



Triennial review of Minnesota's water quality standards

Triennial standards review

An opportunity to comment on the need for revisions, additions or other changes to Minnesota's water quality standards.

Required of states every three years

- Public meeting
 - One, on March 9, 2021
- Public comment period
 - Continues thru Apr. 9, 2021



What is a water quality standard?

- A primary tool in the Clean Water Act for restoring and maintaining water quality
- A number or statement to protect a water body for a specific beneficial use



Who or what is protected?

Waters are protected for public values

Federal CWA and Minn. Statutes 115.44:

- “...best usage in the interest of the public...”



Beneficial uses assigned in Minnesota Rules:

1. Drinking water
2. Aquatic life and recreation
3. Industrial use and cooling
4. Agricultural and wildlife use
5. Aesthetics and navigation
6. Other uses
7. Limited resource value

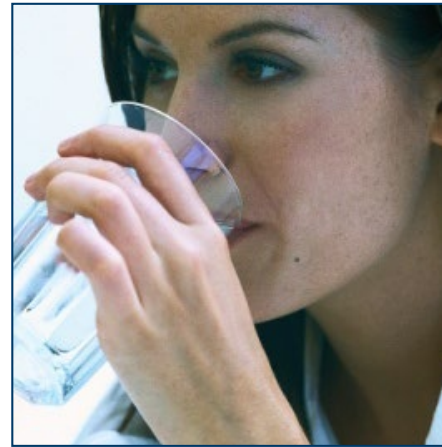
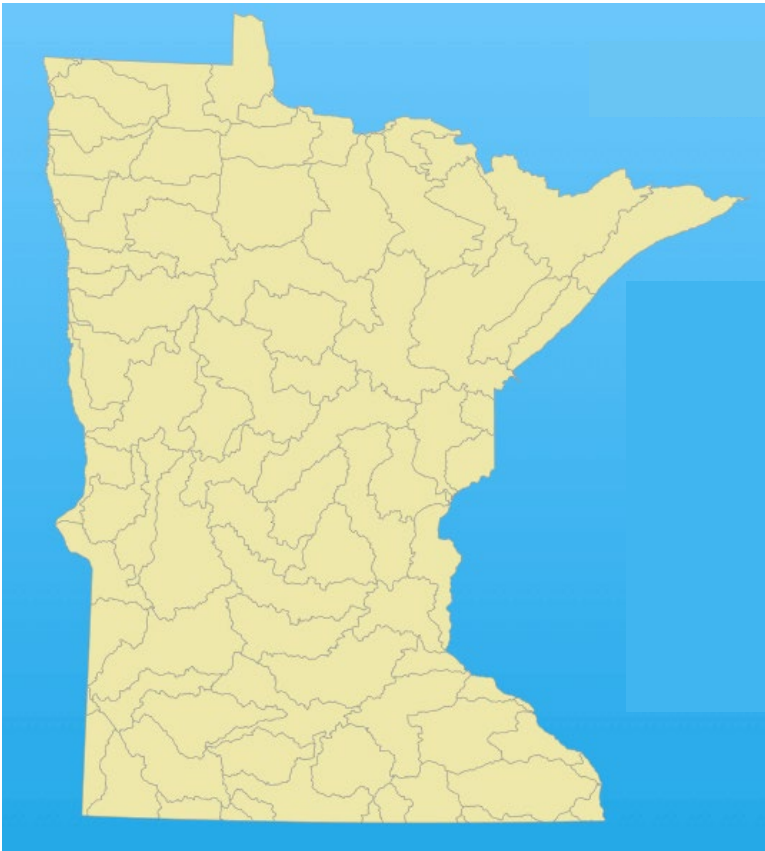
What **conditions** are protective?

- Numeric or narrative (most are numeric)
- Referred to as “standards” OR criteria (EPA term)
- Protect a specific beneficial use
- Apply statewide or are region-specific
- Evaluate condition in the water body



What is a water quality standard?

