



AN ACT AUTHORIZING THE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY TO USE TEMPORARY NUTRIENT CRITERIA TO ESTABLISH PERMIT LIMITS FOR POINT SOURCE DISCHARGES TO SURFACE WATER; ESTABLISHING A TIME LIMIT FOR TEMPORARY CRITERIA; REQUIRING A REPORT TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COUNCIL; AND AMENDING SECTION 75-5-103, MCA.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

**Section 1.** Section 75-5-103, MCA, is amended to read:

**"75-5-103. Definitions.** Unless the context requires otherwise, in this chapter, the following definitions apply:

(1) (a) "Base numeric nutrient standards" means numeric water quality standards for nutrients in surface water that are adopted to protect the designated uses of a surface water body.

(b) The term does not include numeric water quality standards for nitrate, nitrate plus nitrite, or nitrite that are adopted to protect human health.

(2) "Board" means the board of environmental review provided for in 2-15-3502.

~~(2)~~(3) "Contamination" means impairment of the quality of state waters by sewage, industrial wastes, or other wastes, creating a hazard to human health.

~~(3)~~(4) "Council" means the water pollution control advisory council provided for in 2-15-2107.

~~(4)~~(5) (a) "Currently available data" means data that is readily available to the department at the time a decision is made, including information supporting its previous lists of water bodies that are threatened or impaired.

(b) The term does not mean new data to be obtained as a result of department efforts.

~~(5)~~(6) "Degradation" means a change in water quality that lowers the quality of high-quality waters for a parameter. The term does not include those changes in water quality determined to be nonsignificant pursuant to 75-5-301(5)(c).

~~(6)~~(7) "Department" means the department of environmental quality provided for in 2-15-3501.

~~(7)~~(8) "Disposal system" means a system for disposing of sewage, industrial, or other wastes and includes sewage systems and treatment works.

~~(8)~~(9) "Effluent standard" means a restriction or prohibition on quantities, rates, and concentrations of chemical, physical, biological, and other constituents that are discharged into state waters.

~~(9)~~(10) "Existing uses" means those uses actually attained in state waters on or after July 1, 1971, whether or not those uses are included in the water quality standards.

~~(10)~~(11) "High-quality waters" means all state waters, except:

(a) ground water classified as of January 1, 1995, within the "III" or "IV" classifications established by the board's classification rules; and

(b) surface waters that:

(i) are not capable of supporting any one of the designated uses for their classification; or

(ii) have zero flow or surface expression for more than 270 days during most years.

~~(11)~~(12) "Impaired water body" means a water body or stream segment for which sufficient credible data shows that the water body or stream segment is failing to achieve compliance with applicable water quality standards.

~~(12)~~(13) "Industrial waste" means a waste substance from the process of business or industry or from the development of any natural resource, together with any sewage that may be present.

~~(13)~~(14) "Interested person" means a person who has a real property interest, a water right, or an economic interest that is or may be directly and adversely affected by the department's preliminary decision regarding degradation of state waters, pursuant to 75-5-303. The term includes a person who has requested authorization to degrade high-quality waters.

~~(14)~~(15) "Load allocation" means the portion of a receiving water's loading capacity that is allocated to one of its existing or future nonpoint sources or to natural background sources.

~~(15)~~(16) "Loading capacity" means the mass of a pollutant that a water body can assimilate without a violation of water quality standards. For pollutants that cannot be measured in terms of mass, it means the maximum change that can occur from the best practicable condition in a surface water without causing a violation of the surface water quality standards.

~~(16)~~(17) "Local department of health" means the staff, including health officers, employed by a county, city, city-county, or district board of health.

~~(17)~~(18) "Metal parameters" includes but is not limited to aluminum, antimony, arsenic, beryllium, barium, cadmium, chromium, copper, fluoride, iron, lead, manganese, mercury, nickel, selenium, silver, thallium, and zinc.

~~(18)~~(19) "Mixing zone" means an area established in a permit or final decision on nondegradation issued by the department where water quality standards may be exceeded, subject to conditions that are imposed by the department and that are consistent with the rules adopted by the board.

