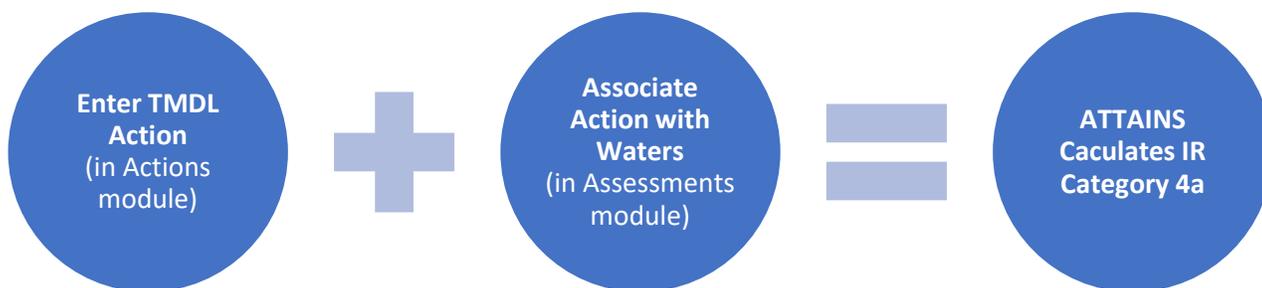


# How to Apply a TMDL Action to Assessments

Version: 9/19/2018

**Question:** My Assessment Unit and Cause Parameter have been Addressed by a TMDL and it has been entered in ATTAINS. However, my Assessment Unit and Parameter combination are still showing up as EPA IR Category 5, when it should be in EPA IR Category 4a. How do I fix this?

**Answer:** Associating a TMDL Action to an Assessment and Parameter combination is a two-step process.



*Figure 1: ATTAINS calculates Integrated Reporting (IR) Categories for Assessments based on the data in the system. Follow these steps to have ATTAINS calculate an Assessment Unit and Parameter combination as IR Category 4a. Step 1: The TMDL Action is entered in the Actions module by either EPA or the State. Step 2: The State associates the action with the appropriate Assessment Units and Parameters in the Associated Actions section of the Assessments module. Step 3: ATTAINS calculates the Assessment Unit and Parameter combinations as IR Category 4a. If this happens between IR cycles, the Assessment Unit and parameter combination is calculated as Category 4a for the next cycle.*

**The first step** is creating the Action in ATTAINS, adding the Parameter and Assessment Unit IDs that are addressed by the TMDL Action, and finalizing the Action. This process is often completed by the EPA Region, but can be completed by the State. TMDLs are often completed and entered between Integrated Reporting Cycles, and the water can be Delisted (moved to EPA IR Category 4a) the next cycle.

**The second step** is to go back into the Assessment / Parameter combination and Associate the Action there. This usually happens as part of the next Integrated Reporting (IR) Cycle. The system can suggest Actions that may apply to the Assessment / Parameter combination, but it does not automatically associate them in case the terminology does not exactly match, or there are multiple potential matches, or in case the state does not agree.

**Example:** In 2018, Assessment Unit ID **AZ15060202-767\_00** had a parameter of **ESCHERICHIA COLI (E. COLI)** that was determined to be a Cause of impairment (see Figures 1 and 2). It was associated with EPA IR Category 5 because no actions were associated with it in the Assessments portion of ATTAINS (see Figure 2). However, the state knew that a TMDL (**Action ID 66242**) had been completed in 2015 that addressed the Assessment Unit and E. Coli cause of impairment (see Figure 3). Therefore, the state knew the water was supposed to calculate as EPA IR Category 4a. Pages 3 and 4 show the steps to take in the Assessment module to associate the Action with the Assessment Unit and Parameter combination so that it calculates correctly as Category 4a.

## BEFORE THE ACTION WAS ASSOCIATED WITH THE ASSESSMENT

For this example, the Action had already been entered in the Actions module. However, it had not yet been associated with the Assessment Unit and Parameter combinations in the Assessments module, so ATTAINS was calculating the water as IR Category 5.

The screenshot shows the 'Assessments' module interface. The navigation bar includes Home, Assessment Units, Assessments, Actions, Reports, Priorities, and Administration. The main title is '2018 IR Assessment - Miller Creek, from Headwaters to GRANITE CREEK (AZ15060202-767\_00)'. A breadcrumb trail shows: General > Uses > Parameters > Sources > Documents > Summary. A warning message states: 'This assessment is incomplete. Hide Details'. A red box highlights the 'EPA IR Category' field, which is set to '5' with a 'Show Definition' link. Other fields include: Assessment Unit (Miller Creek, from Headwaters to GRANITE CREEK (AZ15060202-767\_00)), Water Type (STREAM (7.244 Miles)), Location Description (HUC: 15060202), Use Class (Not Specified), Cycle Last Assessed (2012), Year Last Monitored, State (AZ), Cycle (2018), Agency (State), Organization IR Category (Not Specified), and Comment (Not Specified).

Figure 2: In the Assessments module of ATTAINS, the Assessment Unit is calculated as EPA Category 5.

The screenshot shows the 'Parameters' module interface. A table lists parameters with columns: Parameter Name, Parameter Status, EPA IR Category, and Delisted. The first row is 'ESCHERICHIA COLI (E. COLI)' with status 'Cause', EPA IR Category '5', and 'No' delisted. To the right, a detailed view for 'Cause Parameter - ESCHERICHIA COLI (E. COLI)' is shown. It includes a table for 'Associated Use' (Full Body Contact) and 'Parameter Attainment' (Not meeting criteria). Below this, the 'Impaired Water Information' section is highlighted with a red box, showing 'Associated Actions' as 'No Associated Actions'.

