

A. PROJECT MANAGEMENT

In order to execute the components of the FDEP QA Directive, the Watershed Services Program (WSP) Watershed Information Network (WIN) Section has developed a Quality Plan, the purpose of which is to ensure the implementation of a quality system. This document describes the steps WSP WIN takes to ensure the scientific and legal defensibility of environmental data we manage. It describes the process of training, assessment and corrective action we undertake to ensure that environmental data meet our established quality criteria. One aspect of our program is to ensure that Department QA activities are carried out according to commitments made to the Environmental Protection Agency as enumerated in the [FDEP Quality Management Plan \(QAMP\) Revision March 2018](#).

The WSP WIN Section resides within the Division of Environmental Assessment and Restoration (DEAR). The organization of the WIN Section consists of one Program Administrator, one Environmental Administrator, three WIN Coordinators, one WQX Coordinator/Quality Assurance Officer. A comprehensive description of WSP WIN organization and personnel responsibilities can be found in [Section 4](#) of the Quality Plan for the WSP WIN Section. All personnel undergo extensive training to ensure proficiency and accountability within their duties. Administrators annually assess whether WSP WIN staff performance conforms with the policies and procedures of our Section. A summary of WSP WIN staff training procedures can be found in [Section 5](#) of the Quality Plan for the WSP WIN Section.

WSP WIN implements Florida statutory requirements, Department rule requirements, and U.S. EPA requirements for management of environmental (non-regulatory) data for the state through WIN in accordance with the Quality Plan for the WSP WIN Section. WSP WIN manages data from both internal data providers (e.g., FDEP District Offices) and external data providers (e.g., Water Management Districts, Counties, and local governments). All data are made available for access through the Watershed Information Network (WIN) data warehouse through the publicly available [WIN Reports Module](#). Data housed in Florida's former data repository, the STORET Warehouse, can be found publicly through the [STORET Public Access \(SPA\) Website](#).

WSP WIN is committed to the implementation of the quality assurance requirements within the QAMP and as authorized by [Chapter 403.0623 Florida Statutes \(F.S.\)](#) and [Chapter 62-160 Florida Administrative Code \(F.A.C.\)](#) (the FDEP QA Rule for Water, Waste and Resource Management), specifically [Chapter 62-160.670](#), Data Validation by the Department. Data Quality Objectives (DQO) and Data Quality Indicators (DQI), listed in Table 1 of the Quality Plan for the WSP WIN Section, are used and/or modified as necessary to meet the requirements and objectives for the FDEP Programs and Projects for which we manage data and to meet federal reporting requirements.

WSP WIN staff understand the need to manage and evaluate the quality and usefulness of environmental data to be used in environmental assessments. We conduct data management procedures relative to the collection, evaluation, storage and reporting of data within WIN. Management of the data in WIN includes training data providers (e.g., on data maintenance, quality assurance and migration), and monitoring data quality. Staff evaluate data using the WSP WIN DQOs and DQIs and implement corrective actions as directed by the Quality Assurance Officer (QAO). WSP

WIN also uploads the data to the U.S. EPA Water Quality Exchange (WQX) per federal requirements. It is the intent of FDEP and WSP WIN to carry out these obligations and requirements as described in the Department's [QA Directive 972\(Nov 2016\)](#). A detailed flow of work is provided in [Sections 6 and 7](#) of the Quality Plan for the WSP WIN Section.

B. DATA GENERATION AND ACQUISITION

The WSP WIN Section does not generate data, but acquires data from internal and external data providers throughout the state of Florida. WSP WIN staff review and evaluate incoming data regularly in accordance with [Section 6](#) of the Quality Plan for WSP WIN Section, and assist with quality control during data migration to Florida's Watershed Information Network and upload to the U.S. EPA WQX. Documentation of work flow and quality assurance activities, including data back-up, are kept in accordance with [Section 7](#) of the Quality Plan for WSP WIN Section.

The Division of Environmental Assessment and Restoration (DEAR) and WSP WIN ensure that the FDEP contracts administered for data acquisition are properly developed and managed to assure appropriate data quality. FDEP ensures that contract development includes appropriate provisions of the [FDEP Office of Technology and Information Services \(OTIS\)](#) and, if applicable to the contract, provisions of the [FDEP QA Rule \(Chapter 62-160\)](#) and contract QA guidelines contained in [DEP-QA-002/02](#). WSP contracts are reviewed by the FDEP Office of Technology and Information Services (OTIS), and, if applicable, by FDEP QA staff within the Water Quality Standards Program prior to execution of the contract. Contract managers assure that the work is properly planned and executed, is consistent with Department Information Technology (IT) standards and requirements, and, as relevant, is consistent with FDEP QA Rules.

C. ASSESSMENT AND OVERSIGHT

The WSP WIN Section conducts data assessments serving the purpose of audits throughout the data management process resulting in data verifications, reporting, and/or data corrections as described in [Section 6](#) of the Quality Plan for WSP WIN Section. WSP WIN staff work together in a team environment providing feedback, trouble-shooting, and confirmation throughout the data management process. Deficiencies identified within the data management process are corrected based on WSP WIN Data Quality Objectives (DQOs) and Data Quality Indicators (DQIs) and are implemented as directed by the Quality Assurance Officer (QAO). The results of this integral data assessment are captured in weekly and monthly data quality reporting in WIN.

As accurate documentation is an important factor for determining the success of QA activities, WSP WIN provides internal record-keeping procedures through the WIN system to ensure appropriate documentation of QA activities. The WIN system conducts record-keeping procedures for Standard Values Requests, Dataset History, Data Audits, Data Anomalies, and Quality Control Reports in accordance with [Section 7](#) of the Quality Plan for WSP WIN Section. To provide the Secretary with information regarding FDEP's ongoing QA efforts, WSP WIN will prepare a WSP WIN-specific QA report in accordance with [Section 10](#) of the Quality Plan for Watershed Services Program WIN Section. This report describes and compiles the results of all appropriate QA activities, and will provide the report to the FDEP QA Coordinator for inclusion in the Department-wide annual QA Report to the Secretary.

D. DATA VALIDATION AND USABILITY

The WSP WIN Section staff understand the need to manage and evaluate the quality and usefulness of environmental data to be used in environmental assessments. The WSP WIN staff regularly conduct data management procedures relative to the collection, evaluation, storage, and reporting of the data in WIN in accordance with established Data Quality Objectives and Data Quality Indicators referenced in [Table 1](#) of the Quality Plan for WSP WIN Section.

The WSP WIN staff ensure quality control during data migration to WIN and data upload to U.S. EPA WQX in accordance with [Section 6](#) of the Quality Plan for WSP WIN Section. WSP WIN staff assist data providers in providing high quality data that include all FDEP required fields for the identification of impaired surface waters (referenced in Data Quality Assessment Elements for Identification of Impaired Surface Waters; [DEP EAS 01-01](#)) and U.S. EPA WQX requirements are implemented into the Data Provider's formatting software and WIN import configuration.