

I. Executive Summary

The Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments (PPACG) is required under federal and state statutes to develop a Water Quality Management Plan (208 Plan) that recommends future policies and technical strategies for each of the five watersheds within the Pikes Peak region – El Paso, Teller, and Park counties. The 208 Plan recognizes that each watershed is uniquely different and that water quality problems can be both diffuse and site-specific.

The 2010 208 Plan supersedes the previous update of the 208 Plan that was completed in 2003 and amended in 2007. The format and structure of the 208 Plan has remained unchanged between 2003 and 2010 and is still broken down into five watersheds to describe site-specific information. The changes in the 2010 208 Plan update include but are not limited to:

- changes to the population projections;
- revisions to the regional policies;
- a revised water quality assessment that identifies the major water quality issues for each watershed;
- a revised description of the point source dischargers and a point source summary sheet for each watershed;
- updates to the nonpoint source assessment; and
- revised conclusions and recommendations for each watershed.

Water quality improvements that have been recognized as a result of implementation of the 2003 208 Plan include:

- changes to site applications to address specific water quality issues and concerns as identified in the 208 Plan;
- implementation of recommendations aimed at improving water quality, including changes to local regulations and policies that affect water quality, studies to assess sources of water quality impairment, and further coordination between cities and counties; and

- improved regional collaboration to identify future needs and ensure that water quality will not be impacted as a result of future decisions.

Development Process

This plan was developed by PPACG with the assistance of PPACG's Water Quality Management Committee (WQMC). The WQMC consists of representatives of special districts and military installations involved with water quality management, along with local governments located within El Paso, Teller, and Park counties. During monthly meetings, members reviewed and made recommendations regarding information to be incorporated into the 208 Plan.

Uses of 208 Plan

A regional approach is important to protecting water quality because it involves multiple groups and individuals and recognizes that geographic impacts to problems are not isolated. The importance of providing and promoting regional dialogue, discussion, and solutions is evident by the numerous watershed organizations throughout the region and state. The 208 Plan is a planning document intended to assist local, state, and federal decision makers prioritize and provide information to help guide the region in addressing water quality issues. This process helps assure that decisions made at the local and state levels are consistent with pertinent statutory and planning requirements, that information necessary for water quality decisions is adequate and up-to-date, and that agencies and associations are designated to implement the recommendations.

As such, this plan is used to:

- review site applications and discharge permits to ensure consistency with the recommendations, policies, and future needs of the region;
- educate the cities and counties and the public regarding the future wastewater needs of the region;
- provide information to planners regarding point source and nonpoint-source water quality issues and concerns, and applicable policies and strategies;
- determine if proposed state water quality standards are consistent with the policies and goals contained in the plan;

- review the status of water quality within designated areas and report on progress in meeting the local, state, and federal water quality goals as well as regional policy objectives;
- identify priorities and processes and recommend solutions for addressing water quality problems through special stream studies, including Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) or wasteload allocation analyses;
- identify priorities and local needs for improving or constructing wastewater facilities; and
- identify environmental, economic, and social costs and benefits of implementing portions of the 208 Plan.

Goals and Objectives

The goal of the 208 Plan is to be consistent with the Clean Water Act, which is to *restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of waters*. This will be accomplished through a regional and coordinated approach that serves to recognize the watersheds in the region as regional assets supporting diverse interests. To achieve this goal, five objectives were adopted as part of this plan.

1. Improve watershed health by developing and implementing strategies that improve water quality and maintain a balance between the natural environment and designated land uses.
2. Restore and maintain the designated uses of the streams and creeks to ensure protection of public health, aquatic life, agriculture, recreation, and surface and groundwater supplies.
3. Identify current and future wastewater treatment needs through a regional collaborative process and implement strategies that improve water quality.
4. Develop solutions that consider environmental, social, and economic impacts to both point and nonpoint source problems.
5. Encourage local governments, special districts, businesses, and other stakeholders within the watersheds to adopt policies and operating practices consistent with the 208 Plan.

Scope

The 2010 update of the 208 Plan follows the watershed approach initially taken in the 2003 Plan. Information and issues that overlap between watersheds are described in the beginning of the 208 Plan in the following sections: Introduction; Regional Water Quality Assessment; Regional Policies; Population Projections by District and/or Service Area; and Environmental, Social, and Economic Impacts of the Plan.

The remainder of the 208 Plan is divided into four sections corresponding to the five watersheds shown on Figure ES-1, located within the portions of the South Platte and Arkansas River basins within the Pikes Peak region:

- South Platte Headwaters/Upper South Platte Watershed
- Upper Arkansas Watershed
- Fountain Creek Watershed
- Chico Creek Watershed

The key aspects described in each of these four watersheds are:

- A description and identification of treatment facilities necessary to meet the anticipated municipal and industrial waste treatment needs of the area until 2030, including treatment level requirements;
- The establishment of construction priorities for such treatment facilities and time schedules for the initiation and completion of all treatment facilities;
- The identification of agricultural and forest management-related nonpoint sources of pollution, mine-related sources of pollution, construction activity, and the control and disposition of all residual waste disposal of pollutants on land or in subsurface excavations;
- An identification of management and operating agencies to carry out appropriate portions of the 208 Plan;
- Description of the water quality issues and concerns that are unique to each watershed;
- Recommendations for future policy and technical strategies to address water quality issues and concerns.

