State of California

State Water Resources Control Board and Regional Water Quality Control Boards

National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Quality Assurance Implementation Project Charter

(Draft Version January 2, 2018)

Photo by Carl Henriet

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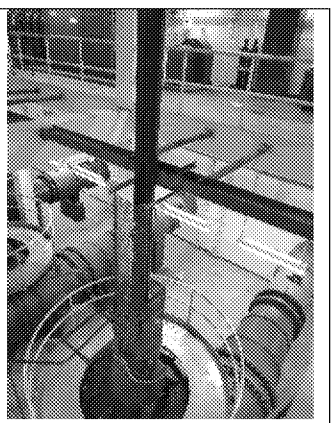
National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Quality Assurance Implementation Project Charter

(Draft Version 1/2/18)

Project Information

Project Name	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Quality Assurance (QA) Implementation Project
Program Name	NPDES QA Program
Division / Agency	Division of Water Quality / State Water Resources Control Board in coordination with the Regional Water Quality Control Boards
Focus Area	Statewide NPDES Wastewater Permit Program (not storm water or MS4)
Product / Process	Planning and development, data problem resolution, implementation, and administrative oversight to support QA activities for the NPDES QA Program
Funding Source	N/A
Project Lead	Carl Henriet
Project Senior	Afrooz Farsimadan
Executive Sponsors	Jonathan Bishop / Karen Larsen

Project Overview

Background	The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) issued an Order on May 5, 2000 that established policy for an agency-wide quality assurance system that is mandatory for all programs that receive federal funding and rely on the need for quality data. U.S. EPA subsequently developed detailed program requirements and a series of guidance for quality assurance (QA) and quality control (QC) practices, which will need to be adapted to NPDES permitting.  Photo by Steven Moore The State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) developed a Quality Management Plan (QMP) on October 1, 2010 to comply with U.S. EPA's Order. The State Water Board revised the QMP on December 8, 2016 (as Version 2.0) and U.S. EPA provided final approval on February 13, 2017. All individual QA Programs, including the NPDES QA Program, must achieve QMP requirements. The State Water Board's Office of Information Management and Analysis (OIMA) and Division of Water Quality (DWQ) completed an NPDES QA Program Plan on August 16, 2017 that is pending revision to satisfy remaining Regional Water Board concerns. The NPDES QA Program Plan provides a foundation for a complete QA

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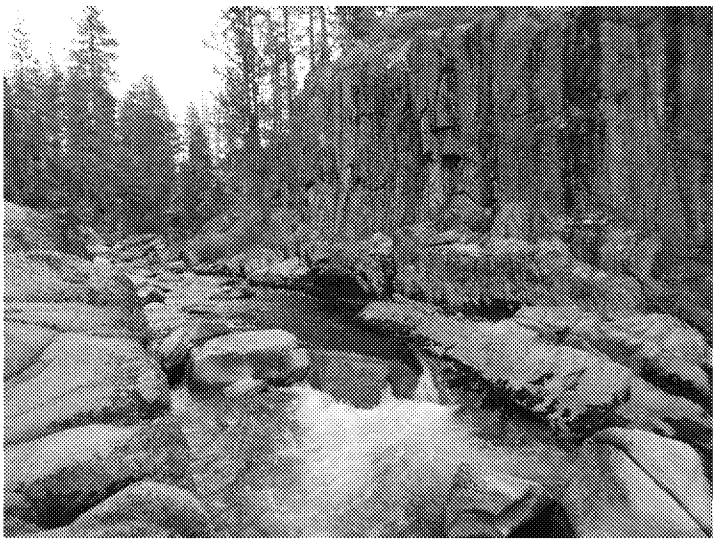
	system and an approach for implementation. The Water Boards are committed to implement the NPDES QA Program. This project sets out a granular, stepwise approach to reach the goals and deliverables required by the QMP and the NPDES QA Program Plan. This project establishes a target schedule for implementation based on priorities and a logical sequence for development. The development and implementation of the NPDES QA Program must deal with many complex and sensitive issues and other issues that arise during the process. The schedule will be subject to the availability of resources for the planning and implementation efforts. This Project Charter will be subject to revision and status updates. The NPDES QA Program is not currently under a fixed timeline for development. However, the NPDES QA Program must maintain regular progress to reach its goals and deliverables even if the plans and schedule must remain somewhat flexible. The NPDES QA Program will remain ongoing once it is fully developed.
Objectives	The objectives of the NPDES QA Program include the generation of data of known and documented quality to make scientifically sound and legally defensible permitting decisions. The objectives also include the resolution of problems that are affecting the functionality of using data from the California Integrated Water Quality System (CIWQS) database.
Scope	The requirements of the QMP and NPDES QA Program Plan can be segmented into four main aspects as follows: • <u>Planning and Development</u> – The project includes the development of internal deliverables for use by Water Board staff (e.g., technical references, checklists, tools, and forms). Products from the Surface Water Ambient Monitoring Program (SWAMP) and Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program (ELAP) will assist that effort. The project requires decision making how the NPDES Program will satisfy elements of a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) through staff and discharger actions. Attachment A, Figure 1 shows the 24 elements of a QAPP. A streamlined checklist will assure that staff complete NPDES permits with requirements to satisfy QAPP elements. Dischargers may need to perform additional requirements for QA implementation and reporting to satisfy the remaining QAPP elements. The project will establish data quality objectives for the NPDES QA Program and develop procedures for data verification, validation, and assessment with considerations to the cost of compliance and resource limitations. U.S. EPA guidance will be adapted for these procedures as best practicable for the NPDES Program. The project will consider if any Board-adopted actions may be necessary to implement QA and if there are alternative measures. The project will include stakeholders to participate at appropriate opportunities. The project will provide status

