

Quality Assurance Management Plan for the Division of Water Restoration Assistance



State of Florida

Florida Department of Environmental Protection

July 31, 2017

Signature Page

The undersigned have read and understood this Quality Plan, are charged with managing and improving the quality system and are responsible for ensuring that all staff properly execute the procedures discussed in the plan.



Trina Vielhauer, Director

8/8/17

Date



Joseph Kahn, Staff Director

8/7/17

Date



Kate Merchant, Program Administrator and
Quality Assurance Officer

8/7/17

Date



Tim Banks, Program Administrator

8/7/17

Date



Rob Buda, Program Administrator

8/7/17

Date



Phil Coram, Program Administrator

8/7/17

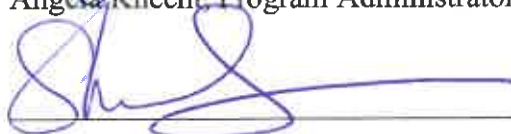
Date



Angela Knecht, Program Administrator

8-7-17

Date



Shanin Speas-Frost, Program Administrator

8-8-17

Date

INDEX

1. Introduction.....	4
2. Quality Assurance Objectives.....	4
3. Policy Statement.....	4
4. Ethics.....	5
5. Organization and Responsibilities.....	5
6. Training	7
7. Data Quality Components.....	8
8. Documentation	8
9. Compliance, Audits, and Corrective Action.....	9
10. Record Keeping.....	9
11. Approved Signatories	9
12. Report Compilation... ..	10

1. Introduction

The Division of Water Restoration Assistance (DWRA) manages state and federal grant programs targeted at water restoration. The DEP Quality Assurance (QA) program involves the implementation of a management system (planning, review, training, and assessment) to ensure that data collection, generation, interpretation, reporting, evaluation and archiving is of sufficient quality to support Department decisions.

2. Quality Assurance Objectives

The Division's goal is to maintain the level of quality needed to successfully manage the funding programs administered by the Division. Activities included are:

- Reviewing grant/loan applications
- Managing grant/loan agreements, including reviewing and approving project-specific Quality Assurance Project Plans (QAPP)
- Maintaining documentation

This Quality Plan explains both the process and criteria by which the quality system is managed. The plan is utilized as an instrument of internal communication to inform staff of current and future quality assurance activities. We will revise our Quality Plan as needed, and pledge to ensure the consistent application of procedures and criteria for the generation or use of our environmental data. The Quality Plan will also be used as a training document for new staff and as a reference for experienced personnel. The plan and its revisions also serve as an archival record of our formal quality system. The elements of the plan are consistent with the Department's Quality Management Plan, Quality Assurance Directive and Quality Assurance Rule (Chapter 62-160, F.A.C.).

