

STORET/WQX Conference Call – January 26, 2012, 12:00-1:00 PM Eastern Time

Introduction (Charles Kovatch)

- The minutes from all previous conference calls are available over the web: <http://www.epa.gov/storet/confcalls.html>
- The next scheduled call will be February 2012. The exact date will be emailed via the list server when the call gets closer.
- Please email storet@epa.gov and let EPA know you have attended the call so that meeting rosters may be kept.
- If you have a special topic you'd like to lead for an upcoming call, please email Kovatch.Charles@epamail.epa.gov
- EPA would like to hear comments you have on the quality of these conference calls. Please send them to storet@epa.gov
- Please subscribe to the STORET automated listserver for announcements regarding conference calls: <http://www.epa.gov/storet/listserv.html>

Refresh Reports – Charles Kovatch

- Posted on website.
- Should be posted every week and will be in a cleaner format than e-mails.

Update Webservices Link – Charles Kovatch

- EPA is moving to a new server. If you are calling our webservices, you will need to update with a new URL.
- We don't have the new URL, yet. We should have new URL available soon. Keep watching. We will announce it on the listserve when the new URL is available, so that you can have a more seamless transition.

Blobs – Michael Brennan

- Changing how WQX/STORET stores blobs and serves them out.
- Formerly, project attachments were in a specific column indicating whether there is a project attachment and the URL where you can access the attachment.
- Changing how project attachments are going to be changed how they are served out. They will now be served out as a URL in the metadata report that you get back as part of the warehouse retrieval.
- Paul Andrews from RTI asked if this is only for Projects, but would you do the same for Activity Attachments? Answer: no, just project attachments for now. This was brought up because the schema allows attachments to parts other than projects. Will follow up on this.

Result Detection – Michael Brennan

- Result detection limits should be coming out correctly for newly submitted data.
- Still preparing the old data. The expectation is that result detection limits should be coming out of the warehouse for newly submitted data.
- Bill Puknat, MT DEQ - Does this involve the not detected, vs. *non-detect. Answer: we have to go back and correct the old data. At this point we have the new data coming out correctly, still working on the old data. Whatever type of limits that you submitted (quantification limit, method detection limit, whatever type of limit) should now be coming out correctly.
- Does newly submitted data mean in the last year? Answer: is that it means data being submitted in the last week. We will go back and adjust the previously submitted data.

Result Measure Qualifier – Michael Brennan

- Proposed new requirement for new WQX data that we want user's feedback on – making Result Measure Qualifier a required field.
- Result Measure Qualifier is as important as Result Detection Limits, Sample Collection Methods and Analytical method. Tells whether data are useable, for instance, contamination in blank, exceeded holding times, different data flags.
- Soliciting user feedback on this change to the schema.
- Would add new domain value to indicate no flag to the data.
- Brian Shows – node admin from MS. When would this change take place? Would it be required for information this year? Where in the schema is this? Answer: It would be required for data this year. Don't have an exact timeframe established. It is part of the result portion of the schema. It is an existing, currently optional field.
- Matt Gubitosa from R10 suggested making it Organization specific, like we do with Analytical Methods, which might give users more flexibility. This means that Organization can create their own domain values.
- Bruce Tuttle in ID. Concerned about making the field required because it indicates that you are trying to record everything from the user, blanks, spikes, etc. Is this beyond the purpose of WQX/STORET? Most QA information should be considered local and not necessarily loaded into WQX. Answer: Charles Kovatch indicated that we dealt a lot with Result Measure Qualifier during the Gulf Oil Spill. Having the Result Measure Qualifier was very helpful in differentiating between detection limits and analytical capabilities.
- Michael Brennan mentioned that this came up from interactions with Region coordinators. The concern is if not required, people won't submit it. WQX/STORET seeks to provide data of documented quality. There is a lot of metadata that goes along with the data and a user might want it. While you can't submit everything, we want to give user to be able to get as much data as we can. We want the user to be aware of any flags on the data.
- Bruce Tuttle said that he agrees that you need to know if result is questionable or out of bounds in some way. If it is a required field, then you need a domain value that satisfies routine result. Michael Brennan said that there would be a routine result allowable value, such as "No Flag". Suggestion also to allow Empty String, but it was pointed out that this would mean it isn't a required field.
- Chris Neumiller from WA. Some of these categories seem very narrow. It would be nice if they were more general for mapping purposes. We rarely get these with our data. What do we do in these cases?
- Bruce Tuttle and Deb Soule agree that they get the data from lab and will make it difficult to submit. Answer: Michael Brennan indicated that there could be a not QA'd flag. Would this address it? Chris Neumiller from WA indicated that they would like to submit qualifiers, but if they are not contract required, but method derived or something else, there is no place to indicate that. We can't use your qualifiers. We don't want to submit them as unqualified, this would not be correct.
- Andrea Thomas in NC – Currently submitting qualifier in Result comment field. NC has a large list, which don't match STORET qualifiers. This could be a big list (166 combinations for NC). It would be hard to get all states matching the STORET qualifiers.
- Paul Andrews from RTI commented that the field is not repeatable and what if there are multiple qualifiers, can the field be repeatable? We have the potential to have very complex combinations. Answer: Michael Brennan said that we can facilitate complex combinations. We may need to

