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2014 NATIONAL TRAINING WORKSHOP ON CWA 303(d) LISTING & TMDLS

**IMPLEMENTING THE PRIORITIZATION GOAL OF THE
NEW LONG-TERM VISION**

National Conservation Training Center
Shepherdstown, West Virginia
May 6-8, 2014

FINAL PROJECT REPORT & TRAINING WORKSHOP PROCEEDINGS

**This project is made possible through a cooperative agreement with the
United States Environmental Protection Agency**

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Environmental Law Institute (ELI) gratefully acknowledges the Watershed Branch of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Wetlands, Oceans & Watersheds, for its support of this important project, undertaken pursuant to Cooperative Agreement No. X7-83460001-0. Special thanks go to Branch Chief John Goodin and our excellent Program Officer, Menchu Martinez.

ELI is particularly indebted to the members of our dedicated Planning Advisory Group, whose time, insights, and enthusiasm made this training workshop possible: Jeff Berckes, Helen Bresler, Jennifer DiMaio, Helene Drago, Julie Espy, Amy Feingold, Traci Iott, Martha Clark Mettler, Tom Stiles, David Werbach, and Steven Winnett. Thank you!

The organizers also wish to thank everyone else who presented material at the workshop, or who otherwise volunteered knowledge and time to developing the event: Dwight Atkinson, Chuck Berger, Greg DeAngelo, Alexandra Dunn, Lynda Hall, Susan Holdsworth, Doug Norton, Andy Painter, Shera Reems, and Greg Schaner.

ELI staff contributing to this project are Adam Schempp, Bruce Myers, Judy Amsalem, Patrick Woolsey, and Amy Streitwieser.

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ELI maintains a companion website for this project: our State TMDL Program Resource Center (<http://www.eli.org/freshwater-ocean/state-tmdl-program-resource-center>).

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I. INTRODUCTION

In early May 2014, the Environmental Law Institute (ELI) convened the *2014 National Training Workshop on CWA 303(d) Listing & TMDLs: Implementing the Prioritization Goal of the New Long-Term Vision*. This event, supported through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), brought together Clean Water Act Section 303(d) listing and TMDL officials from 45 states, Puerto Rico, the District of Columbia, the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, and the Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians. The assembled participants focused on approaches for implementing the Prioritization Goal of the Long-Term Vision for Assessment, Restoration, and Protection under the Clean Water Act Section 303(d) Program, from how and what to prioritize to who to work with and how. Participants had an opportunity to share information about their current and projected efforts as well as their perspectives regarding prioritization and the Vision generally with colleagues from other jurisdictions, representatives of EPA headquarters and the ten EPA regions, a representative of the Association of Clean Water Administrators (ACWA), and a representative of the New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission (NEIWPCC).

As with similar events of national scope convened in June 2008, May 2009, April 2011, April 2012, and April 2013, ELI and EPA intended for this training workshop to provide a forum for program officials to learn about current best practices in listing, TMDL development, and TMDL implementation; to interact with one another; and to share their programmatic ideas (and concerns). To ensure a planning process that would culminate in a workshop attuned to the needs of program implementers at the state, tribal, and territorial level, ELI assembled a Planning Advisory Group (PAG) consisting primarily of state officials. For approximately five months, this group worked through a highly participatory process to develop, shape, and refine: the event objectives and agenda, the structure and focus of workshop sessions, and the course materials.

State, tribal, and territorial participants (including members of the PAG) were typically individuals with substantial responsibility in their respective programs, but who were not far removed from day-to-day program operations. Key to this event, like prior ones, was having the right people in the room.

The three-day training workshop, held at a federal facility in a retreat-type setting, was successful by the metrics of sharing useful information, generating new ideas, and building new relationships. Distinct takeaway messages emerged from the gathering; these themes are identified in Part II of this report. The bulk of the report, Part III, contains a detailed, session-by-session summary of event proceedings. Appendices to the report include the event program, a list of participants, a full summary of participant evaluations and comments, and information on ELI's companion website.

ELI continues to build on the momentum and enthusiasm generated by this and the prior years' events through an ELI-administered website for CWA 303(d) programs and through a listserv dedicated to state, tribal, and territorial professionals and designed to increase and enhance interactions among programs.

II. THEMES AND OTHER TAKEAWAYS

From the perspective of ELI staff in attendance, the following are significant themes, points, and observations that emerged over the course of the training workshop (although they do not necessarily reflect complete agreement among participants):

The CWA 303(d) Program has come a long way over the last two years in developing a new implementation framework -- the CWA 303(d) Vision.

- It was made possible through strong leadership on the side of both states and EPA, by people with a desire to do things better.
- It was crafted to be thoughtful, artful, and reflect many people's input.

The new CWA 303(d) Vision:

- Is about focusing on what is most important to meet the overall state water quality goals, as states, tribes, territories, and EPA implement CWA 303(d) Program responsibilities with existing resources.
- Fosters opportunities for collaboration and integration with other Clean Water Act programs; with other programs within the agency; with other agencies; and between EPA and the states, tribes, and territories, all of which can help to strategically focus resources.
- Provides flexibility but also requires accountability.
- Allows for consideration and use of other tools (as appropriate) in addition to TMDLs, including alternatives to TMDLs and protection plans, to achieve applicable water quality standards, with TMDL development expected to continue to be a primary feature of the program.
- Is likely to play out differently in each state, tribal, and territorial program.
- Will require the engagement of a wide variety of entities to succeed.

Most states, and many tribes and territories, are not starting from scratch on prioritization; some have set priorities and many others are in the process of doing so.

There are many ways to prioritize waters and watersheds for restoration and protection, and the decision is that of the state, tribe, or territory, with EPA involvement.

- EPA has a variety of roles in helping states, tribes, and territories implement program responsibilities consistent with the Vision. EPA headquarters facilitates public engagement, fosters the development of tools, provides resources, issues guidance, and supports policy and programmatic management. EPA regional offices provide resources, promote collaborative approaches, and aid alignment with other CWA programs.
- While there are not specific expectations for the numbers of waters, geographical areas, or other means by which states might express their priorities, EPA believes that collaboration with citizens, with EPA, and with other programs and agencies is critical in setting state priorities for the CWA 303d program.
- A successful relationship between the EPA regional office and states, tribes, and territories for purposes of prioritization depends on open lines of communication.

EPA headquarters has developed various tools for prioritizing waters and watersheds; WATERSCAPE and Recovery Potential Screening are two of them.

- The tools are meant to be widely applicable by being flexible, with the user being able to select the values and/or stressors of most importance.
- The tools are meant to be continually improving – the EPA teams working on them are developing new data layers and functions in response to user input.

Recent changes to the CWA 303(d) Program measures better reflect progress in implementing the CWA 303(d) Program responsibilities consistent with the new Vision.

- The new core CWA 303(d) measure (WQ-27) tracks progress in developing TMDL and alternative restoration plans for priority impaired waters, and in some cases protection plans for priority healthy waters.
- Pilots of the WQ-27 measure have been run in 13 states, with the process proving largely successful.
- The new CWA 303(d) complementary measure (WQ-28) provides an opportunity for programs to receive credit for work that they are doing outside of priority areas as well as for activities leading up to completion of TMDLs or other alternative plans in priority areas.

The widespread rethinking of focus among CWA programs offers an opportunity to plan together for everyone's benefit, but it requires an awareness of what other programs are doing.

For the Vision to be successfully implemented, an understanding of the Vision must be moved up the staffing chain (including through management) and out to other CWA programs, other agencies, stakeholders, and the public

- Stakeholder and public familiarity with (and interest in) the priority issue(s) or water(s) is key to their engagement.
- To be effective, the means, terminology, and content of engagement must be designed with the target audience in mind.
- The prioritization tools developed by EPA headquarters are meant to support public engagement, producing visual aids for explaining the problems and justifying the priorities.
- Communication with data providers, such as those from monitoring programs, is important for informed prioritization.
- TMDLs could be more effectively implemented with earlier communication and better understanding between TMDL developers and permit writers or between TMDL developers and nonpoint source control implementers.

More partnerships between states and tribes are needed in order to meet water quality standards, and implementation of the Vision may serve as a catalyst.

III. WORKSHOP PROCEEDINGS: SESSION-BY-SESSION DISCUSSION

Following is an overview and detailed discussion of the training workshop, presented session by session. The full training workshop agenda appears in Appendix 1 to this report.

Welcome, Introductions, and Training Workshop Overview

ELI staff opened the workshop by welcoming the diverse range of participants, which consisted of TMDL and listing staff representing 45 states (with over one-third of them sending a second participant at their own expense), Puerto Rico, the District of Columbia, the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, the Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians, along with staff from EPA Headquarters and all 10 EPA Regions, a representative of the New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission (NEIWPCC), and a representative of the Association of Clean Water Administrators (ACWA). A complete list of workshop participants, their affiliations, and contact information is provided in Appendix 2 of this report.

Alexandra Dunn, Executive Director and General Counsel for the Environmental Council of States (ECOS), gave opening remarks. Ms. Dunn began by praising the theme of prioritization because it affects not only the CWA 303(d) Program, but also everything people do in life. She added that priority-setting is a programmatic challenge, and human inability to prioritize carries over into work and can explain the difficulty in conveying the importance of one's work.

Ms. Dunn reflected on the development of the Vision, which, as she put it, was far from the "sausage making" that sometimes occurs in Washington, DC, in which case it is better not to know what is in it. She noted that the crafting of the Vision was thoughtful, artful, and reflected many people's input. She explained that it was made possible through strong leadership on the side of both EPA and the states, that the process showed true persistence and tenacity for almost two years, and that the people leading this process had a desire to do things better. The Vision, she added, is an evergreen document—it will be tweaked if improvements are found in the course of implementation. As a result, she noted, the Vision is a great reflection of collaborative governance.

Ms. Dunn then suggested that four components of implementation are critical to making the Vision a reality. First, she said that continuing the positive relationship between the states and EPA is imperative, adding that despite varying state opinions about EPA, all states are in a position to work with EPA to make the Vision work for them. Second, Ms. Dunn noted that stakeholder engagement will be needed to generate support of the Vision. She recommended keeping messages simple, using phrases people understand,

and keeping the message relevant to the audience. She challenged all participants to work with their commissioners to focus on waters for the health of the community as the season for water recreation dawns. Third, Ms. Dunn emphasized the opportunities available now, particularly with 36 governors up for election this year. She observed that some governors are doing a lot of work to improve water quality, and the election of new governors offers the opportunity to put others in office who will do so as well. Fourth and finally, Ms. Dunn said that for the Vision to succeed, those present must remember how important their work is and how much bigger it is than the details of specific TMDLs. The Vision, she added, provides the opportunity to talk about health, economic development, prosperity, and jobs, and she urged the participants to do so.

Next, Ms. Dunn offered her thoughts on how to confront some of the most prominent problems that many states are facing. Regarding reduced staff, time, and funding, she suggested that if you cannot do more with less, then do less with less but make sure that what is done is better and more effective. She added that prioritization can help with this, as it can be a means of engaging partners and stakeholders and leveraging collective resources. Ms. Dunn also challenged participants to get the ear of people at a higher level within their agencies, specifically by giving those people the chance to invest in something that they can claim as an environmental victory. She noted that fully utilizing agency media staff can help with this effort. She also referenced the challenge of the long time horizon for TMDLs, since restoration can be slow, but emphasized the need to highlight signs of progress and to tell the many good stories that there are.

Ms. Dunn closed her comments with two observations. First, she noted that the concept of having a vision goes back to the earliest peoples, and just as the Romans had a vision of aqueducts for water delivery, this program is fortunate to have its own vision. Then she urged those present, who are all leaders, to seek to turn more of their staff members into leaders. She added that to lead, one must have followers, but those present should strive to produce more leaders within NGOs, academic groups, and stakeholders to help. Ms. Dunn said that she sees the Vision as a way to get excited and reenergized and hopes that those present feel the same. She added that, compared to other agency programs dealing with more intractable issues, the CWA 303(d) Program has one of the better stories to tell, and Ms. Dunn encouraged those present to tell that story, and to be successful and proud.

Session 1: Status of the Ten-Year Vision for the CWA 303(d) Program

This session featured two presentations. The intended outcome of the first session was:

- Participants will learn about the Vision as the new framework for implementing the CWA 303(d) Program.

(1) **Tom Stiles, Kansas:** The What, Why and When of the Vision, and Progress since the Last Workshop

Mr. Stiles began the session by declaring that finalization of the new Vision statement foremost among the successes of 2013, and adding that the completion of this initial phase has laid the groundwork for what is to come.

Mr. Stiles recalled that in prior iterations of this workshop, the pace requirement for TMDL development had been characterized as a big challenge, and that many participants had called for its replacement. He explained that the new Vision replaces pace, not making it entirely disappear, but subsuming it within the new prioritization framework. He added that the new measure goes beyond a simple tally of the number of TMDLs, instead describing goals and tracking progress. He observed that this development provides many state programs the greater flexibility that they had sought, suggesting that the new measure is a big step forward.

Mr. Stiles noted that while some states have responded to the new Vision with reluctance, many others already have begun to implement it, taking control of the prioritization process and forging a new path. He asserted that the Vision has ushered in a new era of cooperation between states and EPA regions, and that dialogues conducted during the workshop would help to extend that cooperation. He also explained that the Vision has fostered other opportunities for collaboration, attracting the attention of the monitoring and permitting branches. He encouraged all participants to share what they learn and experience at this workshop with their colleagues, management, other programs, and other agencies, to build bridges and to strengthen the community.

Mr. Stiles then outlined five upcoming challenges.

First, he explained, is the task of conveying to upper management the new efforts around the Vision. Mr. Stiles reported that he had asked attendees of the mid-year ACWA meeting about the Vision, and found that while most had heard of it, few were ready to commit to its implementation. He concluded that this underscores the need to communicate to management the value of the Vision, and to show them the efforts that are underway.

The second challenge that Mr. Stiles noted was personnel transitions. With so many agencies facing layoffs, turnover, and retirements of experienced staff, he deemed communication with current staff and training of new staff imperative to ensuring that implementation of the Vision continues smoothly.

Mr. Stiles identified commitment to the process as the third challenge. He said that some participants feel that they already implement many aspects of the Vision, but he called upon them to examine how effective their programs have been in carrying out the Clean Water Act and whether parts of the Vision could improve their programs.

The fourth challenge outlined by Mr. Stiles was branding. He noted that TMDLs are hard to market and describe, acknowledging that they can seem obscure and anachronistic. He stressed the need to improve communications, packaging, and presentation around TMDL programs.

Finally, Mr. Stiles explained the challenge of moving from implementation of the Vision to meeting water quality standards. He called upon states to create a plan to get results.

Mr. Stiles continued by declaring now a good time to strategically redefine CWA 303(d) focus areas. He noted that prioritization allows states, tribes, and territories the opportunity to commit more resources to specific areas and over a longer time scale. He added that the Vision allows them to think about protection, not just restoration. Mr. Stiles also conveyed the need for those already implementing aspects of the Vision to share their actions, experiences, and results with others. He also asked participants to examine their “toolbox” of options and capabilities, noting that while TMDLs work as a tool in some cases, in other instances alternatives are necessary. He urged states and regions to talk about appropriate tools.

In conclusion, Mr. Stiles observed that the Vision has “raised the ante” and called upon everyone to make strategic decisions and start implementing the Vision.

(2) **John Goodin, EPA HQ:** The Ripple Effect of the Vision at the Federal Level

Mr. Goodin noted that the Vision was released in December of 2013 as a set of guiding principles for EPA and the states, tribes, and territories. He said that the Vision provides flexibility but also requires accountability. He observed that it allows states, tribes, and territories to “redefine the universe” of their programmatic focus, but it also requires that they demonstrate results in a shorter time frame.

Mr. Goodin explained that TMDL programs are now “getting more traction” with other Clean Water Act programs, prompting many promising opportunities for integration with nonpoint source, monitoring, and permitting programs. He added that there also is a need to work with other programs within the agency, including RCRA, Superfund, and pesticides programs, as well as those in other agencies, such as USDA. He reported that EPA already has done some productive work with RCRA and Superfund and is trying to align monitoring objectives with NRCS in order to find opportunities for greater collaboration. He called upon all participants to help break down the “stovepipes” of specialization and promote greater integration.

