

Surface Water Protection



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November 13, 2025

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AGENDA

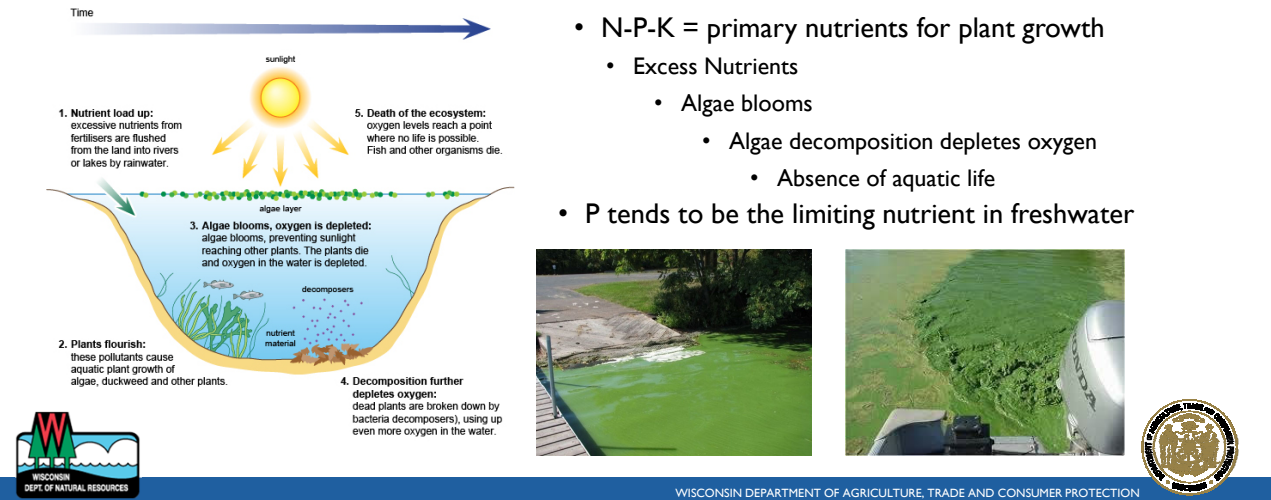
- State of surface waters in Wisconsin
- Current efforts to reduce nutrient loading
 - Point source efforts
 - Nonpoint source efforts
- Path forward
 - Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy



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EUTROPHICATION



- N-P-K = primary nutrients for plant growth
- Excess Nutrients
 - Algae blooms
 - Algae decomposition depletes oxygen
 - Absence of aquatic life
- P tends to be the limiting nutrient in freshwater

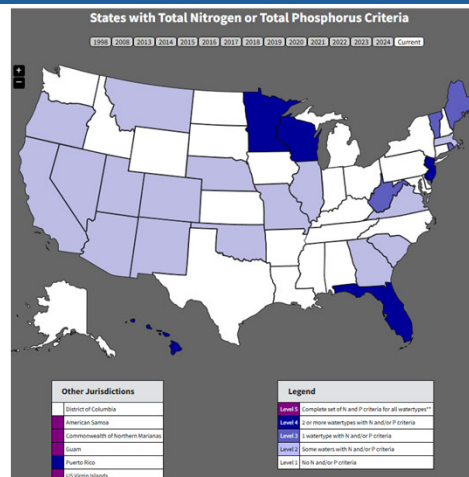


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PHOSPHORUS STANDARDS

- 1 of 4 states with P standards for all lakes and rivers (2010)
- Point Sources – Effluent limits protective of water quality standards
- Nonpoint sources – Meet agricultural performance standards in NR 151 (if cost-shared)

