

# STORET User Call Minutes 1/28/2016

Call number: 866-299-3188

Access: 202-566-0399#

## Attendees

Name	Organization
Laura Shumway	USEPA
Ben Cole	MD DNR
Betty Ratcliff	
Bill Kramer	
Brian Pointer	NCDWR
Eric Wilson	
Gretchen Oelsner	
Jim Porter	MN
Kris Dozark	SD DENR
Lara Panayotoff	
Leslie Karlewicz	CH2MHill
Lori Sprage	USGS
Mike Sutton	
Mike Whitman	
Paul Morton	
Shawn Muir	
Tim Bowren	IDEM
Sharon Keenan	
Jolene McQuillan	MT DEQ
Emily Zimmermann	ME DEP
Ann Wilhite	
Melanie Titus	NH DES
Shawn Henderson	EPA Region 7

## Agenda Topics

### 1. Status report-out from the STORET QA workgroup:

Work has since beginning of October has largely focused on rules for users in STORET; making allowable values less ambiguous and articulating best data input practices. Focus has initially been on nutrients.

### 2. Specific work points:

- Addressing synonymous characteristics (ie Nutrient Nitrogen and Nitrogen)
  - Should synonyms be kept? How should best practices be defined?
  - One proposed solution: Make characteristic list less ambiguous/more inclusive. For example: Nitrogen (mixed form, NH<sub>3</sub>, NO<sub>4</sub>, NO<sub>2</sub>)

- Comments:
  - This is confusing for long-time users who've learned multiple sets of new names.
  - Listing out all possible forms could make entries large, requiring changes in user database structure.
  - Phosphate-phosphorus is a commonly misunderstood characteristic.
  - Spreadsheet with legacy characteristic names is on EPA FTP site. Could be helpful for informing synonym discussion.
- Re-configuring the sample fraction list
  - Guidance is being developed to clarify which sample fractions should be used with which nutrients.
  - Current sample fractions are ambiguous (Ex: "Total") and not mutually exclusive (ex: "Total dissolved").
  - Hoping to implement changes in May.
  - In the short term, combined sample fraction values would address filtered/non-filtered samples. Long term, this would likely be a field.
- Helping users develop a complete nutrient record
  - Complete record contains: Characteristics, value, sample fraction, filtered/unfiltered, sample speciation, method associated with nutrient.
  - No comments
- EPA is requesting lab feedback on the proposed changes.
  - A list of questions will be provided for users to send to labs.

### 3. Open discussion

- Will the proposed changes affect data retrieval?
  - Depends how cleanly synonyms can be matched. There's a potential for data loss if characteristics are too ambiguous. Data will not be deleted and can still be pulled from portal; but will not be matched to new characteristics.
- WQX currently accepts units that don't match characteristic (ex: mg/L for temperature) and doesn't warn user.