	updates to management groups. • Data Problems Resolution – Data problems may originate at many different areas of the NPDES Program including: policy or regulation; permit monitoring and reporting requirements; database coding; QA procedures; field monitoring; sample collection; laboratory analysis; and reporting. Attachment A, Figure 2 shows NPDES processes where data problems may originate and require QA implementation. The project will make a focused effort to identify data quality problems, find their origin, and recommend appropriate solutions to management. The project will resolve easier problems early in the process. The project will address problems with effluent limit types within the CIWQS database. The project will also consider how audits or streamlined alternative measures can deal with laboratory problems. • Implementation – The project must plan, synchronize, and oversee many aspects of implementation. These efforts include staff training; discharger outreach; documentation of staff and discharger actions to satisfy QAPPs; documentation of data verification/validation/assessment; coordination with CIWQS; laboratory audits or alternative measures; and corrective actions oversight. • Oversight and Administrative Functions – The project must provide ongoing communication and reporting to many items of the QMP and NPDES QA Program Plan. The project will provide management estimates of resource requirements to support NPDES QA activities. The project will initially focus on chemical parameters (e.g., conventional, non-conventional, priority pollutants) followed by whole effluent toxicity when policy and tools are fully developed. The project may subsequently address biostimulation indicators, fish tissue, sediment, and bioassessment parameters as needs arise in NPDES permits. The project will initially focus on individual NPDES permits and Regional Water Board (in-house) compliance monitoring. The NPDES QA Program will develop and implement QA for general NPDES permits in a subsequent effort.
Stakeholders	Internal: Water Board staff for NPDES permit writing, inspection, casework, assessment, TMDLs, CIWQS database, and enforcement. External: U.S. EPA, NPDES dischargers, and interested parties.
Metrics	Primary metrics for implementation (following planning and development): • Satisfaction of QAPP elements by Water Board staff and dischargers through NPDES permits and other measures • Procedures for data verification, validation, and assessment with consideration to cost of compliance and resources

	• NPDES QA tools, training, and outreach in place • Identification and resolution of priority data quality problems • Laboratory audit procedures or alternative measures • Representative water quality data • Improved functionality of using the CIWQS database • Administrative reporting to satisfy the QMP and NPDES QA Program Plan <u>Secondary metrics for implementation</u>: • Minimized backlog to NPDES permit issuance and inspection commitments that are attributable to the resources required for QA implementation • Sequenced rollout of QA implementation actions to ease transition
Initial Status	State and Regional Water Board staff formed an NPDES QA Work Group in early 2017 to perform planning and development functions, resolve problems, setup QA implementation activities, and support administrative functions of the NPDES QA Program. Active contributions and teamwork from the NPDES QA Work Group members will be required to maintain the project schedule. The NPDES QA Program will implement requirements of the QMP and NPDES QA Program Plan. OIMA is revising the NPDES QA Program Plan to address outstanding Regional Water Board concerns. Management requested this Charter to be in working format by March 2018 and it will remain as a living document, subject to revision and status updates. The planning and development activities for fiscal year 2017-18 will primarily focus on: (1) determining how QAPP elements will be satisfied through staff and discharger activities; (2) adapting U.S. EPA's QA/QC guidance series to California's NPDES Program; and (3) identifying where data problems are occurring and the alternatives for resolution. The project will develop other implementation actions and deliverables on a fiscal year basis. The NPDES QA Work Group will provide ongoing communication between the Regional Water Boards, NPDES and QA Roundtables, U.S. EPA, management groups, and stakeholders brought into the QA planning and implementation effort. The cost of compliance and resource requirements for implementation will be key considerations as the NPDES QA Work Group explores alternative measures for implementation. The NPDES QA Work Group will rely on administrative regulations and rulemaking information cited in Attachment B together with assistance from the Office of Chief Counsel for determining if proposed actions will require adoption by the State Water Board.

