

# Environmental Protection Agency

## FY 2006 Annual Performance Plan and Congressional Justification

### ***Objective: Enhance Science and Research***

As noted, EPA works with the National Park Service in operating CASTNET. DOE will pursue actions such as promoting the research, development, and deployment of advanced technologies (for example, renewable energy sources). In the case of fuel cell vehicle technology, EPA is working closely with DOE as the Administration's FreedomCAR initiative develops, taking the lead on emissions-related issues.

The President's call for a greatly expanded and coordinated interagency PM research effort led to the creation, in 1999, of the Particulate Matter Workgroup, which is administered by the Air Quality Research Subcommittee of the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources (CENR). This workgroup, co-chaired by EPA and the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS), has completed its *Strategic Research Plan for Particulate Matter*<sup>1</sup> to guide the coordinated Federal research program over the next 5 to 10 years.

The body of national PM research dealing with atmospheric sciences is coordinated under NARSTO<sup>2</sup>. Its membership of more than 65 organizations includes all major Federal, state, and provincial governments; private industry; and utility sponsors of atmospheric sciences research in Canada, Mexico, and the U.S. NARSTO recently released an assessment of PM atmospheric science, "Particulate Matter Science for Policy Makers: A NARSTO Assessment,"<sup>3</sup> to assist policy makers as they implement their national air quality standards for PM. It presents the latest understanding of the PM atmospheric phenomena over North America, and recommends additional work to fill identified gaps.

EPA's Air Toxics Research Program is coordinated as needed with other Federal agencies, such as the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) and the National Toxicology Program (as a source of toxicity testing data). The Health Effects Institute conducts complementary research related to air toxics that is coordinated with EPA activities. In addition, EPA conducts research on advanced source measurement approaches jointly with the Department of Defense through the Strategic Environmental Research and Development Program (SERDP).

### **Goal 2- Clean and Safe Water**

#### ***Objective: Protect Human Health***

The 1996 SDWA amendments include a provision that mandates joint EPA/Centers for Disease Control (CDC) study of waterborne diseases and occurrence studies in public water supplies.

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<sup>1</sup> Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, Air Quality Research Subcommittee (2002). Strategic Research Plan for Particulate Matter. <[www.al.noaa.gov/WWWHD/pubdocs/AQRS/reports/SRPPM.html](http://www.al.noaa.gov/WWWHD/pubdocs/AQRS/reports/SRPPM.html)>. Accessed 2004 Feb 3.

<sup>2</sup> Formerly an acronym for "North American Research Strategy for Tropospheric Ozone," the term NARSTO is now simply a wordmark signifying a public-private partnership across the U.S., Canada, and Mexico for dealing with multiple features of tropospheric pollution, including ozone and suspended particulate matter.

<sup>3</sup> NARSTO (2003). Particulate Matter Science for Policy Makers: A NARSTO Assessment. [www.cgenv.com/narsto](http://www.cgenv.com/narsto). Accessed 2004 Feb 3.

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CDC is involved in assisting EPA in training health care providers (doctors, nurses, public health officials, etc.) on public health issues related to drinking water contamination and there is close CDC/EPA coordination on research on microbial contaminants in drinking water. EPA has in place a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and Interagency Agreement (IAG) with the CDC in the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to implement this provision.

In implementing its source water assessment and protection efforts, the Agency coordinates many of its activities with other Federal agencies. There are three major areas of relationships with other agencies concerning source water assessments and protection.

#### *Public Water Systems (PWS)*

Some Federal agencies, (i.e., USDA (Forest Service), DOD, Department of Energy, DOI (National Park Service), and USPS), own and operate public water systems. EPA's coordination with these agencies focuses primarily on ensuring that they cooperate with the states in which their systems are located, and that they are accounted for in the states' source water assessment programs as mandated in the 1996 amendments to the SDWA.

#### *Data Availability, Outreach and Technical Assistance*

EPA coordinates with USGS (US Geological Survey), USDA (Forest Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES), Rural Utilities Service); DOT, DOD, DOE, DOI (National Park Service and Bureaus of Indian Affairs, Land Management, and Reclamation); DHHS (Indian Health Service) and the Tennessee Valley Authority.

#### *Tribal Access Coordination*

EPA will continue to work with other federal agencies to develop a coordinated approach to improving tribal access to safe drinking water. In response to commitments made during the 2002 World Summit in Johannesburg, the EPA committed to the goal of coordinating with other federal agencies to reduce by half the number of households on tribal lands lacking access to safe drinking water by 2015. United Nations. 2002. *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development: Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August – 4 September, 2002*. New York, NY: United Nations.

#### *Collaboration with USGS*

EPA and USGS have identified the need to engage in joint, collaborative field activities, research and testing, data exchange, and analyses, in areas such as the occurrence of unregulated contaminants, the environmental relationships affecting contaminant occurrence, evaluation of currently regulated contaminants, improved protection area delineation methods, laboratory methods, and test methods evaluation. EPA has an IAG with USGS to accomplish such activities. This collaborative effort has improved the quality of information to support risk

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management decision-making at all levels of government, generated valuable new data, and eliminated potential redundancies.