One way that EPA may be able to aid in the prioritization process is by providing states, tribes, and territories tools useful for the task. For example, he added, later sessions will include presentations as well as personal demonstrations of the Recovery Potential Screening tool, which 17 states already are using, and the WATERSCAPE tool, a new innovation built in ArcGIS.

Since the last ELI training workshop, the GAO report on the TMDL Program had been released. Mr. Goodin observed that the report's primary recommendation for EPA was to issue new regulations for TMDL development, and while that will not happen, he said that EPA is open to developing further guidance on program implementation, as recommended by the report. He added that EPA already is working to respond to the report's recommendations on grant conditions, especially with regard to CWA Section 106. In addition, Mr. Goodin said that he agreed with the report's call for better data, and while budgets are a limiting factor, he suggested that the economic conditions make prioritization even more important.

Mr. Goodin emphasized that EPA wants to incorporate tribes more into the TMDL Program, noting that a new rule regarding "Treatment in the Same Manner as a State" will be released by the end of the summer.

In conclusion, Mr. Goodin stated that the Vision has launched and changes are underway. He acknowledged that these changes would give rise to challenges, and that there will be corrections and learning opportunities along the way. He urged participants to use the workshop as an opportunity to ask tough questions and to get a head start on the prioritization process.

Key Points Raised:

- The Vision provides flexibility but also requires accountability.
- The Vision replaces pace, not by making it disappear, but by subsuming it within the prioritization framework.
- The Vision has fostered opportunities for collaboration and integration with other Clean Water Act programs, with other programs within the agency, with other agencies, and between EPA and the states, tribes, and territories.
- Successful implementation of the Vision requires discussion with higher levels of management and for those already implementing many aspects of the Vision to share with others their actions, experiences, and results.

Session 2: The Basics of the Prioritization Goal

This session featured two presentations, followed by plenary discussion. Intended outcomes of the second session included:

- Participants will learn about the foundational role of the Prioritization Goal in implementing the Vision.
- Participants will learn about examples of processes and factors used to establish priorities consistent with the Vision.
- Participants will learn about the role of TMDL development in setting CWA 303(d) Program priorities.

Adam Schempp of ELI began the session with a quick review of the "Menu of Approaches" for implementing the Vision, a product of the 2013 workshop. He explained that the Menu identifies and explains many of the ways that states already are

implementing the six goals of the Vision. Mr. Schempp focused his comments on the Prioritization Goal section, how states already are prioritizing waters and watersheds. He noted that the ways of prioritizing presently range from the Recovery Potential Screening tool, to public input, to economics, among others. He added that some states prioritize pollutants, others impacts, and others sources. Mr. Schempp concluded by saying that there is no one way to prioritize, and that this list is by no means exhaustive.

(1) Traci Iott, Connecticut: The Results of the ACWA Survey on Prioritization

Traci Iott began her presentation by noting that 41 states responded to the Association of Clean Water Administrators' (ACWA) questionnaire on prioritization. She explained that the results indicate that many states already have prioritization processes, whether formal or informal, and that there effectively are three aspects of prioritization: 1) identifying the most important environmental considerations, whether a pollutant, designated use, or source; 2) practical considerations, such as the likelihood of recovery; and 3) the ease of development. She said that the survey results also indicated that half of states prioritize based on a rotating basin schedule, that half of states reach out to EPA regions and headquarters when setting priorities, and that the age of listings does not seem to be driving priorities.

Ms. Iott continued by noting that states recognize that there will be changes. Eighty percent of respondents indicated that they will develop a list of priorities, but that the list will change over time. She added that many states have the means to address any such changes, whether through a formal or informal process.

Ms. Iott also discussed responses regarding protection and non-pollutant stressors. She explained that some states are addressing protection in TMDLs while many respondents indicated that they will work on protection with colleagues. She added that some states have statutory prohibitions against protection, so restoration is the only option. With regard to non-pollutant stressors, most survey respondents said that they would be interested in addressing such stressors if they had the opportunity, and that are open to doing so within or outside of a TMDL, although there were practical questions about how to do a load allocation for a non-pollutant stressor. Ms. Iott noted that respondents identified stream flow and the impact of dams as issues of concern, but stated that without public support they are not likely to get the program time to address them.

Ms. Iott concluded by relaying that two-thirds of respondents were glad to have the focus on prioritization and a longer planning horizon. She also expressed the need to integrate these efforts with other water quality programs and other agencies, dedicate staff and time to priorities, and retain reserve capacity for unforeseen developments.

(2) John Goodin, EPA HQ: EPA Objectives and Expectations for Prioritization

Mr. Goodin began by emphasizing the foundational nature of the Prioritization Goal of the Vision. He explained that the other five goals are intimately connected to this

one, which is why it has been identified as an important focus as the Vision is launched. He noted that the theme of the training workshop is the challenge of flexibility and accountability: the Vision has opened up what states can consider under CWA Section 303(d), but along with flexibility comes accountability.

Mr. Goodin cited three essential factors for successful prioritization:

1. Engage the public. Regardless of the prioritization process ultimately chosen, states, tribes, and territories must determine how to engage citizens and reflect their input to assure strong footing for implementing the Vision.
2. Collaborate with the EPA region. With the resources and efforts of EPA and the states, tribes, and territories, collaboration in priority-setting will lend strength to the process and the final result.
3. Start now. He explained that a breakout session to be held later in the workshop is designed to provide an opportunity for states, tribes, and territories to engage with each other and EPA on their early views regarding priorities. He expressed optimism in achieving the milestone of reporting priorities by the 2016 Integrated Reporting cycle.

Mr. Goodin then provided his answers to commonly received questions. First, should CWA 303(d) priorities be established within the broader context of a state's water quality objectives? He answered yes. He explained that the CWA 303(d) Program is important for coordinating and integrating priorities for action, making it essential that the program understand the broader goals. He added that the prioritization process is an invitation for integration, understanding more about other programs, and more about water protection and restoration.

Second, does EPA have specific expectations for numbers of waters, geographical areas, or other means of setting priorities? Mr. Goodin's short answer was no. But he added that collaboration with citizens and EPA, and with other programs and agencies, should serve as a natural governor of whether states, tribes, and territories have selected the right numbers, areas, and overall priorities. For example, prioritizing a single HUC-14 likely will not be sufficient for a state's citizens; but on the other hand, prioritizing everything likely will not translate into meaningful action.

Third, what happens if a state does not identify specific priorities? Mr. Goodin emphasized that the Vision is not a mandate, and the prioritization process is not a requirement. For purposes of the measures, EPA will apply the entire state as a baseline for tracking progress in addressing impaired waters if a state opts not to identify priorities.

Fourth, what is the specific role of TMDLs in articulating a prioritization approach? Mr. Goodin said that TMDLs will of course remain the predominant method moving forward, but EPA wants to put alternatives and protection on the table, too. He emphasized that it rarely will be all or nothing—we have seen litigation based on the commitment or lack thereof of states or regions to pursue specific TMDLs. He added that alternatives are not a replacement for TMDLs, but rather could represent a first

approach to addressing the impairment with the requirement to do a TMDL staying in place. If water quality standards subsequently are met, then a TMDL need not be developed.

Mr. Goodin concluded his comments by noting that EPA is developing technical tools for the purpose of assisting in the prioritization of waters and watersheds. He acknowledged the value of prioritizing areas with policy importance, meaning for the public, etc., but noted that data also play a significant role in identifying and supporting priorities.

Session 2 Plenary Discussion

A state participant asked whether the Vision is really that different than pace, noting that after arriving at a theme, the next questions are which watersheds, which segments, and how many ... which seems to revert to pace. Mr. Goodin replied that the biggest difference is crediting programs for focusing on issues of concern right now. He added that the question used to be “what are states doing?” – and a simple tally of TMDLs sufficed. Now, the question is “what are states doing that is leading to environmental success?” He noted that the measure allows the counting of something other than the quantity of TMDLs; it now visually shows the public where we are going, how, and what we are focused on moving forward.

A couple of participants from EPA regional offices asked about flexibility in the prioritization process. One of them inquired as to how prioritization will factor into the Integrated Reporting Guidance being developed for 2016, and specifically how much flexibility EPA regions will have to look at interim prioritization for 2018 (assuming not everyone will be ready by 2016). In response, Mr. Goodin said that the Integrated Reporting Guidance will be a vehicle for housing priorities, and he expressed optimism that everyone will be able to accomplish this by 2016. He added that the goal is to release the guidance as soon as possible so as to provide time to discuss it. Another regional participant asked how flexible the process will be to reflect updated priorities. Mr. Goodin responded that he is anticipating that the measures will be able to reflect evolution in priorities, adding that the supplemental metric already allows EPA to credit interim steps leading to TMDL completion.

Yet another EPA regional participant asked if there are any plans for identifying better ways to address tougher pollutants like PCBs and toxics, which may be a priority but difficult to address. Mr. Goodin acknowledged that such pollutants are a challenging issue for the Vision. But, he said, the program measures now focus on putting in place an alternative, a TMDL, or a protection method, which may provide some freedom over focusing exclusively on TMDLs. He added that the plans need to be implemented, but challenging stressors like temperature, mercury, and PCBs can take a long time to address, and what counts is putting a good plan in place now.

A participant explained that her state has a lot of TMDLs, and managing existing TMDLs will be an issue, thus one part of her priorities is to address a subset of TMDLs in need of

updating. Mr. Goodin acknowledged that updating, revising, and withdrawing TMDLs will be part of the job going forward and that it is part of prioritization and the measures. He added that this issue has been discussed but not yet articulated in guidance, and that it will be addressed.

A regional participant commented that it is hard to discern the boundary between TMDL development and implementation, expressing the concern that those in the room are but one piece of the puzzle. Mr. Goodin noted that the CWA 303(d) Program is not only a receiver of information from water quality and permits programs, but also an influencer. He acknowledged the challenge of trying to lend consistency and better coordination among programs, but explained that several things are happening now that will facilitate it. For example, this CWA 303(d) effort is happening simultaneously with a hard look at state nonpoint source management plans and standards and while permit programs are reviewing their objectives. He noted that this widespread rethinking offers an opportunity to plan together to everyone's benefit, but it requires being aware of what is taking place in other programs.

Key Points Raised:

- The Prioritization Goal is a key goal of the Vision; it is intimately connected to the five other Vision goals.
- There are many ways to prioritize waters and watersheds for restoration and protection.
- Many states already have prioritization processes, whether formal or informal.
- EPA does not have specific expectations for numbers, areas, or priorities—collaboration with citizens, with EPA, and with other programs and agencies is critical for success and will be the natural governor.
- The widespread rethinking of focus among water quality programs offers an opportunity to plan together for everyone's benefit, but it requires an awareness of what is occurring in other programs.
- The changes to the program measures coinciding with the Vision offer credit for what prioritization affords.
- With flexibility comes the need for corresponding accountability.

Session 3: CWA 303(d) Program Measures

This session featured one presentation, followed by plenary discussion. Intended outcomes of the second session included:

- Participants will learn about the proposed new program measures and how the CWA 303(d) priorities relate to them.
- Participants will learn what would need to be reported under the new program measures.
- Participants will learn how the proposed new measures will help communicate progress and show accountability in implementing the Vision.
- Participants will discuss and learn how shifts in priorities can be formalized.

Shera Reems, EPA HQ: New CWA 303(d) Program Measures—Going Live in FY 2015!

Ms. Reems began her presentation by noting that the new CWA 303(d) measures cover not only TMDLs but also alternative restoration approaches. She explained that the measures were designed through collaboration between states, and that they have been approved by the Office of Management and Budget, which she identified as a significant accomplishment given the major shift in approach.

Ms. Reems read and explained the core measure (WQ-27): “The extent of priority areas identified by each State that are addressed by EPA-approved TMDLs or alternative restoration approaches for impaired waters that will achieve water quality standards. These areas may also include protection approaches for unimpaired waters to maintain water quality standards.” She said that this measure marks a large shift from “bean counting” to a focus on priority areas, noting that how states, tribes, and territories define priority areas therefore becomes very important. She added that the move to include alternatives to TMDLs as well as protection approaches enhances flexibility.

Ms. Reems also read and explained the new CWA 303(d) complementary measure (WQ-28): “State-wide extent of activities leading to completed TMDLs or alternative restoration approaches for impaired waters, or protection approaches for unimpaired waters.” She emphasized that this measure is an indicator metric, providing an opportunity for programs to receive credit for work that they are doing outside of priority areas. She added that the measure allows the tracking of incremental activities.

Ms. Reems said that EPA is working to automate the measures and that the data necessary for automation already is available. She noted EPA is redesigning the ATTAINS data system to help with this automation. She added that the redesign process may include funding for states, tribes, and territories. Also with regard to budgets, she observed that the yet-to-be-confirmed FY15 budget includes an \$8 million line item, of which \$5 million would be directed toward supporting the measure, including technical and state-level support.

Ms. Reems provided a brief overview of the catchment approach for implementing WQ-27. She explained that NHDPlus catchments will provide the standard geospatial unit to track state assessment decisions, and EPA will use automated procedures to develop a correspondence between state assessment units and NHDPlus catchments. She added that the catchments unit is not intended to change the way that states do business, merely to calculate measures using a common unit and automate the process at a national level.

Ms. Reems then proceeded to outline the 12-step process used in piloting WQ-27. First, EPA identified states to participate in the process, of which there were ultimately thirteen. Second, EPA requested information from these states, such as a

description of the priority areas, available GIS data for those areas, available information on TMDL alternatives, and state interest in testing WQ-28. Third, EPA reviewed this information for data gaps and asked the states for further details, if necessary. Fourth, EPA identified and processed state geospatial data (including CWA 303(d), CWA 305(b), and TMDL data), converting it into catchments. Fifth, EPA conducted quality assurance on the catchment output to identify errors. Sixth, she noted that EPA prepared instructions for calculating the core measures and, when indicated, complementary measures.

The seventh step was to identify catchments that correspond to state-defined priorities and calculate the total area for priority catchments. The eighth step involved identifying priority catchments containing waters with completed TMDLs, alternative plans, or protection plans. For the ninth step, EPA removed catchments for which impairment(s)/pollutant(s) still needed to be addressed by a completed TMDL, alternative plan, or protection plan. Step 10 involved calculating the total area of catchments identified in steps 8 and 9. She explained that the goal of this effort is to determine what percentage of the priority areas have completed the planning process and can be counted under WQ-27. Step 11 requires the states to fill in target numbers, and step 12 is a repetition of steps 8, 9, and 10 for Cycle B.

Ms. Reems said that the primary lesson learned from the pilot was that the process works. She added, however, that there were several suggestions for improvement, including using a consistent unit of measurement (acre or square kilometer) and better handling the inconsistency of state data. She also identified a variety of issues for further discussion, such as the ATTAINS redesign, the process to calculate WQ-28, potential impacts to the rotating basin approach, and EPA support in the calculation of the measures.

Ms. Reems then explained the timing of the transition and the reporting schedule. She noted that computational guidance was to be finalized by June and that EPA and states, tribes, and territories are to develop and finalize FY15 draft targets for WQ-27 in June and July. However, EPA recognizes that the July target date will not be feasible for some programs. She urged participants not to worry and to continue their conversations with their EPA regions. She said that EPA hopes that all programs at least will be able to provide draft numbers for FY16 one year from now.

In conclusion, Ms. Reems said that the new approach is expected to be iterative and dynamic, so that it will improve over time. She urged participants not to be discouraged, to provide frequent status updates, and to use the EPA regions as their allies. She expressed hope that within a few years the new measures will be well established, and will be an important success story in the implementation of the Vision.