Photo by Steven Moore



NPDES QA Work Group

State / Regional Board / Other	Lead Representative	Backups
State Board - DWQ	Carl Henriet	Afrooz Farsimadan
RB1	Mona Dougherty	Cathy Goodwin
RB2	Jessica Watkins	John Madigan
RB3	Sheila Soderberg	
RB4	Jau Ren Chen	Steven Webb
RB5	Nichole Morgan	Jim Marshall, Anne Littlejohn, Alisha Wenzel
RB6	N/A – Declined	
RB7	Kai Dunn	Jeong-Hee Lim
RB8	Milasol Gaslan	Julio Lara
RB9	Joann Lim	Vicente Rodriguez
State Board - Office of Enforcement	Matt Buffleben	Erin Mustain
U.S. EPA	Becky Mitschele	

Project Schedules

Brackets show Work Group responsibilities / teams. Team makeup may vary each fiscal year.

Fiscal Year 2017-18	Months	Goal		Actual	
		Start	End	Start	End
Charter Adjustments: Adjust this Project Charter to NPDES QA Program Plan revisions. Finalize the project actions and target schedule. [State Board lead; Work Group assist]	2	1/1/18	3/1/18		
Annual NPDES QA Report: Submit the Annual NPDES QA Report to OIMA for Calendar Year 2017. [State and Regional Board leads]	1	8/1/17	9/1/17		

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Develop QA Training for Staff: Assist OIMA with development of basic QA training for staff. The QA Roundtable is heading this effort. [State Board lead; Work Group assist]	TBD				
Assemble QA Products: Collect and review SWAMP, ELAP, and Regional Board QA products and resources for internal use by the NPDES QA Work Group. [Work Group Team A]	4	1/1/18	5/1/18		
NPDES QA Intranet Webpage: Develop the NPDES QA intranet webpage with key documents; FAQs; U.S. EPA guidance; resources; links; regulation updates; alternative test procedure information; and terminology. The intranet webpage must serve the NPDES QA Work Group and Regional Board staff. Establish ongoing maintenance. [Work Group Team A]	6	1/1/18	7/1/18		
NPDES Water Data Summit: Assist OIMA in developing and conducting a summit with Regional Board staff and stakeholders to discuss NPDES data problems, needs, and potential uses. Summarize comments for further use. Scheduled for 3/30/18 at the Cal EPA Building. [State Board lead; Work Group assist]	5.5	11/21/17	5/1/18		
Data Problem Screening Surveys: Develop and administer data problem screening surveys and interviews. Address NPDES data processes shown in Attachment A, Figure 2. Include staff that directly work with data and dischargers. Coordinate with NPDES Program Managers to promote staff participation. [State Board lead; Work Group assist]	2	1/1/18	3/1/18		
Data Problem Report: Summarize data problems, recommend priorities and methods for solution, identify easy vs. difficult solutions, and provide a report to management. Include a master data problems spreadsheet for decision-making and resolution tracking purposes. Problems may reside with policy; permit writing;	2	3/1/18	5/1/18		