- consider making it an organization identified field. It is important to qualify results.
- Tracie Merrill from Seldovia Village Tribe – What kind of data uses qualifiers? We put in data logger data for Water Temperature, and have a high value in because logger was taken out into the air. We just put status as rejected. Answer: Its primarily laboratory data because of things that happen with instrumentation, but more rarely for field data. Lab data relies heavily on the QA process.
 - Paul Andrews from RTI suggested that this may indicate that it could be conditional for Samples and not field measurements.
 - Michael Brennan pointed out that there is a qualifier for field equipment questionable or malfunction. But good comment. Needs exploration. Some people may need to use it for Secchi disk measurements.
 - Valerie Alley in MS. Does not just qualify lab data, we also qualify field data if something occurs with instrumentation. As a regulatory agency, we say those are not useful for permitting or saying something is impaired if it doesn't meet holding times because we can't say it is the actual result. We don't send that data. It is voided. We also qualify field data if there is something wrong with the calibration logs for the sonde. That data is qualified. At the project level, if the data doesn't meet the SOP or QAPP, that data is qualified. You may not get everyone to agree to the same list, and it doesn't always apply to only lab data. MS won't use data to make decisions if it isn't qualified, so we wouldn't provide it to other end users to use in this case. Also, there is not a way as far as we can tell, to get QA status back out from the front end of STORET.
 - Sue McCarthy from Region 10 – We use the data for final qualified results. If result is QA'd we put final qualifier in that field and we use it for field or lab. It does come out through web services.
 - Chris Neumiller from WA. We do the same in WA state. We call them end user qualifiers.
 - Charles Kovatch recapped the themes: flexibility and enabling other qualifiers, looking at how this would be set as a field (required or conditional), getting the data out of STORET, and QA relationship.
 - Valarie Alley from MS – You can have a valid result out of the lab if instrumentation was correct, but if sample did not use QAPP or violated SOP, so it may not be useful data for the purpose. So lab data can be accurate and valid, but not what was intended. For example if the measurement requires a steady-state flow, but the sample was taken during a 100 year flood, the result would not be valid for that the project was designed for.
 - Sue McCarthy from R10 – said that there are different levels of qualification. There can be qualifiers to the qualifiers, but it is all QA'd data. Also want to emphasize that there are lab qualifiers and there are QA Qualifiers. We don't put anything to STORET that isn't final data.
 - Bruce Tuttle said that they only put through Final data, but not all final data is valid. It may come from less reliable sources. Sue McCarthy from Region 10 said that you have a QAPP and you follow that plan, and if the data meets the statement of work in the QA Plan, you can qualify your data and the result comes back as qualified data.
 - Valerie Alley from MS – we provide data that is fully validated and QA'd and passed all checks. It is the same data we use to make decisions.
 - WA – We receive data from multiple sources. So, we ask submitters to indicate what the level of quality is. We have descriptions of each of those. We know if we can use the data for making decisions, or not. In addition to having that level at the study level, we also have the end user qualifiers that

- we require everyone to map to who is submitting data in WA. We have some relatively broad categories and some more specific categories.
- MS accepts third party data, as well, because we have to review all data submitted under 305(b). They provide a QA statement and we use it to determine whether we can use the data to make a decision or do our own monitoring in the area. We don't submit the third party data to STORET because it isn't collected by us and doesn't go through our laboratory.
 - Charles Kovatch asked if when talking about the qualified value or the final value, is there a also a different qualification code that goes with that? WA said that they have, for example, a final value that might be assigned as a result of the more rigorous QA. It would be at the report level if the analyte was positively identified and the result was an estimate with unknown bias. This would be assigned not by the lab but the secondary QA review of the data. That is what we mean by end user qualifier. It provides more information than a lab qualifier would. Some of these we derive from EPA, so we find it interesting the WQX list is so limited. Charles asked for link to qualifiers list that WA is referring to.
 - Charles Kovatch asked if there was any way to track QA all the way through the record in WQX. Valerie Alley in MS mentioned that they don't see data coming out in the warehouse. Though, Sue McCarthy said that you will see it come out of the outbound webservices and warehouse if you provided the data going in.
 - Michael Brennan pointed out that this field is not pre-selected when downloading from the warehouse. The user might have to manually select this one.
 - Paul Andrews from RTI pointed out that there is an Analytical Method Qualifier Type Name. Does this play into the issue? I haven't seen anyone use this field. Answer: EPA will look into this, as well.
 - Bill Puknat from MT – We need to ensure that if this becomes required, we need our EDDs and our node to possibly be updated so that we don't get errors when submitting the data. We have contractors that do the work and the lab reports back to them. This plays into it.

Future Topics – Charles Kovatch

- What would you like to see on this call in the future?
- Any Tools or demos that people would like to see or share? We could use some of this time to do these kinds of things.

Participants on call (based on who emailed storet@epa.gov)

Andrea Thomas	North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources
Bill Kramer	EPA HQ
Tracie Merrill	Seldovia Village Tribe
Jim Hudson	Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
Sue McCarthy	EPA R10
Anthony Williams	EPA R10
Matt Gubitosa	EPA R10
Deb Soule	New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services
Bruce Tuttle	Idaho Department of Water Resources
Vilma Quant	Florida Department of Environmental Protection
Lisa Schwenning	Florida Department of Environmental Protection
Siteria Gregory	Florida Department of Environmental Protection
Lemonteh Horne	Florida Department of Environmental Protection

Maria Rivera	Florida Department of Environmental Protection
Kyle Ferris	Florida Department of Environmental Protection
Bill Puknat	Montana Department of Environmental Quality
Jonathan Burian	EPA R5
Valerie Alley	Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality
Brian Shows	Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality
Molly Pulket	Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection
Chris Neumiller	Washington Department of Ecology
Tom Dallaire	Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection
Daniel Reid	EPA R6
Susan Holdsworth	EPA HQ
Rick Langel	Iowa Department of Natural Resources
Paul Andrews	RTI International