

Quality Management System

Annual Status Report and Quality Management Plan Review

As required under section 2.81-C of the New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission (NEIWPCC) Quality Management Plan (QMP), the Quality Assurance Program Manager (QAPM) will submit a Quality Assurance Status Report to the Executive Director by October 1st of each year and forward a copy of the report to the EPA Region 1 Quality Assurance Officer as an attachment to the next years grant application. Concurrent with the annual status report requirement is an obligation from EPA Region 1 to identify any changes to the NEIWPCC Quality System. This report is submitted to fulfill the obligations of Section 2.81-C of the NEIWPCC QMP.

A. YEAR IN REVIEW

Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) Review – In FY-2010, twenty-one projects presented QAPPs for review and approval, in adherence to the NEIWPCC quality management system. Interestingly, eleven projects originated from the Lake Champlain Basin Program (LCBP) and seven projects were associated with either New York-New Jersey Harbor Estuary Program or the Hudson River Estuary Program. A list of the FY-2010 QAPPs reviewed and approved is contained in Attachment A.

In an attempt to ease the review and approval logistics associated with the high volume of QAPPs originating at the LCBP, NEIWPCC and EPA Region 1 QA Unit staff delivered a training session for LCBP technical staff on September 22, 2010 in Grand Isle, Vermont. The training was focused on QAPP review and approval procedures and requirements.

Field Assessment – In May 2010, NEIWPCC completed a field assessment of sampling activities for the Missisquoi Bay Basin Project – Short-Term Monitoring Project. No deviations from the procedures outlined in the approved QAPP were observed. The Field Assessment report is contained in Attachment B.

Self-Assessment Procedures – In FY-2010, NEIWPCC conducted the third annual employee QA self-assessment process. This two-stage process consists of a three question screening survey contained in the employee performance evaluation, followed by a ten question self reporting form where warranted. The results from previous years were utilized to tailor the content of the annual QA training session conducted during the NEIWPCC all-staff meeting held in June 2010. The self-assessment process continues to be refined.

Regional QA Roundtable – NEIWPCC continues to participate in (and occasionally host) the New England Quality Assurance Roundtable – consisting of QA Officers for the New England state environmental agencies and their EPA counterparts from the Region 1 QA Unit.

QA Irregularities – No irregularities were noted.

B. QUALITY SYSTEM REVIEW

Areas of Success:

- Effectively adapting to a doubling of the total number of QAPPs submitted for review and approval during the course of the fiscal year; including seeking review assistance from other staff and implementing customized technical training for project managers.
- Conducting field assessment during an active sampling activity.
- Continued implementation of the employee self-assessment process
- Additional continuing areas of success include:
 - Information exchange through the regional QA roundtable
 - Open QA communication throughout the NEIWPCC organization
 - Management's commitment to continuous improvement

Areas for Improvement - An integral component of the continuous improvement process is the identification of areas or elements of the system that can be enhanced or optimized. The primary opportunity for improvement in the upcoming year will be focused on maintaining consistent, timely reviews of QAPPS in light of what is anticipated to be another high-volume year. Also, continuing to refine and enhance field assessment procedures.

C. GOALS FOR NEXT YEAR

As has been previously discussed, the following are goals for FY 2011:

- Development of a database to track QAPPs through the approval process and other pertinent QA items on a project-by-project basis.
- Continue to assess the effectiveness of the new field assessment documentation process.
- Continue active participation in the EPA-sponsored New England QA Roundtable.
- Continue to share information from the QA Roundtable with appropriate NEIWPCC staff and facilitate information exchange on issues of common interest.

D. QUALITY MANAGEMENT PLAN REVIEW

There have been no modifications to the NEIWPCC Quality Management System that would warrant revision of the current Quality Management Plan

ATTACHMENT A
QAPP List

Fiscal Year 2010 Quality Assurance Project Plans

Project	Organization	NEIWPCC Project Manager	Approved By	QAPP Status
State of the Estuary Report on Health of the New York – New Jersey Harbor Estuary	NEIWPCC	Gabriela Munoz NY-NJ HEP	EPA Region 2	Approved
Integrated Habitat Restoration into the Daylighting Project for the Saw Mill River	Groundwork Yonkers	Susy King	EPA Region 2	Approved
Nutrient Assessment and Management in Shallow Coastal Embayments in New York and New Jersey	Battelle	Susy King	EPA Region 2	Approved
Northeast Regional Floristic Quality Assessment Index	NEIWPCC	Kerry Strout	EPA OWOW	Approved
Creation of Stewardship Site Selection Criteria and GIS Tool	Fountains Spatial, Inc	Clair Ryan	EPA Region 1	Approved
Estimate of American Shad and River Herring Bycatch in the Winter Ocean Fishery for Sea Herring and Mackerel in New York Bight	NEIWPCC	Amanda Higgs HRERR	NEIWPCC, NYS DEC DFW	Approved
Adaptive Management of Double-crested Cormorants on Four Brothers Islands, Lake Champlain	The Nature Conservancy	Eric Howe LCBP	EPA Region 1	Approved
Model Quality Assurance Project Plan for Nutrient Assessment and Management in Hempstead Bay New York	Battelle	Susy King	EPA Region 2	Approved
Long Island Sound Study Environmental Indicators Presentation and Public Outreach	NEIWPCC	Clair Ryan	EPA Region 1	Approved
The Vermont Common Tern Recovery Project	Audubon, Vermont	Eric Howe LCBP	NEIWPCC	Approved
Quality Assurance Project Plan for the Use of Secondary Data in Developing the Harbor Estuary Program Report	Great Lakes Environmental Center	Susy King	EPA Region 2	Approved
Data Collection to Support a Phosphorous Mass Balance Model for Missisquoi Bay	LimnoTech	Eric Howe LCBP	EPA Region 1	Approved
The Conservation of Zack Woods	Trustees for Public Lands	Eric Howe LCBP	NEIWPCC	Approved

