

TOTAL MAXIMUM DAILY LOADS

Under Section 303(d) of the federal Clean Water Act and the Florida Watershed Restoration Act (s. 403.067, Florida Statutes), Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) must be developed for all waters that do not meet their designated uses (such as drinking water, recreation, and shellfish harvesting) and are thus defined as impaired. A TMDL is the maximum amount of a given pollutant that a waterbody can assimilate and maintain its designated uses.

The waters in the Upper Ocklawaha River Basin that have been identified as impaired are all Class III waters. TMDLs have been established for those waters identifying the amount of Total Phosphorus and other pollutants they can receive and still maintain their Class III designated uses.

TMDLs are developed and implemented as part of a watershed management approach, based on the state's fifty-two river basins. This approach uses a schedule that rotates through the river basins over a five-year cycle to evaluate waters, determine impairments, and develop and implement management strategies to restore impaired waters to their designated uses. The five phases of the watershed management approach are summarized below.

Phase 1: Preliminary Evaluation of Water Quality
Phase 2: Strategic Monitoring and Assessment to Verify Water Quality Impairments
Phase 3: Development and Adoption of TMDLs for Waters Verified as Impaired
Phase 4: Development of Basin Management Action Plan to Achieve the TMDL
Phase 5: Implementation of Basin Management Action Plan, including monitoring and assessment

Stakeholder involvement is critical to the success of the TMDL process and varies with each phase of implementation to achieve different purposes. Rule-adopted TMDLs are implemented through Basin Management Action Plans (BMAPs), which contain actions to reduce and prevent pollutant discharges through various cost-effective means. BMAPs are developed jointly by the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP, or the Department) and the affected stakeholders in specific basins. A basin may have more than one BMAP, based on practical considerations. Stakeholder involvement is essential to develop the BMAP, gain support for the plan, and secure commitments to implement the plan.

The BMAP process is intended to involve the broadest possible range of interested parties to encourage the greatest amount of cooperation and consensus possible. Pursuant to statute, DEP invites key stakeholders to participate in the BMAP development process and encourages public participation to the greatest practicable extent. DEP must hold at least one noticed public meeting in the basin to discuss and receive comments during the planning process

THE UPPER OCKLAWAHA RIVER BASIN MANAGEMENT ACTION PLAN (BMAP)

The purpose of the Upper Ocklawaha BMAP is to identify cost-effective actions that will be undertaken to achieve the TMDLs adopted by DEP for the Upper Ocklawaha River Basin. The BMAP also serves to document the Basin Working Group's (BWG) endorsement of the management actions contained in it, and their commitment to implementing the plan.