3. Policy Statement

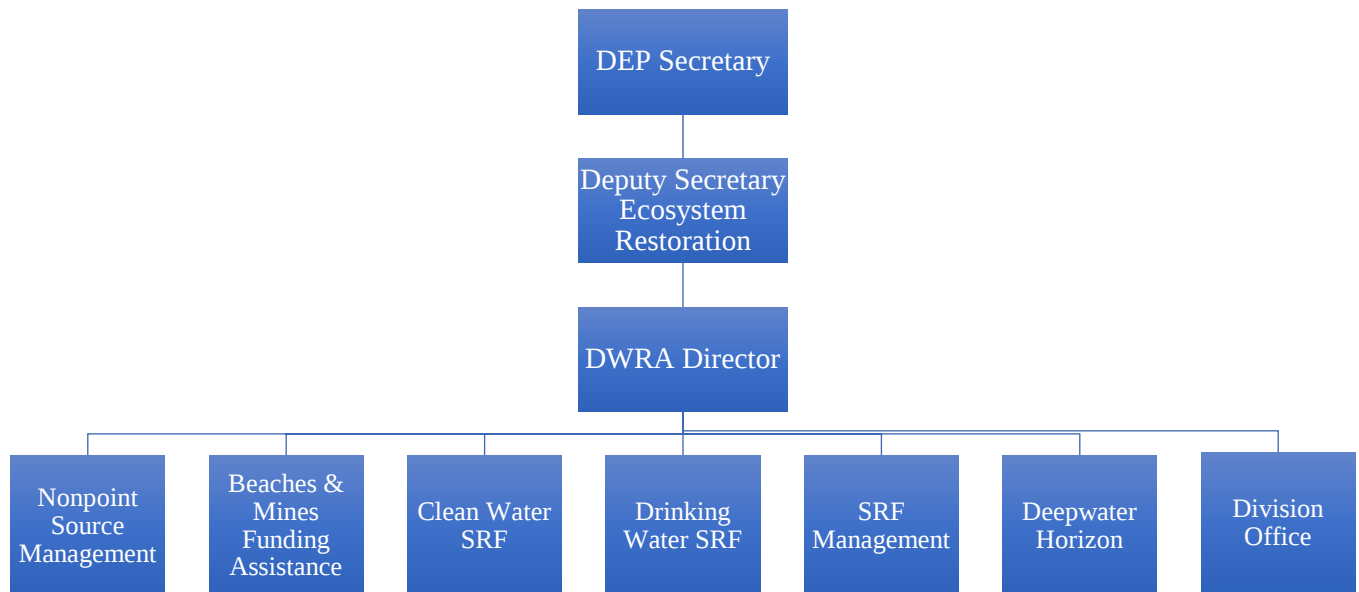
It is the Division's policy to:

- Have and implement the Quality System described in this document.
- Adaptively manage our Quality System to be consistent with provisions of the DEP Quality Assurance Management Plan.
- Ensure that each individual is properly trained to execute their assigned functions.
- Implement procedures to ensure data quality meets the data quality objectives and implement corrective actions when data do not meet data quality objectives.

4. Ethics

All employees of the DEP Division of Water Restoration Assistance are held to high professional ethical standards in the performance of their duties. All employees are required to read, understand and sign an 'Ethics Statement' attesting to their commitment to honesty and integrity in performance of their duties. In addition, all employees are required to attend an annual ethics training class. Improper, unethical or illegal actions will be dealt with according to the published Administrative Directives of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection.

5. Organization and Responsibilities



Division Staffing

DWRA has 51 FTE and 14 OPS employees. The Deepwater Horizon Program also includes a Special Advisor that is under contract through the Office of General Counsel. The division's funding also supports several other employees in water-related programs in DWRM and DEAR. The formal adoption of the new division was completed by the Legislature during the 2016 legislative session, effective July 1, 2016. The formation of the division did not result in an increase in the agency budget.

The following are summaries of the significant activities of each program in the division.

Nonpoint Source Management Program (Kate Merchant)

The Nonpoint Source Management Program is responsible for the implementation of the State of Florida's stormwater and nonpoint source management activities. These activities are implemented cooperatively by the Department, water management districts, other state agencies (i.e., Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Department of Health), local governments, and by the public. The goal of these activities is to minimize stormwater/nonpoint source pollution from new land use activities and to reduce pollution from existing activities. The Program manages the Clean Water Act Section 319(h) Grant and the state TMDL Water Quality Restoration Grant. The grants support projects that reduce pollution from nonpoint sources and urban stormwater.

Beaches and Mines Funding Assistance Programs (Rob Buda)

The Beach Management Funding Assistance Program provides grants to local governments for the planning and implementation of beach and inlet management projects, which provide protection for upland structures, infrastructure, critical habitat, recreation and tourism. Activities eligible for program funding include beach restoration and nourishment, design and engineering studies, environmental studies and monitoring, inlet management planning, inlet sand bypassing (transfer), dune restoration and vegetation, and beach erosion control alternatives. Projects must be accessible to the public, located within an area designated as "critically eroded," and be consistent with strategies listed in the statewide Strategic Beach Management Plan.