Project	Organization	NEIWPCC Project Manager	Approved By	QAPP Status
Williston Wildlife Habitat Assessment	Town of Williston	Eric Howe LCBP	NEIWPCC	Approved
Identification of Critical Source Areas of Phosphorous Pollution within the Vermont Section of the Missisquoi Bay Basin	Stone Environmental	Eric Howe LCBP	EPA Region 1	Approved
Inventory and Conservation of Wetlands, Riparian Zones, Wildlife Corridors, and other Significant Wildlife Habitat in the Upper Poultney River Watershed	Poultney Mettowee Conservation District	Eric Howe LCBP	NEIWPCC	Approved
Culvert Assessment, Prioritization, and Restoration Planning for Aquatic Organism Passage and Geomorphic Stabilization, Potash Brook	South Burlington Stormwater Utility	Eric Howe LCBP	NEIWPCC	Approved
Lower Hudson River Tributary Sediment Monitoring	US Geological Survey	Susy King	EPA Region 2	Approved
Monitoring Tree Health and Bird Use of Riparian restoration Projects in Vermont	US Fish and Wildlife Service	Eric Howe LCBP	EPA Region 1	Approved
Maintaining Monitoring of Atmospheric Mercury and Other Pollutant Deposition at Underhill, Vermont	University of Vermont	Eric Howe LCBP	EPA Region 1	Approved
Operation and Maintenance of Lake Champlain Meteorological Stations	University of Vermont	Eric Howe LCBP	EPA Region 1	Approved

LCBP: Lake Champlain Basin Program
 EPA OWOW: EPA Office of Wetlands, Oceans, and Watersheds
 NYS DEC DFW: New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, Division of Fish and Wildlife
 NY-NJ HEP: New York-New Jersey Harbor Estuary Program
 HRERR: Hudson River Estuary Research Reserve

ATTACHMENT B
Field Assessment Report

Missisquoi Bay Basin Project – Short Term Monitoring Program
Field Assessment to Determine Conformance to Approved QAPP
Conducted: May 6, 2010

On May 6, 2010 the NEIWPC Quality Assurance Program Manager (Michael Jennings) accompanied Nicole Grohoski and Eric Howe of the Lake Champlain Basin Program during field activities to collect a round of samples from five sampling locations associated with the Missisquoi Bay Basin Project – Short Term Monitoring Program.

Samples were collected from the following locations: Hungerford Brook, Black Creek, Tyler Branch, Trout River, and Mud Creek. Manual samples were collected at all locations. In addition an ISCO automated sampler had collected a series of discrete samples at the Hungerford Brook location.

All samples were collected, containerized, and transported in accordance with the approved quality assurance project plan.

Samples were relinquished to the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation laboratory in Waterbury, Vermont.

No deviations from (or discrepancies with) the approved quality assurance project plan were observed.



Nichole Grohoski collecting samples from the ISCO auto-sampler located at Hungerford Brook



Typical sample containers provided by VT DEC laboratory



Use of churn splitter to homogenize manual samples

NEIWPCC Field Assessment Data Sheet

Project: Mississippi Bay Basin STMP

Staff: Mike, Eric,

Project Location: VT (LCR)

Assessors: Mike

Assessment Dates: 5/6/10

Brief Project Description:

- Is there an approved QA Project Plan for the overall project and has it been reviewed by all appropriate personnel?
yes.
- Is a copy of the current approved QA Project Plan maintained at the site? If not, briefly describe how and where quality assurance and quality control requirements and procedures are documented at the site.
PDF stored on common drive @ office
Paper copy accompanies field crew
- Is the implementation of the project in accordance with the QA Project Plan?
As this point in time, all field activities appear to be in conformance with the approved QAP
- Are there deviations from the QA Project Plan? (If yes, explain)
No, not at this time
- Do any deviations from the QA Project Plan affect data quality?
- N/A -
- Have any corrective actions been taken during the project?
None at this time
- Did these corrective actions impact data quality (If yes, describe)
- N/A -

(Note any other pertinent information on the reverse side of this form.)