discharger management; field monitoring; laboratory; reporting; and data review processes. The Data Problem Report will be the basis for ongoing planning. [State Board lead; Work Group assist]					
Crosswalk QAPP Guidance: Crosswalk U.S. EPA QAPP Guidance to the NPDES Permit Program. Partition the detailed QAPP elements as staff or discharger responsibilities. Create lists for both. (EPA QA/G-5 and QA/R-5) [State Board lead; Work Group assist]	3	1/1/18	4/1/18		
DQO Guidance Adaptation: Review U.S. EPA Data Quality Objectives (DQO) Guidance and develop recommendations for NPDES Program adaptation. (EPA QA/G-4) [Work Group Team B]	2	3/1/18	5/1/18		
Conceptual Data Verification / Validation: Review U.S. EPA Data Verification / Validation Guidance, visualize roles between staff and dischargers, identify focus issues and parameters, and develop concepts for NPDES Program adaptation. (EPA QA/G-8) [Work Group Team C]	2	3/1/18	5/1/18		
SOP Guidance Adaptation: Review U.S. EPA Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) Guidance for NPDES Program adaptation. (EPA QA/G-6) [State Board lead; Work Group assist]	2	3/1/18	5/1/18		
QAPP Elements for Staff and Dischargers: Amend the detailed QAPP element lists for staff and discharger responsibilities based on adaptations of the U.S. EPA Guidance Series. The lists will be a basis for ongoing planning. [Work Group]	1	5/1/18	6/1/18		
Draft NPDES Permit Preparation Checklist for Staff: Draft an NPDES Permit Preparation Checklist for satisfaction of QAPP elements by staff. [State Board lead; Work Group assist]	1	6/1/18	6/30/18		

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Fiscal Year 2018-19	Months	Goal		Actual	
		Start	End	Start	End
Data Problem Resolution: Organize, schedule, and administer FY 2018-19 data problem resolution. Problems may reside at policy; permit writing; discharger management; field monitoring; laboratory; reporting; and data review processes. Initial efforts will focus on resolving easy issues and planning for resolving the more difficult issues on a priority basis. Begin coordination with ELAP for problems originating at laboratories. [State Board lead; Work Group assist]	12	7/1/18	6/30/19		
Develop QA Training for Staff: Assist OIMA with development of basic QA training for staff. The QA Roundtable is heading this effort. [State Board lead; Work Group assist]	TBD				
Annual NPDES QA Report: Submit the Annual NPDES QA Report to OIMA for Calendar Year 2018. [State and Regional Board leads]	1	8/1/18	9/1/18		
Project Status for Management: Present project status to the Joint MCC/DMC for management direction on key decisions. [State Board lead / Exec Sponsors]	1	9/1/18	10/1/18		
Toxicity Assessment Resources and NPDES QA Intranet Webpage Update: Identify NPDES QA tools, training, webpage resources, and procedures necessary to support toxicity data assessment under new policy. Post resources or links on the NPDES QA intranet webpage. Toxicity policy may be in place in late 2018. Provide updates and maintenance to the NPDES QA intranet webpage. [Work Group Team A]	6	7/1/18	1/1/19		
NPDES QA Internet Webpage: Develop a framework for the NPDES QA internet webpage to assist stakeholders and the public. Compile items for posting while the webpage remains under construction. [Work Group Team A]	6	1/1/19	6/30/19		
Monitoring and Reporting	12	7/1/18	6/30/19		

Improvements: Make easy improvements to NPDES permit templates, Regional Board Standard Monitoring and Reporting Requirements, and CIWQS data portal reporting instructions to resolve data problems. Resolve problems with missing data fields and identifiers in CIWQS. Make recommendations for resources to include on the NPDES QA internet webpage. [Work Group Team B]					
Inspection Improvements: Make improvements to the Compliance Evaluation Inspection checklist to resolve data problems. [Work Group Team B]	2	7/1/18	6/30/19		
Standard Limit Calculation Types: Define and standardize the effluent limit types and calculations used in NPDES permits to reduce data problems in CIWQS. Resolution actions include (1) defining limit types that support existing objectives; (2) standardizing limit definitions for consistency; (3) clarifying limit calculations for all data situations; and (4) preventing development of new limit calculation types by permit writers and TMDL / Basin Planning staff. Consider how permit writers may convert limits to standard types at permit reissuance (e.g., address anti-backsliding and antidegradation). Provide effluent limit coding assistance to database workers and contractors. [Work Group Team C]	12	7/1/18	6/30/19		

Fiscal Year 2019-20	Months	Goal		Actual	
		Start	End	Start	End
Data Problem Resolution: Organize, schedule, and administer FY 2019-20 data problem resolution. Finish resolving easy issues and begin resolving issues that are more difficult. [State Board lead; Work Group assist]	12	7/1/19	6/30/20		
Annual NPDES QA Report: Submit the Annual NPDES QA Report to OIMA for Calendar Year 2019.	1	8/1/19	9/1/19		