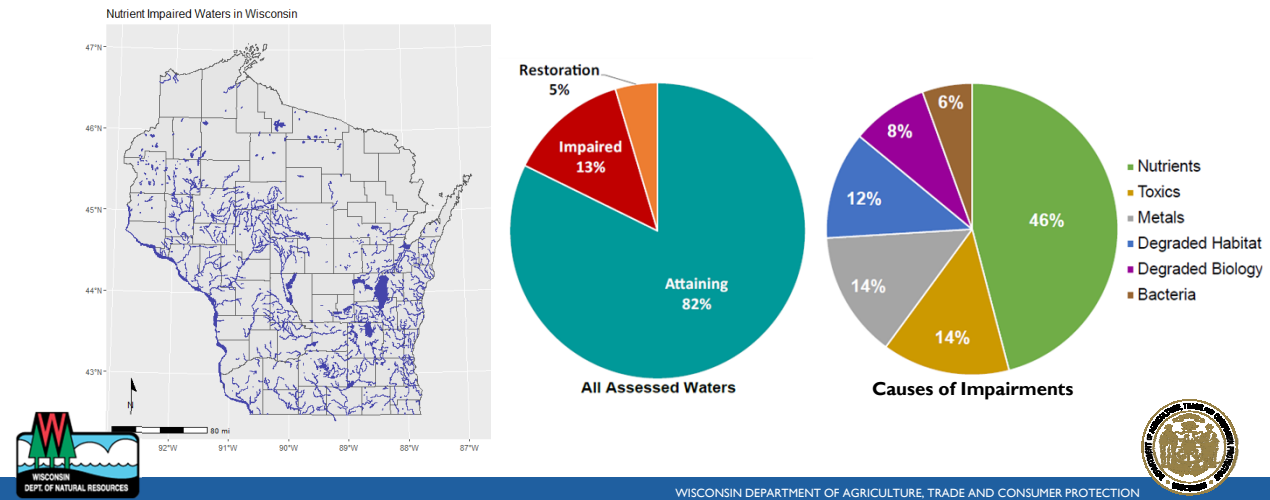
Waterbody Type	Criteria (mg/L)
Rivers	0.100
Streams	0.075
Reservoirs:	0.030 - 0.040
Lakes:	0.015 - 0.040
Great Lakes:	
• Lake Michigan	0.007
• Lake Superior	0.005



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IMPAIRED WATERS

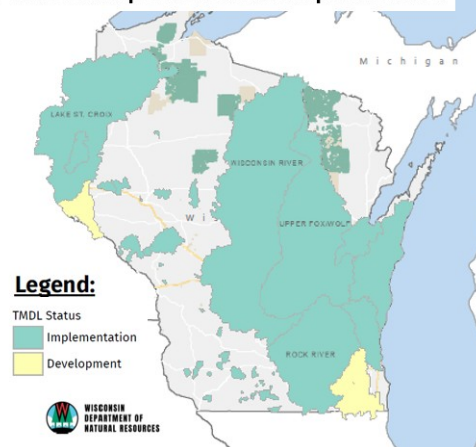


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TOTAL MAXIMUM DAILY LOADS (TMDL)

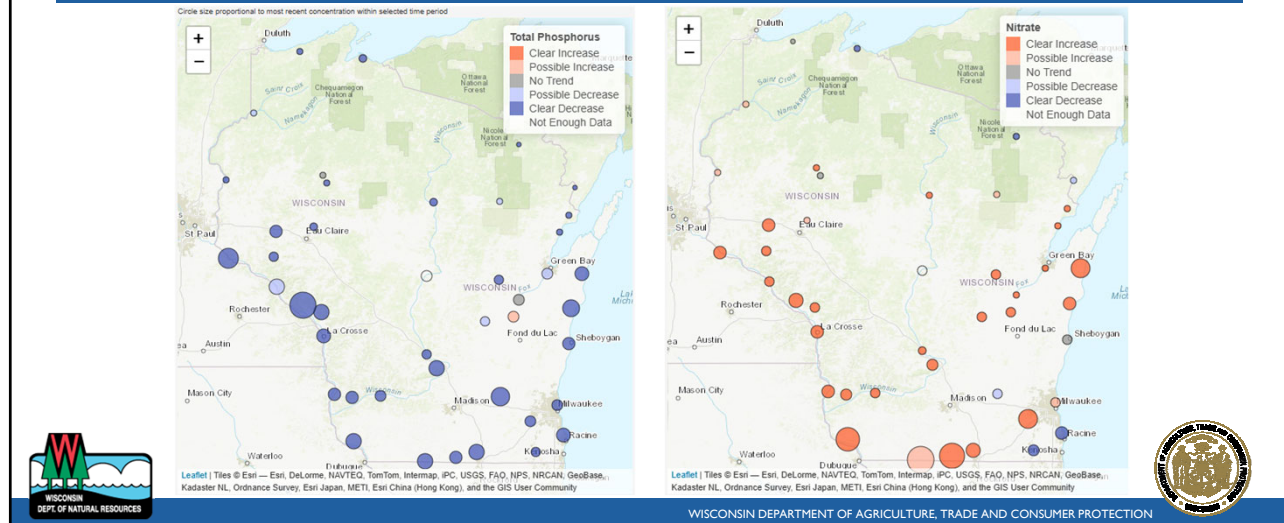
- Under development:
 - Fox-IL (TP & TSS): Mid/late 2026
 - Lake Pepin (TP): Early/mid 2026
 - St Louis Estuary (Hg): Led by MN

