



ECOS Data Management Work Group

March 28, 2011

Alexandria, VA

Draft Meeting Notes

Welcome – Melanie Morris (MS), Vice Chair

- ECOS, states, and EPA have been engaged for a number of years in a project called the National Environmental Information Exchange Network.
- The Exchange Network is a collaborative effort between states and EPA to exchange environmental data securely and more efficiently over the Internet.
- State environmental agencies collect and manage a tremendous amount of information and states routinely share it with EPA as part of the delegation agreements states maintain to run environmental programs.
- The technology of the Exchange Network gives states a single standardized way to share that data rather than maintaining unique mechanisms for different environmental programs.
- That means greater efficiency in times of tight budgets and it also makes it easier to keep state and EPA data in sync so agencies send consistent messages to the public and to the regulated community.
- Apart from regulatory reporting, states often need to share data with other states and organizations on shared issues, particularly in times of disaster response, as we saw last summer with the Gulf Oil Spill. The Network is a powerful tool for providing expanded access to any state's environmental information.
- With the Network, states can provide more timely and accurate information to support better decisions about the environment and human health.
- The Exchange Network is governed by the Exchange Network Leadership Council, which is made up of state and EPA representatives. .
- To learn more about the Exchange Network, see: <http://www.exchangenetwork.net/> and
- http://www.ecos.org/files/4432_file_Exchange_Network_DMWG_03_28_11.docx

How the Exchange Network Works

Kurt Rakouskas, Exchange Network Coordinator

- Endorse the Network as a business opportunity for your agency
 - Talk with your program managers about your support for the Network
 - Talk with your IT managers about obstacles to implementation
 - Promote connections between your Program & IT staffs
 - Encourage staff to seek EPA Network grants
- Monitor progress in implementing data flows
- View Kurt's presentation at: http://www.ecos.org/files/4402_file_Rakouskas_ENLC_03_28_11.ppt

EPA Exchange Network Update

Andy Battin, Director, Office of Information Collection, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

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- Exchange Network – the goal is to have all of the flows implemented by the end of 2012
- Problems with the schemas have largely been fixed; the Office of Air is working on the one last problem with AQS
- On March 28, EPA Deputy Administrator Bob Perciasepe sent a letter to EPA Assistant Administrators and Regional Administrators acknowledging the work that National Program Managers have done to include references to the Exchange Network in grant guidance and asking Regions to actively engage in the Network at their level. All ENLC members should have received a copy of this memo. Region 3, OEI, and Kurt Rakouskas have developed guidance to help Regions incorporate language on the ten priority flows into state grant work plans, and Region 3 has sent this information out to the Assistant Regional Administrators.

2010 Data Verification Process; e-Reporting Rule for NPDES; AFS Modernization

Lisa Lund, Director, Office of Compliance, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

- *ICIS-NPDES* – making good progress; 34 states in system – 16 to go; nervous about the budget – have made an effort to preserve the funding
- Grant work plans – 16 states still having to migrate into ICIS, prime opportunity for them to use the EN grants
- Release in February brought in facility and permits; next February, will bring in compliance
- *Data Verification Process* – looking at starting up the process for next year; talked about maybe making ‘accounts’ in state review framework for verification process
- 2010 has been posted in OTIS
- *Electronic Reporting Rule* – dataset for NPDES program; electronic DMRs from facility to state or EPA – 17 states have netDMRs
- Working on a cost-benefit analysis which is very complex
- Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) expected to be published in the Federal Register in September
- Will be submitting it to OMB review in late spring/early summer
- *Air Facility Subsystem (AFS)* modernization has encountered problems
- If EPA had the money, they could and would fix it
- EPA has done a needs analysis and is redoing a business case that the agency recently paid for but was unhappy with
- The biggest problem is lack of funding
- A letter to EPA from NESCAUM on AFS stated, “the NESCAUM states believe the proposed changes would require significant modifications to the types and amount of data that many states currently collect”
- Compliance status is one area the needs to be fixed...EPA is looking at...maybe shut it off because it’s not been helpful
- EPA will be looking at how stack testing is recorded
- *Proof of concept* – EPA will solicit third-party software developers to create protocols (as has been done for the IRS in the form of easy-to-use Turbo-tax etc.) for eReporting Rule
- Plan to solicit software vendors, conduct a webinar
- Federal Register notice expected to go out soon....hopefully this fiscal year

Adjournment