[State and Regional Board leads]					
Project Status for Management: Present project status to the Joint MCC/DMC for management direction on key decisions. [State Board lead / Exec Sponsors]	1	9/1/19	10/1/19		
Regional Board QA Manuals: Develop improved or standardized Regional Board QA Procedure Manuals. Address internal staff training and qualifications to perform sampling; equipment maintenance and logs; compliance sampling procedures and chain of custody; data validation and assessment; data maintenance, and in-house documentation. [Work Group Team A]	12	7/1/19	6/30/20		
Final NPDES Permit Preparation Checklist and Documentation: Finalize and streamline the NPDES Permit Preparation Checklist to satisfy QAPP elements by staff, to prompt internal corrective actions, and to resolve data problems. Develop a database to document completed checklists. Setup documentation procedures for staff. Annual QA Reports may use the documentation. [Work Group Team B]	6	7/1/19	1/1/20		
Implement NPDES Permit Preparation Checklists: Provide training as necessary and oversee implementation of the NPDES Permit Preparation Checklist by staff at the Regional Board level. Maintain database documentation. Implement internal corrective actions. [Each Regional Board]	6	1/1/20	6/30/20		
Conceptual NPDES Permit QA Requirements for Dischargers: Develop conceptual NPDES Permit QA requirements for satisfaction of QAPP elements by dischargers under individual NPDES permits. Consider implementation alternatives. Address how QAPP elements should be satisfied for Sampling Management Plans or Special Studies prepared by dischargers. Recommend the process how Regional Boards will review and	6	1/1/20	6/30/20		

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approve QAPP element submittals by dischargers under individual NPDES permits. [Work Group Team B]					
NPDES DQO Development: Develop data quality objectives (DQOs) for the NPDES QA Program with consideration to water body types, beneficial uses, and Basin Plan objectives / criteria. Adapt U.S. EPA guidance as best practicable (EPA QA/G-4). Consider the process used by SWAMP to develop and update measurement quality objectives, incorporated by reference in the California Ocean Plan. Evaluate the need to update minimum levels for priority pollutants and establish minimum levels for other parameters. Recommend a process to update minimum levels for management approval if needed. [Work Group Team C]	12	7/1/19	6/30/20		

Fiscal Year 2020-21	Months	Goal		Actual	
		Start	End	Start	End
Data Problem Resolution: Organize, schedule, and administer FY 2020-21 data problem resolution. [State Board lead; Work Group assist]	12	7/1/20	6/30/21		
Annual NPDES QA Report: Submit the Annual NPDES QA Report to OIMA for Calendar Year 2020. [State and Regional Board leads]	1	8/1/20	9/1/20		
Project Status for Management: Present project status to the Joint MCC/DMC for management direction on key decisions. [State Board lead / Exec Sponsors]	1	9/1/20	10/1/20		
NPDES QA Internet Webpage: Develop the NPDES QA internet webpage to assist stakeholders and the public. Establish ongoing maintenance. [Work Group Team A]	12	7/1/20	6/30/21		
Representative Data Issues: Develop guidance for staff to determine representative data. Guidance should serve the uses of	4	7/1/20	11/1/20		

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data for reasonable potential analysis as well as compliance assessment. [Work Group]					
Draft Data Verification, Validation, and Assessment Procedures: Develop draft NPDES QA procedures for staff to review and assess data. Adapt U.S. EPA guidance as best practicable (EPA QA/G-8). Provide consideration to varying staffing structures and responsibilities among Regional Boards. The draft procedures may need adjustment for focus parameters or various levels of coverage since resources are limited. Consider how to document data assessments for use at the permit writer / enforcement level and Annual NPDES QA Reports. Develop a database to track and document data assessments for individual NPDES permits. [Work Group]	8	7/1/20	3/1/21		
NPDES QA Resource Estimates: Estimate resource needs for staff to perform data verification, validation, and assessment for focus parameters or various levels of coverage. Report resource estimates for management consideration and direction. [Work Group]	2	1/1/21	3/1/21		
Final Data Verification, Validation, and Assessment Procedures: Get management feedback for a target commitment level of data review for individual NPDES permits. Finalize NPDES QA data assessment and documentation procedures for Regional Board staff. Develop and maintain a database to document data assessment for purposes of permit writing, enforcement, and Annual QA Reports. [Work Group]	4	3/1/21	6/30/21		
Corrective Action Procedures: Develop procedures to implement corrective actions that will resolve data problems at their origin, including staff and discharger processes. Develop documentation and follow-up	4	3/1/21	6/30/21		

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procedures. [Work Group]					