TMDL Development Status Map as of 10/2025



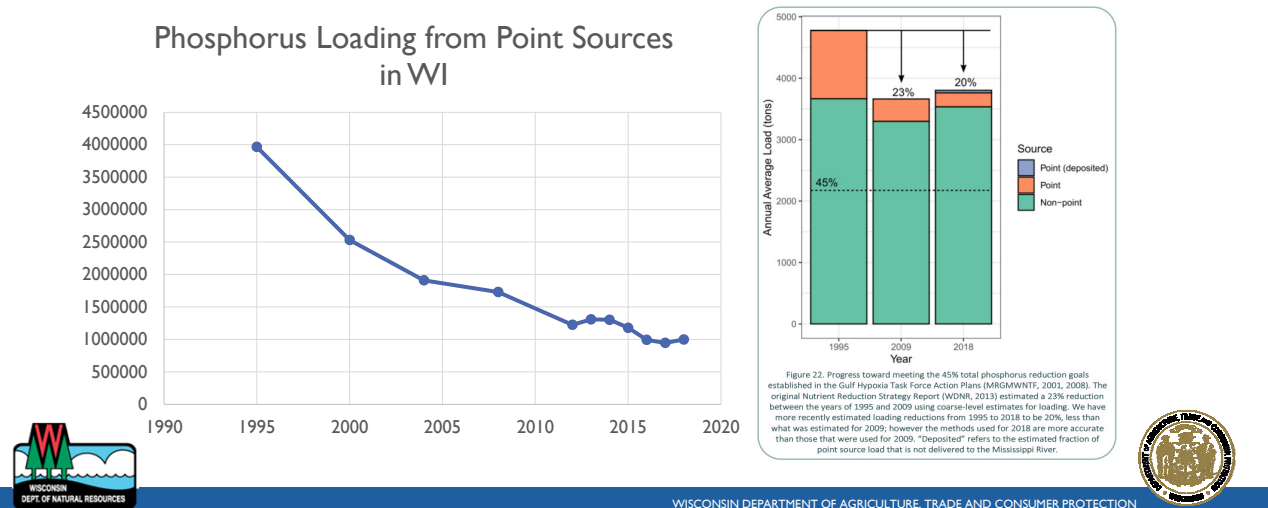
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SURFACE WATER TRENDS



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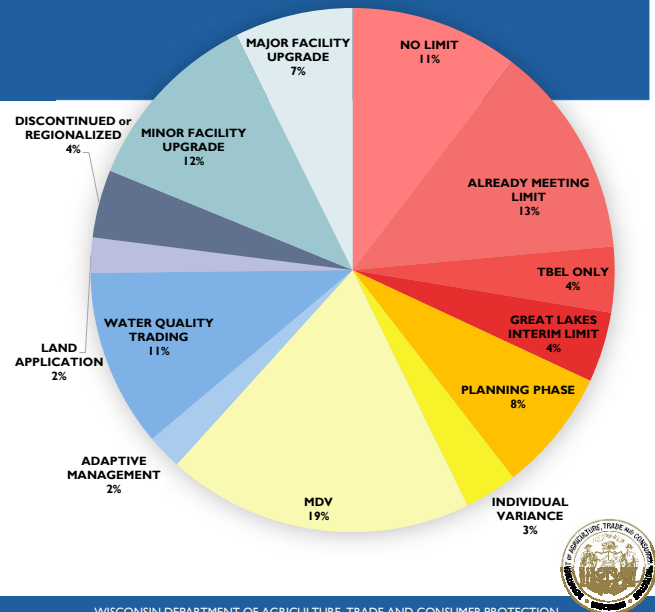
PHOSPHORUS LOADING TRENDS