Session 3 Plenary Discussion:

A participant began the plenary discussion by asking how EPA would reconcile the differences between ATTAINS and the National TMDL Tracking System (NTTS). Ms. Reems responded that NTTS will be incorporated into the ATTAINS redesign and effectively disappear. The same participant asked when the redesigned ATTAINS database would be ready. Ms. Reems responded that EPA wants a few states to pilot the new system in the FY16 reporting cycle, having set a goal of full implementation by the FY18 reporting cycle. The participant then expressed a desire for this new process to not only be more efficient, but to improve the quality of information being communicated.

A discussion subsequently arose regarding the capture of priority areas in catchments. A regional office participant lamented that the catchment approach did not capture pour points, only those sections that touch a catchment. Ms. Reems said that the data should capture the entire area that was identified as the assessment unit. Another participant explained that his state does not monitor every stream in the assessment unit, so there are other points in the watershed that could be causing a problem but are not captured in the catchment. The regional office participant responded that assessment units need not be used to define priority areas—geographic areas can be used instead—and that these would then be overlaid with catchments. Two other participants asked what to do in instances where geospatial data is very challenging and catchment boundaries may be hard to define, as in low-lying, tidally influenced areas where the direction of flow is not consistent. Ms. Reems responded that EPA will approach these areas on a case-by-case basis and noted that custom polygons can be used instead of catchments to capture these areas.

A participant expressed concern over potential state-to-state comparisons, particularly in light of the variability of scale, noting that a state that identifies a smaller total priority area may appear to be making more progress than a state with a large total priority area, since measurement is based on percentages. Ms. Reems responded that the new system would not be much different from the present situation in that regard – TMDLs range in complexity and geographic scope, and states differ significantly in how many they have developed. She added that the goal is not to compare state efforts, but to show the cumulative progress that is being made at a national scale, and to better communicate this to the public.

Another participant requested that other resource-intensive endeavors, such as plans, modeling, and proper communication with stakeholders, also be considered so that the measure of progress is not based solely on completions, as is the case under the pace system. Ms. Reems responded that the complementary measure will be able to capture information regarding the planning and development stages before completion. She added that this information will be collected under the redesign.

A participant asked whether EPA has considered potential redundancies between the new measures and WQ-SP10, SP11, and SP12. Ms. Reems responded that she is leading a SP10-11 workgroup, which is focusing on integrating implementation activities with the

planning process. She said that once these workgroup discussions are finished, EPA intends to circulate proposed revisions to SP10 and SP11 among a wider audience. She added that the workgroup is moving away from “bean counting” and toward the new measures. Ms. Reems explained that the group decided not to focus SP10 and SP11 on priority areas because it received a lot of pushback from states, which said that they preferred to take a state-wide approach. She also noted that states had called for a tiered approach, which could capture the variety of different implementation activities that are occurring. She concluded by noting that the idea is to change the measures to be better integrated with the planning process, but that these changes probably will not happen for at least a year.

Key Points Raised:

- The new core CWA 303(d) measure (WQ-27) is focused on tracking the completion of plans – TMDLs, alternative restoration plans, or protection plans – using catchments as the unit of measure based on the translation from priorities identified by the states, territories, and tribes.
- The addition of alternatives to TMDLs and protection approaches in the CWA 303(d) measures adds flexibility.
- The new CWA 303(d) complementary measure (WQ-28) provides an opportunity for programs to receive credit for work that they are doing outside of priority areas as well as for planning and development stages before completion of a TMDL.
- States will not have to change their assessment units to match catchments. EPA will translate state assessment units into NHDPlus catchments, which will provide the standard geospatial unit to track state assessment decisions.
- Pilots of WQ-27 have been run in 13 states, with the process proving largely successful.
- In areas where the direction of flow is not consistent, custom polygons can be used instead of catchments.

Session 4: Integration Across Programs and Agencies

This session consisted of five presentations, followed by plenary discussion. Intended outcomes of the fourth session included:

- Participants will learn about and discuss the priorities of other CWA programs that may influence CWA 303(d) priorities.
- Participants will learn about and discuss opportunities to link CWA 303(d) priorities with those of other CWA programs and state, tribal, and territorial agencies.
- Participants will learn about and discuss opportunities to link CWA 303(d) priorities with those of other federal agencies.

(1) **Susan Holdsworth, EPA HQ:** How the State Monitoring Strategies and State Probability Surveys May Influence CWA 303(d) Program Prioritization

Ms. Holdsworth, Chief of the Monitoring Branch, began her presentation by highlighting the value of data when prioritizing waters and watersheds, and hence the value of engaging with colleagues in the monitoring program. She urged participants to ensure that they understand their respective jurisdiction's monitoring strategy and implementation plan. She also called on them to explain their goals and needs to their monitoring staff.

Ms. Holdsworth then outlined various characteristics of a state monitoring strategy, including objectives, design, indicators, field and lab SOPs, data management, analysis and interpretation, reporting, identification of gaps, and feedback processes. Next, she provided an overview of different monitoring design components, including established fixed-site networks (which provide information about trends at individual stations), targeted site selection (examining data in areas of concern or special interest), statistical survey design (in which sites are selected through a randomized approach), and rotating basin designs (which use planning areas and implementation schedules).

Ms. Holdsworth then provided examples of charts, graphs, and maps summarizing monitoring data from various states, including state-scale survey results regarding aquatic life use in South Carolina and a state-scale lakes survey of algal blooms in three major ecoregions of Minnesota.

(2) **Greg Schaner, EPA HQ:** Permitting Priorities and Cross-Program Efficiencies

Mr. Schaner, with the Construction Stormwater Program, began his presentation by explaining that this year the NPDES Program strives to modernize, focus on urban stormwater management, and produce better partnerships with the TMDL Program and Water Quality Standards Program.

Mr. Schaner observed that over the last 15 years, the number of permitted entities has doubled, but EPA and state capacity have not increased. He noted that much of the growth is from pesticide application and vessel discharges. He added that there already is a backlog of permits.

Mr. Schaner described the NPDES Program's vision and overarching strategy as:

1. Targeting permit issuance and oversight to achieve the greatest water quality gains;
2. Modernizing permit applications, notices of intent, data tools, and decision support systems—working to increase the use of electronic monitoring and reporting; and
3. Investing in resources to fill the Agency's knowledge gaps and maximize access to knowledgeable staff—recognizing the importance of training new staff as many experienced senior staff are retiring.

Mr. Schaner said that programs must pursue innovation and new ways of thinking, and cited municipal stormwater systems as an example. He noted that stormwater systems have a significant impact on water quality, and that many of them discharge into impaired waters with TMDLs. He explained that EPA is working on 4 pillars to help strengthen the stormwater program: creation of federal partnerships on green infrastructure, increases in training resources, development of incentives for improvement, and assistance with state permits.

Mr. Schaner then highlighted the work of EPA's TMDL and Permits Workgroup, a collaborative effort between the Office of General Counsel, EPA's TMDL Program, and EPA regions. He explained that the group is producing materials that provide input to TMDL developers on what permit writers need to effectively implement wasteload allocations in permits and that provide solutions and examples to permit writers for developing WQBELs and other permit provisions when TMDLs do not provide clear wasteload allocations. He added that the group seeks to foster improved collaboration between programs to ensure more effective development and implementation of TMDLs and seeks to explore data management options that may improve TMDL developer access to information on permittees and permit writer access to information on TMDLs.

Mr. Schaner concluded by previewing a few collaborations, including a draft of Region 9's Best Practices Memo for TMDL developers and permit writers, EPA headquarters' FAQ document covering issues like compliance schedules, a pilot collaborative TMDL review, and data and mapping tools to help connect TMDLs and permit data.

(3) **Lynda Hall, EPA HQ:** The CWA 319 Program and NRCS as They Pertain to CWA 303(d) Program Prioritization

Ms. Hall, Chief of the Nonpoint Source Control Branch, first spoke about connections between the CWA 303(d) Program and the CWA 319 Program. She explained that the CWA 319 Program also is in a period of change: new CWA 319 guidelines require states to update Nonpoint Source Management Programs and to keep them current on a 5-year schedule. She added that over half of the states presently are updating their programs.

Ms. Hall then detailed the *Key Components of an Effective State NPS Management Program* and compared them to the goals of the new Vision for the CWA 303(d) Program. First, she explained that the expectation that state CWA 319 programs contain explicit short- and long-term goals, objectives, and strategies to restore and protect surface water and ground water links well with the Vision goals of prioritization and assessment, since CWA 319 goals should be well integrated with other programs and progress should be demonstrable. Second, she noted that the expectation that state CWA 319 programs strengthen their working partnerships mirrors the Vision goals of engagement and integration. Third, Ms. Hall observed that the expectation that state CWA 319 programs use a combination of statewide

programs and on-the-ground projects to achieve water quality benefits relates well to the Prioritization Goal and Alternatives Goal of the Vision, as the CWA 319 effort to integrate can influence CWA 303(d) priorities and implementation, and a combination of programs are needed to achieve water quality goals. Fourth, she added that the expectation that state CWA 319 programs describe how resources will be allocated between protection and restoration syncs well with the Protection Goal of the Vision. She acknowledged that there is a bias in favor of restoration, but added that CWA 319 funds may at times be used for protection efforts.

Fifth, Ms. Hall observed that the expectation that state CWA 319 programs identify waters and watersheds impaired by nonpoint source pollution and in need of protection as well as establish a process to prioritize and progressively address them relates well to the new Vision goals of assessment, prioritization, and integration. She then referenced Nonpoint Source Program Component 6 (adaptive management to achieve and maintain water quality standards) and Component 7 (efficient and effective implementation) before explaining the connection between Component 8 (review, evaluation, and revision using measures of success) and the CWA 303(d) Vision. Ms. Hall noted that the expectation that state CWA 319 programs review and evaluate their respective nonpoint source management programs at least every five years using environmental and functional measures of success links to the Assessment Goal of the Vision, particularly in light of the data needed for measurement. She encouraged all participants to look for potential opportunities for cooperation with their colleagues in the CWA 319 Program, and to capitalize on the timeliness of the changes in each program.

Ms. Hall then focused her presentation on the CWA 319 Program's collaboration with USDA to achieve water quality goals, noting that they increasingly have been working together at the state and regional level. She described the National Water Quality Initiative as five percent of Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) funding dedicated to water quality issues in small watersheds recommended by the state water quality agency, often by way of CWA 319 programs. She added that it allows for state agency input into USDA allocation decisions and has advanced the agriculture-water quality partnership in many states. Ms. Hall encouraged participants to meet with USDA counterparts and participate actively in the NRCS decisionmaking process. She called upon everyone to collaborate to reduce nutrient loads, and to consider how they can support NRCS.

(4) Chuck Berger, Louisiana: Integration Across Water Quality Programs in Louisiana

Mr. Berger began his presentation by explaining that Louisiana's CWA 319 Program and TMDL Program were previously in the same agency division, but have been split. He added that despite this development, the two programs still meet regularly to coordinate activities.

Mr. Berger also noted that many successful CWA 319 projects have involved cooperative agreements/partnerships between Louisiana Department of

Environmental Quality (LDEQ) and local governments or nonprofit groups. He identified three examples, all addressing high fecal coliform counts. First, he explained that the Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation and St. Tammany Parish began sub-basin pollution source tracking in the Tchefuncte River and Bogue Falaya River. He added that St. Tammany Parish entered into a cooperative agreement with LDEQ to inspect many of the on-site sewage disposal systems (using CWA 319 funds), hired two supplemental environmental inspectors, and developed educational materials with the Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation. He said that the two rivers now meet water quality standards for primary contact recreation.

Second, Mr. Berger explained that the high fecal coliform count in the Tangipahoa River was thought to be from dairies and on-site residential treatment systems. He said that the Tangipahoa Parish and Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals (LDHH) developed and passed an ordinance requiring inspection of home sewage systems for all new homes and existing homes when sold. The agricultural community and regulatory agencies developed minimum standards and specifications of zero-discharge waste systems on dairies, and NRCS designed and installed approximately 158 of the systems. He added that this river also now meet water quality standards for primary contact recreation.

Third, Mr. Berger added that in the case of the Bayou Plaquemine Brule, USDA implemented BMPs on more than 70,656 acres, LDEQ directed CWA 319 funds to St. Landry and Acadia Soil and Water Conservation Districts to implement BMPs in Cole Gully and Bayou Wikoff, and LDHH inspected more than 3,500 homes and assisted homeowners to install more than 3,300 new individual aerobic treatment units. As with the other two examples, he noted that Bayou Plaquemine Brule now meets water quality standards for primary contact recreation.

Mr. Berger concluded his presentation by mentioning that the new statewide nutrient management strategy includes many federal and state partners. He cited its collaborative, goal-oriented watershed approach and said that it includes public outreach to local watershed groups.

(5) Andy Painter, North Carolina: North Carolina Water Resources and NCDOT

Mr. Painter focused his presentation on collaboration with the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) on water quality issues. He explained that NCDOT is involved in most TMDL projects, providing runoff data and GIS information such as roads and facilities. He added that NCDOT is involved in the internal review of TMDLs, to identify and resolve issues before the public comment period. He also noted that NCDOT is involved in a TMDL alternative (Category 4b) for Little Alamance Creek, which has allowed stakeholders to take greater ownership of the process than would be possible through a TMDL.

Mr. Painter then explained that NCDOT involvement in a TMDL is determined by whether it is a significant contributor of pollutants in the TMDL. He said that the

Division of Water Resources is developing a protocol to help determine when this is the case. He added that the protocol includes steps for interagency communication and data exchange. He reported that his program is working to develop a simple screening tool.

Mr. Painter concluded by mentioning that the Division of Water Resources is working to involve NCDOT in the prioritization process, in order to help guide implementation.

Session 4 Plenary Discussion:

A participant asked Mr. Schaner whether EPA's TMDL and Permits Workgroup includes TMDL modelers from the states, tribes, and territories, and suggested that it should. Mr. Schaner responded by saying that the group is merely in the early stages of a policy-level dialogue and currently composed only of EPA staff, but that it will expand to include such individuals in the long-term. The same participant suggested to Mr. Schaner that states, tribes, and territories have an opportunity to give input in the creation of the draft Best Practices Memo for TMDL developers and permit writers. He also expressed a concern that the involvement of other federal programs would require more layers of review, which could prolong and hamper the TMDL approval process. Mr. Schaner said that the intent is to promote coordination between TMDL reviews while not slowing down the process, improving TMDLs without adding obstacles. In answer to the same comment, a participant from one of EPA's regional offices added that the draft Best Practices Memo is not meant as guidance, merely as a source of ideas to improve the process. She added that while it includes examples of possible areas to consider, they will not be directives.

Another participant from an EPA region noted that there had been little discussion of USFWS or its state equivalents. He suggested that these agencies be considered as partners in protection efforts, and added that they are doing a lot of strategic planning and identifying priority areas. A participant noted that his state requires the creation of a local stakeholder advisory committee, including FWS and NOAA as outside partners. He added that they also have DEQ staff, including permit writers, on their project teams.

Upon being prompted by a participant, Ms. Holdsworth explained that EPA likely would continue to use the probabilistic survey approach, which she said works better than a full census of waters given budget limitations. She added that EPA uses a tiered approach to address a range of questions, and that while the probabilistic survey tool generates a state-level picture, it does not convey information about appropriate loads. She predicted that there will be more discussion of which designs do the most to address effectiveness. She said that water quality improvements can be detected through surveys. She concluded by stating that the agency does not take a "one size fits all" approach.

A participant asked Mr. Schaner about coordination with FEMA. Mr. Schaner said that EPA works with FEMA in a variety of areas, including stormwater management, and encourages them to include it in their criteria.

Key Points Raised:

- Multi-agency efforts can improve the effectiveness of solutions to water quality problems.
- The CWA 319 Program also is in a period of change, providing an opportunity for improved integration with the CWA 303(d) Program.
- Many connections exist between the CWA 303(d) Vision and the Nonpoint Source Program Components.
- Communication with data providers, such as those from monitoring programs, is important for informed prioritization.
- TMDLs could be more effectively implemented with earlier communication and better understanding between TMDL developers and permit writers.