Fiscal Year 2021-22	Months	Goal		Actual	
		Start	End	Start	End
Data Problem Resolution: Organize, schedule, and administer FY 2021-22 data problem resolution. [State Board lead; Work Group assist]	12	7/1/21	6/30/22		
Annual NPDES QA Report: Submit the Annual NPDES QA Report to OIMA for Calendar Year 2021. [State and Regional Board leads]	1	8/1/21	9/1/21		
Project Status for Management: Present project status to the Joint MCC/DMC for management direction on key decisions. [State Board lead / Exec Sponsors]	1	9/1/21	10/1/21		
Data Verification, Validation, and Assessment Training for Staff: Develop NPDES QA training for staff based on final data verification, assessment and documentation procedures. Include training for corrective actions. [Work Group Team A]	6	7/1/21	1/1/22		
Implement Data Assessment Procedures by Staff: Oversee implementation of data assessment and documentation by staff at the Regional Board level. [Each Regional Board]	6	1/1/22	6/30/22		
Draft NPDES Permit QA Requirements for Dischargers: Develop draft NPDES Permit QA requirements for dischargers to satisfy QAPP elements and support data assessment by staff. Consider what information staff will need to approve QA submittals and perform data assessment. Consider implementation alternatives. Route draft NPDES Permit QA requirements for management review. [Work Group Team B]	12	7/1/21	6/30/22		
Stakeholder Participation: Engage stakeholder participation with the NPDES QA Work Group as appropriate to discuss QA issues.	12	7/1/21	6/30/22		

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Work with stakeholders to consider the cost of compliance and alternatives to implement potential discharger NPDES QA requirements. (This is a placeholder item) [Work Group Team B]					
Schedule NPDES QA Items for Adoption: Organize and schedule any NPDES QA items requiring adoption by the State Water Board as directed by management with assistance by OCC. Base decisions on administrative regulations and rulemaking information cited in Attachment B. Potential items for mandatory statewide implementation include, but are not limited to, discharger QA requirements under NPDES permits, updated minimum levels, and permit limit calculation types. (This is a placeholder item) [State Board lead; Work Group assist]	12	7/1/21	6/30/22		

Fiscal Year 2022-23	Months	Goal		Actual	
		Start	End	Start	End
Data Problem Resolution: Organize, schedule, and administer FY 2021-22 data problem resolution. [State Board lead; Work Group assist]	12	7/1/22	6/30/23		
Annual NPDES QA Report: Submit the Annual NPDES QA Report to OIMA for Calendar Year 2021. [State and Regional Board leads]	1	8/1/22	9/1/22		
Project Status for Management: Present project status to the Joint MCC/DMC for management direction on key decisions. [State Board lead / Exec Sponsors]	1	9/1/22	10/1/22		
NPDES QA Program Plan Update: Assist OIMA with making a scheduled 5-year update to the NPDES QA Program Plan (i.e., NPDES QAPrP). [State Board lead; Work Group assist]	6	TBD	TBD		
Process NPDES QA Items for Adoption: Prepare and process any items that require adoption by the State Water Board. Coordinate actions with OCC	12	7/1/22	6/30/23		

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and the State Board Executive Office. [Work Group Team A] (This is a placeholder item)					
CIWQS Accommodations for NPDES QA Documentation: Coordinate with CIWQS staff to provide any needed accommodations and portal instructions to receive QA documentation from dischargers under NPDES permit requirements. [Work Group Team B] (This is a placeholder item)	12	7/1/22	6/30/23		
NPDES Discharger QA Workshops: Develop NPDES QA Workshops to acquaint dischargers with appropriate QA procedures to satisfy NPDES permits and QAPP requirements. Provide other helpful information, tools, and resources to dischargers. [State Board lead; Work Group assist]	6	1/1/23	6/30/23		
Laboratory Problems Resolution: Develop triggers and procedures to perform Technical Systems Audits (i.e., laboratory audits) or implement alternative measures to deal with laboratory problems. Regional Boards lack staff chemists, which are the most qualified personnel to perform audits. Coordinate ideas with ELAP for implementing alternative measures vs. full laboratory audits. Plan how to bring in technical expertise. Format report structure to support enforcement processes. Assess resource, staff position class, and qualification needs for management direction how to proceed. [Work Group Team C]	12	7/1/22	6/30/23		

Fiscal Year 2023-24	Months	Goal		Actual	
		Start	End	Start	End
Data Problem Resolution: Organize, schedule, and administer FY 2021-22 data problem resolution. [State Board lead; Work Group assist]	12	7/1/23	6/30/24		
Annual NPDES QA Report: Submit the Annual NPDES QA Report to OIMA for Calendar Year 2021. [State and Regional Board leads]	1	8/1/23	9/1/23		

