



HB23-1221

SHORT TITLE: Water Quality Data Standards

LONG TITLE: Concerning data standards for the determination of a total maximum daily load for state waters.

SPONSORS: Representatives Soper and Mauro/Senator Simpson

COMMITTEES: House Energy & Environment Committee

PURPOSE OF THE BILL: To require the Water Quality Control Division to use quality-assured data to determine the maximum amount of a pollutant that can be discharged daily into state waters without exceeding applicable water quality standards.

PROPONENTS OF THE BILL: Mesa County

POTENTIAL STAKEHOLDERS: Water providers and users, water treatment facilities, local governments including special districts,

BACKGROUND: The Water Quality Control Division in the Colorado Division of Public Health & Environment implements the Clean Water Act in Colorado under delegation from the EPA. The program periodically identifies “impaired waters” in the state and assigns total maximum daily loads (TMDLs) to the various stream segments that limit the amount of pollutants that dischargers may put into the stream under a permit. Mesa County under a TMDL restriction for eleven tributaries to the Colorado River in the Grand Valley. These tributaries, according to CDPHE, exceed water quality standards for selenium, iron, and Escherichia coli (E. coli). The water quality is highly influenced by runoff from federal lands and agriculture (non-point sources).

Is this bill necessary this year? There is no deadline.

How does the bill change current law? The bill emphasizes that TMDLs should be established using the quality assured data and sets out criteria for determining what data meets the definition of quality assured.

Does the bill affect the prior appropriations system? No.

How is the bill implemented? It appears to be self-executing. There are no penalties for not meeting the criteria.

Practical Considerations: It is important to understand how CDPHE obtains and uses data, from which sources, and how those sources meet the definition of “quality assured.”

Fiscal Impact: There is no fiscal note.