Work Plan for the Analytical Methods and Quality Assurance Workgroup

Mission Statement: To provide professional direction and guidance on field and laboratory methods and QA/QC, resulting in accurate and comparable Chesapeake Bay and tributary water quality monitoring data.

Purpose: The Workgroup members are technical advisors to the monitoring and modeling workgroups of the Scientific, Technical Analysis and Reporting Team concerning field and analytical methodology and quality assurance issues related to collection, processing and assessment of water quality data. The Workgroup provides a forum for exchange of technical information focused on the standardization of methods/use of comparable methods throughout the Chesapeake Bay Monitoring Program. Members of the Workgroup participate in the Coordinated Split Sample, Blind Audit and Reference Sample Programs and use this information to evaluate the quality of the monitoring data and to identify areas that require further study.

Objectives:

- Implement the Coordinated Split Sample Program to assess water quality data comparability between laboratories.
- Participate in blind audit and reference sample programs to demonstrate data accuracy; investigate potential analytical issues; determine corrective actions to resolve water quality data discrepancies; improve efficiency of data collection and reporting procedures; perform method comparability studies.
- Explore new monitoring and laboratory technologies for water quality analyses; standardize field and laboratory techniques among agencies; prepare reports on the quality of nutrient, chlorophyll and sediment data.

2012 Major Priorities:

- Revise the analytical methods and Quality Assurance sections of the CBP Recommended Methods for Sampling & Analysis
    - Ensure that QA and QC requirements are consistent with the National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Conference (NELAC) Institute. Document will be considered an authoritative source for CBP methods.
    - Incorporate the nontidal laboratories' procedures into CBP-recognized methods; update requirements for estuarine laboratories.
    - Revise Data Quality Objectives for tidal and nontidal laboratories.
- Support changes to the CIMS water quality database:
    - Review reporting formats and procedures for method codes, problem codes, detection limits and QC sample results; implement changes to accommodate FAST process.
    - Support development and implementation of QA requirements (e.g., QC statistics, range checks, etc.) for the new CIMS data upload QA Tool (DUQAT).
- Monitor WQ laboratory performance through interlaboratory split samples, blind audit samples and USGS reference samples.

- Work with the Non Tidal Workgroup to ensure that all CB watershed States participate in AMQAW, follow rigorous CBP guidelines/methods and QA procedures and submit their data in a consistent format to CIMS.