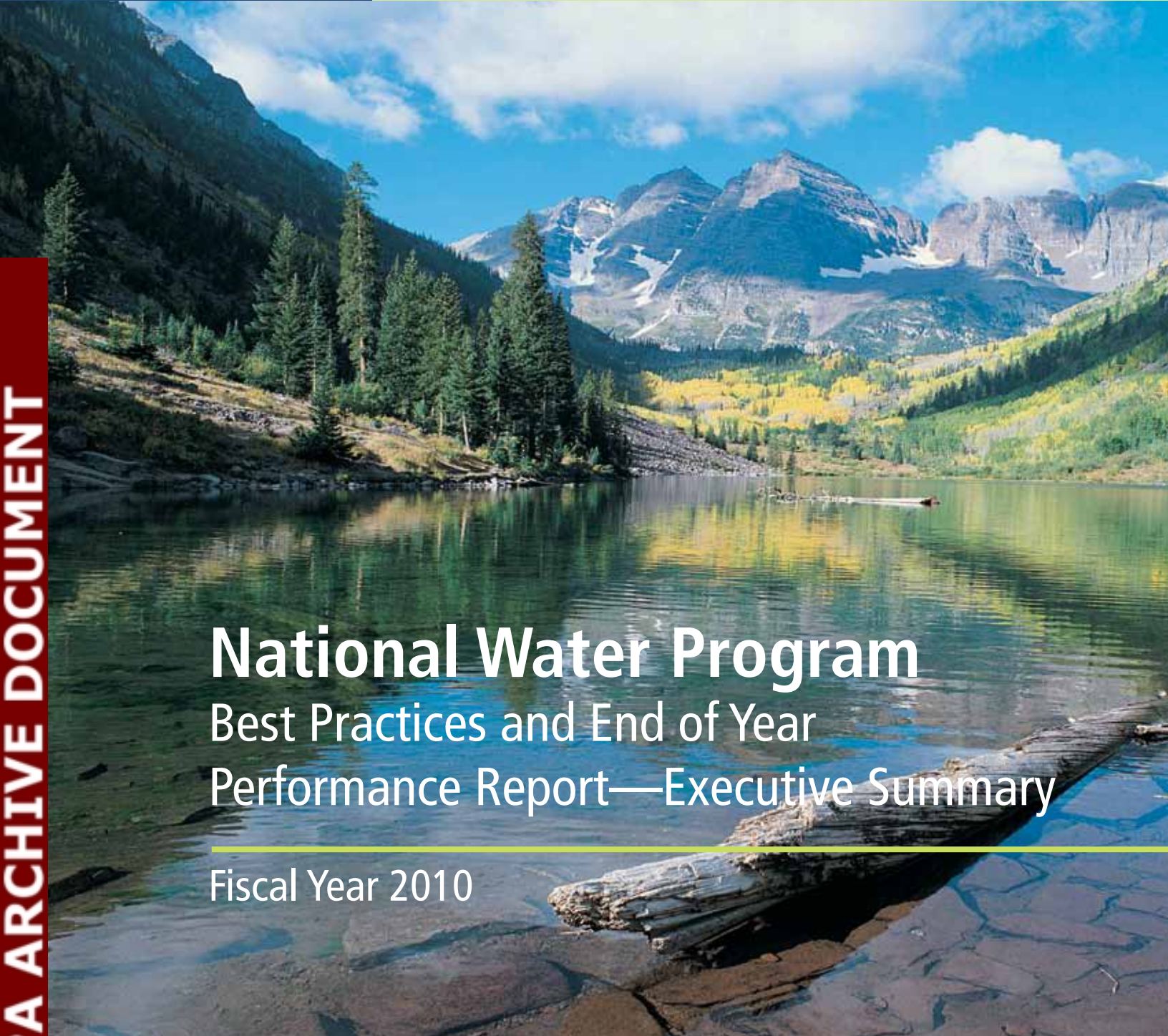


US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT



National Water Program

Best Practices and End of Year Performance Report—Executive Summary

Fiscal Year 2010



National Water Program FY 2010 Performance Results

Executive Summary

Overview

EPA met 70% of its commitments for all National Water Program performance measures in FY 2010. Twenty-four percent (24%) were not met; for 6%, not enough data were available to assess progress or no reporting was expected by the end of the fiscal year. The FY 2010 results represented an increase in the number of measures met from the FY 2009 results (68%). Other highlights include:

- Sixty-seven percent (67%) of the outcome-based Strategic Targets met their FY 2010 commitments. This was a slight increase over the percentage of Strategic Targets met in 2009 (66%).
- Seventy-four percent (74%) of the output-oriented Program Activity Measures (PAMs) met their commitments in 2010. After a gradual increase in the percentage of PAMs that met their commitments over the previous four years, this was a slight increase over the FY 2009 result of 71%.
- Sixty-eight percent (68%) of the Water Program commitments under Goal 2 and 74% under Goal 4 of the FY 2006 Strategic Plan were met in FY 2010. This was the first year that the geographic programs under Goal 4 outperformed the core water program elements under Goal 2.
- The Columbia River, Puget Sound, Gulf of Mexico, Safe Swimming, Wetlands, Long Island Sound, Chesapeake Bay, Drinking Water, and Oceans/Coastal subobjectives were most successful in meeting FY 2010 commitments.
- On average, 87% of performance commitments set by the EPA regional offices for activities in their geographic areas were met in 2010 while 13% of commitments were missed. This was a slight improvement over the FY 2009 results of 84% met.

Protect Public Health

EPA met 80% of its commitments for all [drinking water](#) measures in 2010. Of these, the highlights were:

- Approximately 92% of the population was served by community water systems (CWSs) with drinking water that met all applicable health-based drinking water standards (commitment 89.9%).
- Ninety-one percent (91%) of the cumulative amount of Drinking Water State Revolving Funds available had loan agreements in place (commitment 85.7%). EPA has met its commitments for this measure for five years in a row.
- Ninety-six percent (96%) of Class I and 89% of Class II underground injection wells maintained their mechanical integrity, thereby reducing the impact of contaminants on underground sources of drinking water.

EPA did not meet 20% of its drinking water commitments in 2010. Challenges confronted by EPA and states include:

- Eighty-seven percent (87%) of community systems underwent a sanitary survey, which was just short of the Agency's national commitment of 88.6%. Conducting sanitary surveys is a resource-intensive effort, and EPA regions are working with their states to propose other resource options available under the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (SRF) program.

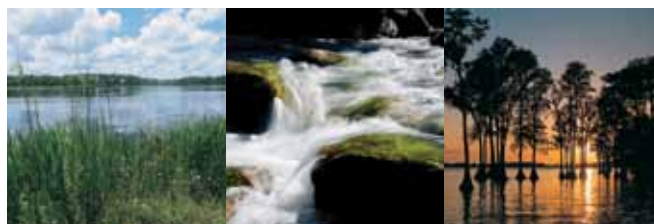
EPA was successful in meeting three-fourths of its commitments under the [Water Safe for Swimming subobjective](#) in 2010. For coastal and Great Lakes beaches monitored by state-based beach safety programs, EPA found that 95% of days of the beach season were open and safe for swimming (FY 2010 commitment 95%). EPA has consistently met this commitment over the past five years.



