



REGION 10

SEATTLE, WA 98101

July 2, 2024

Mr. Steve Mrazik, Manager
Watershed Management
Oregon Department of Environmental Quality
700 NE Multnomah Street, Suite 600
Portland, Oregon 97232-4100

Dear Mr. Mrazik:

Thank you for submitting the Powder River Basin Total Maximum Daily Load for *E. coli*, which includes a protection plan. The EPA Region 10 staff have reviewed the information provided in the final protection plan, received on May 30, 2024, and found the documentation contains all information necessary for acceptance and upload into ATTAINS.

This plan identifies a strategy for maintaining good water quality (i.e., unimpaired) and protection from bacteria exceedances in the unimpaired waters within the Powder River Basin. The protection plan also covers all unassessed waters, unless they are assessed and found to be impaired (see enclosure, Attachment A - Table of Protection Plan Assessment Units). The EPA understands a protection plan approach was chosen to support the identification and minimization of risks to the waterbody and document strategies and activities to avoid water quality degradation. The plan and associated Water Quality Management Plan incorporates a description of protection actions and management practices that can be taken to prevent water quality degradation from bacteria stressors according to the goals, tasks, and milestones described in the plan. The EPA supports protection planning approaches and understands they can be an important component to achieving water quality objectives.

After the information is entered into ATTAINS, the plan will be recognized and counted as a protection plan under the 303(d) Program's performance measure. Optionally, a brief description of the approach and the waters to which this applies can be included during the public review of the next draft Integrated Report.

Thank you to Vanessa Rose, Daniel Sobota, John Dadoly, Michele Martin, and Alex Liverman for all their work on this project.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at (206) 553-6328 or Sydney Clark at (206)-553-4689 or by email, clark.sydney@epa.gov.

Sincerely,

Jenny Wu
Manager
Watersheds Section

Enclosure: Attachment A – Table of Protection Plan Assessment Units

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