Waters have multiple beneficial uses and standards



Class 1 – domestic consumption
Chloride WQS =
250 mg/L

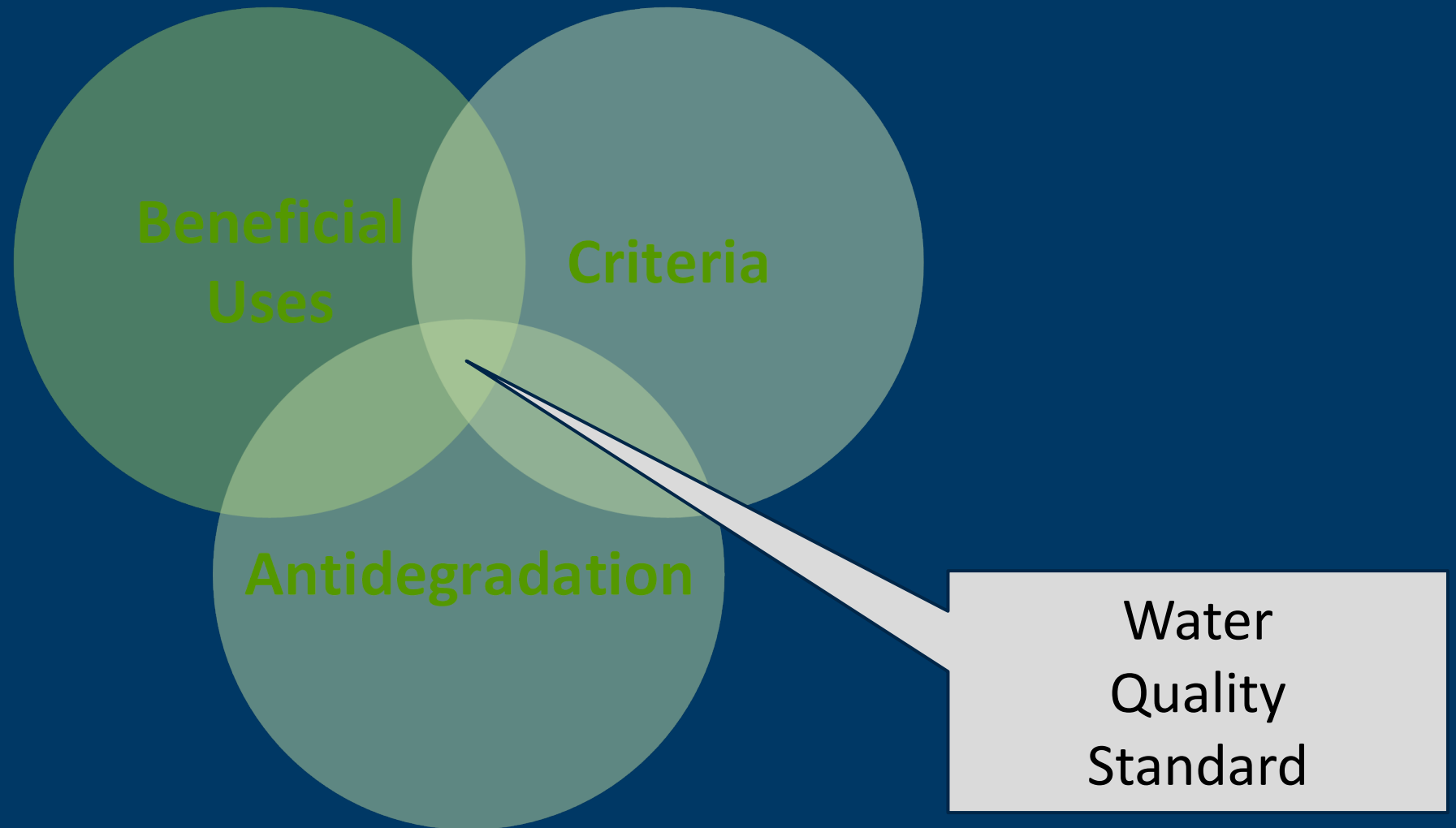


Class 2 – aquatic life
Chloride WQS =
230 mg/L

What is a
water
quality
standard?

How is existing water quality protected?

- Antidegradation rules and policies provide three provisions to:
 - Maintain existing beneficial uses
 - Protect high water quality
 - Maintain outstanding value water bodies



What is a water quality standard?