Restore and Improve Fresh Waters, Coastal Waters, and Wetlands

EPA and states met 59% of their commitments under the [Water Quality subobjective](#) in FY 2010 and fell short on 34%; data were not available for 7%. The percentage of commitments met dropped in FY 2010 after three years of steady increase. Highlights include:

- Over 2,900 of the waters listed as impaired in 2002 met water quality standards for all the identified impairments in FY 2010 (commitment 2,809). Out of a universe of 39,503 waterbodies, 7% were achieving attainment by the end of FY 2010.
- For the second year in a row, states and territories met regional commitments for submitting new or revised water quality criteria acceptable to EPA that reflect new scientific information.
- EPA approved 91% of water quality standards revisions submitted by states and territories (FY 2010 national commitment 85%).
- For the fourth consecutive year, EPA and states achieved the national goal of having current NPDES permits in place for 89.4% of non-tribal facilities (FY 2010 commitment 89%). In addition, EPA and authorized states have exceeded their annual commitments for issuing high priority permits for the past five years.
- EPA and states made significant gains in documenting the full or partial restoration of waterbodies that are impaired primarily by nonpoint sources. Nationally, EPA and states exceeded their commitment (188) with 215 waterbodies that were partially or fully restored.
- The Clean Water SRF utilization rate hit 100% for the first time in 2010. \$84.1 billion in funds available for projects through 2010 have been committed to approximately 28,190 loans. In 2010, project assistance reached \$10 billion, which funded 3,494 loans in a single year.



EPA faced several management challenges in restoring and improving freshwater quality in FY 2010. These include:

- As of 2010, 12 states and territories have adopted water quality criteria for nutrients, which was just below the national target of 13.
- In 2010, 2,262 total maximum daily loads (TMDLs)¹ were developed by states and approved by EPA. This was just short of the national commitment of 2,491, and seven of 10 regions met their commitments for this measure.

The 28 [National Estuary Programs \(NEPs\)](#) and their partners protected or restored almost 90,000 acres of habitat within the NEP study areas—10,000 short of EPA's goal of 100,000 acres. This is still a substantial accomplishment despite the fact that several Gulf NEPs diverted attention away from habitat protection to respond to the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. In FY 2010, the 28 NEPs played the primary role in directing nearly \$274 million in additional funds to on-the-ground activities (leveraged from approximately \$20 million from EPA funds), which is a ratio of \$14 raised for every \$1 provided by EPA.

EPA, in partnership with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, states, and tribes, was able to report "no net loss" of [wetlands](#) under the Clean Water Act Section 404 regulatory program. More than 130,000 acres have been restored and enhanced since 2002. As of FY 2010, 47 states and 22 tribes have built capacities in wetlands monitoring, regulation, restoration, water quality standards, mitigation compliance, and partnership building.

¹ A TMDL is a technical plan for reducing pollutants in order to attain water quality standards. The terms "approved" and "established" refer to the completion and approval of the TMDL itself.

Improve Drinking Water and Water Quality on American Indian Lands

Safe drinking water and water quality on tribal lands continues to be a concern for the water program. Some key highlights and challenges include:

- For the first time in five years, EPA achieved its national target (82%) for the percentage of the population in Indian Country served by CWSs that receive drinking water meeting all applicable health-based standards (87%). This achievement is especially important considering that 93% of the population in Indian Country is served by small systems.
- For the fifth consecutive year, the National Water Program has been unable to meet its annual commitment to reduce by 50% by 2015 the number of homes provided access to safe drinking water. However, the number of homes lacking access to safe drinking water has decreased from a high of 43,437 homes in FY 2009 to a low of 34,187 homes in FY 2010.
- More than 25,700 homes still lack access to basic sanitation, which is short of the Agency's FY 2010 goal of a reduction to 18,985 homes. The shortfall is most likely attributable to an increased number of homes on tribal lands requesting access, loss of safe water and sewer access to some previously served homes due to changes in regulation, infrastructure breakdown, and maintenance problems.



