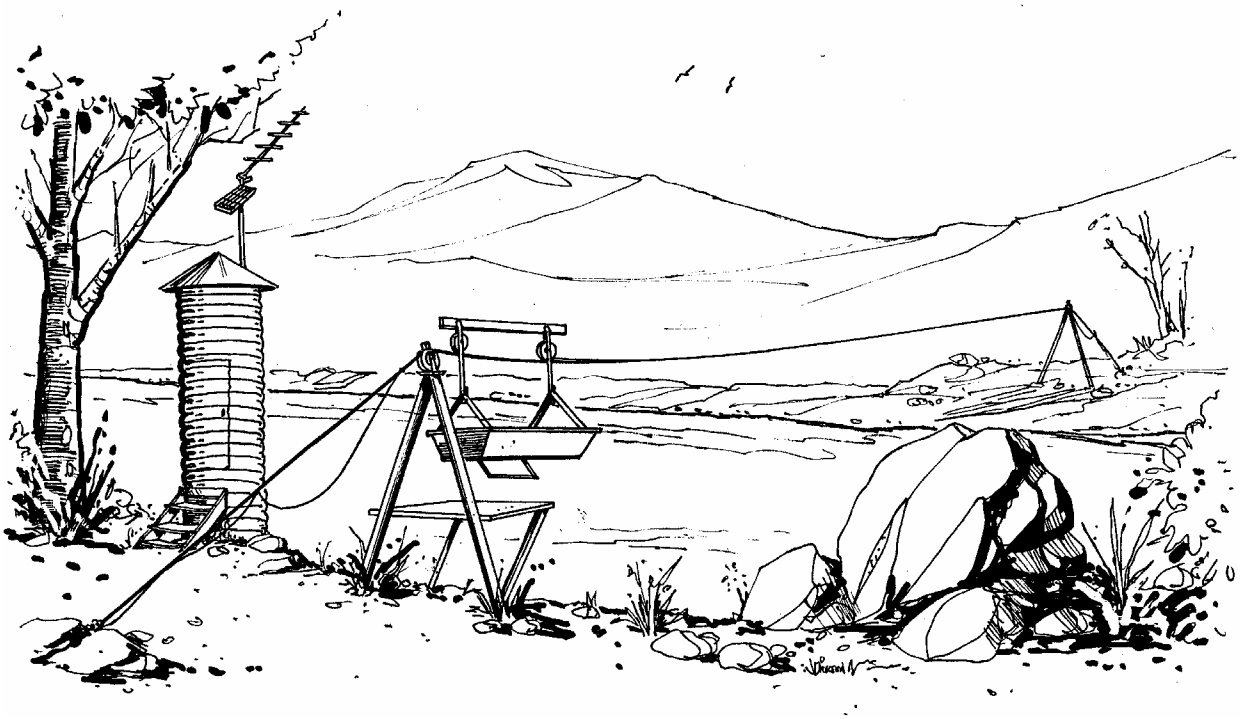
# Water Quality Status and Classification



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# APPENDIX I

## Water Quality Status and Classification Explanation

### Status

Partial support and not supporting are terms used in the 305b report to describe status of water quality as it meets standards and toxic pollutant levels.

Partial support-some interference with designated uses, but use is not precluded. An acute water quality standard is exceeded in two or more samples in past three years, but the mean measured value is less than the chronic standard. The designated uses of the waterbody are present, but it is uncertain that these are at attainable levels, or at least some impact on the uses has been noted. The use exists in the waterbody based on observation, but professional judgment, which may be based on limited data, indicates that the use is not fully supported.

Not Supporting-designated uses measurably impaired because of water pollution. Use may be present but at significantly reduced levels from full support in all or some portion of the waterbody. An acute water quality standard is exceeded in two or more samples in the previous three years and the mean measured value is above the chronic standard. There is some certainty that the waterbody can not be fully used as designated because the survival propagation, production, dispersion community structure, or species diversity of aquatic life is impaired. No evidence exists that the entire waterbody can be used as designated; or known or suspected water quality impacts prevent anything but minimal use of all or a major portion of the waterbody.

