

**Quality Assurance Management Plan
for the
Division of Water Restoration Assistance**



State of Florida
Florida Department of Environmental Protection

February 2025

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.




 Digitally signed by Angela Knecht Date: 2025.02.07 15:36:03 -05'00'	<u>02/07/2025</u> Date
Angela Knecht, Director	
 Digitally signed by Sandra Waters Date: 2025.02.07 15:13:00 -05'00'	<u>02/07/2025</u> Date
Sandra Waters, Deputy Director	
 Digitally signed by Michael Barr Date: 2025.02.07 15:10:03 -05'00'	<u>02/07/2025</u> Date
Michael Barr, Program Management Director	
 Digitally signed by Deinna Dalton	<u>02/07/2025</u> Date
Deinna Dalton, Program Administrator	
 Digitally signed by Ethan Morrow Date: 2025.02.07 13:26:20 -05'00'	<u>02/07/2025</u> Date
Ethan Morrow, Environmental Manager	
 Digitally signed by Sarah Ketron Date: 2025.02.07 13:15:04 -05'00'	<u>02/07/2025</u> Date
Sarah Ketron, Environmental Administrator	
 Digitally signed by Amanda Peck Date: 2025.02.07 12:49:28 -05'00'	<u>02/07/2025</u> Date
Amanda Peck, Program Administrator and Quality Assurance Officer	

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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/contracts/purchase orders, 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 (62-160 F.A.C.).

3. Policy Statement

It is the Division's policy to:

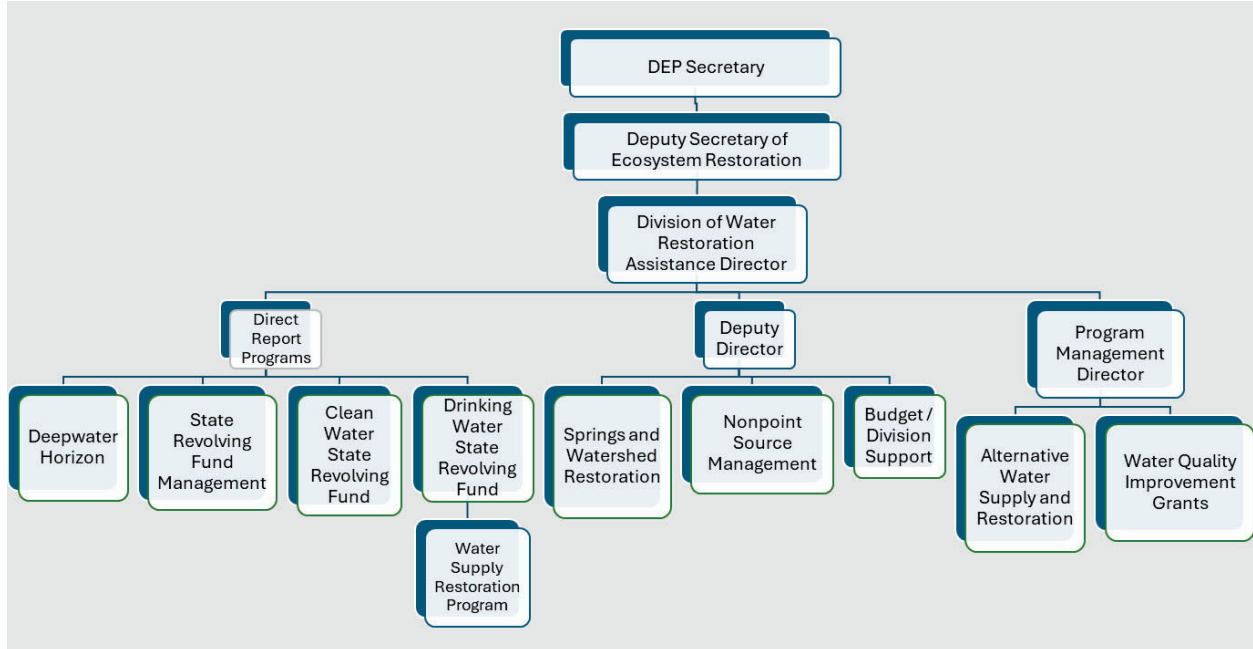
- Have and implement the Quality System described in this document.
- Adaptively manage our Quality System to be consistent with provisions of the DEP Quality Assurance Management Plan.
- Ensure that each individual is properly trained to execute their assigned functions.
- Implement procedures to ensure 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 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. The Inspector General’s office gives the Division training on fraud detection and ethics periodically.

