

Water Quality Standards Workgroup Meeting Summary

July 26, 2007, 1:00 – 3:30 p.m.

288 North 1460 West, Salt Lake City, Cannon Health Building, Room 125

Attendance

WQS Workgroup Members and Alternates in Attendance:

Nathan Darnall
Chris Cline
Carmen Bailey
Craig Walker
Terry Sykes
Gerard Yates
Leland Myers
Shazelle Terry
Merritt Frey
Paul Dremann
Lisa Kirschner
Reed Bodell
William Moellmer
Ying-Ying Macauley

Others Present:

Harry Judd, DWQ
Tom Toole, DWQ
Dave Wham, DWQ
Theron Miller, DWQ

Harry Judd welcomed the participants on behalf of the Division of Water Quality (DWQ). Harry elaborated on the purpose and goals of this workgroup and the proactive approach by DWQ in seeking input from various stakeholders during the water quality standards triennial review. He expressed a desire to have the workgroup make constructive recommendations to DWQ instead of statements of “likes” or “dislikes.”

Bill Moellmer welcomed the group and then had members of the workgroup and the audience introduce themselves.

Bill provided the background information of WQS triennial reviews and EPA’s and State’s roles. The authority of implementing WQS was relegated to the States by Congress via the Clean Water Act. There are no specific federal water quality standards; however, EPA has published recommended water quality criteria (or WQS Guidelines). The States adopt water quality standards through formal rule-making process (contingent upon EPA approval).

Ying-Ying Macauley discussed the role of the workgroup, which is to identify focus issues, provide peer review, act as the sounding board, and make recommendations to DWQ for WQS rule changes. Ying-Ying also mentioned the idea of forming sub-groups to work on specific issues and to draft a strawman to bring back to the workgroup

Bill Moellmer gave a PowerPoint presentation “Overview of the Water Quality Standards.” Bill’s presentation covered the key elements of Utah’s existing WQS regulations (beneficial uses, numeric standards, narrative standards, and antidegradation review) as well as the hot topics that surfaced during DWQ’s previous triennial review effort. The content of *R317-2 Standards for Quality for Waters of the State* is available on DWQ’s website (<http://www.rules.utah.gov/publicat/code/r317-002.htm>).

Two handouts were provided to the group: the content of the existing WQS rule R317-2, and the response summary to the comments DWQ received during the previous effort of conducting triennial review in 2006. Bill shared with the group a list of key issues generated from the previous triennial review effort in 2006 and discussed this list in detail with the workgroup.

Bill Moellmer asked each of the workgroup members to identify their number one WQS issues. The list is presented here in no particular order:

Merritt – Antidegradation
Leland – Attainability
Lisa – OK with the current standards
Paul – Antidegradation; biological standards
Shazelle – Antidegradation
Gerard – Balance between use and protection
Carmen – Biological standards and associated meaningful measures
Craig – Monitoring of water quality and flow; how to address the water quality of the middle portion of the streams (the current WQS covers the head and the downstreams); incorporate WQS with Department of Natural Resources regulations; incremental degradation
Reed – Technology versus monitoring (e.g. mercury monitoring)
Nathan – Water quality and nutrient issues
Terry – Affordability of the small systems
Chris – Look into the future (look beyond the frequent regulation changes)

The following issues were discussed during the Open Discussion / Q & A session:

- Craig Walker asked about how DWQ monitor for narrative standards. Harry said that the monitoring data are all stored in STORET database. Leland said that the STORET data are available on the internet, but the biological data may not be complete.
- The workgroup discussed mercury issues. Harry Judd explained the differences between the water column mercury numeric standards versus the concentration used for issuing the consumption advisories. It was discussed that the State WQS should not be more stringent than the EPA mercury criteria recommendation.
- The workgroup decided to focus on one major issue and possibly one or two minor issues in the next meeting – primarily on antidegradation review (ADR) regulations (R317- 2-3) and, if time allows, the total dissolved solids (TDS) numeric standards (R317-2-14, Table 2.14.1 and footnote (4)).

- It was suggested that in the next meeting Bill present in depth focusing ADR issues.

Ying-Ying stated that the meeting materials, the draft meeting summary and the workgroup contact list would be e-mailed to the participants. The meeting materials will be posted on the DWQ website soon.

The next meeting is scheduled on **August 15, 2007, Wednesday at 2 p.m.** The location is **Room 101 of Cannon Health Building (288 North 1460 West).**