Slight is a reference to the status of the water quality as it refers to a narrative explanation of the impacts of the named nonpoint source pollutant. Sediment in this case is a nonpoint pollutant which has no numerical standard to rate against, however, with application of Best Management Practices this pollutant could be remediated and impairment eliminated.

### Classifications

*Recreation*

Class 1 - Primary Contact

These surface waters are suitable or intended to become suitable for recreational activities in or on the water when the ingestion of small quantities of water is likely to occur. Such waters include but are not limited to those used for swimming, rafting, kayaking and water-skiing.

Class 2 - Secondary Contact

These surface waters are suitable or intended to become suitable for recreational uses on or about the water which are not included in the primary contact subcategory, including but not limited to fishing and other streamside or lakeside recreation.

*Agriculture*

These surface waters are suitable or intended to become suitable for irrigation of crops usually grown in Colorado and which are not hazardous as drinking water for livestock.

*Aquatic Life*

These surface waters presently support aquatic life uses as described below, or such uses may reasonably be expected in the future due to the suitability of present conditions, or the waters are intended to become suitable for such uses as a goal:

Class 1 – Cold Water Aquatic Life

These are waters that (1) currently are capable of sustaining a wide variety of cold water biota, including sensitive species, or (2) could sustain such biota but for correctable water quality conditions. Waters shall be considered capable of sustaining such biota where physical habitat, water flows or levels, and water quality conditions result in no substantial impairment of the abundance and diversity of species.

Class 1 - Warm Water Aquatic Life

These are waters that (1) currently are capable of sustaining a wide variety of warm water biota, including sensitive species, or (2) could sustain such biota but for correctable water quality conditions. Waters shall be considered capable of sustaining such biota where physical habitat, water flows or levels, and water quality conditions result in no substantial impairment of the abundance and diversity of species.

Class 2-Cold and Warm Water Aquatic Life

These are waters that are not capable of sustaining a wide variety of cold or warm water biota, including sensitive species, due to physical habitat, water flows or levels, or uncorrectable water quality conditions that result in substantial impairment of the abundance and diversity of species.

*Domestic Water Supply*

These surface waters are suitable or intended to become suitable for potable water supplies. After receiving standard treatment (defined as coagulation, flocculation, sedimentation, filtration, and disinfection with chlorine or its equivalent), these waters will meet Colorado drinking water regulations and any revisions, amendments, or supplements thereto.

*Wetlands*

The provisions of this section do not apply to constructed wetlands.

Compensatory wetlands shall have, as a minimum, the classifications of the segment in which they are located.

Created wetlands shall be considered to be initially unclassified, and shall be subject only to the narrative standards until the Colorado Water Quality Control Commission (Commission) adopts a “wetlands” classification.

Tributary wetlands shall be considered tributaries of the surface water segment to which they are most directly connected and shall be subject to interim classifications as follows: such wetlands shall be considered to have the same classifications, except for drinking water supply classifications, as the segment of which they are a part, unless the “wetlands” classification and appropriate site-specific standards have been adopted to protect the water quality dependent functions of the wetlands.

The Commission may adopt a “wetlands” classification based on the functions of the wetlands in question. Wetland functions that may warrant site-specific protection include ground water recharge or discharge, flood flow alteration, sediment stabilization, sediment or other pollutant retention, nutrient removal or transformation, biological diversity or uniqueness, wildlife diversity or abundance, aquatic life diversity or abundance, and recreation. Because some wetland functions may be mutually exclusive (e.g., wildlife abundance, recreation), the functions to be protected or restored will be determined on a wetland-by-wetland basis, considering natural wetland characteristics and overall benefits to the watershed. The initial adoption of a site specific wetlands classification and related standards to replace the interim classifications and standards described above shall not be considered a downgrading.