5. Organization and Responsibilities



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

Nonpoint Source Management Program (Amanda Peck)

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 Water-quality Assistance Grant (SWAG). The grants support projects that reduce pollution from nonpoint sources and urban stormwater.

Water Supply Restoration Funding Program (Ethan Morrow)

The Water Supply Restoration Funding Program (WSRF) uses grant monies from the Water Quality Assurance Trust Fund and the Inland Protection Trust Fund to provide filtration systems for private citizens and public water systems with potable wells contaminated by man-made constituents. If available, the Water Supply Restoration Program will pay to connect a residence with a contaminated well to a public water supply system.

The Water Supply Restoration Program employs an OPS staff member who periodically samples private wells located in central Florida.

Deepwater Horizon Program (Sarah Ketron)

The Deepwater Horizon Program (DWH) 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 funding to offset injuries 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 benefit the natural resources impacted by the spill, and Gulf restoration projects under the RESTORE Act's Council-Selected Restoration 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.

Alternative Water Supply and Restoration Program (Deinna Dalton)

The Alternative Water Supply and Restoration Program (AWSR) is responsible for managing Alternative Water Supply Grant projects that are selected by the Office of Water Policy and Ecosystems Restoration. This funding is provided to help communities plan for and implement reclaimed water, aquifer recharge, water conservation and other alternative water supply projects. AWSR also develops and manages grant agreements resulting from line item appropriations (legislative appropriations), including water projects, in each year's Florida General Appropriations Act.

6. Training

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

- Florida Certified Contract Manager certification: required for all contract/grant managers
- Program specific training, as provided by administrative services or the inspector general, from EPA for selected personnel
- As provided, training by DEP Administrative Services staff on grant management.
- Training on program specific Standard Operating Procedures
- FDEP's Annual Quality Assurance Training
- Training on grant development and the use of grant agreement templates including:
 - Standard Terms and Conditions for Agreements, provided by DEP Office of the General Council (OGC)
 - Scope of Work templates, developed by the DWRA Project Managers using templated language
 - 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

- Quality Assurance Project Plan template for grantees to use when developing QAPPs, developed by the Quality Assurance Section
- Other standard attachments to state or federal agreements, developed by OGC

The Water Supply Restoration Program contracts with the Florida Department of Health to sample private wells throughout the State of Florida. DOH provides training to its employees on proper sampling, preservation, and holding times. The training requires that FDEP Standard Operating Procedures for sampling be followed. The samples are analyzed by the FDEP Laboratory which has their own set of QA procedures.

7. Data Quality Components

The Nonpoint Source Management (NPSM), Alternative Water Supply and Restoration (AWSR), and Deepwater Horizon (DWH) Programs manage grant agreements for projects that may include water quality monitoring to evaluate the effectiveness of projects that address pollutant reduction. In order to maintain the level of quality assurance required, the NPSM, AWSR, and DWH Program staff 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, AWSR, and DWH Programs send the QAPP template, developed by the QA Program, to the grantees to use when developing their QAPP. The NPSM, AWSR, and DWH Program staff review and approve the grantee's QAPPs when the template is followed. QAPPs that deviate from the template or that involve research are submitted to the DEP QA Program staff for review. The QAPP is considered a Deliverable in the agreement.

8. Capabilities

WSRF staff take quarterly drinking water samples from point-of-entry (POE) filtration systems. These systems are installed on properties with private potable wells with in-place plumbing. The majority of the program's filters are two tank systems. Field staff take three samples at each site to verify Pre-, Mid- and Post-filter analyte levels. WSRF staff collect samples based on procedures outlined in the DEP SOPs applicable to groundwater (DEP-SOP-001/01 FS 1000, FS 2000, FS 2200 and FS 2300). Sampling encompasses collection of bottle samples from ground waters for independent laboratory analysis for a variety of parameters including Arsenic. Sample collection and handling by Department staff must meet the objectives of the WSRF program while following the requirements specified in the DEP SOPs. All containers, volumes, sample hold times, and sample preservation procedures are consistent with FS 2000 and FS 1006 of the DEP SOPs.

WSRF sampling events are scheduled with the Florida DEP Laboratory in Tallahassee. The lab generates a laboratory Request ID (RQ) for the sampling event, which is linked to each sample bottle requested for the event. Laboratory Chain of Custody forms are generated by field staff using the corresponding RQ number.

