



WATER POLICY

Basin Management Action Plans

What Producers and Agricultural Business Owners Should Know

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A basin management action plan (BMAP) is a plan designed by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, in conjunction with the water management districts, to restore an impaired water body by reducing pollutants to meet the total maximum daily load (TMDL). BMAP development varies between water bodies due to unique watershed characteristics and impairments.

Some things to know about BMAPs:

In Florida, two agencies are involved in setting rules for ensuring good water quality in Florida's rivers, streams, lakes, canals, and estuaries. The US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP). The USEPA enforces the Clean Water Act of 1972, and also ensures that states have appropriate rules to protect water quality. The FDEP creates the processes for stakeholders and citizens to follow to get to the goals of water quality.

1. A water body (e.g. lake, estuary, section of river) is assigned a **designated beneficial use** which could be:
 - Class I - Potable Water Supplies
 - Class II - Shellfish Propagation or Harvesting
 - Class III - Fish Consumption, Recreation
 - Class IV - Agricultural Water Supplies
 - Class V - Navigation, Utility and Industrial Use
2. Water quality of the water body is compared to **water quality standards** for that designated use. Florida uses numeric criteria for nutrients. A numeric standard defines the maximum nitrogen and/or phosphorus concentration in a water body that will maintain its designated use (see <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pdffiles/SS/SS52800.pdf>).
3. If the surface water does not meet water quality standards, it is considered **"impaired."** This means it is polluted to the extent that it is not meeting the designated use. It might be too polluted to swim in, or too polluted to harvest shellfish.
4. When a water body is impaired, a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) of pollutant is calculated for it. A **TMDL** is established for each pollutant of concern for the impaired water body. Excessive nitrogen and phosphorus often come from fertilizers, and sometimes from leaky septic tank systems and faulty water treatment plants.
5. Because rain and runoff capture pollutants and bring them to the receiving water body,



an action plan is designed for the watershed (basin) that drains to that water body. A Basin Management Action Plan (**BMAP**) is developed by FDEP with public input for the land around an impaired water body. This plan affects managers of water treatment plants, municipalities managing stormwater, agricultural producers and other residents.

6. Best Management Practices (BMPs) are part of the BMAP. The BMPs are actions and practices that are researched for effectiveness, documented and training is provided for how to implement them.
7. The effectiveness of the BMAP is measured by monitoring water quality of the water body and related tributaries every 5 years. Water quality continues to be monitored over time.

For more information visit www.piecenter.com/pep.

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