Alaska’s 2014/16 Integrated Water Quality Monitoring and Assessment Report Public Workshop/Meeting

Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation
Division of Water
Cindy Gilder
January 2018
Public Meeting/Workshop

- No Public Testimony
- Questions & Comments at the end of presentation
- In person and teleconference participants
- Please state name/organization
- Teleconference Courtesy
  - Please put phone on mute
  - Please do not put on hold (we get music)
Introducing the DEC Team

- Cindy Gilder, Section Manager, Non-Point Source
- Laura Eldred, Mat-Su and Western AK
- Drew Grant, Overall Integrated Report Coordinator
- Chandra McGee, Northern AK
- Gretchen Pikul, Southeast
- Jeanne Swartz, Anchorage and Kenai
- Tom Turner, Lean Facilitator
What We Will Cover

✓ Clean Water Act
✓ DEC’s Integrated Report Process
✓ Proposed Waterbody Categories
✓ Improving Water Quality
✓ How to Make Public Comments
Federal Clean Water Act

- Congress requires that states:
  - Report on the health of all waters in the state every 2 years
  - Identify waters not meeting State water quality standards
- Integrated Report (or the Integrated Water Quality Monitoring & Assessment Report)
Clean Water Act

Water Quality Standards

- The state adopts water quality standards
- Water quality standards are the basis for reviewing water quality data
- Includes public process to periodically review water quality standards
State develops and/or revises methods and policies for implementing WQS

State or third party collects water quality data on waterbodies of interest

State reviews waterbody data and uses methods and policies to compare to WQS

State decides if waterbody is meeting WQS

State reports on waterbody condition in the Integrated Report
What is the Integrated Report?

- Report card on the health of Alaska’s waterbodies
- Congress requires report every 2 years
- Waters may change categories based on new data
Integrated Report Timeline

Call for data
August 2015

Data analysis & agency collaboration

Public comment period
Occurring now

Respond to public comments

Submit final report to EPA
Spring 2018

EPA approves & reports to Congress
Alaska’s Integrated Report Status

- 2010 – Approved by EPA
- 2012 – Submitted to EPA, approval pending
- 2014/16
  - requested data from the public - 2015
  - completed analysis -2017
  - asking for public comment - *Where we are today*
- 2018 – moving to an electronic format
  - requested data from the public – May 2017
  - working on data analysis – in progress
  - public notice - tentative for early 2018
Integrated Report-5 categories:

- **Category 1** – all designated uses attained
- **Category 2** – some designated uses attained
- **Category 3** – insufficient information to determine status
- **Category 4** – one or more uses impaired, but does not need a restoration plan [or Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL)]
  - 4a – impaired waters with a restoration plan (TMDL)
  - 4b – impaired waters with other pollution controls
- **Category 5** (also known as 303(d) list) – one or more uses impaired needing a restoration plan (TMDL)
Alaska’s Designated Uses

- Water Supply
  - Drinking, culinary, and food processing
  - Agriculture
  - Aquaculture
  - Industry
- Recreation
  - Contact
  - Secondary
- Growth and Propagation of Fish, Shellfish, Other Aquatic Life, and Wildlife
Category 1

All designated uses attained – meets everything

- Most of Alaska’s waters fall here, but do not have the data to verify. No waters currently Category 1.
Category 2 – 18 waters

Some designated uses attained for some pollutants – Some things ok

- Chatanika River
- Cottonwood Creek
- Kenai River
- Little Meadow Creek
- Meadow Creek
- Mosquito Lake
- Udagak Bay
- Wasilla Creek
Category 2- Improved Waters

Some designated uses attained for some pollutants

- Five unnamed Creeks near Sweetwater Lake & USFS 3030 Road
- Chena River
- Chena Slough
- Granite Creek
- Lakes Hood/Spenard
- Noyes Slough

Rain Garden Installation
Category 3

Insufficient information to determine if water quality standards are attained – not sure

- Includes approximately 325 waters
- Since 2012 most have not changed
Category 4a

Impaired but has an approved restoration plan (TMDL)

1. Goldstream Creek 2015 - turbidity
2. Slate Creek 2014 - metals
3. Cottonwood Creek 2015 – fecal coliform bacteria
4. Matanuska River 2017 – debris
5. Hawk Inlet 2017 - metals
Category 4b

Impaired with pollution controls other than restoration plan (TMDL)

- Little Susitna River: 8.5 miles for Petroleum Hydrocarbons
  - Board of Fish prohibits fishing from a boat with a 2-stroke motor (as of January 2017)
Category 5 (or 303(d) list)

Impaired (polluted) needs a restoration plan (TMDL)

1. Little Susitna River: 8.5 miles for Turbidity
2. Kenai River: 7.5 miles for Turbidity
3. Lake Lucille: 5.6 acres
   - 2 areas near stormwater discharge outfalls for Metals (Zinc and Lead) in lake bed sediment
How do impaired waters get healthy?

- Water quality recovery often takes time
  - Setting priorities and timeframes
- Identify if need:
  - additional water quality studies
  - engineering designs
- Develop & implement restoration plans (TMDLs)
How do impaired waters get healthy? (continued)

- Permitted discharges will be regulated to improve water quality
- DEC does not have authority to regulate pollution from numerous small sources (aka nonpoint source)
  - DEC works to fix nonpoint source pollution by collaborating with other organizations
- Waters re-evaluated every 2 years
  - Call for data
  - Evaluate new information
  - Issue a new Integrated Report
What happens next with the report?

1. DEC reviews comments and revises Integrated Report as needed
2. DEC submits Final 2014/2016 Integrated Report and Response to Comments to EPA
3. EPA approves or disapproves the Category 5 waters
4. EPA reports to Congress
Resources - web page

- A copy of this presentation
- Fact Sheets
  - Integrated Report
  - Kenai River
  - Little Susitna River
  - Lake Lucille
  - Turbidity
- Water quality reports link

How do I stay informed?

- Join the NPS Listserv
Public Comments

- Public comments must be received in writing;
  - E-mail
  - Fax
  - Letter

- No verbal comments
- Must be received and date stamped by: **5pm on January 29, 2018**

Send comments to:
Drew Grant
DEC Division of Water
P.O. Box 111800
Juneau, AK 99801

Email: drew.grant@alaska.gov

Fax: (907) 465-5177
Questions?
Thank you for your time!

Deadline for written comments 5 pm on January 29, 2018