



NATIONAL WATER QUALITY MONITORING COUNCIL

Working Together for Clean Water



Ensuring Data & Information Comparability

What is the Value of “Comparability”?

- Saves money
- Reduces duplication
- Adds “value” to data, information & presentation
- Permits regional assessment/planning
- Responds to “credible data laws” & GPRA

What are the Barriers/Challenges to Improved Comparability?

- Some agencies still do not want to share data!!
- Different laws => different agencies => different mandates => different methods
- Costs money to document comparability
- Lack of distinction between monitoring for routine management information & measurements for addressing emerging concerns
- Lack of comparability in monitoring guidance
- Few political incentives to share data
- Lack of comparability training and education

What Do You Need to Move Forward?

- Templates of data elements
- Common vernacular
- Identification of where you need comparability and where you don't
- Incentives to make data comparable
- Specify up front levels of comparability, access, & ownership in contracts
- Addition of field methods to NEMI
- Tools to combine data from multiple sources

Success Stories/Lessons Learned

- Importance of metadata recognized
- Recognition of how far we've come:
 - Monitoring framework
 - NEMI
 - Data Elements
 - STORET/NWIS agreement
 - Data available on internet
- Many comparability studies available for synthesis
 - Maryland/Montgomery County study
 - Environment Canada Regional study
- National Monitoring conferences are timely & supportive of comparability efforts

Future Role for NWQMC?

- Place guidance examples, templates, comparability boiler plate for contracts, minimum data elements, and success stories on NWQMC web page
- Training program for sharing data
- Institute a comparability awards program
- Formal resolutions in support of data comparability efforts
- Expert system development for all cogs of monitoring framework

Future Role for NWQMC (cont.)?

- Reduce perception of duplication in monitoring
- Develop “Stamp of Approval” for comparability of data
- Use major national programs (NAWQA, EMAP, WSA) as focal point for comparability development
- Coordinate development of reporting template & indices
- Support sample exchange programs

***Be An Active Member of the Water
Monitoring Community and Support
Comparability in All That You Do!***