Project Status for Management: Present project status to the Joint MCC/DMC for management direction on key decisions. [State Board lead / Exec Sponsors]	1	9/1/23	10/1/23		
Process NPDES QA Items for Adoption (continuing): Prepare and process any continuing items that require adoption by the State Water Board. Coordinate actions with OCC and the State Board Executive Office. [Work Group Team A] (This is a placeholder item)	6	7/1/23	1/1/24		
Oversight Planning: Plan rollout and ongoing oversight of staff actions (e.g., permit writing, data assessment) and discharger actions (e.g., QA submittals under NPDES permits) to satisfy QAPP elements. Plan rollout and ongoing oversight of corrective actions and laboratory audits. [Work Group Team B]	6	7/1/23	1/1/24		
Laboratory Audit Training: Develop training for staff to perform laboratory audits or implement alternative measures. [Work Group Team C]	6	7/1/23	1/1/24		
Assess QAPP Element Satisfaction: Assess and report how the NPDES QA Program satisfies QAPP elements on a program and/or project level through staff and discharger actions. Plan implementation of any additional needed actions. Management, OIMA, and U.S. EPA will review the report. [State Board lead; Work Group assist]	6	1/1/24	6/30/24		
NPDES QA Program Assessment: Assist OIMA and U.S. EPA with assessment of NPDES QA Program conformance to the NPDES QA Program Plan and the Quality Management Plan. U.S. EPA guidance may apply (EPA QA/G-3). [State Board lead; Work Group assist]	6	1/1/24	6/30/24		

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Photo by Steven Moore

State Water Board Approvals

Role	Name	Date	Signature
Senior	Afrooz Farsimadan		
Section Chief	Diana Messina		
Asst. Dep. Director	Phillip Crader		
Deputy Director	Karen Larsen		

Regional Water Board NPDES Program Approvals

Region	Name	Date	Signature
1 – North Coast	Mona Dougherty		
2 – San Francisco Bay	William Johnson		
3 – Central Coast	Sheila Soderberg		
4 – Los Angeles	Deborah Smith		
5 – Central Valley	Nichole Morgan		
6 – Lahontan	Not represented		
7 – Colorado River	Kai Dunn		
8 – Santa Ana	Milasol Gaslan		
9 – San Diego	Brandi Outwin-Beals		

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Attachment A

24-Element QAPP

Project Management
A1 – Title and Approval Sheet
A2 – Table of Contents
A3 – Distribution List
A4 – Project/Task Description
A5 – Problem Definition and Background
A6 – Project/Task Description
A7 – Quality Objectives and Criteria
A8 – Special Training/Certifications
A9 – Documentation and Records

Data Generation
B1 – Sampling Process Design
B2 – Sampling Methods
B3 – Sampling Handling and Custody
B4 – Analytical Methods
B5 – Quality Control
B6 – Instrument/Equipment Testing, Inspection, and Maintenance
B7 – Instrument/Equipment Calibration and Frequency
B8 – Inspection/Acceptance of Supplies and Consumables
B9 – Non-direct Measurements
B10 – Data Management

Assessment and Oversight
C1 – Assessment and Response Actions
C2 – Reports to Management

Data Review and Usability
D1 – Data Review, Verification, and Validation
D2 – Verification and Validation Methods
D3 – Reconciliation with User Requirements