#### *Collaboration with Public and Private Partners on Critical Water Infrastructure Protection*

EPA coordinates with other federal agencies, especially the newly established Department of Homeland Security as well as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Food and Drug Administration, and the Department of Defense on biological, chemical, and radiological contaminants, and how to respond to their presence in drinking water and wastewater systems. A close linkage with the FBI, particularly with respect to ensuring the effectiveness of the ISAC, will be continued. The Agency is strengthening its working relationships with the American Water Works Association Research Foundation, the Water Environment Research Federation and other research institutions to increase our knowledge on technologies to detect contaminants, monitoring protocols and techniques, and treatment effectiveness.

#### *Collaboration with FDA*

EPA and FDA have issued joint national fish consumption advisories to protect the public from exposure to mercury in commercially and recreationally caught fish, as well as fish caught for subsistence. EPA's advisory covers the recreational and subsistence fisheries in fresh waters where states and tribes have not assessed the waters for the need for an advisory.. *ibid.* <http://map1.epa.gov/html/federaladv> FDA's advisory covers commercially caught fish, and fish caught in marine waters.. *Ibid.* <http://map1.epa.gov/html/federaladv> EPA works closely with FDA to distribute the advisory to the public. In addition, EPA works with FDA to investigate the need for advisories for other contaminants and to ensure that these federal advisories support and augment advisories issued by states and tribes.

#### *Beach Monitoring and Public Notification*

The BEACH Act requires that all federal agencies with jurisdiction over coastal and Great Lakes recreation waters adjacent to beaches used by the public implement beach monitoring and public notification programs. These programs must be consistent with guidance published by EPA . *ibid.* "National Beach Guidance and Required Performance Criteria for Grants." EPA will continue to work with the U.S. Park Service and other federal agencies to ensure that their beach water quality monitoring and notification programs are technically sound and consistent with program performance criteria published by EPA.

#### ***Objective: Protect Water Quality***

##### *Watersheds*

Protecting and restoring watersheds will depend largely on the direct involvement of many Federal agencies and state, tribal and local governments who manage the multitude of programs necessary to address water quality on a watershed basis. Federal agency involvement will include USDA (Natural Resources Conservation Service, Forest Service, Agriculture Research

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Service), Department of the Interior (Bureau of Land Management, Office of Surface Mining, United States Geological Survey (USGS), Fish and Wildlife, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs), National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Department of Transportation, and the Department of Defense (Navy, Army Corps of Engineers). At the state level, agencies involved in watershed management typically include departments of natural resources or the environment, public health agencies, and forestry and recreation agencies. Locally, numerous agencies are involved, including Regional planning entities such as councils of governments, as well as local departments of environment, health and recreation who frequently have strong interests in watershed projects.

#### *National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Program (NPDES)*

Since inception of the NPDES program under Section 402 of the CWA, EPA and the authorized states have developed expanded relationships with various Federal agencies to implement pollution controls for point sources. EPA works closely with the Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service on consultation for protection of endangered species through a Memorandum of Agreement. EPA works with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation on National Historic Preservation Act implementation. EPA and the states rely on monitoring data from the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) to help confirm pollution control decisions. The Agency also works closely with the Small Business Administration and the Office of Management and Budget to ensure that regulatory programs are fair and reasonable. The Agency coordinates with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) on efforts to ensure that NPDES programs support coastal and national estuary efforts; and with the Department of Interior on mining issues.

#### *Joint Strategy for Animal Feeding Operations*

The Agency is working closely with the USDA to implement the Unified National Strategy for Animal Feeding Operations finalized on March 9, 1999. The Strategy sets forth a framework of actions that USDA and EPA will take to minimize water quality and public health impacts from improperly managed animal wastes in a manner designed to preserve and enhance the long-term sustainability of livestock production. EPA's recent revisions to the CAFO Regulations (effluent guidelines and NPDES permit regulations) will be a key element of EPA and USDA's plan to address water pollution from CAFOs. EPA and USDA senior management meet routinely to ensure effective coordination across the two agencies.

#### *Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF)*

Representatives from EPA's SRF program, Housing and Urban Development's (HUD's) Community Development Block Grant program, and USDA's Rural Utility Service have signed a Memorandum of Understanding committing to assisting state or Federal implementers in: (1) coordination of the funding cycles of the three Federal agencies; (2) consolidation of plans of action (operating plans, intended use plans, strategic plans, etc.); and (3) preparation of one environmental review document, when possible, to satisfy the requirements of all participating Federal agencies. A coordination group at the Federal level has been formed to further these

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efforts and maintain lines of communication. In many states, coordination committees have been established with representatives from the three programs.

In implementation of the Indian set-aside grant program under Title VI of the CWA, EPA works closely with the Indian Health Service to administer grant funds to the various Indian tribes, including determination of the priority ranking system for the various wastewater needs in Indian Country.

In 1998, EPA and the Rural Utilities Service of the USDA formalized a partnership between the two agencies to provide coordinated financial and technical assistance to tribes.

