

Appendix D: Key Terms

Antidegradation - A provision of federal water quality standard regulations that establishes requirements for maintaining and protecting water quality that has already been achieved. This includes maintaining and protecting the water quality that supports existing uses, high-quality waters, and outstanding National resource waters.

Assessment Methodology - A document that outlines how Tribes perform their data analysis, includes decisions to ensure consistency in data interpretation, and provides transparency to stakeholders about how the program performed assessments and how others can reproduce the data.

Aquifers - Areas where ground water exists in sufficient quantities to supply wells or springs.

Authorized Tribes - federally recognized Tribes that have received treatment in a similar manner as a state (TAS) approval for purposes of carrying out EPA-delegated, EPA-approved, or EPA-authorized activities, such as permitting and primary enforcement responsibility as found on EPA's [Tribes Approved for Treatment as a State](#) website.

Best Management Practices (BMPs) - Practices, measures, or actions that are commonly recommended to prevent, reduce, or mitigate pollution from nonpoint sources.

Clean Water Act (CWA) - A federal law that establishes the basic structure for regulating discharges of pollutants into the "waters of the United States" and regulating water quality standards for surface waters. Chapter 2: Overview of the Clean Water Act has more information.

Data Analysis - The process of evaluating monitoring results to determine what they reveal about the condition of a waterbody.

Data Validation - The process in which programs evaluate field, lab, and data management activities, organizations (such as labs), and personnel. This can include evaluations of performance (for example, sample collection techniques), systems (such as equipment and analytical procedures), and data quality (for example, comparisons of actual data results with project quality objectives).

Decentralized Wastewater Treatment System - An on-site or clustered system used to collect, treat, and disperse or reclaim wastewater from a small community or service area (for example, septic systems).

E. coli (Escherichia coli) - A bacterium that is commonly found in the lower intestine of warm-blooded animals.

Effectiveness Monitoring - An evaluation of how well projects and restoration efforts are working to reduce pollution to waterbodies.

Federally Recognized Tribe - Any Indian Tribe, band, nation, or other organized group or community, including any Alaska Native village, recognized as eligible by the U.S. Department of the Interior.

Geographic Information System (GIS) - A computer system for capturing, storing, manipulating, analyzing, and displaying data related to positions on the Earth's surface.

Impaired Waters - Waters for which technology-based limitations and other required controls are not stringent enough to meet applicable CWA water quality standards.

Impairments - The kinds of pollutants that create a condition, by means of amount or type, where water quality standards are exceeded.

Indigenous Knowledge - A body of observations, oral and written knowledge,

practices, and beliefs that promote environmental sustainability and the responsible stewardship of natural resources through relationships between humans and environmental systems. It is applied to phenomena across biological, physical, cultural, and spiritual systems. Indigenous Knowledge has evolved over millennia, continues to evolve, and includes insights based on evidence acquired through direct contact with the environment and long-term experiences, as well as extensive observations, lessons, and skills passed from generation to generation. Indigenous Knowledge is owned by Indigenous people—including Tribal Nations, Native Americans, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians.

Intertribal Consortium - A partnership between two or more Tribes that is authorized by the governing bodies of those Tribes to apply for and receive assistance under one or more of the programs listed in [40 CFR 35.501](#).

Management Measures - A suite of best management practices that together address a nonpoint source.

Metadata - Information about a specific water quality sample that provides context for the sampling activity. Metadata contain information about when, where, why, and how the program collected a water quality sample.

Mitigation - Measures that are taken to reduce adverse effects on the environment and can provide a method of compensation for unavoidable impacts.

Narrative Criteria - Statements that describe the desired water quality goal, such as waters being free from pollutants or substances that can harm people and fish; an approach used for pollutants for which numeric criteria are difficult to establish because of inherent subjectivity.

Nonpoint Source (NPS) Pollution - Pollution not discharged from a point source. This generally consists of pollution from diffuse sources, without a single point of origin or not introduced into a receiving stream from a specific outlet. The pollutants are generally carried off the land as a result of precipitation events (rainfall, snowmelt).

Numeric Criteria - A number standard for limiting a particular pollutant that protects a specific use designation; can be load- or concentration-based.