Standards vs. Limits

Standard

- Ambient water quality goal
- Lake or river water quality target



March 9, 2021

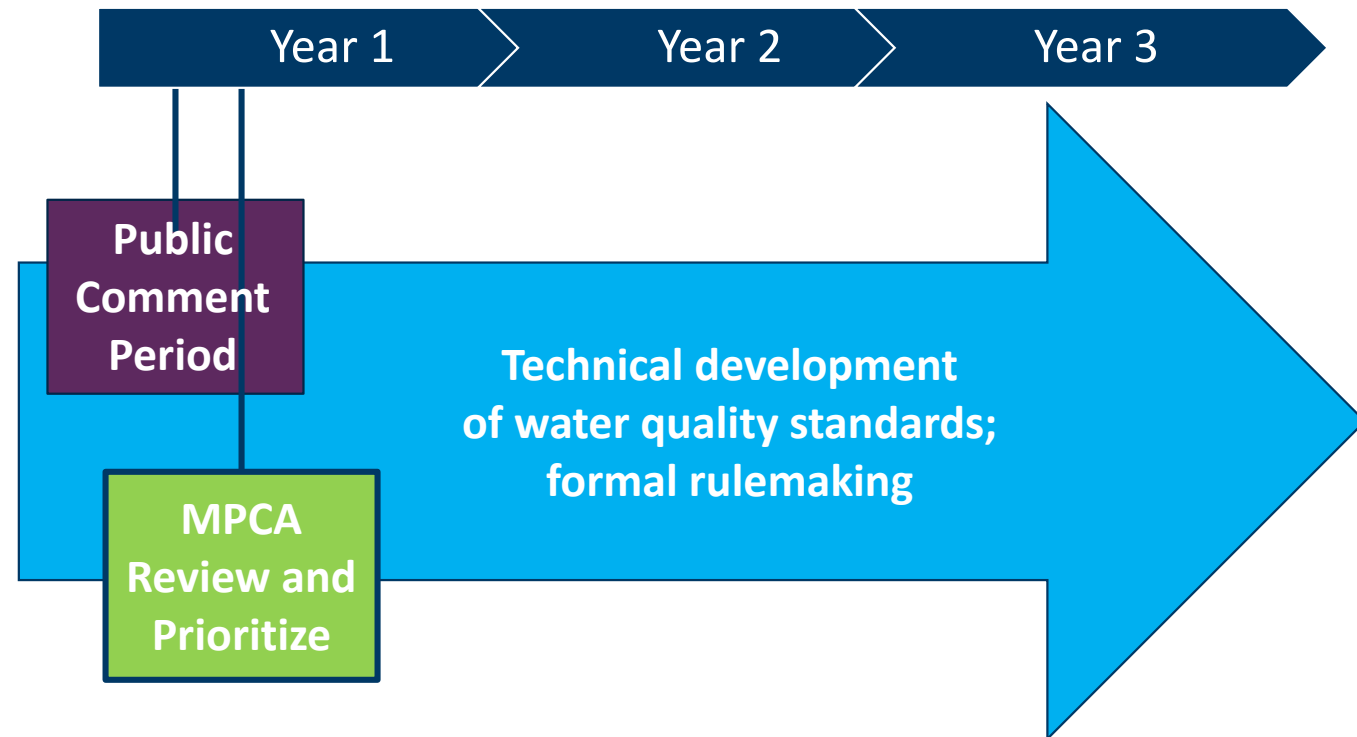
Limit

- Effluent goal
- Legal requirement in a permit



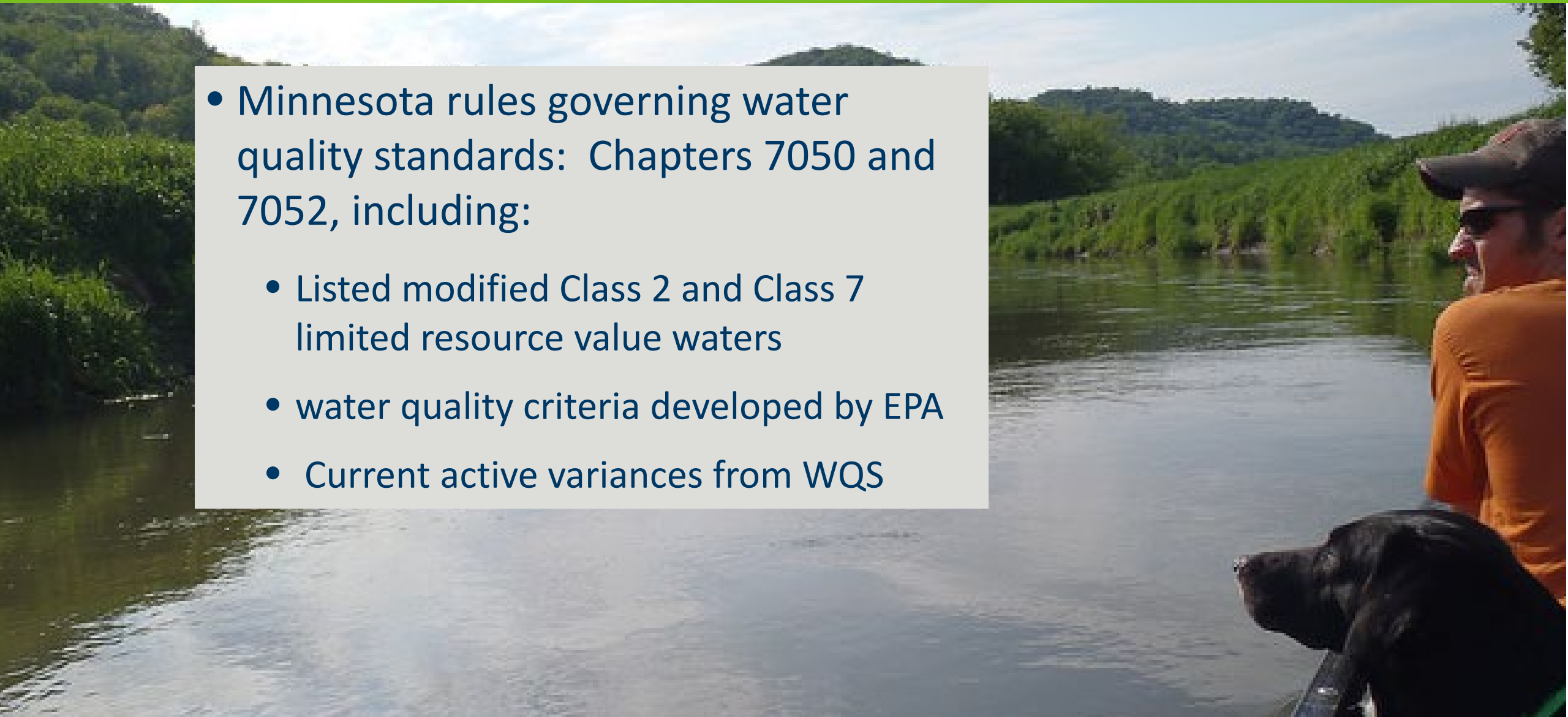
Triennial standards review

- **Public involvement is essential**
- Informs priority setting and a general work plan for development and rulemaking



What is open for review?

- Minnesota rules governing water quality standards: Chapters 7050 and 7052, including:
 - Listed modified Class 2 and Class 7 limited resource value waters
 - water quality criteria developed by EPA
 - Current active variances from WQS



MPCA's proposed WQS work plan = priorities for development with timelines

WQS - active development	WQS – initial evaluation and development	
Group 1: Current and Active	Group 2: In Technical Development	Group 3: Tracking and Evaluation

Group 1: WQS topics that are already being worked on by MPCA

Group 2: WQS topics that are in technical development, but are still one to two years from starting rulemaking

Group 3: WQS topics that are priorities for development

MPCA's proposed WQS work plan for 2021-2023

Water Quality Standards - active development	
Group 1: Current and Active	
<i>1A: Rulemaking</i>	<i>1B: Pre-rulemaking development</i>
<i>Minimum 18 months in this development stage</i>	<i>Two to three years in this development stage</i>
Use Classes 3 –industrial, and 4 -agriculture and wildlife	Use Classes 2A (cold water)/2B (cool and warm water) – aquatic life)
	Use Class 1 - drinking water

MPCA's proposed WQS work plan for 2021-2023

Water Quality Standards – initial evaluation and development	
Group 2: In Technical Development	
<i>2A: Technical Review</i>	<i>2B: Technical Information Outstanding</i>
<i>One to two years in this development stage</i>	<i>May not move into next phase before 2023</i>
Lake Eutrophication WQS - revisions	Sulfate – aquatic life
Nitrate – aquatic life	Chloride – aquatic life
Ammonia – aquatic life	
PFOS in fish tissue – human health	
Aluminum, copper and cadmium – aquatic life	