Session 5: Interactions with EPA

This session featured two presentations, followed by plenary discussion. Intended outcomes of the fifth session included:

- Participants will learn about and discuss the roles of EPA and states, tribes, and territories in setting CWA 303(d) priorities.
- Participants will learn about and discuss opportunities for EPA regions and states, tribes, and territories to work together in the context of CWA 303(d) priority-setting.

(1) John Goodin, EPA HQ: The Respective Roles of EPA and States, Tribes, and Territories in CWA 303(d) Prioritization of Waters and Watersheds

Mr. Goodin began the session by outlining the roles of EPA headquarters and regional offices in the Vision. He noted that the role of EPA headquarters is limited but important: to facilitate public engagement, foster the development of tools, provide resources, issue guidance, and support policy and programmatic management. The EPA regional offices, Mr. Goodin explained, are the primary points of EPA interaction with states, tribes, and territories. Like EPA headquarters, he added, regional offices will focus on collaborative approaches and providing resources. He said that the EPA regions also will express their expectations and aid alignment with programs, including identifying funding opportunities through CWA 104(b), 106, and 319 grants.

(2) Julie Espy and Greg DeAngelo, FL; Amy Feingold, EPA R4: State – EPA Region Case Study: The Process and Dynamics of Prioritizing Waters in Florida

Ms. Espy began the joint presentation by highlighting the challenge of monitoring Florida's 4,000 miles of waters, which it approaches with probabilistic monitoring, trend data, data from assessment and CWA 303(d) programs, active monitoring in municipalities and other agencies, and collaboration with other entities. She noted that the state uses a rotational watershed management approach, in which assessment, TMDL development, implementation of TMDLs, and overall watershed restoration

are done on a five-year rotating cycle. She explained that the watershed management cycle begins with a preliminary assessment and creation of a planning list, followed by targeted monitoring to fill in any data gaps, and assessment once all of the data is pulled together. This information, Ms. Espy continued, is used to determine which TMDLs to develop, and a TMDL implementation strategy is subsequently established. She added that the program is looking to tweak monitoring to identify restoration after implementation.

Ms. Espy then described the public engagement in Florida's assessment process. She said that the first point for public engagement each year occurs when the program is developing strategic monitoring plans: the program seeks public input on where to monitor and how to collaborate. The second point for public engagement comes after a draft assessment list is produced, for comments on the content of that list. She added that EPA is engaged just before this point, to determine whether any changes should be made to the criteria or assessment methodologies. Ms. Espy noted that new information is incorporated into the assessment list before it is distributed again, the third opportunity for the public to engage in the process. She said that few changes ever need to be made to the revised list. She concluded by detailing the remainder of the process: the revised list is adopted by secretarial order, the public has a 21-day challenge period, and, after that, updates to the CWA 303(d) list are submitted to EPA.

Mr. DeAngelo presented Florida's approach to prioritization. He explained that last year, with the consent decree near completion, the program used the Recovery Potential Screening tool to help decide where next to focus its efforts. He noted that they chose indicators by reviewing the availability and attainability of data and minimizing overlap, such as land use cover and agriculture. Their first step in prioritizing, he observed, was to remove mercury and fecal coliform impairments from consideration to avoid redundancies with statewide TMDLs. Second, he explained, they ranked the remaining 845 impairments using numeric indicators, and then six staff members each selected 10 to 20 priority waters. Throughout the process, Mr. DeAngelo added, the program collaborated with EPA Region 4 staff, with monthly calls and letters to keep EPA informed and confirm approval of the three-phase process and indicators in use. He also noted that they officially met biweekly (unofficially more often) with other departments, soliciting feedback on restoration priorities.

Mr. DeAngelo then described Florida's public engagement process for purposes of prioritization, which included conducting six workshops around the state to share the list. He explained that the goals of this engagement were to confirm that the right waterbodies had been selected, to educate the public on the program's TMDL plans for the coming years, and to spur people considering implementing alternatives to take action. Mr. DeAngelo observed that the main feedback from the public was not concern about TMDL development, but more surprise and frustration at the length of time needed to develop TMDLs. He said that the concept itself garnered broad support. Mr. DeAngelo concluded his presentation by outlining the program's next

steps, which include maps showing where TMDLs are planned, under development, drafted, approved, and adopted. He noted that the key lessons learned in the process were the value of communication, both internal and with the public, and that using the Recovery Potential Screening tool is a continuous process.

Ms. Feingold presented additional details on how EPA Region 4 has worked with Florida with regard to prioritization. She explained that a variety of indicators can help states walk the line between flexibility and accountability, and demonstrate to the public and the EPA region that issues like nutrients are being considered, even if they are not made top priorities. Ms. Feingold said that the Region 4 office expects continuation of the dialogue that already is taking place through meetings between the region and the states, with program managers, and with state directors, working to communicate the message of the Vision at all levels. She added that Region 4 intends to document commitments and plans, which many states are already making and carrying out. Ms. Feingold concluded her remarks by stressing the importance of keeping open the lines of communication between states and regional offices, and that success cannot be reached without working together.

Session 5 Plenary Discussion:

Several participants suggested that EPA could help support states, tribes, and territories in their monitoring work. Participants noted that in some cases data is too old or too sparse to develop a TMDL or delist a waterbody. One participant lamented the expense of monitoring and the fact that requisite program processes cannot move forward until the data is available to support a decision. Another participant remarked that this need for more data is closely tied to the importance of coordinating with other programs. Yet another participant suggested that the benefits of improved integration are apparent across all TMDL-related programs. She added that when funding is sparse, restrictions on how federal money can be used can result in assigning staff to issues that are not top priorities. She suggested that EPA could help states, tribes, and territories by finding ways to improve their ability to use federal money for the issues that they have prioritized.

Key Points Raised:

- The roles of EPA headquarters in prioritization are to facilitate public engagement, foster the development of tools, provide resources, issue guidance, and support policy and programmatic management.
- The roles of EPA regional offices in prioritization are to provide resources, promote collaborative approaches, and aid alignment with other CWA programs. They are the primary points of EPA interaction with states, tribes, and territories.
- A successful relationship between the EPA regional office and states, tribes, and territories for purposes of prioritization depends on open lines of communication.
- Increased EPA support regarding monitoring could benefit prioritization efforts as well as implementation of the Vision generally.

Session 6: Technical Tools and Assistance

This session featured two presentations on tools available to assist state water quality programs. Intended outcomes of the session included:

- Participants will learn about a national online resource of multiple tools and data to assist in priority setting for waters and watersheds.
- Participants will learn about and discuss tools and technical assistance that EPA has developed to aid the process of prioritizing waters and watersheds for restoration and protection.

(1) Doug Norton, EPA HQ: EPA Support for Watershed Planning and Prioritizing: Data, Tools, and Services

Mr. Norton began his presentation by explaining that Recovery Potential Screening is a method to help states and restoration planners compare restorability across watersheds. He added that it is a science-based, indicator-driven means of scoring and comparing watersheds relative to their ecological condition, exposure to stressors, and social context affecting restoration efforts. He noted that this is one of many tools, and that states, tribes, and territories are free to choose among them, or not choose one at all.

Mr. Norton then briefly explained how the tool works. He said that the user must first select indicators for each of the three metrics (ecological, stressor, and social context). He recommended using three to twelve indicators for each metric. He noted that the indicator scoring then produces a ranked list, a bubble plot, and a map that compares recoverability among the watersheds selected. Mr. Norton added that the newest version of the tool is done almost entirely in Excel, which increases its accessibility. He also noted that his team is developing tools specific to each state.

Mr. Norton reviewed the five main applications of the Recovery Potential Screening tool: 1) helping prioritize impaired waters by showing which are more restorable and might recover more quickly; 2) revealing differences in the level of difficulty in restoring different waters; 3) TMDL implementation and evaluating which TMDLs are good prospects for implementation; 4) Nonpoint Source P303(d) program strategies; and 5) scenario-specific projects.

Mr. Norton then gave examples of how states are using the tool. He explained that five states are using the tool with a two-stage approach to prioritizing for nutrients, noting that in the first stage (the targeting stage), indicators are chosen, the screening is run, and a small set of HUC8 watersheds is identified. He added that in the second stage (the implementing stage), HUC12 watersheds are screened within the HUC8s, and sites are selected for action. Mr. Norton concluded his presentation with several other examples of states using the tool. One notable example, he explained, is Minnesota, where the state program took the tool to stakeholder meetings to select the social indicators in which people were most interested.

(2) Dwight Atkinson, EPA HQ: WATERSCAPE: A GIS-based Framework for Identifying Priority Watersheds

Mr. Atkinson presented on what he called the “latest arrow in the quiver of prioritization aids”: the WATERSCAPE tool. He explained the goal of the tool as simplifying prioritization and facilitating public engagement by providing maps to compare alternative prioritization scenarios. He said that it combines intrinsic, property-based scores and value-added scores. He mentioned that users can choose the parameters that they would like to use and can weight the importance of each. Mr. Atkinson noted that EPA is developing a core set of state-normalized data layers for intrinsic stressors, including designated uses, impaired waters, economic stress, and recovery potential. He added that there currently are 27 data layers, and more are being developed.

Mr. Atkinson then explained in greater detail how the WATERSCAPE tool works. He noted that it is an add-on to ArcGIS that comes at no additional cost to the user beyond the ArcGIS license. He explained that the tool combines two types of “scored” state-normalized HUC12 data on values/stressors of interest. He said that one score is the Relative Intrinsic Score, which is a percentile ranking of the density of each value or stressor of interest in each HUC12 in the state compared to other HUC12s in the state. The other score is the Assigned Weighting Score, which is a value of 0 to 100% assigned to each property by the user to reflect the relative importance of each value or stressor. He added that the user then selects all or some of the HUC12s identified by the tool.

One feature of the tool that Mr. Atkinson described in depth was the layer showing Source Water Protection Areas, particularly useful where prioritizing drinking water is of high importance. He also explained how the tool uses catchment areas to reconcile the different units of measurement, including points, lines, and polygons, used by states, tribes, and territories to classify waters for designated uses and to report impairments. Other data layers Mr. Atkinson discussed included environmental justice, economic stress, and nitrogen and phosphorus yield of agriculture. Mr. Atkinson also provided two supplemental hypothetical examples of advanced WATERSCAPE applications in Ohio and Vermont.

Key Points Raised:

- There are various tools available for prioritizing waters and watersheds; WATERSCAPE and Recovery Potential Screening are two of them.
- The tools are meant to be evergreen, and the EPA teams working on them are updating them with new data layers and functions in response to user input.
- The tools are meant to be widely applicable by being flexible, with the user being able to select the values and/or stressors of most importance.
- The tools are meant to support public engagement, producing visual aids for explaining the problems and justifying the priorities.

Session 7: Public Engagement Introduction

This session featured two presentations. The intended outcome of the session was:

- Participants will learn about and discuss strategies (and an overall framework) for engaging the public and other stakeholders in setting CWA 303(d) priorities, and implementing them.

(1) Traci Iott, Connecticut: The Results of the ACWA Survey on Engagement

Ms. Iott began the session by reviewing the responses to ACWA's questionnaire on the Engagement Goal of the Clean Water Act 303(d) Vision. She noted that 35 states had submitted responses as of the workshop. She explained that the questionnaire included many questions covering varying aspects of engagement and implementing the Vision goal, but that she would be highlighting six issues.

She first noted that of the many different groups for which engagement by CWA 303(d) programs may be relevant, the responding states deemed others within the state environmental agency the most important, followed closely by watershed groups, EPA, and dischargers. Second, she reported that over half of the responding states do not have a formal process for conducting public outreach and that the most used public outreach tools are websites, followed by meetings, direct outreach, and publications. She added that respondents tended to agree that meetings and direct contact are the most effective means of engagement.

Third, Ms. Iott explained that the questionnaire responses revealed that most states conduct outreach at multiple points throughout the TMDL process, from before development to post-development phases, and not merely through public notice processes. Fourth, she reported that most of the responding states felt that the public is interested in impaired waters, but that the interest is tied to a connection to the particular resource.

Fifth, Ms. Iott said that respondents deemed staff resources to be the greatest factor in limiting public engagement, closely followed by a lack of public interest. She added that respondents also labeled as significant hurdles domination of the conversation by certain specialty groups and individuals, competition with other matters, and the inability of the public to understand technical messages. Sixth, Ms. Iott reported that when asked about the potential impact of assistance from EPA on engagement, 22% of respondents said that it would help, 33% said that it would hinder, and 44% said that it would do both. She added that the questionnaire responses suggested that opinions regarding EPA assistance depended on the situation, such as whether the public found federal input to provide assurances rather than to be unwelcomed, whether the assistance was through financial and technical support rather than through mandates, and whether the assistance was "behind the scenes."

Ms. Iott then reviewed several recommendations that could be drawn from the questionnaire results. She highlighted the importance of using talking points and the

value of visual tools to improve communication. She added that the questionnaire results showed strong support for rebranding the program and for using more direct language, citing “water cleanup plans” as one example. In conclusion, Ms. Iott said that because the Clean Water Act has a strong voluntary component, public participation is critical, and as a result engagement efforts and program flexibility are key to success.

(2) Jeff Berckes, Iowa: “I’m from the Government, and I’m Here to Help...”

Mr. Berckes began his presentation by urging participants to consider their role as “science communicators.” He likened the different groups with which the CWA 303(d) Program should communicate to the orbital rings of the solar system. For purposes of the analogy, he labeled as the sun the Clean Water Act, including water quality standards, monitoring, CWA 303(d) listing, TMDLs, permits, and CWA 319. Within those confines, Mr. Berckes identified communication between TMDL and 303(d) listing as the most immediate, innermost level, followed closely by the “bridge” role that those two play between water quality standards and monitoring on one side and permits and CWA 319 on the other.

Mr. Berckes then likened state partners, such as fisheries, wildlife, lakes restoration, forestry, and agriculture programs, to the first ring of orbit. He emphasized the need to work with them on issues that influence water quality that can be addressed through the authorities of these other entities. Along similar lines, Mr. Berckes likened federal partners, such as EPA, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the U.S. Forest Service, to the second orbital ring of engagement.

Mr. Berckes labeled stakeholders, such as environmental interests, agricultural interests, industrial interests, and watershed groups, as the third level of engagement. The furthest out, and potentially hardest to reach, he said, is the general public. He highlighted the communication challenges posed by that the lack of familiarity among much of the public with core scientific concepts of water. As an example, he showed a short video demonstrating that many members of the public are not familiar with the meaning of the term “watershed.”

Mr. Berckes cautioned participants that they should not assume that maps or data speak for themselves, and called upon them to spell out their conclusions in plain language for a non-technical audience. In preparation for the sessions to follow that morning, Mr. Berckes urged participants to consider how they might improve communication with the public about their respective programs, what they do, why and how.

Key Points Raised:

- There are a wide variety of entities that CWA 303(d) programs should “engage” to improve the results of their programmatic efforts.

- Lack of familiarity with and interest in the issue(s) or water(s) at hand present hurdles for engagement with many entities, and the size of those hurdles can vary.
- For public engagement to be effective, the means, terminology, and content of engagement must be targeted to its audience(s).

Sessions 8 & 9: Water Words That Work

These two sessions featured a two-part presentation by Eric Eckl of Water Words That Work. Intended outcomes of the eighth and ninth sessions included:

- Participants will learn to spot the signs of “preaching to the choir” and recognize when a message will miss its audience.
- Participants will learn how to translate professional conservation writing into messages that are useful for the public.

Mr. Eckl began his presentation by highlighting how few water professionals there are in the United States relative to the entire population. He explained that this reality makes understanding the intended audience and not “preaching to the choir” very important for communication. Mr. Eckl proceeded to test the participants’ knowledge of “the general public,” specifically what drives action and involvement. He noted that the drivers are what make for successful communication, and that focusing on other considerations has led many communication efforts astray. He cited three common wrong conclusions that many professionals jump to when it comes to communication, and then he provided several examples of bad communication, commonly focused on the use of overly technical terminology given the audience. Mr. Eckl observed that even if the audience cares about water, which they overwhelmingly do, you still need to speak their language, which may not include words like “watershed” and “TMDL.” He explained that using these words alienates much of the audience.