Objectives - Activities to achieve desired outcomes.

Outcomes - The result, effect, or consequence that will occur from carrying out an environmental program or activity that is related to an environmental or programmatic goal or objective. Outcomes may be environmental, behavioral, health-related, or programmatic in nature; must be quantitative; and may not necessarily be achievable within an assistance agreement funding period.

Outputs - an environmental activity, effort, and/or associated work products related to an environmental goal and objective, that will be produced or provided over a period of time or by a specified date. Outputs may be quantitative or qualitative but must be measurable during an assistance agreement funding period.

Point Source - A stationary location or fixed facility from which pollutants are discharged through a conveyance system; any single identifiable source of pollution, such as a pipe, ditch, ship, ore pit, or factory smokestack.

Quality Assurance (QA) - An integrated system of management activities involving planning, implementation, documentation, assessment, reporting, and quality improvement to ensure

that a process, item, or service is intended and of high quality.

Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) - A formal document describing in comprehensive detail the necessary QA, QC, and other technical activities that are implemented to ensure that the results of the work performed will satisfy the stated performance criteria.

Quality Control (QC) - The overall system of technical activities that measures the attributes and performance of a process, item, or service against defined standards to verify that they meet the stated requirements established; operational techniques and activities that are used to fulfill requirements for quality.

Quality System - A structured and documented management system describing the policies, objectives, principles, organizational authority, responsibilities, accountability, and implementation plan of an organization for ensuring quality in its work processes, products (items), and services. The quality system provides the framework for planning, implementing, documenting, and assessing work performed by the organization and for carrying out required QA and QC activities.

Riparian Areas - Areas adjacent to rivers and streams with a differing density, diversity, and productivity of plant and animal species relative to nearby uplands.

Sampling Design - The method employed to collect adequate and appropriate data to support accurate analysis.

Saturated Zone - The area in which the spaces between rocks, gravel, sand, or soil are filled with water.

Source Water - A reservoir, stream, river, or aquifer that a water system uses to supply drinking water to its customers.

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) - A set of written instructions that document a routine or repetitive activity followed by an organization.

Treatment in a Similar Manner as a State (TAS) - Authorization for EPA to treat eligible federally recognized Indian Tribes in a similar manner as a state for the purpose of implementing and managing certain CWA environmental programs and functions, and for grant funding.

Water Quality Criteria (WQC) - Limits on particular chemicals or conditions in a waterbody. As elements of state/tribal water quality standards, the criteria protect particular designated uses, such as propagation of fish and wildlife, recreation, and public water supply. The criteria can be expressed as acceptable levels (constituent concentrations) or as narrative statements.

Water Quality Goal - A long-term perspective on the evaluation of water resource conditions that describes an eventual desired future condition and implies actions toward meeting a targeted improvement in or maintenance of current high quality of the waters.

Water Quality Standards (WQS) - Provisions of tribal, state, territorial, or federal law that describe the desired condition of a waterbody and the means by which that condition will be protected or achieved. WQS consist of three core components: designated uses of a waterbody, criteria to protect designated uses, and antidegradation requirements to protect existing uses and high quality/high value waters. Tribes can develop and use WQS solely for their own use under tribal law, or they can obtain authority to adopt and administer WQS under the CWA.

Watershed - The land area that drains into a stream, wetland, lake, or coastal waterbody. The watershed for a major river could encompass a number of smaller watersheds that ultimately combine at a common point.

Watershed-Based Planning - A place-based method for maintaining, protecting, and restoring resources within a watershed.

Work Plan - The document which identifies how and when the applicant will use funds from environmental program grants and is the basis for managing and evaluating performance under the grant agreement to produce specific outputs and outcomes (40 CFR 35.507). The work plan must be consistent with applicable federal statutes; regulations; circulars; executive orders; and EPA delegations, approvals, or authorizations.

Water Quality Exchange (WQX) - WQX is the water data schema associated with the Exchange Network used by Tribes, states, and EPA. More information about WQX, WQX Web, and the Water Quality Portal, including tutorials, can be found on EPA's [Water Quality Data](#) website.