WSRF sample documentation begins in the Florida DEP Chemistry Program with the preparation of sampling kits and their shipment to field staff. Pre-cleaned sample bottles are provided by the Florida DEP Laboratory. Laboratory staff place a label on each container with the RQ, the analytical test method, and the preservation method. The collection date, time, FLUWID and sample location are written on the sample containers and field sheets by field staff prior to sampling.

WSRF field staff do not engage in laboratory procedures. The DEP Laboratory in Tallahassee is responsible for all analytical analyses performed on the submitted samples. All activities regarding sample custody, shipment and submittal to the DEP Laboratory are consistent with and follows FD 5000 of the DEP SOPs.

9. Equipment and Instruments

All WSRF filter systems are installed on private potable wells with in-place plumbing, therefore no sampling equipment other than bottles and nitrile gloves are needed. The program objectives for quarterly sampling do not include water parameters (e.g., pH, oxidation-reduction potential, turbidity, temperature, salinity, etc.). No analytical instruments that require calibration are used in the field.

10. Review and Assessment

WSRF staff apply several quality control measures to ensure high-quality data are being collected and analyzed. Field staff wear clean powder-free disposable nitrile gloves while handling the sample containers and only work with one set of containers at a time. The bottles are not rinsed before sample collection. All the sample containers for a site are labelled prior to filling them. Bottles are arranged in the proper order to avoid contamination (or cross contamination) when collecting and preserving the samples. Review and evaluation are completed on each water quality sample to ensure they meet all applicable DEP SOPs and WSRF program objectives. Analytical results are evaluated for laboratory reported qualifiers to determine if re-sampling is necessary.

Wells in the WSRF program are GPS located and tagged with Florida Unique Well ID's (FLUWID). The FLUWID allows staff to verify the exact location of a specific well. If the well to be sampled has already been assigned a FLUWID number but the tag cannot be located, staff may use other information and historic records to confirm the well identity prior to sampling.

WSRF samples are acid preserved, pH-checked, and placed on ice in coolers within 15 minutes of sample collection (if applicable). Coolers are shipped overnight to the Florida DEP Laboratory. Chain of Custody forms containing the well's FLUWID, date and time of sampling, name of field staff, property information, and preservation information are included in the shipment to the laboratory. This allows the laboratory receiving staff to identify each sample container and enter

RQ information for each sample. The DEP Laboratory uses multiple internal quality control measures for evaluating the quality of the data being generated. These are outlined in detail in the DEP Laboratory Quality Manual.

11. Documentation

Documentation is stored electronically. The Division office and each program have an electronic folder on the WRA server. The NPSM Program, the AWSR Program and the Water Supply Restoration Program also have a catalog in OCULUS for storing documents.

The AWSR and NPSM Programs have a database to manage the agreement/project/funding information. The DWH Program maintains its agreement/project information in Excel spreadsheets. The WSRF Program utilizes Salesforce to track wells and work orders.

12. Compliance, Audits, and Corrective Action

Programs in the division are audited periodically by federal (EPA) and state entities (DEP Office of the Inspector General, 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. 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.

Potable well sample data received from the Department of Health is stored in the WSRF's Salesforce database. Quality assurance checks are performed on this data monthly. Errors in the data are reported to the program's QA officer for review and corrective actions.

All WSRF personnel are responsible for assessing quality control measures for which they are responsible and initiating corrective actions, if needed. Field staff are responsible for the implementation of corrective actions for data non-conformance incidents. Systemic problems are addressed through identification of a problem and development of preventative steps. If an error is made while collecting or preserving the samples the lab will be alerted so they can take appropriate steps upon receipt or analysis of the sample.

WSRF corrective action procedures are consistent with FA 3000 of the DEP SOPs. Please refer to the DEP laboratory Quality Manual for laboratory guidelines concerning corrective action.

13. Record Keeping

All records, which may be disposed of, shall be disposed of in accordance with procedures in Administrative Directive DEP 375, as it may be changed from time to time. No permanent records shall be destroyed without written approval by the Department's Records Management Liaison.

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.

14. Approved Signatories

Approved Signatories for Authorizing Agreements are:

Alexis Lambert, Secretary

Adam Blalock, Ecosystem Restoration Deputy Secretary

Angela Knecht, DWRA Director

Sandra Waters, DWRA Deputy Director

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

15. Report Compilation

The NPSM Program reports water quality restoration data to EPA through their Grants Reporting and Tracking System on an annual basis. The Division submits information to the Quality Assurance Section for reporting to the Secretary on an annual basis.