Improve the Health of Large Aquatic Ecosystems

EPA implements collaborative programs with other federal agencies, states, and local communities to improve the health of large aquatic ecosystems. Highlights and challenges for each program include:

- **U.S.–Mexico Border.** Construction delays in 2010 had a significant impact on the U.S.–Mexico Border Program's performance. EPA fell short of its commitment to remove 36 million pounds of biochemical oxygen demand (BOD) loadings from the U.S.–Mexico border area and ended the year with 18.7 million pounds removed. EPA provided access to safe drinking water for 21,650 additional homes on the U.S.–Mexico border, which was just short of its FY 2010 commitment of 21,899 additional homes. EPA provided adequate wastewater sanitation to an additional 75,175 homes over the past year but fell short of its FY 2010 commitment (190,720 additional homes).
- **U.S. Pacific Island Waters.** Fifty-two percent (52%) of sewage treatment plants in the U.S. Pacific Island Territories complied with permit limits for BOD and total suspended solids (TSS). This was below the FY 2010 commitment of 62%. Monitored beaches in the U.S. Pacific Island Territories were open and safe for swimming for 80% of the days of the beach season in FY 2010.
- **Great Lakes.** From a baseline score of 20 in 2002, the Great Lakes Index declined in 2010 from a score of 23.9 to 22.7 using a 40-point scale. Average long-term total PCB concentrations in whole Great Lakes top predator fish at sites on each Great Lake declined more than 43% annually between 2000 and 2008, meeting the target for declines in concentration trends. EPA, states, and other partners remediated 7.3 million cubic yards of contaminated sediments through 2009, including more than 1.3 million cubic yards for the most recent year reported.

- **Chesapeake Bay.** EPA's Chesapeake Bay Program made significant improvements over its FY 2009 results, meeting five of six (83%) of its commitments in FY 2010. For the second consecutive year, EPA met its annual goal for implementing phosphorus pollution control measures and came very close to meeting its annual goal for implementing nitrogen pollution control measures reduction practices. EPA expects enhanced implementation of nitrogen pollution control measures as a result of the TMDL that was established in December 2010.
- **Gulf of Mexico.** Although the Gulf Program ended the year ahead of its FY 2010 cumulative target (27,500 acres) and restored, protected, or enhanced an additional 200 acres of coastal and marine habitats (29,552 acres), this was significantly less than the approximately 4,000 acres restored in 2009. The size of the hypoxic, or "dead," zone in the Gulf of Mexico increased significantly from 3,000 square miles in 2009 to 8,000 square miles in 2010. There were a number of hydrological, climate, and monitoring factors that led to the large increase in the hypoxic zone over the past year.
- **Long Island Sound.** The Long Island Sound Program significantly exceeded its 2010 commitment (79 acres) by restoring or protecting 1,361 acres of coastal habitat, including tidal wetlands, dunes, riparian buffers, and freshwater wetlands. In 2010, the duration of hypoxia in Long Island Sound was 40 days and the area affected was 101 square miles, both well below average. This was an improvement over end-of-year hypoxic conditions in 2007, 2008, and 2009.
- **South Florida.** EPA's South Florida Program reported improvements in mean stony coral cover and the health and functionality of the sea grass beds in the Florida Keys Marine Sanctuary (FKNMS) in 2010. In addition, EPA and its partners were able to maintain the overall water quality of the near shore and coastal waters of the FKNMS. For the third consecutive year, however, the Agency did not see an improvement in water quality of the Everglades ecosystem as measured by total phosphorus.
- **Puget Sound Basin.** In 2010, EPA and its state, local, and tribal partners improved water quality in the Puget Sound Basin, which enabled the lifting of harvest restrictions in 4,453 acres of shellfish bed growing areas (cumulative from FY 2006). This significantly exceeded the FY 2010 commitment of 1,800 acres. Over 10,000 acres of tidally and seasonally influenced estuarine wetlands have been restored in the Puget Sound Basin since FY 2006. The program significantly exceeded its 2010 commitment due to the completion of a very large project that accounted for over 3,200 acres of habitat alone.
- **Columbia River Basin.** Working with EPA and other partners, the Lower Columbia River Estuary Partnership protected, enhanced, or restored an additional 6,000 acres of wetland and upland habitat in the Lower Columbia River watershed in FY 2010 for a total of 16,000 acres since FY 2006. Much of this progress is due to landowners embracing the benefits of wetland restoration on their property and greater access by restoration practitioners to multiple funding sources for nearly every project that was successfully implemented.