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POINT SOURCE PROGRESS

- 80% TP load reduction from 1995
- 7-9 year compliance schedules (2010)
- Multiple compliance options
 - Market-based
 - Adaptive Management
 - Water Quality Trading
 - Upgrade system
 - Advanced treatment
 - Cease discharge or regionalize
 - Discharge to groundwater
 - Variances
 - Individual Variance
 - Multi-discharger Variance



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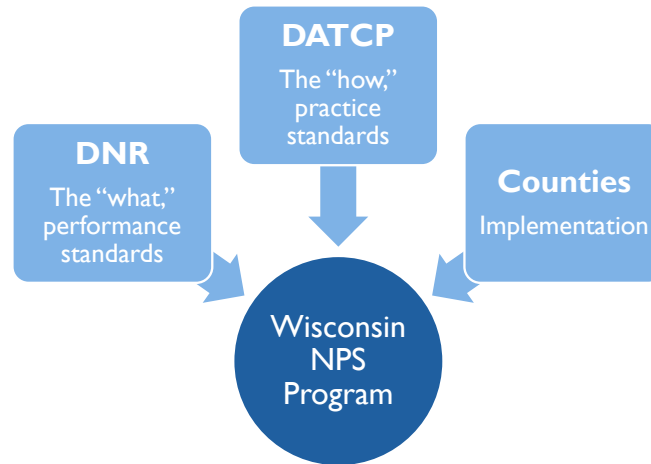
NONPOINT SOURCE POLLUTION ABATEMENT



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INTERAGENCY COLLABORATION



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DNR'S NONPOINT PROGRAM FUNCTIONS



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DATCP'S NONPOINT PROGRAM FUNCTIONS

- Soil and water conservation practice standards
- Conservation programs
- Financial assistance
- Technical assistance



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JOINT ALLOCATION PLAN FUNDING

- Counties are eligible with an approved Land and Water Resources Management Plan
- Counties prepare annual grant requests, receiving in 2026:
 - Staffing and support funds: \$15.3 million
 - Cost sharing through grant programs: \$10.2 million
- Grants support nonpoint source pollution abatement:
 - County staffing and support
 - Conservation practices
 - Nutrient management planning and nutrient management farmer education
 - Animal waste discharges to state waters
 - Project cooperators



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DATCP CONSERVATION PROGRAM EXAMPLES

- **Farmland Preservation Program**
 - Landowners meet soil and water conservation standards to be eligible for income tax credit
 - 2.04 million acres protected and in compliance with standards in 2024
- **Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program**
 - Payments to install filter strips along waterways or return continually flooded fields to wetlands
 - Landowner contracts for 40,000 acres, resulting in ~700 miles of shoreline buffers and tens of thousands of lbs. of nutrients and sediment from leaving farm fields
- **Producer Led Watershed Protection Grant Program**
 - Grants support producer led groups that improve soil and water quality
 - PL groups implemented conservation practices on over 960,000 acres in 2024, resulting in 235,000 lbs. of P and 331,000 lbs. of sediment from leaving farm fields.

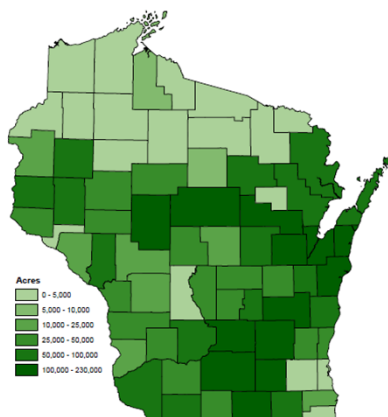


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AGRICULTURAL PERFORMANCE STANDARDS IMPLEMENTATION

2024 Annual Nutrient Management Report
Acres per County



Nutrient Management Plans (NMP)

- Implementing an NMP ensures farms meet performance standards for cropland
- 3.82 million cropland acres (43%) with NMPs in 2024
- \$1 million in past four years training 1,000+ farmers to incorporate NMPs on their farm
- Farmland Preservation Program, county ordinances, and CAFO permits are the largest drivers for implementing the agricultural performance standards.



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