

Date: August 13, 2010

To: William Ray, Karen Larsen, Toni Marshall – State Water Resources Control Board (State Board); Terrence Fleming – U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 9

CC: Rusty Fairey – Moss Landing Marine Laboratories (MLML)

From: The Surface Water Ambient Monitoring Program (SWAMP) Quality Assurance Team (QAT) and Data Management Team (DMT)

Subject: Implementation of the Revised SWAMP Data Classification System

Background

On June 17, 2010, the SWAMP Roundtable approved two changes to the SWAMP quality assurance (QA) program:

1. The Roundtable approved the SWAMP standard operating procedure (SOP) *Data Classification System*. Approval of this document constituted approval of the revised data classification system proposed by the QAT and DMT.
2. The Roundtable approved a method for applying SWAMP data classifications to samples receiving holding time violations. This method was presented to the Roundtable in a memo dated April 27, 2010 (*filename: SWAMP Memo-Holding times and data classification-FINAL.pdf*).

Application of Approved Changes

The SWAMP QAT and DMT have discussed the implementation of these changes, and propose the following.

1. The new data classification system and method related to holding time violations would be applied to data collected under the 2008 *Surface Water Ambient Monitoring Program Quality Assurance Program Plan* (QAPrP). The DMT has only recently begun receiving SWAMP data collected under the QAPrP. A small amount of this data has already been validated using the old classification system. The DMT estimates the resources needed to reclassify this data would be minimal.

From a practical standpoint, the change from the 2002 *Quality Assurance Management Plan for the State of California's Surface Water Ambient Monitoring Program* (QAMP - 2002) to the QAPrP would provide a clear dividing line for implementing the approved changes.

2. "Historical" data classified using the original classification system would not be updated to the new classification system. There are currently no plans to reclassify SWAMP data collected under the QAMP. Assuming the proposed timeline for implementation is approved, data collected under the SWAMP QAMP would continue to be classified under the original SWAMP data classification system.
3. One of the key differences between the original and revised classification systems is a significant change in the definition of the "Estimated" classification level. In order to distinguish the original and revised data classification systems, the original code "Est" would be changed to "QualH". The compliance codes for the other classification levels would remain unchanged.

Requested Action

The SWAMP QAT and DMT request approval of the following points:

1. The revised SWAMP data classification system, including the handling of holding time violations, will be implemented with data collected under the 2008 SWAMP QAPrP.
2. Data collected under the 2002 SWAMP QAMP will be classified under the original data classification system. This data will not be reclassified under the revised system (i.e., no change to "Historical" data).
3. The compliance code for "Estimated" data classified under the original system will be changed from "Est" to "QualH".