The Nonmandatory Land Reclamation Program manages grants for the reclamation of eligible phosphate lands mined before July 1975, when the regulatory requirement for reclamation was introduced in statute. As the cost of reclamation often exceeds land value, an incentive program was needed for private land owner participation. This nonmandatory mined land reclamation program improves environmental and economic utility of lands by removing safety hazards and improving water quality and quantity. Program funding is provided through severance fees paid by active mining operations.

Clean Water State Revolving Fund Program (Tim Banks)

The Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) staff is responsible for the implementation of Florida's CWSRF and Small Community Wastewater Construction Grants (SCWCG) programs. The CWSRF program provides low interest (as low as zero) loans for wastewater and stormwater projects that reduce or eliminate a source of pollution. Non-point source, such as agricultural best management practices, and green infrastructure projects are also eligible for low interest loans. The SCWCG program provides grants to small disadvantaged communities for wastewater treatment, collection, and disposal facilities. The CWSRF program's engineering project managers and other staff accept the requests for funding for wastewater and stormwater projects, review the project documents and conduct an environmental review, hold public meetings to list projects for funding, conduct site visits to assist the sponsors with meeting the program requirements, and review project costs and disbursement requests before handling by the SRF Program Management staff.

Drinking Water State Revolving Fund Program (Shanin Speas-Frost)

The Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) staff is responsible for implementing Florida's DWSRF program. The DWSRF provides low-interest loans to eligible entities for planning, designing, and constructing public water facilities. The DWSRF program receives requests for funding throughout the year. Small community assistance is available for disadvantaged communities having populations less than 10,000. The DWSRF program's project engineering managers accept the requests for funding for drinking water projects, review the project documents and conduct an environmental review, hold public meetings to list projects for funding, conduct site visits to assist the sponsors with meeting DWSRF requirements, and review project costs and disbursement requests before handling by the SRF Program Management staff.

State Revolving Fund Management Program (Angela Knecht)

The State Revolving Fund Management Program is responsible for financial oversight of the Clean Water State Revolving Fund, Drinking Water State Revolving Fund, and Small Community Wastewater Construction Grants Programs. Program staff prepares financial assistance agreements and amendments, reviews disbursement requests, monitors loan repayments, and reconciles program funds.

Deepwater Horizon Program (Phil Coram)

The Deepwater Horizon Program is responsible for identifying, selecting, and implementing restoration projects from the various sources of funds made available from the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. This includes projects selected and implemented through Natural Resource Damage Assessment Early Restoration funding to offset damages to Florida's natural resources and recreational uses from the oil spill, projects eligible for funding under National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund to preserve or improve the type of habitats and living resources damaged by the spill, and Gulf restoration projects under the RESTORE Act's Council-Selected Component funding. The unit coordinates project identification, selection, and implementation with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Water Management Districts, other State agencies, Gulf Coast Counties and Cities, non-governmental organizations, and the public.

6. Training

Staff in the DWRA programs are trained in the areas necessary to perform their duties. Along with taking the required Department-wide training courses, the program employees take the following:

- Florida Certified Contract Manager certification: required for all contract/grant managers
- Single Audit Act Training
- Program-specific training from EPA for selected personnel
- As provided, training by DEP Administrative Services on grant management.

