303(d)/TMDL Program Vision Effort

A. Issue Thread: The Listing and TMDL program tracks success and measures progress in ways that identify improvements in and maintenance of water quality and uses, in addition to attainment of water quality standards in previously degraded waters.

B. EPA Strategic Measures:

a) Tracked by the 303(d) Program:
- WQ08a: Number, and national percent, of TMDLs that are established or approved by EPA [Total TMDLs] on a schedule consistent with national policy.
- WQ08b: Number, and national percent, of approved TMDLs that are established by States and approved by EPA [State TMDLs] on a schedule consistent with national policy.
- WQ 21: Number of water segments identified as impaired in 2002 for which States and EPA agree that initial restoration planning is complete (i.e., EPA has approved all needed TMDLs for pollutants causing impairments to the water body or has approved a 303(d) list that recognizes that the water body is covered by a watershed related plan [i.e. Category 4b or Category 5m]). (No longer reporting on in FY 2013)

b) Not tracked by the 303(d) Program, but 303(d) listed impaired waters information used to report on measures:
- SP 10: Number of water bodies identified in 2002 as not attaining water quality standards where standards are now fully attained. [Target measure: cumulatively reported]
- SP 11: Remove the specific causes of water body impairment identified by states in 2002. [Target measure: cumulatively reported]
- SP 12: Improve water quality conditions in impaired watersheds nationwide using the watershed approach. [Target measure: cumulatively reported]
- WQ 10: Number of water bodies identified by States (in 2000 or subsequent years) as being primarily nonpoint source (NPS) – impaired that are partially or fully restored. [cumulative]

C. Potential New Metrics to Consider:

a) Report on the population served by TMDLs. (see Figure 3 below)
b) Report on extent of water resource within a HUC 12 watershed addressed by a TMDL, and could focus on nonpoint source pollutants. (see Figure 4 below)
c) Analysis on the implementation of wasteload allocations via permits
d) Analysis on the implementation of load allocations via watershed management plans
e) Report on TMDLs developed in Environmental Justice communities

In response to an OIG study of the TMDL Program, a geospatial analysis was conducted to identify the rate of implementation of wasteload allocations via priority permits (c) and load allocations via watershed management plans (d). The results found that of the 9,703 candidate priority permits associated with a TMDL, 9,225 or 95% were meeting the wasteload allocations (Figure 1); and 2,729 319 Projects in GRTS recorded a relationship to TMDLs, which included: developing a TMDL, developing a TMDL implementation plan, or implementing a TMDL (Figure 2).

Using 303(d) impaired waters GIS information, several types of analyses might be considered, such as identifying population served by a TMDL or the extent of water resources within a HUC 12 watershed addressed by a TMDL, and could focus on nonpoint source pollutants (see Figures 3 and 4).

Figure 1. Number and proportions of assessed PS TMDLs (a, left) and NPDES permits (b, right) categorized by meeting or not meeting TMDL wasteload allocations (WLAs) in the permit terms.

Source: USEPA, FY2010 National Report on Implementing Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs), March 31, 2011

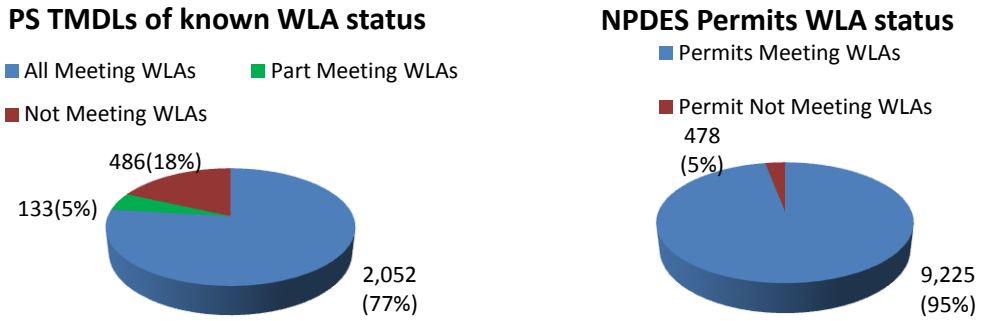
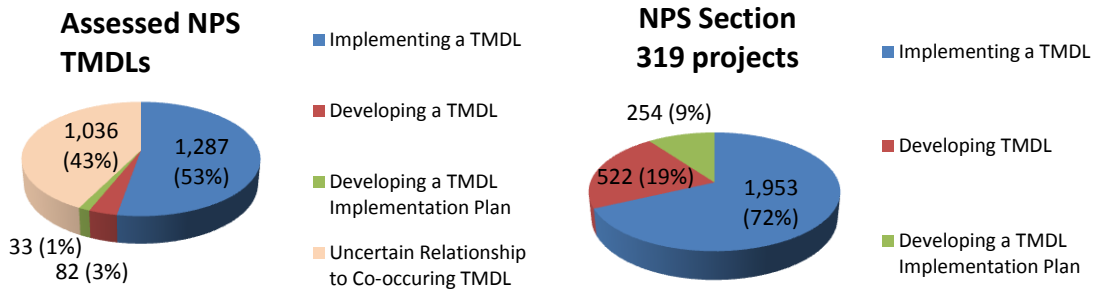