Figure 3: In the Assessments module, the Assessment Unit calculated as EPA IR Category 5 because it did not have any Associated Actions for the Parameter, which was a Cause of impairment.



## Action - 66242

Menu

<b>Action Identifier</b>	66242	<b>Organization</b>	21ARIZ						
<b>Action Name</b>	Granite Creek E. Coli TMDL	<b>Action Status</b>	EPA Final Action						
<b>Action Type</b>	TMDL	<b>Agency Code</b>	State						
<b>Completion Date</b>	2016-05-04	<b>TMDL Date</b>	2016-05-04						
<b>TMDL Other Identifier</b>		<b>Indian Country Indicator</b>	No						
<b>Action Comment</b>	<i>Not Specified</i>	<b>TMDL Documents</b>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Document Name</th> <th>File Name</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Granite Creek E. Coli TMDL 050416.pdf</td> <td>Granite Creek E. Coli TMDL 050416.pdf</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Granite Creek E. Coli TMDL Approval Letter 050416.pdf</td> <td>Granite Creek E. Coli TMDL Approval Letter 050416.pdf</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Document Name	File Name	Granite Creek E. Coli TMDL 050416.pdf	Granite Creek E. Coli TMDL 050416.pdf	Granite Creek E. Coli TMDL Approval Letter 050416.pdf	Granite Creek E. Coli TMDL Approval Letter 050416.pdf
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Pollutants

TMDL Pollutant	Source Type	Assessment Unit	...
<a href="#">ESCHERICHIA COLI (E. COLI)</a>			

Pollutant - ESCHERICHIA COLI (E. COLI)	
<b>Assessment Unit</b>	Granite Creek, headwaters-15060202-060 (AZ15060202-059A_00)
<b>Addressed Parameters</b>	ESCHERICHIA COLI (E. COLI)
<b>Explicit Margin of Safety</b>	<i>Not Specified</i>

66242

[Back](#)
[Next](#)
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Figure 4: In the Actions module of ATTAINS, Action ID 66242 shows that the E. Coli parameter of the relevant Assessment Unit ID was addressed by the TMDL.

## HOW TO ASSOCIATE THE TMDL ACTION WITH THE ASSESSMENT

1. In the Assessments module, locate the record for the Assessment Unit ID.
2. Go to the Parameters tab.
3. Click on the appropriate Parameter in the table on the right. That will open up an additional pane below the main pane.

The screenshot shows the ATTAINS Client interface for a 2018 IR Assessment. The breadcrumb navigation includes: Home, Assessment Units, Assessments, Actions, Reports, Priorities, Administration. The main title is "2018 IR Assessment - Miller Creek, from Headwaters to GRANITE CREEK (AZ15060202-767\_00)". The "Parameters" tab is selected in the navigation bar. Below the navigation bar, the "Assessed Parameters" section contains a table with the following data:

Parameter Group	Parameter	Status	EPA IR Category	Delisted
All Parameter Groups	ESCHERICHIA COLI (E. COLI)	Cause	5	No

Below the table, there are input fields for "Parameter\*" (Select Parameter(s)), "Parameter Status" (Meeting Criteria, Cause, Observed Effect), and "Add" and "Cancel" buttons.

4. Scroll down to the Associated Actions section and click on it to expand the section.

The screenshot shows the "Associated Actions" section, which is currently collapsed. The text "Associated Actions" is highlighted with a red box. Below it, the text "Prior Causes" is visible, indicating the section is partially expanded.

- Leave the Search Filter set to Recommended, and click on the **Search** button to find available actions. (Note: Actions will appear in the Recommended list if the Assessment Unit was included when the Action record was entered in ATTAINS. If the Action you are looking for is not shown in the Recommended Actions, then change the selection to All Actions and click on Search.)

Associated Actions

---

Search Filter  All Actions  Recommended

Press Search to find available actions.

Action ID	Action Name	Action Type
No Associated Actions		

Prior Causes

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- Click in the box next to Action (top arrow) to open a list of Actions that may apply to the Assessment Unit and Parameter combination. Then click the appropriate Action ID (bottom arrow) to select it, and then click the **Add** button to add it to the box on the right and associate it with the Assessment Unit and Parameter combination.

Associated Actions

---

Search Filter  All Actions  Recommended

Action

Prior Causes

---

Associated Actions

---

Search Filter  All Actions  Recommended

Action

Prior Causes

---

Associated Actions

---

Search Filter  All Actions  Recommended

Action

Action ID	Action Name	Action Type
66242	Granite Creek E. Coll TMDL	TMDL <input type="button" value="🗑️"/>

Prior Causes

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7. Click the Save button at the top of the Cause Parameter pane, or click Next at the bottom of the window to save the association.

Cause Parameter - ESCHERICHIA COLI (E. COLI) Save Cancel

Parameter:  Parameter Status:  Meeting Criteria  Cause  Observed Effect

Associated Uses

Associated Use\*:

Attainment\*:

Trend:

Include Season Information

Use	Use Attainment	Parameter Attainment	Trend	Season
Full Body Contact	Not Supporting	Not meeting criteria		

8. Now, if you look at the Parameters tab, it shows E. Coli as EPA IR Category 4a.

Home Assessment Units Assessments Actions Reports Priorities Administration

## 2018 IR Assessment - Miller Creek, from Headwaters to GRANITE CREEK (AZ15060202-767\_00) Menu

General Uses **Parameters** Sources Documents Summary

Assessed Parameters

Parameter Group:

Parameter\*:

Parameter Status:  Meeting Criteria  Cause  Observed Effect

Parameter	Status	EPA IR Category	Delisted
ESCHERICHIA COLI (E. COLI)	Cause	4A	No