

UPPER MISSISSIPPI RIVER SOURCE WATER PROTECTION

PROJECT TIMELINE

January 25, 2005

Spring 1996

Congress passes the Safe Drinking Water Act Amendments, establishing the Source Water Assessment Program, requiring states to prepare source water assessments for all public water supplies. The Safe Drinking Water Act does not require the preparation of source water protection plans by surface water-based public water suppliers. However, the assessment laid the groundwork for future Source Water Protection activities for the surface water-based public water supplies.

Winter 1997

Application submitted to the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) for a Clean Water Partnership (Diagnostic Phase) Grant to support the coordinated preparation of source water assessments for St. Cloud, St. Paul, and Minneapolis (all of whom rely on the Mississippi River as source water), and the preparation of wellhead protection plans for the approximately 30 communities in the project area that rely on ground water for their public water supplies. The project was selected for funding by MPCA in early-1998. Additional project funds and in-kind support were contributed by St. Cloud, St. Paul, Minneapolis, and the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH), along with in-kind support from the Metropolitan Council, the Mississippi Headwaters Board (a joint powers board of the eight counties in the headwaters region of the Mississippi River), and the Rivers Council of Minnesota (a non-profit organization focused on improving the protection and management of rivers in Minnesota).

Fall 2001

Final report on the Clean Water Partnership project submitted to and approved by MPCA. The report includes the completed source water assessments for St. Cloud, St. Paul, and Minneapolis. Each assessment includes a delineated "source water assessment area." These three assessment areas were combined to form a "composite source water assessment area," an area that stretches from the Twin Cities to approximately Little Falls, Minnesota.

Application submitted to the MPCA for a Section 319 (Clean Water Act) Grant to support the development of source water protection plans for St. Cloud, St. Paul, and Minneapolis. Additional project funds and in-kind support are contributed by the three cities, along with in-kind support from the Minnesota Department of Health and the Metropolitan Council. The project was selected for funding by MPCA in early-2002, with Section 319 funds becoming available in early-2003.

Summer 2003

The US Geological Survey conducted a dye trace study on the Sauk River and calculated the time of travel estimates for the Sauk, Elk, Crow, and Rum Rivers and Elm, Coon, and Rice Creeks to each of the water intakes based on flow. Times and concentrations of the dye were used to develop software for use by the water treatment plants in estimating the risk of possible contaminants.

Summer 2004

A list of contaminants of concern of the water suppliers was compiled to identify the specific contaminants that present treatment issues or current water treatment technology does not address.

A trip to Sandusky, Ohio to collaborate on the activities in Ohio to protect surface waters as a source of drinking water. The Sandusky River Watershed District hosted the field trip through a portion of the Sandusky River Watershed to its mouth at Lake Erie. In addition to presentations by the watershed district, participants attended presentations from the Columbus Department of Public Utilities, Sandusky County Health Department and local landowners (agricultural and private).

Winter 2005

Each City recruited its own members of a Technical group to determine the boundaries of the Priority A response zone, its corresponding drinking water supply management area; the Priority B response zone, and its corresponding drinking water supply management area using a guidance document developed by state agencies specifically for this purpose. The guidance covered geology, soils, land use, National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit lists, MetCouncil Interceptor maps, watershed districts, major transportation routes, local communities well head protection areas among others. Using the mapped data, each city has developed their Source Water Protection Area.

Anticipate presentation to the Minnesota Environmental Quality Board to approve 1) Part 1 of the respective St. Cloud, St. Paul, and Minneapolis Source Water Protection Plans, and 2) its own role in the approval of source water protection plans for public water suppliers in Minnesota.

Fall 2005

Anticipated date for completion of Draft Source Water Protection Implementation Plans for St. Cloud, St. Paul and Minneapolis.