

Prioritization Process

The Science Assessment evaluated HUC8s within Illinois (including some that cross state lines), detailing the estimated point and nonpoint source contributions of nutrients (e.g. Phosphorous or Nitrates) in pounds/per acre/year. For the scorecard, each watershed was assessed a score based on its estimated contribution (yield) of N and P separately:

- Top 5 watersheds were assessed a score of eight;
- Next top 5 watersheds were assessed a score of six;
- Next 6 watersheds were assessed a score of four;
- The middle 16 watersheds were assessed a score of two;
- The rest were assessed a zero

Within each watershed, if the PS inputs were higher for a PS scenario than NPS inputs (and vice-versa), four points were given.

In even numbered years (i.e. 2014), IEPA's *Integrated Report* (IR) serves to "report" on the assessed lakes and streams within Illinois and reports whether or not waterbodies are meeting designated uses. This report was used to determine the restoration potential of watersheds. In a watershed where 0-10% and 91-100% of the assessed waterbodies met designated uses these were given one point; 11-20% and 81-90% meeting designated uses, two points; 21-30% and 71-80% three points; 31-40% and 61-70% four points; and 40-60% of assessed waterbodies meeting designated uses received five points. So the worst and best watersheds for water quality received the least amount of points and the mid range watersheds the most points for this prioritization.

One point was given for each watershed-based plan within a HUC8 according to RMMS (Research Management Mapping Service). The aforementioned rows were added together to calculate a total point value for the watersheds, which were sorted in descending order.

What does being a priority watershed mean?

Defining a priority watershed depends on agency resources (human resources and financial resources) and regulations. The following outline the distinct differences of these types of inputs and where monitoring fits

- **NPS:** Given limited funds for Agency grant programs (IEPA/IDA), the higher priority watersheds will be given priority given everything else equal (similar projects with similar cost effectiveness and water quality benefit);
- **PS:** All watersheds are treated equally through regulatory programs. Strategies will be implemented statewide. However, if state revolving fund (SRF) ever becomes a competitive process, loans for nutrient removal upgrades/expansions should be considered as a priority;
- **Monitoring:** Increased monitoring in priority watersheds to track progress