~~(20)~~ "Nutrient work group" means an advisory work group, convened by the department, representing publicly owned and privately owned point sources of pollution, nonpoint sources of pollution, and other interested parties that will advise the department on the base numeric nutrient standards, the development of temporary nutrient criteria, and the implementation of those standards and criteria together with associated economic impacts.

~~(19)~~(21) "Other wastes" means garbage, municipal refuse, decayed wood, sawdust, shavings, bark, lime, sand, ashes, offal, night soil, oil, grease, tar, heat, chemicals, dead animals, sediment, wrecked or discarded equipment, radioactive materials, solid waste, and all other substances that may pollute state waters.

~~(20)~~(22) "Outstanding resource waters" means:

(a) state surface waters located wholly within the boundaries of areas designated as national parks or national wilderness areas as of October 1, 1995; or

(b) other surface waters or ground waters classified by the board under the provisions of 75-5-316 and approved by the legislature.

~~(21)~~(23) "Owner or operator" means a person who owns, leases, operates, controls, or supervises a point source.

~~(22)~~(24) "Parameter" means a physical, biological, or chemical property of state water when a value of that property affects the quality of the state water.

~~(23)~~(25) "Person" means the state, a political subdivision of the state, institution, firm, corporation, partnership, individual, or other entity and includes persons resident in Canada.

~~(24)~~(26) "Point source" means a discernible, confined, and discrete conveyance, including but not limited to any pipe, ditch, channel, tunnel, conduit, well, discrete fissure, container, rolling stock, or vessel or other floating craft, from which pollutants are or may be discharged.

~~(25)~~(27) (a) "Pollution" means:

(i) contamination or other alteration of the physical, chemical, or biological properties of state waters that

exceeds that permitted by Montana water quality standards, including but not limited to standards relating to change in temperature, taste, color, turbidity, or odor; or

(ii) the discharge, seepage, drainage, infiltration, or flow of liquid, gaseous, solid, radioactive, or other substance into state water that will or is likely to create a nuisance or render the waters harmful, detrimental, or injurious to public health, recreation, safety, or welfare, to livestock, or to wild animals, birds, fish, or other wildlife.

(b) A discharge, seepage, drainage, infiltration, or flow that is authorized under the pollution discharge permit rules of the board is not pollution under this chapter. Activities conducted under the conditions imposed by the department in short-term authorizations pursuant to 75-5-308 are not considered pollution under this chapter.

~~(26)~~(28) "Sewage" means water-carried waste products from residences, public buildings, institutions, or other buildings, including discharge from human beings or animals, together with ground water infiltration and surface water present.

~~(27)~~(29) "Sewage system" means a device for collecting or conducting sewage, industrial wastes, or other wastes to an ultimate disposal point.

~~(28)~~(30) "Standard of performance" means a standard adopted by the board for the control of the discharge of pollutants that reflects the greatest degree of effluent reduction achievable through application of the best available demonstrated control technology, processes, operating methods, or other alternatives, including, when practicable, a standard permitting no discharge of pollutants.

~~(29)~~(31) (a) "State waters" means a body of water, irrigation system, or drainage system, either surface or underground.

(b) The term does not apply to:

- (i) ponds or lagoons used solely for treating, transporting, or impounding pollutants; or
- (ii) irrigation waters or land application disposal waters when the waters are used up within the irrigation or land application disposal system and the waters are not returned to state waters.

~~(30)~~(32) "Sufficient credible data" means chemical, physical, or biological monitoring data, alone or in combination with narrative information, that supports a finding as to whether a water body is achieving compliance with applicable water quality standards.

(33) "Temporary nutrient criteria" means numeric permit limits for nutrients that are based on a determination that the base numeric nutrient standards cannot be achieved by a particular point source

discharger due to economic impacts or the limits of technology.

~~(31)~~(34) "Threatened water body" means a water body or stream segment for which sufficient credible data and calculated increases in loads show that the water body or stream segment is fully supporting its designated uses but threatened for a particular designated use because of:

- (a) proposed sources that are not subject to pollution prevention or control actions required by a discharge permit, the nondegradation provisions, or reasonable land, soil, and water conservation practices; or
- (b) documented adverse pollution trends.

