MONTREAL, IRON COUNTY

Wastewater Receiving Stream Classification

The City of Montreal discharges treated wastewater directly to the Montreal River, West Fork approximately 1000 feet north (downstream) of State Highway 77. A large dam creating the Gile Reservoir is located on this river just upstream from Highway 77.

The Gile Reservoir is operated by the Lake Superior District Power Company as a storage reservoir for their downstream hydro-electric operations. Under normal operations this reservoir is used to augment stream flow in the West Fork, Montreal River during periods when there would be natural low flow. However, there are other times when the flowage is used to hold back and store water and the flow in the river downstream is less than what would occur naturally. The projected low flow (7°10) for this stream at the Montreal Sewage Treatment Plant is 2.7 cfs.

The West Branch Montreal River is considered Class II trout water from the Highway 77 crossing downstream. This stream segment contains populations of both brook and brown trout.

RECOMMENDATION:

The West Fork, Montreal River shall be classified as a continuous stream with a sub-category of "fish and aquatic life". The achievement of these standards could probably be attained in either of two methods: (1) using a waste assimilation study to set effluent limits based on low flow projections, or (2) negotiating an agreement with the power company to maintain a minimum flow of X cfs at all times (X would be determined by setting an appropriate effluent limit and back calculating to establish necessary flow).

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