- As provided, training by DEP Office of the Inspector General (OIG) on Fraud Deterrence
- Training on program-specific Standard Operating Procedures
- Training on grant development and the use of grant agreement templates including:
 - o Standard Terms and Conditions for Agreements, provided by DEP Office of the General Council (OGC)
 - o Scope of Work templates, developed by the DWRA Project Managers using templated language, updated as needed
 - o Quality Assurance template language and Quality Assurance Attachment (for agreements that include water quality monitoring), developed by staff in OGC and the DEP Quality Assurance Section
 - o Quality Assurance Project Plan template for grantees to use when developing QAPPs, developed by the Quality Assurance Section
 - o Other standard attachments to state or federal agreements, developed by OGC

7. Data Quality Components

The Nonpoint Source Management (NPSM) Program manages grant agreements for projects that may include water quality monitoring to evaluate the effectiveness of the project for reducing pollutants. Other grant program areas do not typically require such monitoring in the agreements. In order to maintain the level of quality assurance required, the NPSM Program employees include the following in the grant agreements:

- Template language for Quality Assurance in the grant agreement, approved by DEP OGC
- Template language for Quality Assurance in the Scope of Work attachment to the agreement, approved by DEP OGC and DEP Quality Assurance Section
- Quality Assurance Attachment for agreements developed by the DEP Quality Assurance Section

The language in the agreement and attachment templates requires that the grantees develop a project specific QAPP for the monitoring. The NPSM Program sends the grantees the QAPP template, developed by the Quality Assurance Section, to use when developing their QAPP. The NPSM Program employees review and approve the grantee's QAPPs when the template is followed. QAPPs that deviate from the template or that have research are submitted to the DEP QA Program for review. Where monitoring is required, the QAPP is considered a Deliverable in the agreement.

8. Documentation

Documentation is stored electronically. The Division office and each program have an electronic folder on the WRA server. The NPSM Program, the Beaches Program and the SRF Programs also have program specific catalogs in OCULUS for storing documents. DWRA anticipates

having any remaining older documents in paper format scanned electronically by the end of 2017.

The SRF Program has a database to manage the agreement/project information. The database is maintained by the Office of Technology and Information Services (OTIS). The other programs in the division maintain agreement/project information in Excel spreadsheets which are maintained by the programs.

9. Compliance, Audits, and Corrective Action

Program personnel perform contract monitoring for the agreements that they manage. Contract monitoring includes performing site visits to check project progress, reviewing contract deliverables (including QAPPs) and invoices. Corrective actions required of grantees are handled according to the requirements in the grant agreement. The Standard Terms and Conditions section of the grant agreements provides the instructions for handling corrective actions.

Programs in the division are audited periodically by federal (EPA) and state entities (DEP OIG, DEP Administrative Services, Dept. of Financial Services, and Office of the Attorney General). Corrective actions identified in an audit are reported to the auditors in accordance with their instructions followed by Program implementation of the corrective action.

10. Record Keeping

Records related to grants will be retained in accordance with the Department records retention policy. All records which may be disposed of shall be disposed of in accordance with procedures in Administrative Directive DEP 335, as it may be changed from time to time. No permanent records shall be destroyed without written approval by the Department's Records Administrator on Form DEP 55-413, Records Disposition Document (General Services Forms).

Records generated for the federally funded programs are disposed of in accordance with the federal requirements under Code of Federal Regulations 200.333, Retention of Records for Grants and Agreements.

11. Approved Signatories

Approved Signatories for Authorizing Agreements are:

Noah Valenstein, Secretary
Drew Bartlett, Ecosystem Restoration Deputy Secretary
Trina Vielhauer, DWRA Director
Joe Kahn, DWRA Staff Director

The Division obtains Signature Delegation of Authority (from the Secretary to the Division Director) on a project specific basis, documented through a Delegation Memo.

12. Report Compilation

The Division submits information to the Quality Assurance Section for reporting to the Secretary on an annual basis. The CWSRF, DWSRF, and NPSM Programs each prepare an annual report for submission to EPA. The NPSM Program reports water quality restoration data to EPA through EPA's Grants Reporting and Tracking System on an annual basis. In accordance with Florida Statutes, the Beach Management Funding Assistance Program submits, along with the Fixed Capital Outlay Local Government Funding Requests to the Governor and Florida Legislature, an Annual Financial Summary and Accountability Report of the appropriated funds for beach and inlet management.