MPCA's proposed WQS work plan for 2021-2023

Water Quality Standards – initial evaluation and development

Group 3: Tracking and Evaluation

Limited progress expected before 2023

Revisions to Total Suspended Solids (TSS) WQS

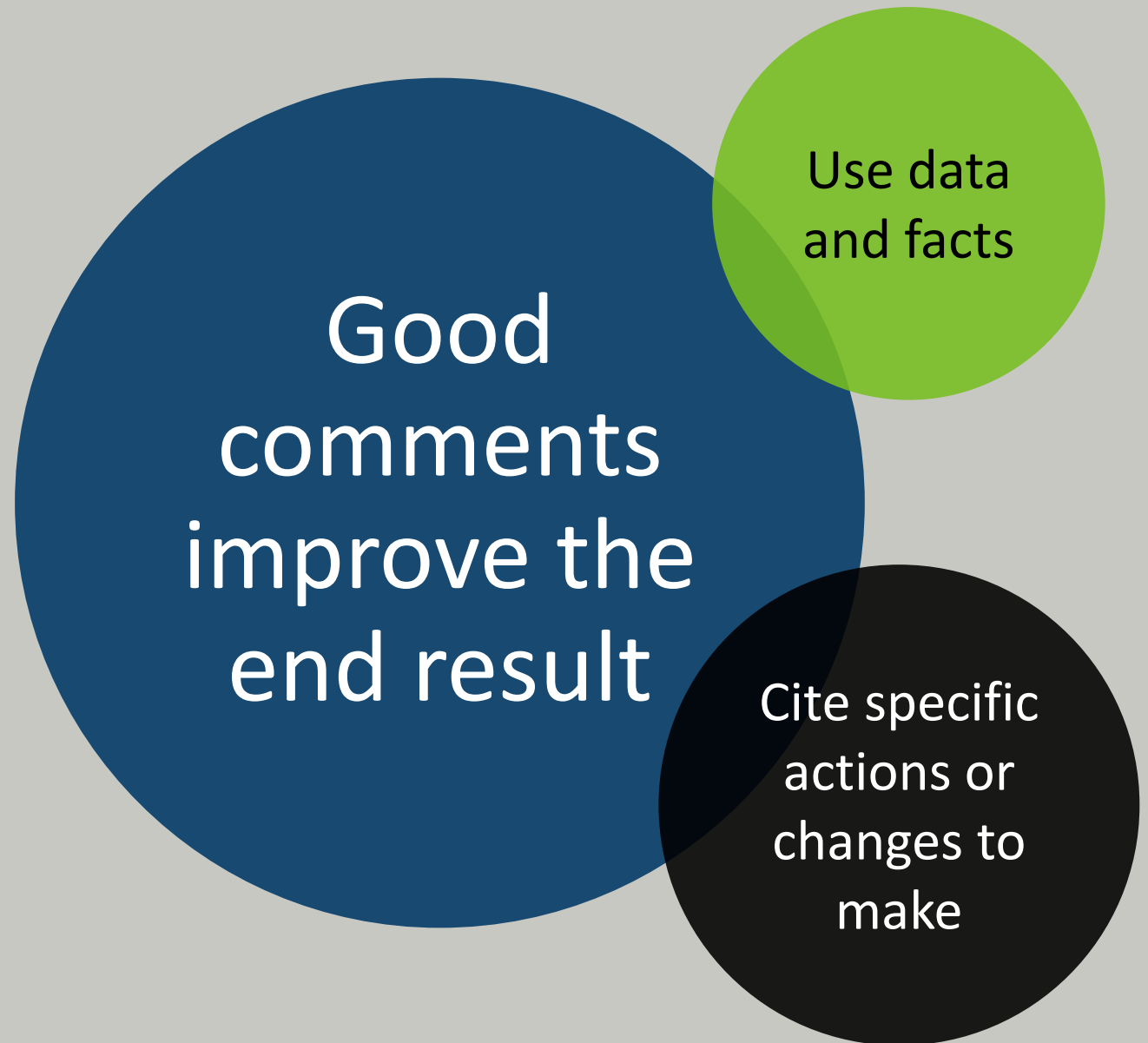
Other potential WQS projects considered

- Bioaccumulative toxins in fish t (revisions):
 - Dioxins/Furans (Dx/Fx)
 - Polychlorinated Biphenyls (P
 - Mercury
- Surface water pathogens (*E. co*
- WQS for clothianidin and imidi
- Review/update designated Out

Effective Public comments:

How to make your voice heard

Opinion-based comments that lack supporting information have less impact



Comments can be very simple:

I agree/disagree with the Proposed Work Plan

The Priority for WQS X should be higher/lower

Issue X is missing from the work plan

Include the reason(s) for your comment!

