



MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH

Office of the Borough Manager

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MEMORANDUM

DATE: November 1, 2023
TO: Mayor and Assembly
FROM: Michael Brown, Borough Manager
RE: Manager's Weekly Post

Junk Vehicle Tow Reimbursement Program Suspended: The allotted funds of \$50,000 approved by the Assembly for this program have been expended. Just over 250 vehicles have been removed from private properties by the two authorized contractors.

MS4 Water Quality Follow-Up: During the October 10, 2023 Assembly/Planning Commission meeting, a number of questions were asked about impaired waters and actions the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation was taking to monitor the impairments and educate the public. Janie Dusel, MSB consultant for the MS4 project, assisted in providing this follow-up information:

1. Does DEC have any requirements, or do they do anything to educate or notify landowners, or fix the issue of a declared impaired waterbody?

It depends on the level of impairment. There are 5 different impairment categories. (See table below.) When water bodies are placed in Category 5, I believe DEC starts to pursue a total maximum daily load (TMDL) for that water body. The TMDL process does have a public involvement component. The specific public activities vary based on the water body. For example, Lake Lucile might have different outreach activities than Big Lake due to different types of stakeholders. Once a TMDL is established, the water body moves out of Category 5 and into Category 4.

DEC also supports the watershed approach to managing pollutants in water bodies, including public involvement and education. Again, activities are tailored to each watershed. DEC partners with other agencies to fund watershed plans and studies. For example, DEC and the City of Wasilla co-funded the Lake Lucile Management Plan completed a few years ago.

Categories 1 and 2	1	Waters for which there is enough information to determine that water quality standards are attained for all or some of their designated uses.
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Category 3	Waters for which there is not enough information to determine their status.
Category 4	Waters that are impaired, but have one of several different types of waterbody recovery plans.
Category 5	Waters that are impaired and do not yet have waterbody recovery plans. Also known as 303(d) list impaired waters.

Additional recourses for impaired water bodies

Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, Water Quality Program: <https://dec.alaska.gov/water/water-quality/>
 Map/catalog of impaired waters: <https://gis.data.alaska.gov/maps/ADEC::alaska-dec-impaired-waters/about?layer=0>

2. The Assembly requested a copy of the DEC reports of waterbodies impaired.

The most recent integrated water quality report (IR) is from 2022 and is presented online here: <https://dec.alaska.gov/water/water-quality/integrated-report/>. The site includes an interactive map, information, and links to additional resources. DEC is currently working on the 2024 IR update.

3. What testing is DEC doing? Are other bodies of water in the Mat-Su being tested? What is DEC’s process for testing?

DEC collaborates with various partners (governmental agencies, Alaskan tribes, municipalities, and watershed-based groups) to collect water quality data to support the impaired water bodies list. Data is reviewed for quality control by DEC, which generally has to be collected within the last 5 years to be considered valid. More detailed and technical info about the data collection and review process can be found in the technical reports listed under “Past Reports/Resources” at the link above. There is an overview document called Consolidated Assessment and Listing Methodology, as well as reports for various types of impairment (turbidity, hydrocarbons/oils/grease, pathogens, and residues.) If you notice, category 3 (above) is for when there’s not enough information to make a determination – I understand that this would be due to a lack of sufficient data.

Public Affairs Media Flyover:

Red Ribbon Week

- [Meadow Lakes celebrates Red Ribbon Week with visit from National Guard Frontiersman](#)

Fisheries

- [Economic disaster declaration for east side setnet fishery](#)
Alaska’s News Source

MSBSD

- [Students make their voices heard in early-morning protest](#)
Frontiersman
- [Hundreds of Mat-Su students stage walkout to protest school board and superintendent](#)
ADN

Palmer

- Palmer City gets squeaky clean report from its auditors
Frontiersman

Borough Business

- Mat-Su Borough's 'free' dump days ended up costing almost \$900,000, officials say
ADN

Public involvement

- Borough seeks public input on Comprehensive Plan
KTNA

Elections

- Vandalism, negativity mar school board campaigns 1 week before elections
Frontiersman

Facebook Posts

- Takeback
Reach: 8,817 / Reactions: 50 positive, 0 negative / Shares: 8
- Snow removal
Reach: 9,908 / Reactions: 41 positive, 9 neutral / Shares: 8

Future Events:

- Community Cleanup Meeting, Tuesday, November 14 at 6pm, Assembly Chambers