Figure 1. 24-Element QAPP

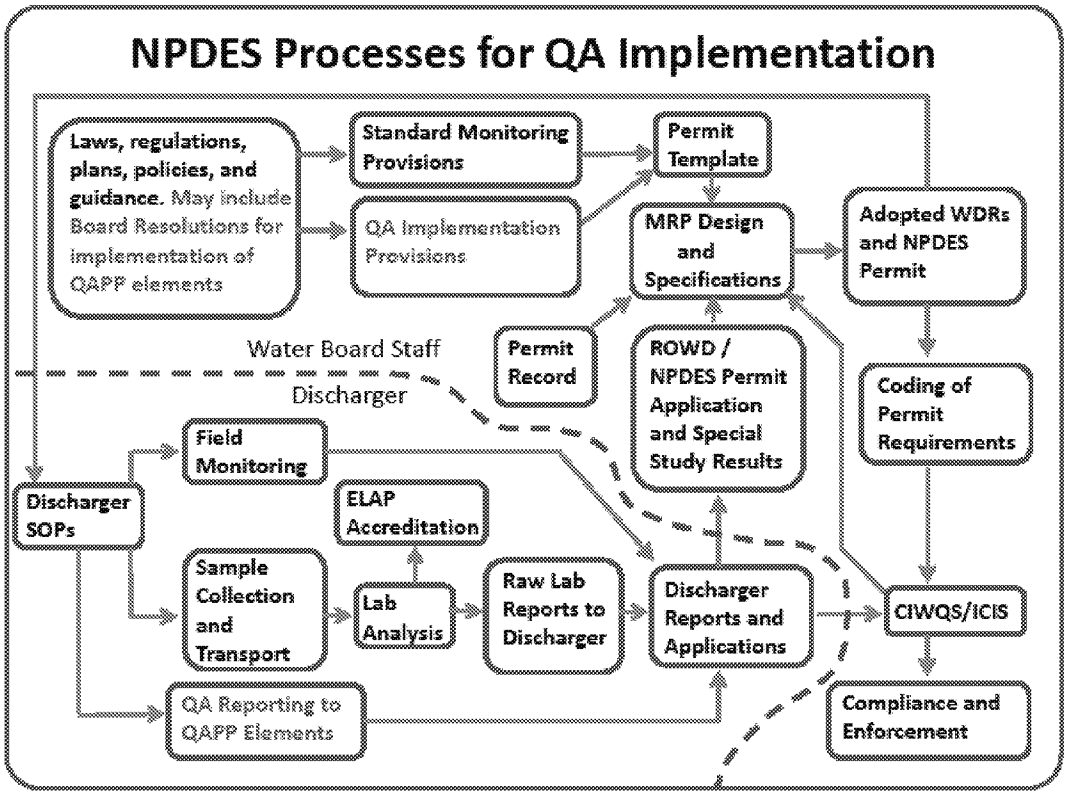

Figure 2. NPDES Processes for QA Implementation

Attachment B

Administrative Regulations and Rulemaking Information

The following excerpts from California state law and regulations help establish when rulemaking processes are required prior to implementing regulatory requirements as a rule of general applicability. The Administrative Procedures Act is codified in the California Government Code at section 11340 et. seq. The Administrative Procedures Act contains a proscription against underground regulation.

The law states that:

> "No state agency shall issue, utilize, enforce, or attempt to enforce any guideline, criterion, bulletin, manual, instruction, order, standard of general application, or other rule, which is a regulation as defined in Section 11342.600, unless the guideline, criterion, bulletin, manual, instruction, order, standard of general application, or other rule has been adopted as a regulation and filed with the Secretary of State pursuant to this chapter." (Gov. Code § 11340.5, subd. (a).)

State law defines the term "regulation" as follows:

> ""Regulation" means every rule, regulation, order, or standard of general application or the amendment, supplement, or revision of any rule, regulation, order, or standard adopted by any state agency to implement, interpret, or make specific the law enforced or administered by it, or to govern its procedure." (Gov. Code § 11342.600.)

Special procedures are applicable to Chapter 3.5, Administrative Regulations and Rulemaking, with emphasis on the exemption within provision (b):

> "The following actions are not subject to this chapter:
> (a) The issuance, denial, or waiver of any water quality certification as authorized under Section 13160 of the Water Code.
> (b) The issuance, denial, or revocation of waste discharge requirements and permits pursuant to Sections 13263 and 13377 of the Water Code and waivers issued pursuant to Section 13269 of the Water Code.
> (c) The development, issuance, and use of the guidance document pursuant to Section 13383.7 of the Water Code." (Gov. Code § 11352.)

The California Water Code requires that the Water Boards issue waste discharge requirements in compliance with the provisions of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act as amended in 1972:

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> "Notwithstanding any other provision of this division, the state board or the regional boards shall, as required or authorized by the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, as amended, issue waste discharge requirements and dredged or fill material permits which apply and ensure compliance with all applicable provisions of the act and acts amendatory thereof or supplementary, thereto, together with any more stringent effluent standards or limitations necessary to implement water quality control plans, or for the protection of beneficial uses, or to prevent nuisance." (Wat. Code § 13377.)

The California Code of Regulations requires that the Water Boards issue waste discharge requirements in compliance with U.S. EPA regulations for the NPDES program:

> "Waste discharge requirements for discharge from point sources to navigable waters shall be issued and administered in accordance with the currently applicable federal regulations for the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program." (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 23, § 2235.2.)

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