Mr. Eckl highlighted demographic patterns that matter for purposes of public engagement and what to keep in mind when developing a communication approach. He stressed the need to define the target audience and tailor the message to that audience. With this in mind, he divided the room into workgroups and assigned an exercise that made them look at outreach materials through the eyes of various fictional characters.

Mr. Eckl went on to detail his recommended method for presenting information in communications, and the important steps within each. He also explained that behavior sought from communications falls within one of three categories and should be tailored to the specified audience. Mr. Eckl then requested each workgroup to prepare a message based on the outreach material they had received. Subsequently, he explained what to look for in pictures to better capture the audience and convey the intended message. He used a series of photo comparisons to demonstrate the points and then asked each workgroup to sketch a picture demonstrating each point. Mr. Eckl concluded his presentation by explaining how to select the right words and providing a list of words that “work.” He again used a series of examples to demonstrate his points and asked each

group to rewrite the outreach material they were given, with the fictional characters from the first assignment in mind.

Session 10: Breakouts – Practical Implementation

This two-park breakout session consisted of small group discussions. Intended outcomes of the tenth session included:

- Participants will learn about the current thinking of state, tribal, territorial and EPA staff in their respective EPA regions regarding prioritization.
- Participants will identify challenges to putting in place a prioritization framework.
- Participants will identify and discuss solutions to those challenges and assistance that they may need.

This session consisted of ten breakout groups, one per EPA region. Each breakout group included state as well as tribal or territorial participants from that region in addition to EPA regional and headquarters staff. The primary purpose of this session was to provide participants an opportunity to learn and discuss with EPA regional staff, EPA headquarters staff, and staff from neighboring states, tribes, and territories intentions, expectations, challenges, and opportunities with regard to implementing the Prioritization Goal and the Vision generally. Recognizing the unique circumstances across jurisdictions and EPA regions, the content of the discussions was guided by a series of discussion questions. Prior to the session, participants were charged with incorporating all that had been covered in the training workshop to that point into identifying what each of them may do with the information and where their programs may be headed.

Session 11: Next Steps: Approaches and Needs

This session featured one presentation, followed by plenary discussion. Intended outcomes of the eleventh session included:

- Participants will learn the variety of approaches to accomplishing the Prioritization Goal being considered by states, tribes, and territories.
- Participants will identify and discuss potential solutions to challenges they face in implementing the Prioritization Goal, including policy and resource needs.
- Participants will learn and discuss strategies for improving public engagement regarding the CWA 303(d) Program, including prioritizing waters and watersheds.

Menchu Martinez, EPA HQ: Breakout Summary: Paths, Hurdles, and Assistance Ahead

Ms. Martinez began Thursday morning's first session by presenting a summary of the information participants had reported back from their breakout discussions. She relayed that many states, tribes, and territories are not starting from scratch, adding that progress on priority setting ranges from those who have set priorities to those

who have recently begun thinking about them, and many others in between. She also noted that many of the participants expressed excitement over the prospect of the Vision providing flexibility in program implementation as well as the opportunity to address long-term problems, non-pollutant pollution, and protection of healthy waters. Ms. Martinez reported that some participants expressed concern about identifying priorities by 2016, but she saw this as a healthy result of programs thinking long-term and taking prioritization seriously.

Ms. Martinez then provided an overview of the approaches to prioritization being implemented or considered. She noted that many participants were prioritizing waters by specific factors, such as nutrients, public health, toxics, stakeholder interest, designated use, length of time on the list, recovery potential, drinking water, perennial streams, economic value, or where to obtain the biggest bang for the buck. She added that some participants had used the Recovery Potential Screening tool to prioritize waters. Ms. Martinez emphasized input from tribal participants, noting the expressed priorities of some of them, such as cold, clean water; salmon; eagle habitat; and mercury reduction. She went on to explain that several participants indicated that they would rely on stakeholders to set priorities, and a few others would use their rotating basin approach, prioritizing waters within watersheds based upon uses such as drinking water and recreation.

Ms. Martinez went on to review the challenges of implementing the Vision that participants raised in the breakout discussions. She noted that the main challenge reported was conveying the message of the Vision within one's own agency, closely followed by the challenge of integrating efforts with other CWA programs, particularly since participants "cannot control the other programs." She also referenced participant concern over integration with other statutory programs, such as RCRA and CERCLA. Other challenges included how soon the 2016 target will arrive, the lack of resources available for meaningful stakeholder engagement, the lack of groups to help with implementation, and striking the balance of identifying challenging yet realistic priority commitments.

Ms. Martinez concluded her summary of information from the breakout sessions with a list of clarifications sought by participants. She first noted the question of whether the new program measure tracks planning in priority areas or environmental results. Other inquiries she relayed included: how revisions of old TMDLs count in the new measure; what qualifies for purposes of the measure as a TMDL alternative; what EPA's expectations are regarding minimum priorities and interim targets leading up to 2022 and what happens if they are not met; how much engagement of the public is expected for the prioritization process; where priorities and the prioritization process should be documented; how tribes will get appropriate focus when states set priorities; how delisting is given credit; whether and how newly listed waters could be added to priority watersheds; and what happens after 2022. Ms. Martinez explained that some of these issues will be clarified in the Integrated Reporting Guidance.

Session 11 Plenary Discussion:

John Goodin, of EPA headquarters, began the plenary discussion by addressing various clarification requests noted in Ms. Martinez's presentation. He said that EPA will defer action on what will happen after 2022 until 2020. Regarding interim targets under the new measure, he suggested that EPA will be able to share some expectations, adding that the Agency recognizes that next year most states will be using only estimates and less-quantitative ways of expressing their yearly targets, which EPA will accept. Regarding which alternatives are acceptable, Mr. Goodin explained that enough must be known about the alternative to demonstrate that it is designed to meet water quality standards and that, with some level of confidence, it will deliver sufficient improvements to meet those standards. He added that he hopes that the program is leading the way to use a catchment approach for the new measure, and that along with it will come the ability to redefine and characterize SP10, 11, and 12.

A participant asked what priorities the regions had expressed in the breakout sessions. Ms. Martinez and Mr. Schempp explained that the responses varied, with some regions focusing on types of waterbodies or specific waterbodies, while others emphasized particular pollutants—like nutrients. Ms. Martinez reported that several regions said that their priority is making sure that the states' prioritization reflects the extent of impairment in the watershed and that states do not identify priorities that are out of sync with the length of the list or extent of impairment.

Several participants inquired about EPA's expectations for engagement. Mr. Goodin explained that EPA's expectations regarding engagement simply will be that which is required as part of the Integrated Reporting process, but he encouraged participants to take advantage of existing opportunities to talk with the public about the state priorities under the Vision. A few participants questioned the value of attempting to engage the public at large, distinguishing these efforts from engaging interested stakeholders. Another participant questioned if there would be flexibility for states to choose when goals and measures are accomplished within the target. Her primary concern was engaging the public now if the program is going to be rebranded and prioritizations are going to change in the near future. Mr. Goodin stressed that the important milestone for 2014 is for each jurisdiction to have an overall engagement strategy, and that branding and the relative success of strategies will be evaluated after 2014.

The discussion turned to the role of tribes in implementing the Vision. One participant stated that the opportunity to take part in the CWA 303(d) Program has been a large step in the right direction, and that the National Tribal Water Council recognizes this and wants to help facilitate the program moving forward, reaching out to tribes and conducting trainings. One concern she raised was the difficulty of addressing mercury impairments and elevating them as a priority, despite the fact that mercury impairments are a widespread problem. She urged EPA to focus on mercury and help advance efforts to address the problem beyond the existing TMDLs. Another participant agreed that mercury is an important concern for her tribe, where a fish consumption advisory raises

the concern that eagles will not be able to nest on tribal land, which has cultural significance.

Participants also discussed the role of tribes and how to integrate their work with that of state programs. One participant said that such collaboration has been difficult in the past because standards and permitting cannot be applied to tribal lands. He asked what states can do to help tribes “get in the game.” Several participants representing tribes responded, noting that many tribes have CWA 106 and 319 programs with the capacity to contribute to partnerships with states. One participant noted as examples of partnership the gathering of data and implementation of a TMDL by her tribe. All participants agreed that more, and more effective, partnerships between states and tribes are needed. One participant suggested that regional offices help facilitate these partnerships and make sure that everyone is heard and included in cooperative projects and studies. Mr. Goodin suggested addressing this collaboration in the context of the efforts to implement the Vision, but also work it into EPA’s “Treatment in the Same Manner as a State” rulemaking.

Participants were interested in learning more about what will receive credit under the new measures, specifically with regard to delisting. Several participants discussed the complexity of delisting, since waters coming off of the CWA 303(d) list because of permitting or a technicality are different from waters being delisted because they meet designated uses. Mr. Goodin said that having waters addressed and recovered is the ultimate goal, adding that while revisiting waters that may be incorrectly listed as impaired also is a worthy goal, simply cleaning up the list should not be the main priority of implementing the Vision.

One participant asked whether TMDLs should be developed for waters being addressed through CERCLA actions that may not ultimately meet water quality standards. Eric Monschein of EPA headquarters responded that when the Superfund site is one of several sources of impairment, there is benefit in doing a TMDL as an organizational framework to parse out the responsibilities of different groups and active sources in the watershed. He added that in cases where the site is the sole source of impairment, and the record of decision does not explicitly address water quality standards, there may be occasion for a more in-depth conversation with Superfund to see if there is an opportunity to ensure that water quality standards are addressed.

One participant observed that pace still must be maintained, since states have a legal responsibility to develop TMDLs for those waters that have been listed, and alternatives do not take waters off the CWA 303(d) list. He asked if EPA has considered how long an impairment can be on a state’s CWA 303(d) list. Mr. Goodin replied that the bottom line on timing is that alternatives can be attractive where they may result in waterbodies being cleaned up faster, at a lower cost, or with greater public support. He added that it is important to make a good case for why an alternative is being pursued.

Key Points Raised:

- Most states, and many tribes and territories, are not starting from scratch on prioritization; some have set priorities and many others are in the process of doing so.
- States are using and considering many different approaches to prioritization.
- Common perceived challenges to implementing the Vision include disseminating the message of the Vision within one's own agency and integrating efforts with other CWA programs and other statutory programs.
- An alternative must be designed to meet water quality standards and, with some level of confidence, deliver sufficient improvements to meet those standards. Impaired waters for which alternatives are pursued remain on the CWA 303(d) list, since they still require a TMDL until water quality standards are achieved.
- It is important to make a good case for why an alternative is being selected.
- More partnerships between states and tribes are needed in order to meet water quality standards, and implementation of the Vision may serve as a catalyst.
- Meeting water quality standards is the ultimate goal; revisiting waters that may be incorrectly listed as impaired is a worthy goal; simply cleaning up the CWA 303(d) list should not be the goal.
- An important milestone for 2014 is for each jurisdiction to have an overall public engagement strategy. The relative success of strategies will be evaluated after 2014.

Session 12: Next Steps: Internal Communication

This session featured one presentation, followed by plenary discussion. The intended outcome of the twelfth session was:

- Participants will learn about and discuss ways of communicating the Vision to management and other relevant programs.

Traci Iott, Connecticut, and Tom Stiles, Kansas: Developing Talking Points

Ms. Iott began the session by recounting that, on ACWA calls and surveys, participants have expressed a need for tools for more effectively communicating with their management and others about the Vision. She said that at the March ACWA meeting, high-level managers were largely unfamiliar with the Vision, adding that effort is needed to move the message up the chain. Ms. Iott noted that several people had suggested developing talking points regarding the Vision, and thus a rough draft of such a document is included in the training workshop materials. She explained that the talking points are organized by the different topics that she and Tom foresaw as being beneficial, such as providing flexibility, improving teamwork, and emphasizing results.

Mr. Stiles added that these draft talking points are menu-driven, so that they can be customized. He explained that, like Mr. Eckl's "words that work" list, these are the points that frame the context of what the Vision is. He said that he hopes that

discussion of the Vision at the August ACWA meeting will receive a more vibrant reaction than it did in March.

Ms. Iott and Mr. Stiles then asked the participants to share their thoughts as to whether this list of talking points is what they need, or at least a step in the right direction, and if so, what changes are needed.

Session 12 Plenary Discussion:

One participant started the discussion by suggesting that the terms used by Ms. Dunn in her introduction would be well received by his management: “thoughtful, artful, insightful, and inclusive.” He added that his management would want to know that the Vision is not just EPA handing down instructions, but that it was a truly collaborative effort; otherwise, the first reaction could be that this is “another thing foisted onto us.” Mr. Stiles added that the Vision is not a fad, but rather a long-term change that ushers in a new era of communicating views regarding TMDLs and CWA 303(d) listing.

Another participant said that the Vision is about efficiency, a way to improve process by being focused and emphasizing engagement. She added that they have explained the Vision in this way to their management, with success. A participant from a regional office suggested identifying the problem that the Vision is solving, how the Vision addresses the problem, and ultimately how the Vision helps management. One participant took that concept further, emphasizing the value to management by framing the Vision in the context of their responsibilities and concerns, for example, how it fits with the nonpoint source strategy. Another participant noted that he has referred to the Vision as “an offer that we cannot refuse,” explaining to management that “there is a lot of good stuff here, and it is such a good offer that we need to look at it and take it on.”

Yet another participant said that, in her experience, the higher the level, the harder it is to get the person’s attention, so it is important to keep points short and punchy. She suggested making each of these points as brief as possible. She also noted that there are points in the draft that could be read as saying that we will do what is already expected of the program—which managers may find troubling. She relayed the virtues of focusing on implementation: emphasizing the improvement of water quality, not the process and documentation used in getting there. A participant from a regional office suggested focusing on “cheaper, cleaner, faster environmental benefits,” how the Vision can or will produce more in the way of results than the old focus of the program did.

One participant suggested that the talking-point needs for each state and level of management within that state are going to be case-specific, and thus no one is going to be able to write generally applicable talking points. She said that she will take these draft points back with her and fine-tune them for the different levels of management for which she would be using them. Ms. Iott confirmed that the talking points simply are meant to be a menu from which to choose and edit statements regarding the Vision.

Several participants suggested making this document more relevant to the public and other stakeholders, while other participants suggested developing separate documents focused on different audiences, particularly in light of the brevity of the document.

Ms. Iott and Mr. Stiles reiterated that they would like to provide as much help as possible, and make requested improvements to the talking points so that people will be prepared to speak with their managers about the Vision by the time of the ACWA meeting in August. Mr. Stiles offered to set up webinars, an idea for which roughly one-third of the room expressed interest. He also suggested having a session for mid-level management staff at the next ACWA meeting. Mr. Stiles acknowledged the need for efforts like these talking points to go beyond those individuals directly connected to the CWA 303(d) Program, suggesting that permit staff, other agencies, and stakeholders should hear about the Vision and understand what it means for them. He concluded by saying that efficiency is not necessarily doing more with less; it may be doing less with less, but we are going to do what is most important.

Key Points Raised:

- Understanding of the Vision must be moved up the chain (through management) and out to other CWA programs, other agencies, stakeholders, and the public.
- The talking points are a resource for starting communication with management.
- It is important to note that the Vision resulted from a collaborative effort, rather than being a set of instructions handed down from EPA.
- The Vision is about improving process, but for the purpose of being more effective in achieving environmental results. In any outreach effort, which of those factors receives the greater weight will depend on the audience.
- The Vision is about doing what is most important.

Training Workshop Wrap-Up

This final session consisted of three sets of closing remarks.

(1) Tom Wall, EPA HQ: Closing Remarks

Mr. Wall began by observing that the present moment of the Vision offers a rare opportunity to reset the direction of the CWA 303(d) Program. He acknowledged the influence that litigation has had on the program to this point as well as the skill, technical ability, and administrative effort that will be necessary to transition successfully, adding that the engagement of stakeholders will be key.

