

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

# Restoring Water Quality through a Watershed Approach



*A stronger focus on restoring polluted waters through implementation of TMDLs and watershed plans...*

EPA Region 9 – January 2009

# “Measure W” (SP-12)

## ➤ **By 2012, improve water quality conditions in 250 impaired watersheds nationwide using the watershed approach.**

- Model & Demonstrate Watershed that Approach Works
- Watershed boundaries
  - "12-digit" HUCs
- Baseline
  - 2002 303(d) List
- Watershed Approach
  - Defined Hydrologic Area
  - Involved Stakeholders
  - Uses Iterative Planning or Adaptive Management
  - Integrates Tools & Programs

## ➤ **What Does "Improve" Mean?**

# “Measure W” (SP-12)

## What Does *Improve* Mean?

### Option 1

#### Impairment Removal (Delisting)

- Tracks Progress Based on Removal from State 303(d) List
- 1 or More Impairment Causes Removed for at Least 40% of Impaired Water Bodies or Stream Miles/Lake Acres
- Perhaps Most Rigorous Option

OR

### Option 2

#### Watershed-Wide Improvement

(demonstrated by valid scientific information)

#### Option 2a

Statistical  
Procedures

OR

#### Option 2b

Multiple Lines of  
Evidence

# “Measure W” (SP-12)

**Option 2: Significant Watershed Wide Improvement**  
(demonstrated evidence of a positive trend/change)

Option 2a  
Statistical Procedures Approach

OR

Option 2b  
Multiple Lines of Evidence Approach

Statistically significant change in WQ parameters or related indicators

- 90% or greater confidence level

Improving trend in WQ parameter  
*AND*  
Improving trend in biological index  
*OR*  
Improving trend in WQ based on predictive/modeled data  
*OR*  
Significant load reductions

*AND*

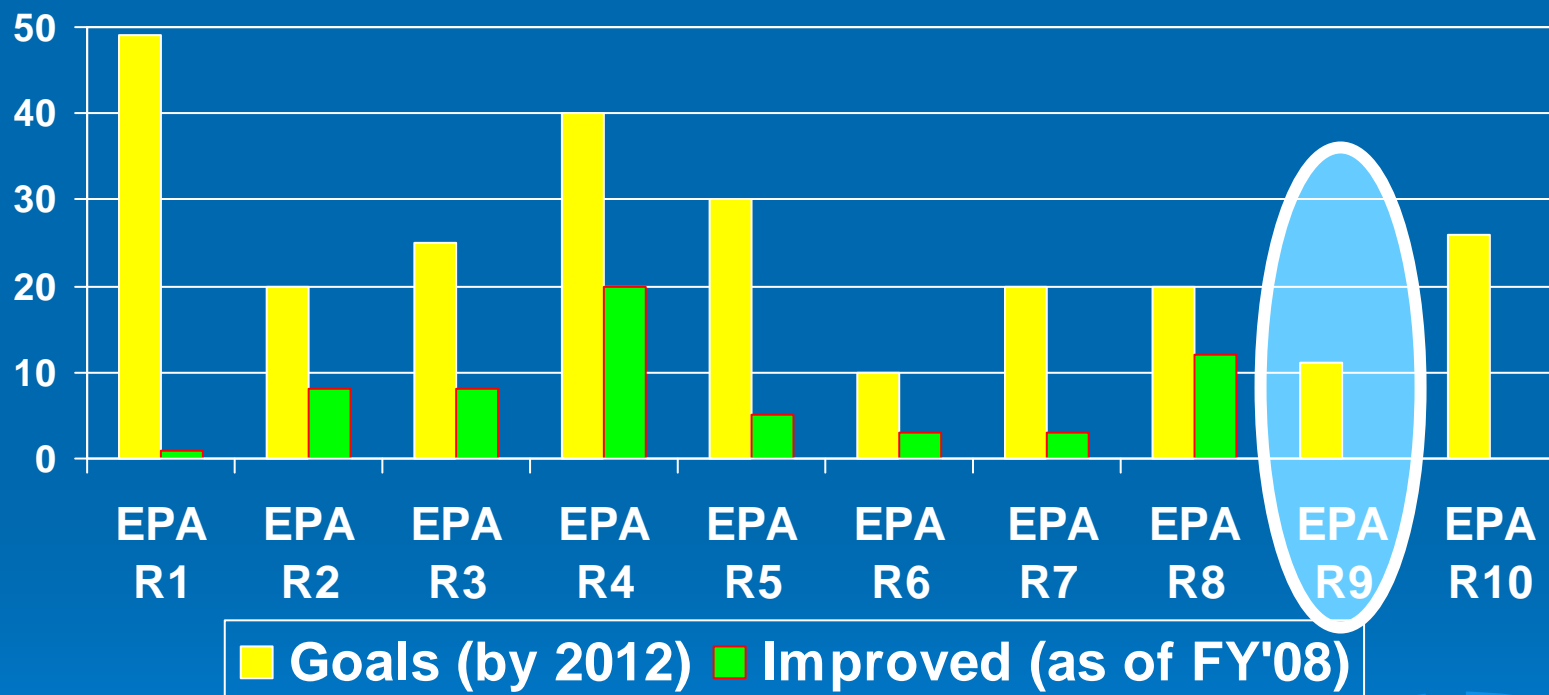
Widespread NPS implementation or other implementation activities.

*AND*

No deteriorating trends in parameters related to impairment.

# “Measure W” (SP-12)

## ➤ Nation-Wide Goal: 250 Watersheds by 2012



# Where Do We Go From Here?



## ➤ Increase Effectiveness & Results

- Identify & Address Needs in “Watersheds of Focus”
- Target Implementation of TMDLs & Watershed Plans
- Build Partnerships
  - Alignment of Federal, State & Local Efforts
- Facilitate Information Exchange/Highlight Progress
  - Communicate Goals & Account for Results

## ➤ Learn and Adjust

<http://www.epa.gov/region09/water/watershed/index.html>