

Watershed-based NPDES Permitting

DANIELLE STEPHAN

WATER PERMITS DIVISION

US EPA – WASHINGTON, DC

OCTOBER 18, 2018

Outline

- ▶ Introduce the concept of a Watershed-based Permitting (WBP) Approach
- ▶ How a WBP approach applies to nutrient pollution
- ▶ Types of watershed-based permits
- ▶ Expected benefits

What Is Watershed-Based Permitting (WBP) Approach?

- ▶ An approach to NPDES permitting that results in permits:
 - ▶ Issued on a watershed basis
 - ▶ Focused on multiple pollutant sources
 - ▶ Targeted to achieve watershed goals
 - ▶ Integrate permit development among monitoring, water quality standards, TMDL, nonpoint sources, source water protection and other programs

Who Initiates a Watershed-Based Permitting Approach?

- ▶ Leadership can come from any level
 - ▶ Permitting authority
 - ▶ Point sources
 - ▶ Watershed organization
- ▶ Requires support of Permitting Authority and EPA Regional Office

Nutrients and Watershed-based Permitting Approaches

- ▶ Effects vary from Site to Site
- ▶ Near and Far-Field Effects
- ▶ Contributions from both point and non-point source
- ▶ Complexity of the problem leading to more holistic approach
- ▶ Mechanism for implementing a water quality trading program

Key Drivers for consideration of a watershed based approach

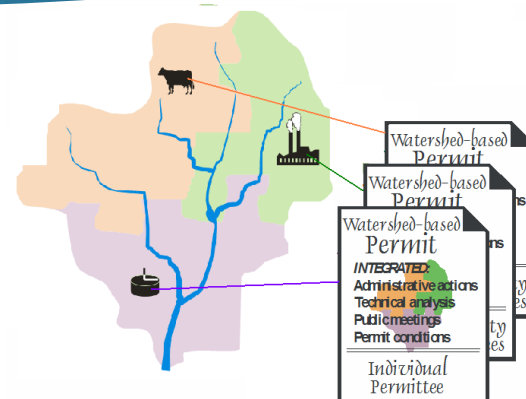
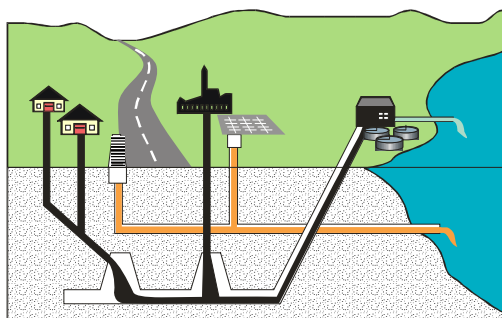
- ▶ Implementation of new water quality standards that require a holistic view of the problem (ex. nutrients)
- ▶ TMDL implementation
- ▶ Watershed with multiple sources contributing to the problem
- ▶ State pursuing Integrated planning
- ▶ Stakeholder interest in innovation and alternative permitting approaches (e.g. water quality trading, adaptive management, etc.)

What Are the Expected Benefits?

- ▶ Encourages efficiencies and targeted use of resources
- ▶ Focuses on environmental results and common water quality goals for the watershed
- ▶ Integrates various regulatory programs and allows streamlining requirements
- ▶ Promotes stakeholder involvement and cooperation
- ▶ Promotes watershed monitoring plans for more efficient data collection
- ▶ Produces cost savings
- ▶ Decreases litigation

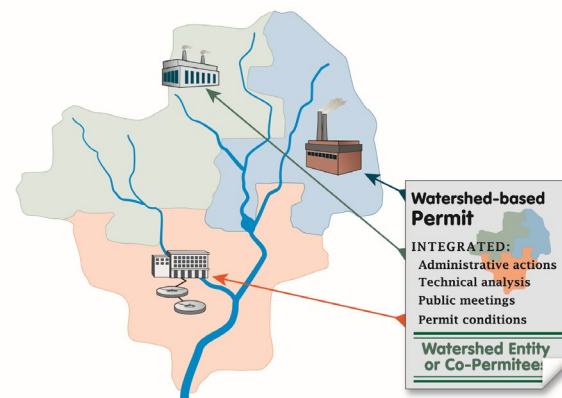
Types of Watershed-based Permits

Coordinated individual permits



Integrated municipal permits

Multisource watershed-based permits



Available EPA Resources

- ▶ EPA has various developed watershed-based NPDES permitting resources
 - ▶ Policy Statement (2003)
 - ▶ Implementation Guidance (2003)
 - ▶ Technical Guidance (2007)
 - ▶ Case Studies (2003-2010)
- ▶ Watershed-based permitting website:
www.epa.gov/npdes/watershed-based-permitting

For More Information on Watershed-based Permitting

Danielle Stephan (202) 564-0759

Watershedpermitting@epa.gov

Water Permits Division (MC 4203M)
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W.
EPA East Building - Seventh Floor
Washington DC 20460