Figure 2. Number and proportions of assessed NPS TMDLs (a, left) and Section 319 projects (b, right) categorized by relationship of the projects to TMDLs.

Source: USEPA, FY2010 National Report on Implementing Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs), March 31, 2011



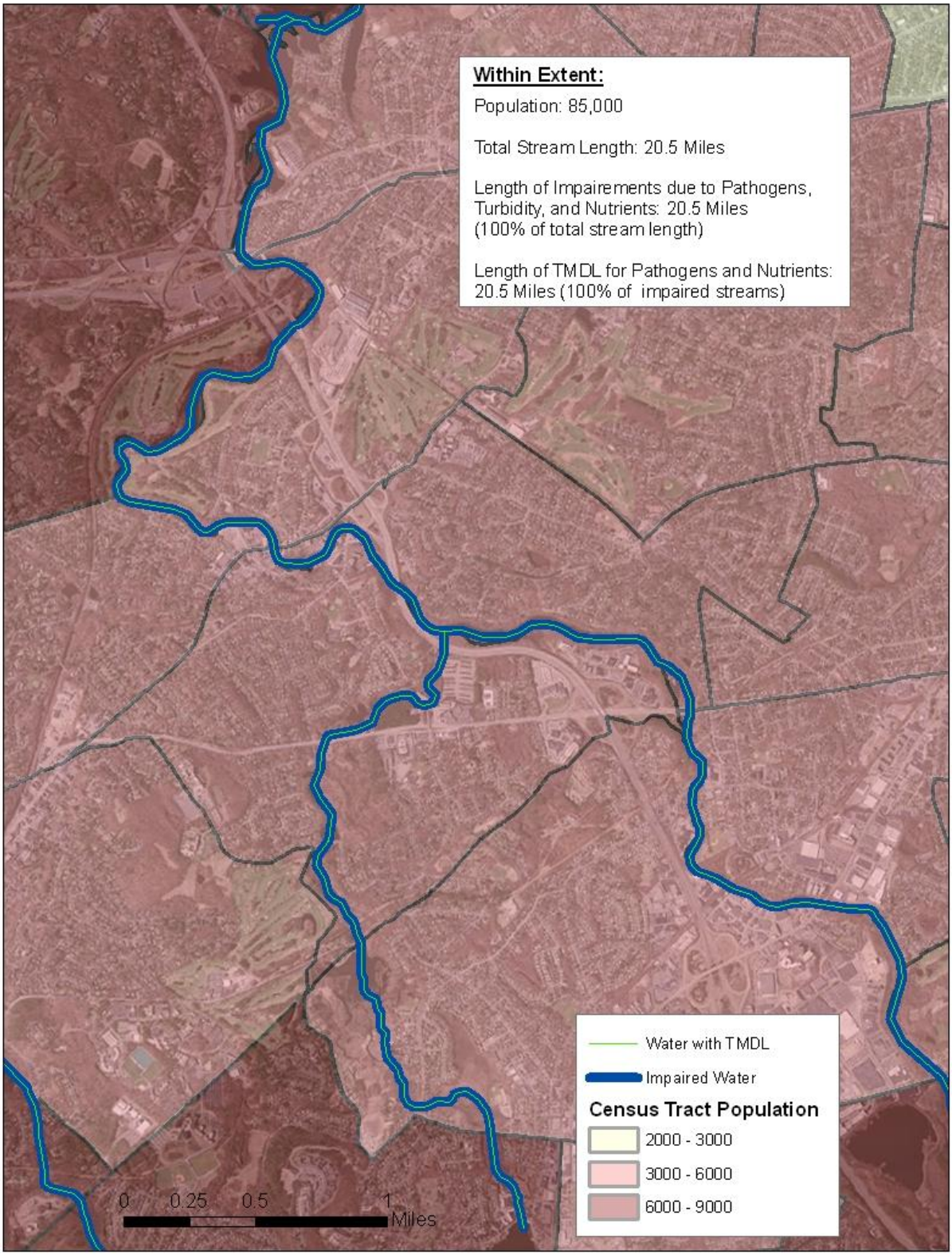


Figure 3: Population served by TMDLs

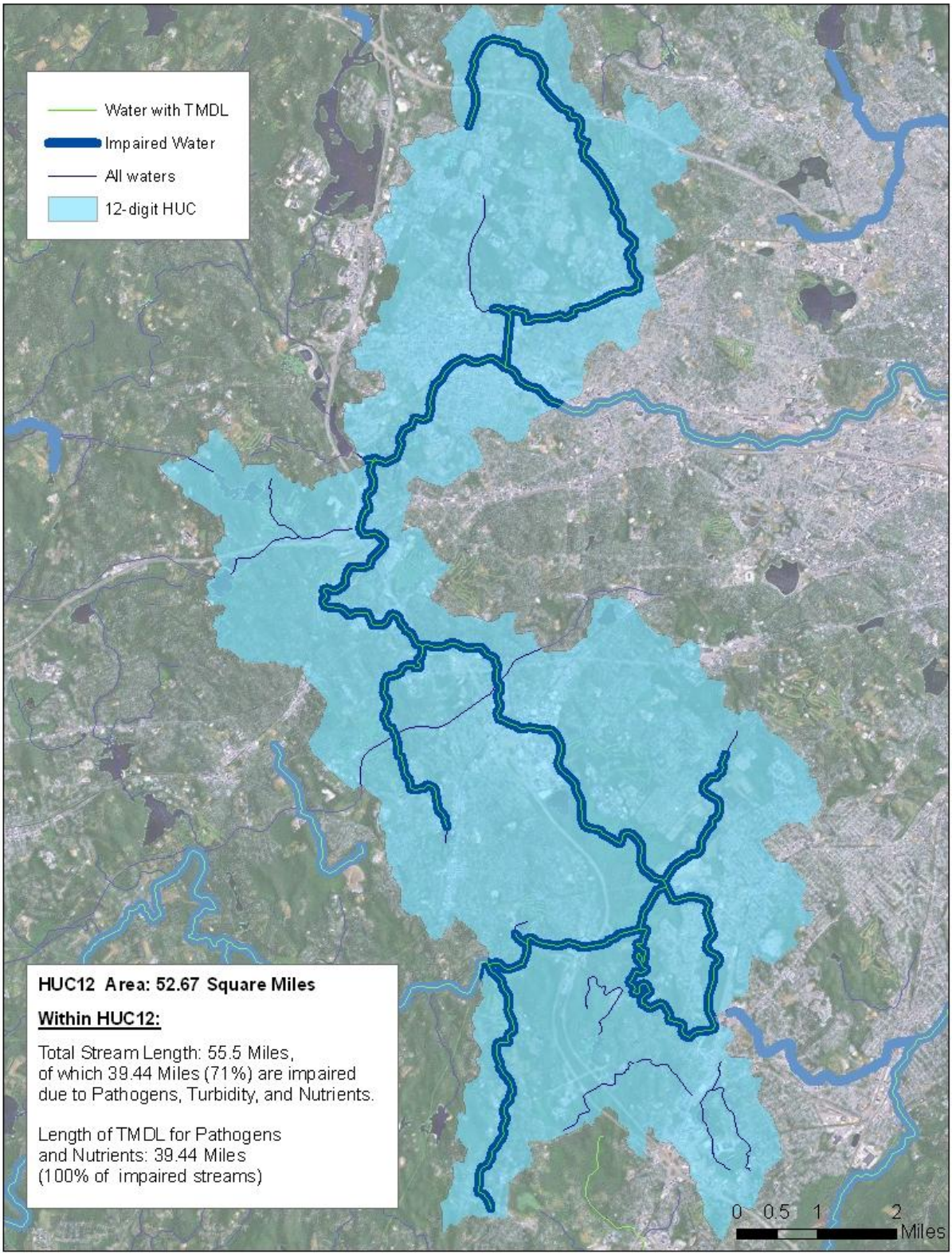


Figure 4: Extent of water resource within a HUC 12 watershed addressed by a TMDL, and could focus on nonpoint source pollutants.