Mr. Wall stressed the importance of setting near- and long-term priorities as well as maintaining water quality in healthy waters, efforts that will require substantial work at all levels. He also emphasized the need for greater integration between programs, challenging the participants to work more closely with their respective monitoring programs, CWA 319 programs, and permitting programs, including involving them in

priority setting. He added that similar efforts should be made with their respective agriculture departments and NRCS.

Mr. Wall noted that the agenda and timeline laid out in the Vision are ambitious, but it is a matter of taking the first steps, in this case priority-setting and public engagement. He added that implementation is likely to play out differently in each program, yet the objective is the same: achieving better results.

(2) John Goodin, EPA HQ: Summary, Prioritization & Other Goals, Next Steps

Mr. Goodin first thanked the members of the training workshop Planning Advisory Group; ELI; and the state, tribal, territorial, and EPA headquarters and regional staff in attendance for making the training workshop so successful.

Mr. Goodin then explained that the development of the Vision over the past two years was heavily informed by feedback from prior training workshops. He noted that in the first few workshops, everyone knew that the TMDL Program was moving into a period of transition, and maybe even facing an identity crisis as it came out of consent decrees and focused more on nonpoint sources of pollution. He cited comments and conclusions from those meetings in relaying that many people emphasized the need to focus on priorities, highlighted the importance of broad stakeholder engagement, expressed support for further direct discussions between EPA regions and state programs, encouraged the expansion of networking opportunities, and requested the continuation of the training workshops on an annual basis.

As with kids, Mr. Goodin said, if you see them every day, it is hard to see the changes; but when you look back at old pictures, it is obvious—the program really has come a long way over the last two years. He also likened the Vision to a rocket, designed and built with care and precision, and now in that nerve-wracking 60-120 seconds after taking off, before it glides as it orbits.

Mr. Goodin then offered a series of observations that he grouped into three categories: sweat, swirl, and sweet. First, he said that there still are many details to sweat out, such as communication between levels, inside the agency, and with others outside the agency. He also noted the need to develop a more thorough explanation of the measure, as well as a clearer account of how the measure relates to the overall goal. In addition, he acknowledged challenges to continuity from the loss of staff and resources.

Second, Mr. Goodin recognized the swirl, the controversies and challenges, and cautioned against unnecessarily adding to it. He urged participants to capitalize on the good will and familiarity accrued at the training workshop, tempering reactions to news until having had an opportunity to discuss it with relevant parties. Mr. Goodin also noted that the priorities do not equal the totality of work, and that it is impossible to focus all time on the priorities. He said that prioritization is a useful guide and a tool to focus effort, but acknowledged that time also must be devoted to other things.

Third, Mr. Goodin applauded the (sweet) solutions raised at the workshop, as well as the willingness of people to participate. He acknowledged the excitement and support for the new tools and resources and said that he would like the legacy of the workshop to be the provision of tools for programs to achieve the most success possible. Mr. Goodin also noted the opportunities. He reiterated the willingness of potential partners, such as the CWA 319 Program, monitoring, and even non-CWA programs, to have their work leverage CWA 303(d) Program efforts. He also highlighted the value of states helping states during this transition period, suggesting that not all interactions must flow through EPA. Finally, he stressed the need to balance the flexibility and freedom offered by the Vision with accountability.

In conclusion, Mr. Goodin said that while 2016 is fast approaching, there is sufficient time for thoughtful prioritization. He reiterated that communication will be essential and that there are clear indications that the Vision is generating interest and gaining traction with other programs. Finally, he stressed a fundamental commitment to continuing this dialogue through future training workshops.

(3) Tom Stiles, Kansas: Send-Off Remarks

Mr. Stiles began by urging everyone to commit fully to implementing the Vision. He explained his personal motivation for pushing hard for implementation as being rooted in a goal for the year, expressed to his management, of getting 30 states to establish their priorities and set their sights on 2022.

Mr. Stiles reiterated the flexibility of the Vision, and encouraged everyone to make it their own. He challenged workshop participants to populate the measure, to redefine their universe, baseline, and targets. He also emphasized the importance of engaging their management and their respective EPA regions. Mr. Stiles also deemed integration the key to implementation, highlighting the value of building bridges between programs in order to enhance cooperation. He called upon participants to promote proactive engagement in the implementation process, and stressed that their individual actions will make a difference.

Mr. Stiles advocated a goal of “total consciousness” of one’s program, calling upon participants to explain what their programs are doing and how their actions will address the goals of the Clean Water Act. He added that the Vision had created new opportunities to use alternatives as a pathway to implementation.

In conclusion, Mr. Stiles said that much progress had been made in the past year. He reminded participants that communication would continue via calls and check-ins and that, over the coming months, there would be increasing focus on the details of assessment, integration, and protection, the other three goals of the Vision. Finally, Mr. Stiles thanked the Planning Advisory Group; ELI; EPA headquarters and regions; and the participants from states, tribes, and territories.

APPENDIX 1: TRAINING WORKSHOP AGENDA



ENVIRONMENTAL LAW INSTITUTE®

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2014 NATIONAL TRAINING WORKSHOP ON CWA 303(d) LISTING & TMDLS

IMPLEMENTING THE PRIORITIZATION GOAL OF THE NEW LONG-TERM VISION

National Conservation Training Center
Shepherdstown, West Virginia
May 6-8, 2014

TRAINING WORKSHOP AGENDA

**This project made possible through a cooperative agreement with the
United States Environmental Protection Agency**

PURPOSE OF THE TRAINING WORKSHOP

To provide an opportunity for state, tribal, and territorial participants from Clean Water Act Section 303(d) Listing and TMDL Programs —along with their federal counterparts—to learn about and discuss approaches for implementing the Prioritization Goal of the new Long-Term Vision for Assessment, Restoration, and Protection under the Clean Water Act Section 303(d) Program.

WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES

- Advance **mutual understanding** among participants of what the Vision, and particularly the Prioritization Goal, may mean for the path of the CWA 303(d) Program.
- Learn how **states, tribes, and territories are implementing** the Prioritization Goal.
- Learn about **state, tribal, and territorial needs** for implementing the Prioritization Goal, and about ways to address those needs.
- Explain **strategies and tools** for prioritizing waters and watersheds for restoration and protection.
- Present the new **CWA 303(d) Program measures** as they relate to systematically prioritizing (and re-prioritizing) waters and watersheds.
- Identify and discuss how water and watershed prioritization by the CWA 303(d) Program **influences and can be influenced** by other CWA programs, other agencies, and the public.
- Discuss and inform what **clarifications in guidance** would help the states, tribes, and territories meet the Prioritization Goal.
- Enhance the **network of listing and TMDL professionals** by expanding and improving communication among the states, tribes, and territories and with EPA regions and headquarters.

OUTPUTS

No. 1: A final report summarizing presentations and discussions from the training workshop. The report will include a summary of individual input from workshop participants and may serve as a reference for program personnel implementing the Prioritization Goal.

No. 2: A menu of talking points to assist state, tribal, and territorial CWA 303(d) listing and TMDL Program staff in informing management and other relevant programs of the expectations of the Vision and its Prioritization Goal.

No. 3: An updated list of approaches to implementing the Prioritization Goal and other goals, including states, tribes, and territories that are using or intending to use each approach and contact information for staff in those jurisdictions who can speak about the experience.

AGENDA

Monday, May 5

Arrival, Check-In, and Registration

- | | |
|-------------------|---|
| 3:00 pm – 8:00 pm | NCTC Check-In and Training Workshop Registration
Main Lobby
Ding Darling Lodge, Lounge Area |
| 6:00 pm – 7:30 pm | Dinner
Commons Dining Room |
| 8:00 pm – 9:00 pm | Informal Welcome
Ding Darling Lodge, Lounge Area |

Tuesday, May 6

Training Workshop Day 1

6:30 am – 8:15 am Breakfast
Commons Dining Room

8:30 am – 9:30 am **Welcome, Introductions, and Training Workshop Overview**
Auditorium

Greeting and Introductions

Bruce Myers, ELI

Opening Remarks

Alexandra Dunn, ECOS

Training Workshop Overview

Adam Schempp, ELI

9:30 am – 10:00 am **Session #1**
Status of the Ten-Year Vision for the CWA 303(d) Program
Auditorium

The What, Why, and When of the Vision, and Progress Since the Last Workshop

Tom Stiles, KS

The Ripple Effect of the Vision at the Federal Level

John Goodin, EPA HQ

Session #1 Outcome:

- *Participants will learn about the Vision as the new framework for implementing the CWA 303(d) Program.*

10:00 am – 10:30 am Morning Break

10:30 am – 11:30 am **Session #2**
The Basics of the Prioritization Goal
Auditorium

Prioritization Goal: For the 2016 integrated reporting cycle and beyond, States review, systematically prioritize, and report priority watersheds or waters for restoration and protection in their biennial integrated reports to facilitate State strategic planning for achieving water quality goals.

The Results of the ACWA Survey on Prioritization

Traci Iott, CT

EPA Objectives and Expectations for Prioritization

John Goodin, EPA HQ

Facilitated Discussion

Session #2 Outcomes:

- *Participants will learn about the foundational role of the Prioritization Goal in implementing the Vision.*
- *Participants will learn about examples of processes and factors used to establish priorities consistent with the Vision.*
- *Participants will learn about the role of TMDL development in setting CWA 303(d) Program priorities.*

Discussion Questions:

1. What should be the minimum expectations regarding CWA 303(d) prioritization of waters and watersheds?
2. What flexibility do states, tribes, and territories have in setting those priorities?
3. What influences the prioritization of waters and watersheds for restoration and protection?
4. What is the role of TMDLs in setting CWA 303(d) Program priorities?
5. What is the potential role of efforts to address water quality problems not requiring a TMDL (non-pollutant stressors and the **protection** of high quality waters) in CWA 303(d) prioritization of waters and watersheds?

11:30 am – 12:30 pm

Session #3

CWA 303(d) Program Measures

Auditorium

Core Measure (WQ-27): The extent of priority areas identified by each State that are addressed by EPA-approved TMDLs or alternative restoration approaches for impaired waters that will achieve water quality standards. These areas may also include protection approaches for unimpaired waters to maintain water quality standards.

Complementary Measure (WQ-28): State-wide extent of activities leading to completed TMDLs or alternative restoration approaches for impaired waters, or protection approaches for unimpaired waters.

New CWA 303(d) Program Measures – Going Live in FY 2015!

Shera Reems, EPA HQ

Facilitated Discussion

Session #3 Outcomes:

- *Participants will learn about the proposed new program measures and how the CWA 303(d) priorities relate to them.*
- *Participants will learn what would need to be reported under the new program measures.*
- *Participants will learn how the proposed new measures will help communicate progress and show accountability in implementing the Vision.*
- *Participants will discuss and learn how shifts in priorities can be formalized.*

Discussion Questions:

1. How should measures count **alternative** restoration approaches for impaired waters? Should and how would incremental progress count?
2. How should measures count **protection** approaches for unimpaired waters?
3. How should progress on waters that are not included on the state, tribe, or territory’s priority list be reported? Should and how would incremental progress count?
4. How should changes in priorities be accommodated and counted?

12:30 pm – 1:15 pm

Lunch
Commons Dining Room

1:30 pm – 3:00 pm

Session #4
Integration Across Programs and Agencies
Auditorium

How the State Monitoring Strategies and State Probability Surveys May Influence CWA 303(d) Program Prioritization

Susan Holdsworth, EPA HQ

Permitting Priorities and Cross-Program Efficiencies
Greg Schaner, EPA HQ

**The CWA 319 Program and NRCS as They Pertain to
CWA 303(d) Program Prioritization**

Lynda Hall, EPA HQ

Integration Across Water Quality Programs in Louisiana

Chuck Berger, LA

North Carolina Water Resources and NCDOT

Andy Painter, NC

Facilitated Discussion

Session #4 Outcomes:

- *Participants will learn about and discuss the priorities of other CWA programs that may influence CWA 303(d) priorities.*
- *Participants will learn about and discuss opportunities to link CWA 303(d) priorities with those of other CWA programs and state, tribal, and territorial agencies.*
- *Participants will learn about and discuss opportunities to link CWA 303(d) priorities with those of other federal agencies.*

Discussion Questions:

1. How can CWA 303(d) prioritization of waters and watersheds be **integrated** with the priorities and efforts of other CWA programs?
2. How can CWA 303(d) prioritization be **integrated** with the priorities of other state, tribal, and territorial agencies?
3. How can CWA 303(d) prioritization be **integrated** with the priorities of other federal agencies?
4. How might water quality improvement efforts undertaken by other state, tribal, and territorial agencies and other federal agencies influence TMDL **alternatives** in priority waters and watersheds?

3:00 pm – 3:30 pm

Afternoon Break

3:30 pm – 4:30 pm

Session #5
Interactions with EPA
Auditorium

**The Respective Roles of EPA and States, Tribes, and
Territories in CWA 303(d) Prioritization of Waters and
Watersheds**

John Goodin, EPA HQ

State – EPA Region Case Study: The Process and Dynamics of Prioritizing Waters in Florida

**Julie Espy, FL
Greg DeAngelo, FL
Amy Feingold, EPA R4**

Facilitated Discussion

Session #5 Outcomes:

- *Participants will learn about and discuss the roles of EPA and states, tribes, and territories in setting CWA 303(d) priorities.*
- *Participants will learn about and discuss opportunities for EPA regions and states, tribes, and territories to work together in the context of CWA 303(d) priority-setting.*

Discussion Question:

In what ways could EPA and states, tribes, and territories work together as the latter prioritize waters and watersheds?

4:30 pm – 5:30 pm

**Session #6
Technical Tools and Assistance
Auditorium**

**EPA Support for Watershed Planning and Prioritizing:
Data, Tools, and Services**

Doug Norton, EPA HQ

**WATERSCAPE: A GIS-based Framework for Identifying
Priority Watersheds**

Dwight Atkinson, EPA HQ

Facilitated Discussion

Session #6 Outcomes:

- *Participants will learn about and discuss tools and technical assistance that EPA has developed to aid the process of prioritizing waters and watersheds for restoration and protection.*
- *Participants will learn about a national online resource of multiple tools and data to assist in priority setting for waters and watersheds.*

Discussion Questions:

1. What do states, tribes, and territories need from EPA to prioritize waters and watersheds for restoration and protection?

2. Are existing prioritization tools and approaches flexible and applicable to the variety of topics that might be the subject of watershed prioritization?
3. How can prioritization tools help state, tribal, and territorial programs engage other water quality programs, other agencies, and the public?

5:30 pm – 6:00 pm	Open
6:00 pm – 7:00 pm	Dinner Commons Dining Room
7:30 pm – 10:00 pm	Bonfire

Wednesday, May 7

Training Workshop Day 2

6:30 am – 8:15 am Breakfast
Commons Dining Room

8:30 am – 9:00 am **Session #7**
Public Engagement Introduction
Auditorium

The Results of the ACWA Survey on Engagement
Traci Iott, CT
“I’m from the Government, and I’m Here to Help...”
Jeff Berckes, IA

Facilitated Discussion

Session #7 Outcome:

- *Participants will learn about and discuss strategies (and an overall framework) for engaging the public and other stakeholders in setting CWA 303(d) priorities, and implementing them.*

Discussion Question:

What has and has not worked to improve public understanding of what the CWA 303(d) Program is and does, and to engage stakeholders and the public in its processes?

9:00 am – 10:00 am **Session #8**
Water Words That Work Part 1
Auditorium

The Perils of Preaching to the Choir
Eric Eckl, Water Words That Work

Session #8 Outcome:

- *Participants will learn to spot the signs of "preaching to the choir" and recognize when a message will miss its audience.*

10:00 am – 10:30 am Morning Break

10:30 am – 12:30 pm

Session #9
Water Words That Work Part 2
Auditorium

The Environmental Message Method
Eric Eckl, Water Words That Work

Session #9 Outcome:

- *Participants will learn how to translate professional conservation writing into messages that are useful for the public.*

12:30 pm – 1:15 pm

Lunch
Commons Dining Room

1:30 pm – 3:00 pm

Session #10
Breakouts – Practical Implementation
Breakout Rooms, Various Locations

This session consists of ten breakout groups, one for each region, each with state, tribal, and territorial participants from that region as well as EPA regional and headquarters staff.

