



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

OFFICE OF WATER

September 15, 2022

**MEMORANDUM**

Subject: 2022-2032 Vision for the Clean Water Act Section 303(d) Program

From: Radhika Fox  
Assistant Administrator

To: Regional Administrators  
EPA Region 1 - 10

I am pleased to announce the *2022 - 2032 Vision for the Clean Water Act Section 303(d) Program* (“2022 Vision”). The 2022 Vision is the product of an exemplary and robust collaboration with states, territories, and tribes to identify opportunities to manage the Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 303(d) program to best restore and protect water quality. The 2022 Vision charts a path to promote continued improvements in water quality as we mark the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the CWA. Thank you and your staff for your efforts to implement the 2013 CWA Section 303(d) Vision<sup>1</sup> and articulate this 2022 renewal.

As part of the 2013 Vision, states and territories engaged in a long-term planning and prioritization process, through meaningful public engagement, to develop support for and address challenging priorities through integrated assessment, planning, standards, and implementation processes. The 2022 Vision builds on the experience gained from implementing the 2013 Vision. The 2022 Vision is intended to encourage flexible and innovative approaches for states, territories, and tribes to implement CWA Section 303(d), as well as to identify ways to use limited resources to leverage partnerships, restore and protect water quality, and encourage development of solutions to emerging and difficult water quality challenges.

I applaud the addition in this 2022 Vision of four cross-cutting themes of national, regional, and local importance – Environmental Justice, Climate Change, Tribal Water Quality and Program Development, and Program Capacity Building. The 2022 Vision identifies important ways that environmental justice, climate change, and tribal considerations can be integrated into assessments of water quality and total maximum daily loads (TMDLs) and other plans to restore and protect the Nation’s waters under the CWA.

I ask each Region to work closely with your states, territories, and tribes to help them implement the 2022 Vision. We should encourage states, territories, and tribes to develop tailored strategies to implement their CWA Section 303(d) Program responsibilities in the context of their overall water

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<sup>1</sup> A New Long-Term Vision for Assessment, Restoration, and Protection under the Clean Water Act Section 303(d) Program. 2013. [https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2015-07/documents/vision\\_303d\\_program\\_dec\\_2013.pdf](https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2015-07/documents/vision_303d_program_dec_2013.pdf)

quality goals. Planning and prioritization should guide the location and timing of TMDL development, the use of other restoration or protection approaches, and the allocation of resources. Each EPA Region should work closely with your states, territories, and tribes on setting priorities in such settings as Performance Partnership Agreements/Grants. EPA will continue to provide tools, data/information, and technical assistance to states, territories, and tribes on prioritization and other goals of the 2022 Vision. EPA and states, territories, and tribes will also utilize program metrics to promote accountability and illustrate program progress. I anticipate that documentation of progress towards achieving water quality goals in CWA Section 303(d) lists and Integrated Water Quality Reports will continue to be an important part of EPA's system for strategically measuring the effectiveness of the overall national water program.

I am confident that the 2022 Vision will help states, territories, tribes, and EPA, in collaboration with stakeholders, to make significant progress toward realizing the objectives of the CWA. Thank you again for your and your staff's efforts. If you have any feedback or questions, please contact me or Brian Frazer, Acting Director of the Office of Wetlands, Oceans and Watersheds; Tom Wall, Director of the Watershed Restoration, Assessment and Protection Division; or James Havard, Chief of the Watershed Branch.

Attachment: 2022-2032 Vision for the Clean Water Act Section 303(d) Program

cc: Acting Director, Office of Wetlands, Oceans and Watersheds  
Director, Office of Standards and Technology  
Director, Office of Wastewater Management  
Director, Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water  
Water Division Directors, Regions 1-10  
President, Environmental Council of States  
President, Association of Clean Water Administrators  
Chair, National Tribal Caucus  
Chairman, National Tribal Water Council