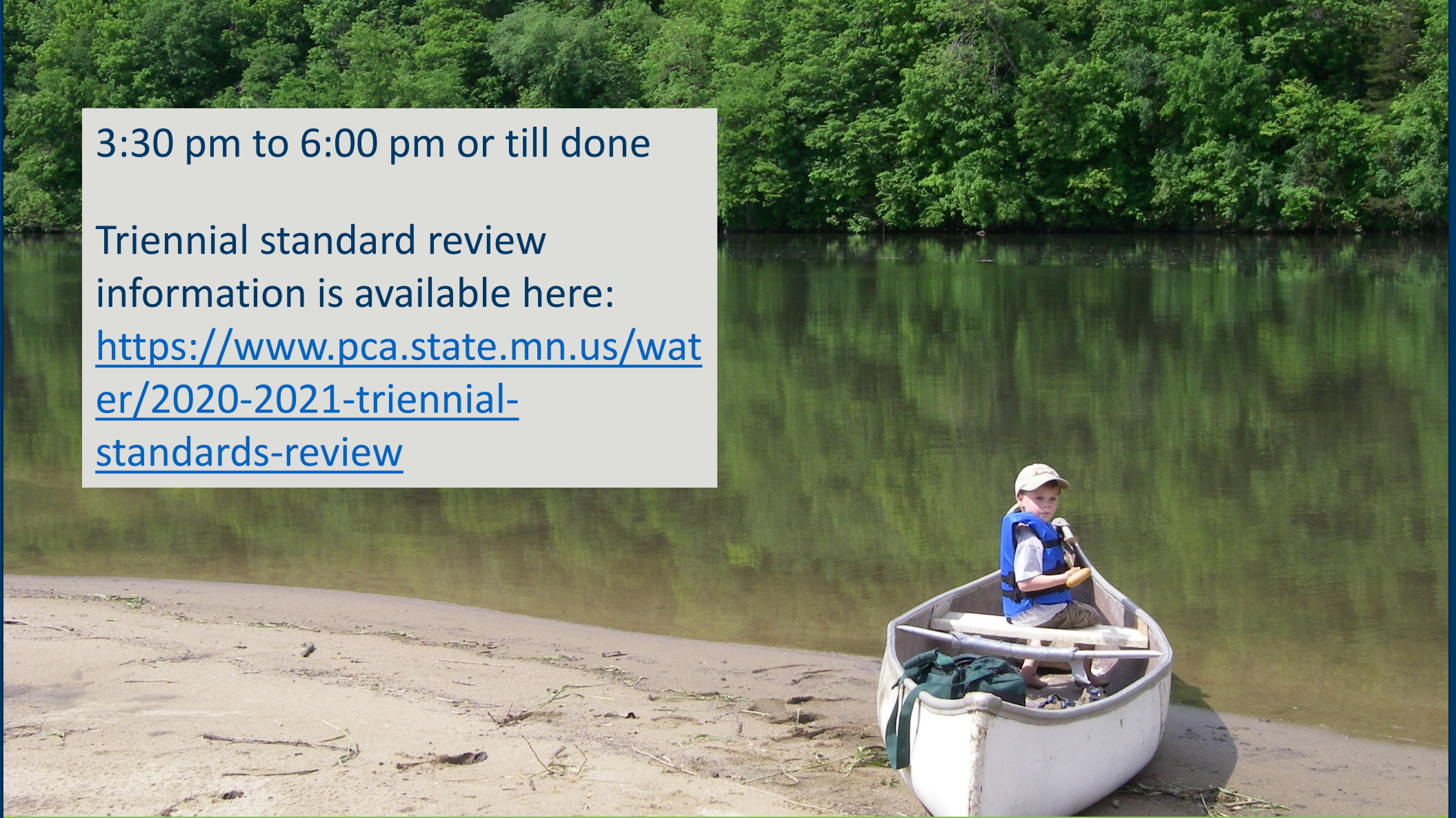
What happens next?

- Public comment period ends April 9, 2021
- MPCA will review the comments & consider changes
- WQS priorities are based on:
 - Degree of need; new data/science; relative impacts/benefit of a WQS; public comments; staff resources (WQS development and implementation)

3:30 pm to 6:00 pm or till done

Triennial standard review
information is available here:

<https://www.pca.state.mn.us/water/2020-2021-triennial-standards-review>



Triennial standards review public meeting