presentations and led group discussions about the current status of and issues associated with implementing TMDL programs in their respective states. Presentations were made on a variety of topics, including monitoring approaches, credible data laws, biocriteria development, effective public involvement, and state/tribal coordination.

At the culmination of these activities, participants engaged in a lively wrap-up discussion and identified priority action items to consider as USEPA, States and Interstate Agencies move ahead in their efforts to develop meaningful and implement TMDLs. Those actions items and next steps included—

- The need to continue dialogue between States and USEPA on the new directions of the TMDL rule, with more open discussions especially concerning:
  - ❖ Impaired waters impacted only by nonpoint sources
  - ❖ Maintaining enough flexibility in approved TMDLs to make adjustments in loadings over time (use of “caps”),
  - ❖ What is envisioned with a new CPP,
  - ❖ Use of adaptive management, and
  - ❖ Delisting criteria.
  
- Unify the State's voices when responding to EPA rule changes

- Increase opportunities for States to share information and transfer technology.
- Provide more opportunities for States and Tribes to understand relationships, commonalities and differences, and foster participation when developing and implementing TMDLs.
- Explore ways to maintain the momentum by:
  - ❖ Developing efficiencies at the Federal, State and local levels in the TMDL development and approval process. and
  - ❖ Improve the capability to garner long-term public support for TMDL implementation;
  - ❖ Improving the techniques for measuring and articulating progress.
- Improve linkages between Water Quality Standards and TMDLs.
- Help States improve their processes for documentation (particularly that which could be subjected to citizen and legal scrutiny.)

(All presentations from this Forum may be found on the ASIWPCA website).