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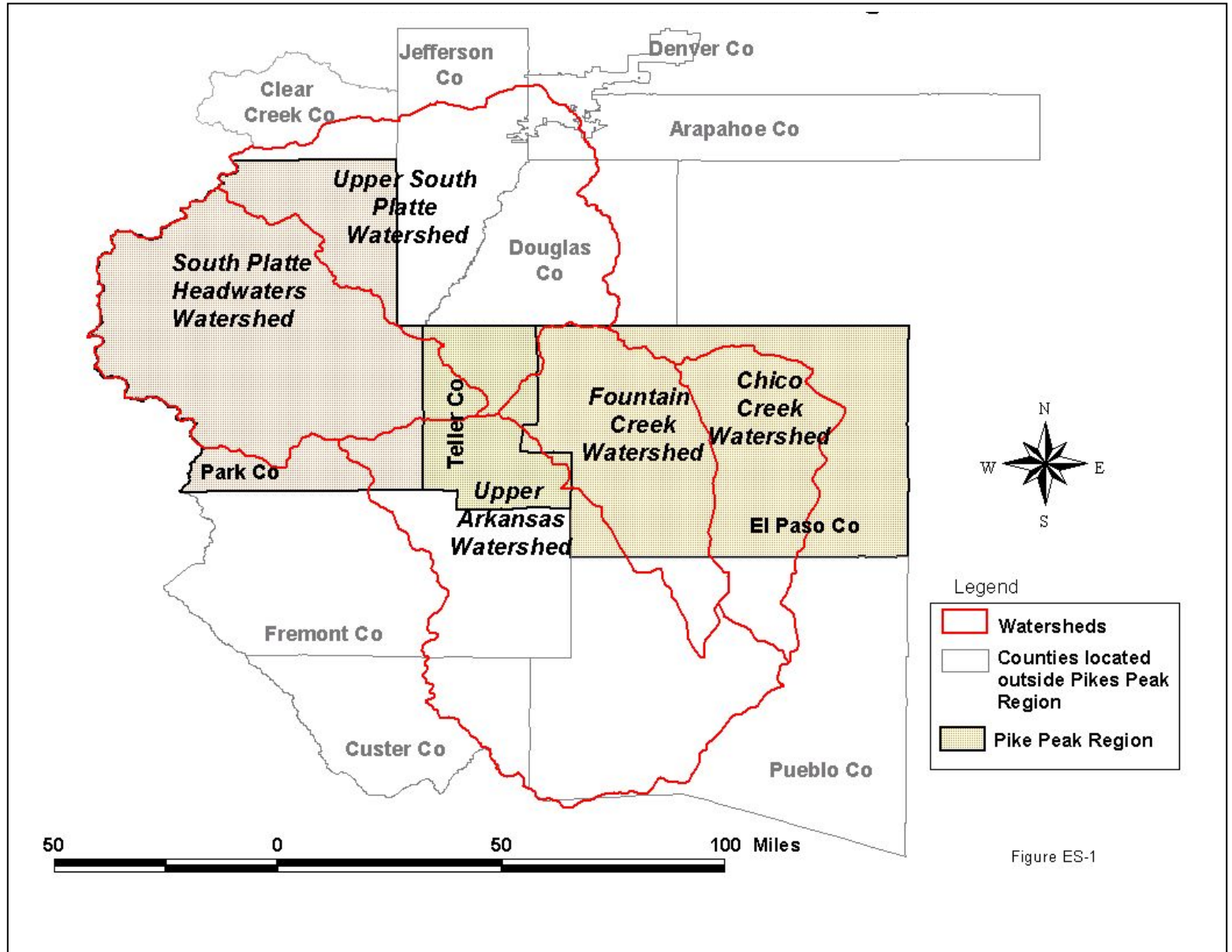


Figure ES-1

Regulatory Documents Guiding the Development of the 208 Plan

The following federal and state regulations and policies guide the development of the 208 Plan and the information that it contains:

- Federal Clean Water Act: Sections 201 (treatment facilities), 205(j)(state-wide planning), 208 (area-wide planning), 301 (treatment facility discharge limitations), and 303(e) (basin planning within a state);
- C.R.S. Section 25-8-105 (pertains to requirements regarding Regional Wastewater Management Plan Amendments). This information can also be found in the Colorado Water Quality Control Act.
- 40 CFR 130.6 (includes a listing of statewide water quality management plan elements: TMDLs, effluent limitations, municipal and industrial waste treatment, nonpoint source management and control, management agencies, implementation measures, dredge or fill program, basin plans, and ground water);
- Colorado Water Quality Management and Drinking Water Protection Handbook, A Continuing Planning Processes, Commission Policy #98-2 (defines the institutional roles and responsibilities of planning agencies and elements that should be contained in the 208 Plan).

Recommendations and Implementation Strategies

The 208 Plan is a regional plan, and implementation recommendations are made according to regional needs and concerns. Implementation recommendations are based on a review of available information concerning the current and potential impacts that have been discussed in specific areas of the watershed. Because the 208 Plan primarily focuses on water quality issues, most of the recommendations address water quality and not flow-related issues. Implementation of the recommendations contained in the 208 Plan is critical in order to improve water quality. Agencies have been identified that would be the most appropriate to implement the policies that are recommended in the plan.

According to the Federal Clean Water Act, management associations formed under the 208 Plan have the authority to accept and utilize grants or other funds, and to implement the point and nonpoint features of the 208 Plan.

Challenges

The development of the 208 Plan identified the following challenges:

- Complying with possible nutrient standards for total phosphorous and total nitrogen that will be determined in June 2011 by the Colorado WQCC;
- Determining sources of E. coli contamination; and
- Conducting adequate water quality monitoring in each of the watersheds to determine future water quality problems.

Future Plan Revisions and Updates

The 208 Plan will be updated on a regular basis at least every five years. If required, amendments to the 208 Plan will occur between updates of the 208 Plan. Section 25-8-105 of the Colorado Revised Statute and the Colorado WQCC Policy #98-2 contain language regarding review and approval of amendments to the 208 Plan.