Session #10 Outcomes:

- *Participants will learn about the current thinking of state, tribal, territorial and EPA staff in their respective EPA regions regarding prioritization.*
- *Participants will identify challenges to putting in place a prioritization framework.*
- *Participants will identify and discuss solutions to those challenges and assistance that they may need.*

Discussion Questions:

1. Where in the prioritization process is each state, tribe, and territory?
2. What factors and methods will each state, tribe, and territory use (or consider using) to prioritize waters or watersheds for restoration and protection?
3. If known, what are each state, tribe, and territory's priority waters or watersheds, or what has it considered as potential priorities?

4. What strategies is each state, tribe, and territory using (or considering using) to engage the public and stakeholders in setting priorities and to convey those priorities to the public?
5. What are the foreseeable challenges to putting in place a prioritization framework, and how might they be addressed?
6. What assistance (e.g., data, technical tools, policy development) will states, tribes, and territories require if they are to successfully identify priority waters or watersheds and meet the respective water quality standards?

3:00 pm – 3:30 pm

Afternoon Break

3:30 pm – 4:30 pm

Session #10 (cont'd)
Breakouts – Practical Implementation
 Breakout Rooms, Various Locations

4:30 pm – 6:00 pm

Open

NOTE: The developers of EPA’s Recovery Potential Screening tool and WATERSCAPE tool will be available during this time to discuss state-specific prioritization support needs and EPA assistance, in the Ding Darling Lodge, Lounge Area.

6:00 pm – 7:00 pm

Dinner
 Commons Dining Room

7:30 pm – 8:30 pm

Informal Evening Session
 Ding Darling Lodge, Lounge Area

Relating State Prioritization to Available Tools and Support

Dwight Atkinson, EPA HQ
Doug Norton, EPA HQ

Thursday, May 8

Training Workshop Day 3

6:30 am – 8:15 am Breakfast
Commons Dining Room

8:30 am – 10:00 am **Session #11**
Next Steps: Approaches and Needs
Auditorium

Breakout Summary: Paths, Hurdles, and Assistance Ahead
Menchu Martinez, EPA HQ
Adam Schempp, ELI

Facilitated Discussion

Session #11 Outcomes:

- *Participants will learn the variety of approaches to accomplishing the Prioritization Goal being considered by states, tribes, and territories.*
- *Participants will identify and discuss potential solutions to challenges they face in implementing the Prioritization Goal, including policy and resource needs.*
- *Participants will learn and discuss strategies for improving public engagement regarding the CWA 303(d) Program, including prioritizing waters and watersheds.*

Discussion Questions:

1. What issues related to prioritization potentially should be clarified in guidance?
2. What should be done to maintain, let alone improve, accountability to the public and stakeholders, particularly in light of the noted challenges and shifting priorities?
3. What changes may be needed to more effectively communicate what the CWA 303(d) Program is and does, and to assist the development of state, tribal, and territorial **engagement** frameworks as part of implementing the **Engagement** Goal?

10:00 am – 10:30 am Morning Break

10:30 am – 11:00 am

Session #12
Next Steps: Internal Communication
Auditorium

Developing Talking Points

Traci Iott, CT
Tom Stiles, KS

Facilitated Discussion

Session #12 Outcome:

- *Participants will learn about and discuss ways of communicating the Vision to management and other relevant programs.*

Discussion Question:

What talking points would aid CWA 303(d) listing and TMDL Program staff in conveying the Vision and particularly the Prioritization Goal to management and other relevant programs?

11:00 am – 12:00 pm

Training Workshop Wrap-Up
Auditorium

Send-Off Remarks

Tom Stiles, KS

Closing Remarks: Summary, Prioritization & Other Goals, Next Steps

John Goodin, EPA HQ

12:00 pm – 12:45 pm

Lunch
Commons Dining Room

NCTC Check-Out & Departure

1:00 pm

Departure of Shuttle Bus for Dulles Airport
Ding Darling Lodge, Parking Lot

APPENDIX 2: PARTICIPANT LIST

2014 NATIONAL TRAINING WORKSHOP ON CWA 303(d) LISTING & TMDLS IMPLEMENTING THE PRIORITIZATION GOAL OF THE NEW LONG-TERM VISION

National Conservation Training Center
Shepherdstown, West Virginia
May 6-8, 2014

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APPENDIX 3: SUMMARY OF WORKSHOP PARTICIPANT EVALUATIONS

Forty-six workshop participants completed an anonymous Participant Evaluation Form (provided in the resource binder materials). The combined numerical results from the evaluations indicate an overall event rating of “Very Good-to-Excellent,” across all categories. In addition to the numerical responses, we received many written comments, which are reproduced here.

Participant Evaluation Form: Compilation

Scale: 5 = Excellent, 4 = Very Good, 3 = Satisfactory, 2 = Fair, 1 = Poor

A. The Workshop—Overall

Information Presented	5 (22) 4 (23) 3 (0) 2 (0) 1 (0)	AVG: 4.49
Workshop Materials	5 (28) 4 (16) 3 (1) 2 (0) 1 (0)	AVG: 4.60
Workshop Organization	5 (36) 4 (7) 3 (1) 2 (0) 1 (0)	AVG: 4.80
Group Interaction	5 (28) 4 (14) 3 (2) 2 (1) 1 (0)	AVG: 4.53
Session Facilitation	5 (36) 4 (8) 3 (0) 2 (0) 1 (0)	AVG: 4.82
Conference Facility (NCTC)	5 (42) 4 (4) 3 (0) 2 (0) 1 (0)	AVG: 4.91

Comments:

- What a wonderful conference! Well done! This setting is great! My brain is full and I’m exhausted, but what a perfect way to collaborate and brainstorm! I hope it continues!
- There is always room for improvement, but the workshop was very good overall—extremely good.
- Great faculty. This year, the workshop had a nice mix of formats, presentations by State and EPA, breakout sessions and Eric Eckl. Really appreciated this. [Comment on group interaction: Good - have more encouraged activities.]

- Well organized given the large number of people attending. NCTC is a great location! Wish we were all lodging together. Shuttling back and forth between the Bavarian Inn and NCTC added some logistical complications. Comment on workshop material: E-files would be good. Would like to eventually see us go paperless.
- The breakout sessions with Regional states are very beneficial. The small group allowed for a needed detailed discussion. I encourage this at next year's workshop, an opportunity for the states to provide updates on their vision milestones. I suggest adding an organized hike in the evening.
- Sometimes it is difficult to follow along when speakers don't have presentations.
- Well thought-out meeting - clear that all of the planning paid off.
- Very good mix of presentation and discussion. The facility is fabulous. Good mix of work and informal network opportunities.
- Group interaction and opportunities to be fully engaged during the lecture sessions seemed absent this year. While discussions at meals, bonfire, and evening gatherings were exceedingly frank and robust, that level of discussion was absent/minimized during sessions this year. Not sure why that was. The final session/re-cap was the best for more interaction. *The "state license plates" were a nice touch; the ELI supplied food and beverages for evenings were much appreciated by all.
- Good combination of pertinent topics, examples, and available tools and training versus conversation. It would be helpful for EPA or one of the workgroups to craft some examples of what a new measure could look like, so more states can report out in 2015 ahead of 2016.
- Another great workshop! The interaction with other states and regions is tremendous.
- Another superb ELI conference - no one does it better. [Comments on group interaction and conference facility (NCTC): Auditorium not most conducive for interaction but I understand limitations of group size.]
- I really enjoyed the interjection of the communication piece on day two (breaks up the week a bit with some variety.)
- The breakout session with the regions and regional states was great. We don't get many opportunities to talk to each other in person. Highly recommended for future sessions.
- Warn new participants about bad cell service. Please add number stickers for the regions on our name badge. [Comment on session facilitation: very good at staying (close to) on time.]
- Still difficult to commit so much time. Contacts list is excellent.
- Very well organized and great facility.
- Probably should have spent a bit less time "selling" the vision and its positive attributes (though I agree it is terrific). More time could have been spent on the more immediate interim goals, e.g., 2014 Engagement Goal, public and stakeholder engagement strategy this year and the framework to ensure data to develop/measure the engagement goal by next year.
- A couple of the slide reprints from the communication consultant useful to re-visit but hard to read. ELI does a wonderful job on logistics/meeting layout, etc.
- Very well organized and worthwhile workshop! I've gained better understanding of vision implementation and am taking back a lot of new ideas and improvements for my program.

- Generally, too much time spent on presentations and not enough time for interactive discussions within sessions in spite of set-up claiming the goal of program was to ensure workshop would not be a lecture in spite of being in an auditorium.
- This was the first national meeting I attended. Very well organized. Facilities are very nice.

B. Goals and Outcomes

How effective was the workshop in satisfying the stated goals and intended session outcomes?

5 (16) 4 (26) 3 (0) 2 (0) 1 (0) AVG: 4.38

How successfully did the workshop meet your own expectations?

5 (24) 4 (18) 3 (0) 2 (0) 1 (0) AVG: 4.57

Comments:

- I'm a first time participant, so this workshop/networking helped me make sense of all the new program objectives. Now I have to go back and put it on paper and make it happen!
- The presentation and meetings were great. The opening and after hours informal activities provided additional time to network with other states.
- Probably need more discussion time built in.
- I expected more discussion time. It seems some presenters didn't practice presentations to time them – there's so much I want to hear from others (states and regions) and there just wasn't time to get it all.
- Great interaction with other states. Excellent representation by EPA.
- The workshops are always great. I feel I have a better grasp of how to prioritize and even developed a draft straw man while here this week.
- Water Words was useful, but I felt we were being “marketed” to, like an advertising teaser. I came away with some useful tools but also came away with a somewhat annoyed view of Eric. The vision still seems too loosey, goosey and so flexible as to not perhaps be useful. I'm concerned as states get out from under consent decrees that the ball will get dropped. Seems like priorities on TMDLs is misplaced and implementation is really what the priority should be.
- I came in skeptical of the “visions and priorities” as an-add on tracking exercise. This will allow me to communicate to our regions as to how this will work in California when we already require implementation
- I was hoping to get a little more into the nitty-gritty of how to implement the vision, how to determine priorities, how to account for activities, etc.
- Had great opportunity to interact with our states and other Regions.

C. Next Steps

Which type of activity do you think would be most valuable in advancing peer-to-peer exchange as it relates to the engagement goal of the vision? (Select One)

- A. (19) Discussion Forum—via conference call
- B. (14) Discussion Forum—via online tool
- C. (11) Consultation with Communications Expert
- D. (5) Other _____

[Notes: Some participants chose multiple options and some chose none. An individual circled A as a tool for the interim but ultimately wants B]

In Other:

- More engagement probably means a mix of methods in peer to peer. I'm assuming you meant within our state group of participants or do you mean our public? Engaging with our peers is easy. Engaging the public is the problem.
- Video conference if possible. Liked Eric Eckl, especially the breaking out into groups. Perhaps making folks work on issue/project together. Fosters communication with states, EPA regions.
- EPA Regional Communication
- Webinar/Video conference
- In-person discussion with EPA. Regional and represented states.
- I think we have to get the states to invite the other water programs for a 101 on this. The IR responsibility lives in sections other than the TMDL group.
- Online tool would be good too, especially for using the RPS and WATERSCAPE tools.
- Would help us continue the conversation within our agency to repeat a couple of the presentations. 1) On the overall vision 2) on the prioritization methods (e.g. PPT from FL)
- 1.5-hour web conferences on specific subjects: WATERSCAPE, RPS, catchments, implementation models...outreach
- Some time needs to be spent on elucidating what integration really means. Integration should not be confused with coordination.

D. Specific Sessions

Session #1: Status of the Ten-Year vision for the CWA 303(d) Program

- Excellent overview and kickoff for the workshop
- I think some of the handouts from the session that were developed were helpful
- Clarified where we are going.
- Menu of approaches helpful
- Alex, Tom, and John did a good job kicking off the workshop. Seems like their remarks might have been appropriately captured as I overheard (bullets)/person...as an aid to note-taking. Not 100% sure the audience intro/icebreaker was best use of the time it consumed.

- We will start the vision soon.
- Tom did a great job summarizing the challenges of the new vision and the benefits.
- We have really come a long way in a year!
- The recap of the vision was helpful. There seems to be a split between people who know a lot about the vision and are intimately familiar with it because they are involved in workshops and others who only receive general updates.
- This was wonderful in terms of setting the tone. The keynote address was great!

Session #2: The Basics of the Prioritization Goal

- Very much appreciated the “bottom line” summary from EPA HQ
- Helpful
- Still trying to understand the flexibility of the vision on setting priorities and what the accountability will be.
- Necessary to establish condition baseline for participants. Call alternatives: interim measures (still have to do TMDL eventually)
- Though the presentations were very good, it was a bit hard to take notes from the Q/A portion due to the speed of the process. Repeating/summarizing Q’s might help.
- We will continue to use our current prioritization methodology.
- The survey results information in the notebooks was a great reference. It is nice to see how many states responded.
- I would like to have seen results of the pilot for more of the participating states.
- It was helpful to hear John outline EPA’s expectations. We have been integrating our CWA programs so it was nice to hear that this is being promoted.
- Survey results were helpful to see where/how our state stacked up.
- This session was fine, but I’m worried upper management in most states hasn’t bought into this shift in emphasis.
- The overview of state responses is helpful and it’s good to know what other states are thinking and doing. I feel that maybe some more guidance – specific guidance from EPA concerning expectations will be beneficial.
- Traci Iott’s summary was great.

Session #3: Draft CWA 303(d) Program Measure

- Keep messaging this topic. It will take several times hearing/seeing it for it to completely sink in.
- Helpful introduction but feel that ongoing discussion and clarification is needed between EPA and states on the topic.
- This presentation was the same as phone call last week.
- Wonderful- could have focused a bit more on the actual measures because I don’t think all the states really got it. So, showing slides 4&5 again at the end.
- Shera’s presentation was smoothly delivered as usual
- We will need to keep giving this presentation to states and regions – it’s clear from discussions that people don’t get it yet.
- Alternatives are being pursued at the moment in several watersheds.
- WQ-28 is good, but there appears to still be some confusion over what will qualify.

- There are still questions on measures, but Shera hasn't completed all of the pilot states study. Hopefully individual state calls will help resolve questions and issues.
- This was an informative session, but I was left wanting more specific information regarding the calculations of the new metrics, baselines, universe, how to demonstrate progress toward meeting water goals.
- I understand WQ-27 much better now than from conference calls. Shera does a great job facilitating the calls.
- I would have preferred more in depth discussion concerning the measure – with examples. Specific examples relating to how each activity will be counted; how the universe is defined, would be greatly beneficial. Basically a step-by-step prioritization, activities, country, and who is responsible for what. Does the state define the priority and EPA determines catchments? At what point should EPA be brought into the discussion?
- OK.

Session #4: Integration across Programs and Agencies

- Enlightening and helpful. Concerned that permitting-TMDL discussions are at the EPA level only. Need to involve states in this discussion.
- This will be important as we move forward with the vision.
- More participation from the region.
- Lynda's and Greg's sessions needed to be longer. In fact, session 4 should have been longer, considering its significance.
- It was really good, but I wanted to hear more – presenters skipped through slides and rushed past important points. Then there was not enough time for important discussion, especially for NPS/319.
- All water programs: standards, assessment and NPDES permit are on board.
- Interesting session. Would appreciate the NPDES PowerPoint. Our state could follow in some of the footsteps.
- Integration with NPS is crucial! Specific ways in which integration with 319 programs is needed. Involvement with priority setting is a great start.
- EPA needs to do a better job at integrating this in our programs. "Beans" should reflect the overall goals of the CWA. USEPA beans should consider our (states) program integration.
- Again, we feel integration is key to the vision. I look forward to seeing the translation of WCH's to permits that Greg and Region 9 mentioned.
- Helpful to know how components of vision fit into monitoring strategy write up and NPS Plan! Good idea to update and strengthen MS4 Permits to complement strategy and emphasize NPS implementation
- I still don't think we're doing enough about this. Every state is different and this is probably the 800 lb. gorilla in the room that folks are ignoring. Every program is tribal and territorial and as such, is unlikely to yield their power and program.
- It is good to see how other states interact with different agencies and to learn what types of issues they are dealing with that may/may not become an issue in our state.
- Think each HQ speaker should have been given more time. This was an important session to assure cross-program coordination, so would have been better to have allowed

each HQ speaker to stress the key integration efforts of each program areas (e.g., monitoring, permits, NPS) and how they fit into the vision process.

