



TOTAL MAXIMUM DAILY LOAD (TMDL) PROGRAM

Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act (CWA) and related regulations require states to develop lists of waters that do not meet water quality standards. The lists are commonly called Section 303(d) lists of "impaired waters." The statute and regulations also require states to develop TMDLs for all listed waters. A TMDL sets strict discharge limits (essentially, pollution budgets) for those pollutants that are preventing a water body from meeting its water quality standards. TMDLs are developed in two steps by: 1) calculating the maximum amount of a pollutant that a waterbody can take in and still meet water quality standards and then 2) distributing that amount among all "point sources" (i.e., storm water discharges from construction sites) and "nonpoint sources" (i.e., agricultural runoff) that discharge the pollutant. Using this framework, states will develop clean-up plans for each listed waterbody.