

# WQDE Guidance Document

- Biological Water Quality Data Elements presented to ACWI in September.
- Guidance document rewritten and will be forwarded to ACWI when reviews completed.
- Conference call to be held with ACWI to answer questions on data elements and guidance document.
- Vote to approve both to be taken by E-mail

# Revised WQDE Guidance Document

- Original document coordinated by Chuck Job (EPA), drafted by Cadmus, and distributed for Methods Board review in August, 2003.
- Comments indicated the need to better incorporate the modular concept and integration of toxicological and population/community WQDE under development.
- Document drafted in August 2004 and received initial suggestions from WQDE core group and from Workgroup at Board meeting in Loveland, CO October 2004.
- Incorporated comments and distributed the revised document for comment, November 2004.

# Questions for Reviewers

- Document readability: Is the WQDE guidance clear and understandable?
- Case Studies: Are the case examples presented useful and accurate?
- Implementation of WQDE: Comments regarding the discussion of recent technological advancements to help implement WQDE more easily.

# Comments Received

- Total of 12 sets of comments received as of December 1, 2004.
- Organizations include: EPA-NERL, EPA-OST, EPA-OSW, EPA-OWOW, Oregon Dept Fish & Wildlife, Texas CEQ, IDEXX, Utah Div Water Quality, Axys, Gradient, and Washington Dept of Ecology
- Comments generally favorable

# Document Content

- “Guide establishes an excellent plan for documenting water quality data”
- “Comparability approach presented is consistent with the spirit of EPA’s Data Quality Act”
- “Revised Guide is greatly improved by adding both toxicological and population/community WQDE to the original Guide.”
- Should make very clear at the outset that all of the WQDE listed may not be applicable to a given project or program, but complete those WQDE that apply.
- Should make clear that the recommendations presented are not intended to be regulation or mandatory requirements.
- Document should be cross-checked with EPA’s Quality Systems Guidance.

# Document Readability

- Most commented that the document was well-written and understandable.
- Some reported that some knowledge of water quality data was necessary to understand the document.
- Several reported that the background sections (Chapter 1) were very helpful in making the case for WQDE and the recommendations made.
- One reviewer noted that “there was a nice balance between selling the concept and presenting the technical content.”
- One reviewer noted the need for better editorial review.

# Case Studies

- Very little feedback received; one reviewer suggested including to the extent possible the progress towards incorporating WQDE guidelines in all case study examples.
- Look at Pacific Northwest Aquatic Monitoring Partnership (PNAMP) and Northwest Environmental Data-Network (NED) as other examples.

# WQDE Implementation Discussion

- No comments received on this topic.

# Several Comments on Specific WQDE for Chemical and Microbiological Analytes

- Detection limit elements need refinement
- Suggested new element: Location or source where data can be obtained.
- Suggested new element: Accreditation to ISO 17025 standards.
- Use the term bias rather than accuracy.
- Definitions for detection/quantitation level and duplicate versus replicate precision need refinement.

# Comments on Other WQDE

- % minimum significant difference WQDE should be added for toxicological data (already included in element 7.11.2).
- Toxicological WQDE list (Appendix B) should repeat in full those WQDE that are the same as those in the Chem/Micro list, so the reader does not have to flip back and forth between lists.
- Methods Board needs to develop WQDE for physical habitat data (already under development).

# Next Steps

- Most comments were editorial in nature – these will be incorporated in a revised draft by December 31, using redline-strikeout feature. Consideration will be given to technical comments.
- Suggestions/comments on existing, ACWI- approved WQDE will not be addressed in this Guidance Document. These will be retained for discussion in a future revision of the WQDE list.
- The revised Draft will be reviewed by core WQDE group within 2 weeks (Council and Board co-Chairs, and Chair of the WQDE workgroup, and a few other people).
- Any additional suggestions will be incorporated pending the group's approval.
- Final WQDE Guidance Document will be distributed to ACWI by end of January.