- The session was great but a lot more time needs to be spent on this subject as the success of the new vision depends on it – or so I believe.

Session #5: Interactions with EPA

- Very helpful to hear and learn about a specific state example (FL)
- Helpful
- Florida is great. Region 4 is great.
- Quarterly calls with EPA and Region states help keep up the program's goals and those ideas.
- Very helpful in understanding the details of the prioritization goal.
- Can't wait for the draft Region 9 best practices memo for TMDL and Permit writers
- The Florida case study is a good example of seeing how other states are proceeding.
- Very informative!

Session #6: Technical Tools and Assistance

- Very interesting
- Good info but too detailed and too long.
- This section was a good end to a long day (surprisingly)
- Wonderful- Very cool stuff I have a better understanding and respect for recovery potential tools
- Great! Sounds like states are interested.
- Would like to have seen the tools demonstrated during the session.
- These tools included all states, tribes, and territories (Hawaii and PR)
- Nice job. Need to follow up with tools.
- The more that can be provided and/or developed by EPA the better. The prioritization tools appear to be very useful. Hopefully tools such as this will be maintained into the far future. Many states have financial stressors/challenges, therefore they do not have the time or resources to develop their own.
- Too short, too rushed. Fascinating info. However, there could have been more selectivity in picking slides to show (especially WATERSCAPE)
- Doug did well, but Dwight lost me. These are great tools and I'm glad they are available. I look forward to working on them.
- Very helpful
- RPS and WATERSCAPE appear to be great tools for states to prioritize their efforts.
- Good tools. Will go back to check out WATERSCAPE. Not familiar with this tool. I am familiar with RPS, but would like to experiment. Appreciated Doug touching base on an individual basis to discuss working with states.
- More time during daytime schedule for hands-on experience with the tools or whatever tools we will be using next time.
- Interesting to learn more about the recovery potential tool. Will explore this more for our use in prioritization.
- How about a tutorial webinar on each tool? Make all presentations available electronically if possible. Specifically RPS and WATERSCAPE.

- Good. Thanks to Doug and Dwight. RPS is most useful and I'm excited about the roll-out of the updated version in 4 months. I appreciate the efforts of Headquarters and their support of D2 for working on this.
- I had no idea that these tools were available. Definitely something we need to look into.
- Really glad we included the presentations and sessions from Doug and Dwight. It is very exciting to hear their enthusiasm and offers of support.
- Great to see the types of tools available. Would recommend that PPT be shorter. Liked the connection to the evening session with Doug N. and Dwight A. But shorter PPT and more time available to Doug/Dwight later.
- Very informative and useful. Future follow-ups will definitely be necessary.

Session #7: Public Engagement Introduction

- Well done.
- Loved the Prezi - nice lead in.
- Great set up by Jeff!
- I'm hoping to use Water Words That Work to start this process. Jeff Berckes' "Cosmos" presentation was simple, effective, and perfect!
- Traci gives a really good overview- Jeff did a great job
- Good, but could have added a speaker to dissect the Engagement Goal a bit more.
- Good introduction. Would like copy of Jeff Berckes' slides- it was a dynamic presentation.
- Great job/presentation; always enjoy what Jeff has to say, and his lively presentation style.
- Very good ideas were presented in this session.
- It really is important and the emphasis was good.
- I'm interested to know what further types of engagement we might be required to do.
- Terrific! Really puts in perspective of real world.
- This is another element of the new vision. The session was great!

Sessions #8 and #9: Water Words That Work

- Excellent - water quality issues, and TMDLs in particular, are very difficult to convey. The tools and suggestions offered here will be very helpful, and simplify technical stuff for the public.
- Outstanding!
- This was the most helpful session(s) of the workshop for me - outstanding presenter.
- Good; could have used a few less sales plugs.
- Wow! What can I say?! Every state's environment agency needs to see/hear this!
- Excellent! I'm motivated to reach the 99%! (After the bigger challenge of reaching the 1% first!)
- Especially engaging and dynamic speaker!
- Great, thanks to EPA for all the clarifications. Excellent and entertaining – made me think and will change how I do things. Missed the idea that our audience is not always the "general public" when developing plans. A bit sales-oriented toward the end. Too much pushing to purchase further training or services.
- Excellent!

- Great speaker- very dynamic and informative.
- We need more techniques to deal with our stakeholders and partners
- Very interesting – need not to plug or promote business as much as it was.
- A real disappointment – I wanted so much more. I suspect I already knew 95% or more of the content, and I found the presenter to be somewhat off-putting. He seemed to be far too self-centered. It was a bit like late-night cable TV infomercials. I really found his refusal to answer questions to any extent offensive.
- Very cool. This was helpful to hear, although I didn't like the exercise because I didn't want to spend too much brain power trying to come up with all those ideas for something that's not real. Maybe lazy or maybe I'm just trying really hard on the other workshop stuff?
- Excellent outreach ideas beyond the current practice.
- Excellent presentations
- Some great concepts, but in discussions with other states, direct public contact is somewhat rare or at least very limited and many of the topics are very technical and/or require technical documents, so Eric's coaching may be hard to apply.
- Excellent! Would love to have him back in the combat training he talked about. Would like to see him invited for a workshop at our state – favorite session.
- Excellent advice for engagement.
- This session was really good. It would be helpful to have multiple copies of the exercises so everyone in the group could read the information. We didn't have time for everyone to read the copy, so it was difficult for everyone in the group to participate in the exercises.
- Loved this session!
- This was excellent. I've always wanted to hear what Eric has to say. I do think the great fallacy is that we need to engage the "public". We need to engage those who can make changes, it's tough for all the reasons Eric outlined.
- These sessions were very informative. We have thought about how to remove the technical jargon from our reports and communications, but I did not realize how big of an issue this is. We will definitely evaluate our audience when developing documents and outreach material.
- Content is useful, and Eric clearly knows what he is talking about – but he is a little bit too slick which puts me off. Too salesman-like. This is 2nd time I've seen him and felt the same both times.
- Helpful. A little too much of a "sale job," however.
- Good session – while the tools are useful the exercises of our audience is a good reminder for technical folks.
- Excellent!! Please look at the possibility of bringing Eric's combat talk to webinar!
- I feel this session was informative; however, I felt the speaker's personality didn't work too well with us. It was very telemarketing...and if he does have another 90 minute presentation on a topic ~ surely he can give a 30-second spiel about it.
- Would like to see Eric come back and present the combat communication program.
- Excellent presentation by Eric. Very informative, interesting, and useful and worth considering the right words and ways to engage the public to take action.
- Great PPT – very helpful. Useful and helpful.

- The session was great. Mr. Eric Eckl talked about a couple of elements or sub-topics that would help enrich how we will be communicating with the public. Specifically, we talked about two more sessions. I suggest we accomplish this through a webinar, if this is possible.

Session #10: Breakouts—Practical Implementation

- Very helpful to have opportunity to hear how other states operate, and approach priorities in the region. Definitely worth a half-day of the workshop.
- Regional breakouts were very valuable!
- I liked the time to sit with our EPA reps and both hear other states and have some frank discussions on how to go forward and sell the vision.
- Very helpful to hear from all the states in my region, plus interaction/response from EPA regional staff.
- Regions need to get a handle on the vision and then work with the states to move forward - too many questions at all levels.
- Good, focused state/regional discussion. Learned some new things about our state colleagues and identified some issues that need further consideration.
- The breakout session was very helpful and informative, however the half day allotted was insufficient time. Future workshops should dedicate a full day for states and EPA regions to discuss issues.
- Most helpful to have the chance to discuss in more detail what we're currently doing and how we can start re-prioritizing our programs!
- Region 8 had a very positive discussion; it was great to discuss what other states are doing and the EPA perspective on setting priorities and the new measure.
- If we could do this regional break out each year with a changing topic each year - it would be great. It was great to have a small discussion with neighbor states.
- I had doubts going in that this would be useful, but it turned out to exceed my expectations. I got a lot out of it – great idea. The only minor drawback - didn't feel like I could speak as freely with EPA HQ in the room.
- Great! Was fun and insightful. Accomplished a lot.
- Informative – enjoyed sharing with other programs.
- Very important: the clarification of natural condition
- Excellent – inevitable reductions in resources for states and EPA requires even greater coordination
- Allowed states to talk candidly. Appreciate this opportunity.
- Region 4 is great. This session was so helpful and valuable to get our states talking and sharing. Re: discussion questions – it would be helpful if Region leads knew that HQ was expecting answers to some questions to survey states as opposed to a way to facilitate/suggest discussion.
- Prioritization will be discussed with our regions soon. To show our vision.
- Nice way to meet and interact with our local counterparts and EPA regions.
- Excellent opportunity to have discussions with regions and regional states. Great time for sharing and offering assistance with expertise in specific areas with other states.
- Productive session. Learned more about other states in our Region. They are in a position similar to ours.

- Great to hear examples from my neighboring states.
- It was nice to meet with other states and region staff in the breakouts. This was the first time that Region 9 had done this. We will be pursuing additional regional meetings/calls in the future.
- Very helpful to have 1:1 with region - hope to go a long way for future continued collaboration.
- Good discussion with our EPA region, states, etc. Vision difficult to implement but good job at fleshing out questions and issues to address.
- This is great. Really good to connect with others in the region to see what they are working on and maybe how we could work together on outstanding issues.
- This was extremely helpful and a great idea. We are able to hear and understand what hurdles other states have/envision with respect to water quality issues and how these might impact their prioritization for the vision.
- This was great! Really good to hear from other states within the region. We came up with a few ideas where we can collaborate and help one another.
- Was a great session and opportunity to meet with our states.
- Great approach. Really fostered communication with others, but also immediately able to see one's own and others' prejudices as related to how we engage with the public.
- Wonderful – at least for me. We dealt with a lot of the “rubber-meeting-the-road” issues. Very helpful. Needs to be continued and strengthened!

Session #11: Next Steps: Approaches and Needs

- Can the states get a copy of the summary?
- Very helpful
- Nice summary of the regional discussions.
- Valuable discussion, but hard to follow closely while trying to make notes. Will overheads for the session be shared with attendees? The conversation moved quickly, which kept energy up (a good thing). Will ELI be sharing its notes with participants?
- Thanks to Menchu and Adam for compiling notes so fast and all note takers. I'm looking forward to seeing more comprehensive notes.
- Thanks for showing clarification issues from the breakouts. Alternatives really need clarification outside of 4A + 5R. There are other options but what is expected from EPA? Where do all other than 4B + 5R fall on 303 (d) lists? Need another category. Important from stakeholder discussion to give credit other than remaining as category 5.
- 2014 is now – thus EPA must convey any specific expectations they have for how states engage the public and stakeholders in the vision ASAP. Has EPA formally conveyed to NPDES, 319(n) NPS Program, and monitoring folks that they need to incorporate the vision and that it is being set by TMDL/303(d) Program (but in consultation with them)?
- This session was very helpful and hopefully allowed EPA to see some of the issues that states are facing and that vagueness is not helpful
- Great summary!! Needs to be updated based on comments received from the floor – and subsequently shared with the participants.

Session #12: Next Steps: Internal Communications

- Very helpful
- Need to direct talking points to specific audiences: upper management, internal partners, and external stakeholders.
- I was hoping for more presentation (answers) on what to give instead of discussion. I'll be looking for materials to come out.
- Very helpful and hopefully we will be able to have useful materials to move forward within our individual states.
- Extract (from the "talking points") a version for the general public – highlight the benefits.
- Tom and Traci were good, as always.

Training Workshop Wrap-Up

- John Goodin's summary observations were very helpful as a take-home message. Great wrap-up!
- Hard to top the haikus and Preacher Tom. We are inspired.

Other Comments or Suggestions

- Great opportunity to hear about issues/challenges and solutions from others states. Much gained from sideline conversations with other states in breaks and informal sessions.
- Please consider organizing a session next year that focuses on the "hard" pollutants - Hg, other toxics. Examples of statewide/regional approaches, but also the range of regulatory and non-regulatory actions that have been planned or implemented.
- Make sure the IR guidance is very explicit about prioritization requirements - the TMDL prioritization occurs in a different section than where the assessment/listing/IR work happens.
- Can't wait 'til next year! Another great job. Kudos to ELI staff, EPA staff, the PAG, and all the states who participated!
- All talks/presentations should have accompanying text/slides available for the audience. Otherwise, you miss the point of the talk as you try to take notes.
- Alex Dunn's and Tom Stiles' opening comments were motivating!
- Great job again! Thanks to all of ELI's staff.
- Prepare webinar to learning on techniques to improve the engagement.
- 1. Vision template(s) would be helpful 2. Issue to explore – leveraging. Permitted ambient monitoring
- Overall I thought the meeting was well done and run. I enjoyed the interaction that was allowed during the meeting time. It is refreshing to hear that many states have the same challenges, while other states may be able to provide helpful solutions/suggestions. This level of interaction is extremely important and allows EPA regions and headquarters to learn and understand state challenges and successes. The states are asked to do more with less money, and Congress needs to understand this. Nobody wants to think they may need to drink their own waste to survive. Everybody wants clean water.
- Thanks to Adam! We'll miss Judy!
- 2016 will be here soon! EPA should continue to provide active support and guidance to states on prioritization with regional conferences or at least conference calls.

- Great workshop. Look forward to the next one!!
- A webinar may be helpful for management. This is always a well-run and productive workshop. I have learned that in order for any team to achieve its goals, it must have an opportunity to recharge its battery. This workshop does that. Therefore I suggest that EPA and ELI continue to hold this workshop through 2022 and beyond.
- USEPA (or someone) should reduce the vision to a single-page summary. Hopefully graphically presented. Also, distribute “Vision 101” or whatever messages have/will see at ACWA. I frequently don’t recognize (from the descriptions) what they think they saw at a conference
- Concur follow up is needed for why (what’s the value added - WIIFMe) and how old TMDLs get updated (e.g., addendum format) and credit given also for protection plans. Appreciate that EPA issued vision guidance so quickly. Thank you – looking forward to additional guidance documents, e.g. national conditions. Thank you ELI – super organized as usual and a pleasure to work with.
- This yearly workshop is when I actually feel my views and everyone else’s are truly heard and considered thoughtfully. We need to continue our yearly face-to-face. It’s the only time or one of the few times that we get any kind of affirmative “high five” for the valuable work we do on/for clean water. Thanks to EPA and ELI for giving us the chance to work together!!! Thanks for enabling this “rave” and rant!
- I really like the combination of EPA reps so we can get clarification, state folks providing examples and lessons learned, and useful tools (including how to talk to the public) to bring it all forward. Great job! Also please continue holding sessions that include improvement to communication skills like Eric’s - we have been working on the same lines of the book “Don’t be such a Scientist” (must read!), and I’d be happy to give a presentation along those lines next year!
- Overall great workshop! I think this is a critical first step for everyone to get out of the gate, and bringing the states together helps them understand they are not alone in implementing the vision. WE all have challenges and ideas!
- Great conference! Again, liked the nice mix of format presentations. Suggestion: the breakout sessions with states were good. Would like to see more of that.

APPENDIX 4: WORKSHOP WEB PORTAL— ELI'S *STATE TMDL PROGRAM RESOURCE CENTER*

ELI continues to maintain and make publicly available a companion website for this workshop and related past work. Workshop materials for 2014, as well as many other resources that are relevant to the mission and work of State TMDL programs, are now available at the Institute's *State TMDL Program Resource Center*, at

http://www.eli.org/Program_Areas/state_tmdl_center.cfm