~~(32)~~(35) "Total maximum daily load" or "TMDL" means the sum of the individual waste load allocations for point sources and load allocations for both nonpoint sources and natural background sources established at a level necessary to achieve compliance with applicable surface water quality standards.

~~(33)~~(36) "Treatment works" means works, including sewage lagoons, installed for treating or holding sewage, industrial wastes, or other wastes.

~~(34)~~(37) "Waste load allocation" means the portion of a receiving water's loading capacity that is allocated to one of its existing or future point sources.

~~(35)~~(38) "Water quality protection practices" means those activities, prohibitions, maintenance procedures, or other management practices applied to point and nonpoint sources designed to protect, maintain, and improve the quality of state waters. Water quality protection practices include but are not limited to treatment requirements, standards of performance, effluent standards, and operating procedures and practices to control site runoff, spillage or leaks, sludge or water disposal, or drainage from material storage.

~~(36)~~(39) "Water well" means an excavation that is drilled, cored, bored, washed, driven, dug, jetted, or otherwise constructed and intended for the location, diversion, artificial recharge, or acquisition of ground water.

~~(37)~~(40) "Watershed advisory group" means a group of individuals who wish to participate in an advisory capacity in revising and reprioritizing the list of water bodies developed under 75-5-702 and in the development of TMDLs under 75-5-703, including those groups or individuals requested by the department to participate in an advisory capacity as provided in 75-5-704."

**Section 2. Temporary nutrient criteria.** (1) The department may, on a case-by-case basis, approve the use of temporary nutrient criteria in a discharge permit based upon adequate justification pursuant to subsection (2) that attainment of the base numeric nutrient standards is precluded due to economic impacts or

the limits of technology.

(2) (a) The department, in consultation with the nutrient work group, shall develop guidelines to ensure that the economic impacts from base numeric nutrient standards on public and private systems are equally and adequately addressed. In developing those guidelines, the department and the nutrient work group shall consider economic impacts appropriate for application within Montana and may also consider relevant guidance of the United States environmental protection agency pertaining to analysis of economic impacts from water quality standards.

(b) In the event that economic impacts do not justify temporary nutrient criteria for a particular discharger, the department may approve temporary nutrient criteria based upon a finding that the limits of technology preclude the attainment of the base numeric nutrient standards. The department's determination that the limits of technology justify temporary nutrient criteria must be based on available and proven treatment technologies at the time the temporary nutrient criteria are approved.

(c) The department shall consult with the nutrient work group prior to recommending base numeric nutrient standards or criteria to the board and shall continue to consult with the nutrient work group in implementing temporary nutrient criteria.

(3) The department shall review each application for temporary nutrient criteria on a case-by-case basis to determine if there are reasonable alternatives, such as trading or permit compliance schedules, that preclude the need for the temporary criteria.

(4) (a) Temporary nutrient criteria approved by the department become effective and may be incorporated into a permit only after a public hearing and adoption by the department under the rulemaking procedures of Title 2, chapter 4, part 3.

(b) Temporary nutrient criteria may be established for a period not to exceed 20 years and must be reviewed by the department every 5 years from the date of adoption to ensure that the justification for their adoption is still valid.

(c) On or before July 1 of each year, the department, in consultation with the nutrient work group, shall report to the environmental quality council by providing a summary of the status of the base numeric nutrient standards, temporary nutrient criteria, and implementation of those criteria, including estimated economic impacts.

(d) On or before September 1 of each year preceding the convening of a regular session of the

legislature, the department, in consultation with the nutrient work group, shall summarize the previous two reports provided in subsection (4)(c) to the environmental quality council in accordance with 5-11-210.

**Section 3. Codification instruction.** [Section 2] is intended to be codified as an integral part of Title 75, chapter 5, part 3, and the provisions of Title 75, chapter 5, part 3, apply to [section 2].

- END -

I hereby certify that the within bill,  
SB 0095, originated in the Senate.

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Secretary of the Senate

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President of the Senate

Signed this \_\_\_\_\_ day  
of \_\_\_\_\_, 2009.

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Speaker of the House

Signed this \_\_\_\_\_ day  
of \_\_\_\_\_, 2009.

SENATE BILL NO. 95

INTRODUCED BY J. BRUEGGEMAN

BY REQUEST OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

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