CWA §106 Water Quality Assessment Report Template (WQAR) Pilot
Frequently Asked Questions
October 2010

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1. **How does this electronic template compare with the required elements of the Water Quality Assessment Report as set forth in the CWA §106 Guidance?**
The required elements of this template closely align with the requirements set forth in the Guidance.

2. **How often do tribes need to submit water quality assessment reports?**
As stated in page A-4 of the CWA §106 Guidance, tribes are expected to submit assessment reports on an annual basis.

3. **Aren't tribes already providing water quality data to EPA via WQX/STORET? Why is this assessment report necessary?**
The CWA §106 Guidance does require that tribes submit electronic WQX/STORET-compatible data to EPA. The WQX data reporting provides EPA with quantifiable, specific information from each tribe related to their water quality.

   The WQAR template, on the other hand, provides tribes and EPA with a general summary of CWA §106 monitoring activities and water quality conditions, which is more suitable for decision makers and the public.

4. **Who developed this template?**
EPA Region 9 developed this template with the input and collaboration of the RTOC Clean Water Act Workgroup. This template is a continuing Pilot and Region 9 welcomes further suggestions for improvement of this template.

5. **Why was this template developed?**
Some tribes have requested an easier way to complete the assessment report. Moreover, an electronic reporting template offers several advantages over paper submissions:
   - More uniform reporting standards
   - The ability to compile information from many tribes for the development of graphs to document water quality changes in Indian Country for use by NTOC, RTOC, and EPA
   - The ability to track general trends in water quality over time in Indian Country

6. **Did tribes provide input in the development of this template?**
EPA Region 9 conducted the following tribal outreach activities during tool development
   - Water Quality Standards RTOC Workgroup
     - Conference calls beginning in Fall 2008, continuing in 2010
   - Fourteen tribes completed an initial pilot of the template from February to April 2009.
     - Completed tool, offered comments and suggestions for improvement
   - Presentation at 2009 and 2010 RTOCs, and a training session in August 2010

7. **How is the reported information being used by EPA?**
The standardized format allows tribal water quality information to be compiled and provides a broader picture of water quality in Indian Country to tribes within the Region, decision makers and the public.

8. **Is this template in final form?**

This template continues to be refined. EPA anticipates revising and improving the template over time with the help of the tribes in Region 9.

9. **Is this template required, or can I to submit the water quality assessment report to EPA in another format?**

The template is not required, however, it is the format preferred by EPA Region 9 to submit your annual Water Quality Assessment Report. Please discuss with your Project Officer any uncertainties you may have with using the template.

10. **How and when should I submit the template to EPA?**

The template should be submitted to your Project Officer annually. Please discuss the date your template submittal should be received by EPA with your Project Officer. Remember, the requirement to complete the Water Quality Assessment Report consists of three components (the first two are annual): *1)* the WQAR template including the narrative, *2)* data in WQX/STORET compatible format, and *3)* a monitoring strategy (one-time requirement).

11. **What information do I need to complete the assessment report?**

You should have on hand specific details of your monitoring program (e.g., name of water body, monitoring station ID, designated uses, and parameters monitored). In addition, you should have the results of your water quality monitoring available, including the data you have collected and input into WQX/STORET compatible format. Your *analysis* of this data will enable you to respond to specific sections of the template, for example, "Current Water Quality Status." If you need any help in the analysis of your data, please contact your Project Officer.

12. **What computer programs or technical information do I or my staff need in order to complete the template?**

The template and the accompanying components require a general knowledge of Microsoft Word and Excel. If you need additional training to complete this template, please talk to your Project Officer or the persons listed below.

13. **I lost my copy of the template. Can I find it online?**

The template can be found online at: http://epa.gov/region9/water/tribal/cwa-reporting.html under "Regional Supplements".

14. **Can I print the template?**

All tabs within the WQAR template are printable. For the actual template (Tab 2), it is currently only set up to print the first 3 monitoring stations. You can manipulate the printing settings for the template by going to "Page Break Preview" under the "View" menu to expand the printing boundaries and add page breaks. Also, please check the "Page Setup" option within "Print Preview". You will want to select "Adjust to:" under the "Scaling" sub-header within the "Page" tab. Do not hesitate to contact us if you need help.

15. **I need technical support. Who should I contact?**

Please contact your Project Officer or either Audrey Johnson (415) 972-3517, Janis Gomes (415) 972-3517, or Christopher Chen (415-972-3442).

16. **I have an idea for improving the template. Who should I contact at EPA?**

We welcome your input. Please contact Audrey L. Johnson (johnson.audreyL@epa.gov, 415-972-3431), Janis Gomes (gomes.janis@epa.gov, 415-972-3517) or Christopher Chen (chen.christopher@epa.gov, 415-972-3442).