

Approach for Development of National Water Program Core Measures

July 13, 2018

Overview: EPA has begun implementation of the EPA Lean Management System (ELMS) focusing on continuous improvement. ELMS sets ambitious performance targets for Strategic and Mission Measures and tracks progress against them to find and solve small problems before they become big problems. The Office of Water is seeking input to develop a core set of measures. Our goal is to select a small and meaningful set of metrics to track progress at the national level.

Background:

- The National Water Program included over 100 performance measures in the FY 2018-2019 National Water Program Guidance (NWPG).
- States/Tribes expressed concern about the number of measures required to track program performance.
- Regions want to retain some form of NPM guidance to states and tribes.
- States/Tribes enjoy flexibility to capture program performance in grant work plans.
- States/Tribes also expressed concern over the possible expansion of measures through the development of cascading performance measures initiated by other OW divisions and branches. Measure streamlining and reduction should focus on not adding burden beyond data already collected.

Criteria for core measures:

- Criteria 1: Retain the following types of required measures: Strategic and Mission Measures used to track progress on EPA's Strategic Plan and implementation of ELMS.
- Criteria 2: Proposed core measure must: be outcome focused (e.g. pounds of pollution reduced versus number of surveys conducted) and have state and tribal data (i.e. not a HQ only measure) either collected by the region or reported to a national database (e.g., SDWIS).
- Criteria 3: Reduce to the smallest set of measures.

Approach:

- **Communication and Outreach:**
 - Engage with States and Tribes through noted associations and councils to develop a list of core measures with state/tribal input. EPA Headquarters will develop talking points and outreach materials to facilitate those conversations.
- **Development of Core measures:** Develop a core set of measures with state/tribal input.
 - Finalize criteria for a core set of measures
 - Consider Feedback from States and Tribes
 - National Water Program will use criteria and feedback to select a core set of measures
- **Development of 2020-2021 NPM Guidance:** Streamline National Water Program Guidance (including grants guidance). Core measures would be included as an appendix.
- **State Engagement:** EPA is working with State and Tribal associations to collect feedback on the process and criteria.
 - The National Water Program is requesting ideas on how associations can best support this process.
 - Regions will be working with their States and Tribes to collect feedback on the process and criteria.
- **Next Steps:**
 - Regions will reach out to individual States and Tribes to engage on the Core Measures and the FY 2020-2021 National Water Program Guidance.

- After consultation, the National Water Program will analyze feedback and develop a list of core measures.
- Starting in October, the National Water Program plans to collect data on the core measures.

Proposed Timeline:

Date	Milestone
July–October	– Early engagement period for National Water Program Guidance
July	– Call with State and Tribal Water Associations on Core Measures
August - September	– Possibly attend State association annual meetings to discuss core measures
By September 30	– Finalize National Water Program Core Measures
Oct-November	– OW will collect data (EOY data for FY 2018 and bids for FY 2019) on the core measures for the National Water Program
November 14	– Each region summarizes early engagement input and submits a Summary of Early Engagement template.
January 21-28	– Internal review of draft FY 2020-2021 National Program Guidances.
February 14 - March 18	– External comment period on the draft FY 2020-2021 National Program Guidances.
April 22	– Final FY 2020-2021 National Program Guidances posted online

*National Water Program Guidance dates are shaded.