#### *Construction Grants Program - US Army Corps of Engineers*

Throughout the history of the construction grants program under Title II of the CWA, EPA and the delegated states have made broad use of the construction expertise of the Corps of Engineers to provide varied assistance in construction oversight and administrative matters. EPA works with the Corps to provide oversight for construction of the special projects that Congress has designated. The mechanism for this expertise has been and continues to be an Interagency Agreement between the two agencies.

#### *Nonpoint Sources*

EPA will continue to work closely with its Federal partners to achieve the ambitious strategic objective of reducing pollutant discharges, including at least 20 percent from 1992 erosion levels. Most significantly, EPA will continue to work with the USDA, which has a key role in reducing sediment loadings through its continued implementation of the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, Conservation Reserve Program, and other conservation programs. USDA also plays a major role in reducing nutrient discharges through these same programs and through activities related to the AFO Strategy. EPA will also continue to work closely with the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management, whose programs can contribute significantly to reduced pollutant loadings of sediment, especially on the vast public lands that comprise 29 percent of all land in the United States. EPA will work with these agencies, USGS, and the states to document improvements in land management and water quality.

EPA will also work with other Federal agencies to advance a watershed approach to Federal land and resource management to help ensure that Federal land management agencies serve as a model for water quality stewardship in the prevention of water pollution and the restoration of degraded water resources. Implementation of a watershed approach will require coordination among Federal agencies at a watershed scale and collaboration with states, tribes and other interested stakeholders.

#### **Vessel Discharges**

Regarding vessel discharges, EPA will continue working closely with the Coast Guard on addressing ballast water discharges domestically, and with the interagency work group and U.S. delegation to Marine Environmental Protection Committee (MEPC) on international controls. EPA will continue to work closely with the Coast Guard, Alaska and other states, and the

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International Council of Cruise Lines regarding regulatory and non-regulatory approaches to managing wastewater discharges from cruise ships. EPA will also continue to work with the Coast Guard regarding the vessel sewage discharge standards, and with the Navy on developing Uniform National Discharge Standards for Armed Forces vessels. Regarding dredged material management, EPA will continue to work closely with the Corps of Engineers on standards for permit review, as well as site selection/designation and monitoring.

EPA's environmental mandate and expertise make it uniquely qualified to represent the Nation's environmental interests abroad. While the Department of State (DOS) is responsible for the conduct of overall U.S. foreign policy, implementation of particular programs, projects, and agreements is often the responsibility of other agencies with specific technical expertise and resources. Relations between EPA and DOS cut across several offices and/or bureaus in both organizations.

OIA also serves as the primary point-of-contact and liaison with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). Specially drawing on expertise from throughout EPA, OIA administers a number of interagency agreements for environmental assistance.

Finally, EPA works closely with a number of other Federal agencies with environmental, health, or safety mandates. These include (among others) the Department of Labor, Department of Transportation, Department of Agriculture, Department of the Interior, Department of Health and Human Services, and the Food and Drug Administration.

EPA works with the Department of State, NOAA, Coast Guard, Navy, and other Federal agencies in developing the technical basis and policy decisions necessary for negotiating global treaties concerning marine antifouling systems, invasive species, and air pollution from ships. EPA also works with the same Agencies in addressing land-based sources of marine pollution in the Gulf of Mexico and Wider Caribbean Basin.

#### ***Objective: Enhance Science and Research***

While EPA is the Federal agency mandated to ensure safe drinking water, other Federal and non-Federal entities are conducting research that complements EPA's research program on priority contaminants in drinking water. For example, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) conduct health effects and exposure research. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) also performs research on children's risks.

Many of these research activities are being conducted in collaboration with EPA scientists. The private sector, particularly the water treatment industry, is conducting research in such areas as analytical methods, treatment technologies, and the development and maintenance of water resources. Cooperative research efforts have been ongoing with the American Water Works Association Research Foundation and other stakeholders to coordinate drinking water research.

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EPA is also working with the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) to evaluate performance of newly developed methods for measuring microbes in potential drinking water sources.

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EPA has developed joint research initiatives with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the United States Geological Survey (USGS) for linking monitoring data and field study information with available toxicity data and assessment models for developing sediment criteria.

The issue of eutrophication, hypoxia, and harmful algal blooms (HABs) is a priority with the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources (CENR). An interagency research strategy for pfiesteria and other harmful algal species was developed in 1998, and EPA is continuing to implement that strategy. EPA is working closely with NOAA on the issue of nutrients and risks posed by HABs. This CENR is also coordinating the research efforts among Federal agencies to assess the impacts of nutrients and hypoxia in the Gulf of Mexico.

Urban wet weather flow research is being coordinated with other organizations such as the Water Environment Research Foundation's Wet Weather Advisory Panel, the ASCE Urban Water Resources Research Council, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), and the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). Research on the characterization and management of pollutants from agricultural operations (e.g., CAFOs) is being coordinated with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) through workshops and other discussions.

EPA is pursuing collaborative research projects with the USGS to utilize water quality data from urban areas obtained through the USGS National Ambient Water Quality Assessment (NAWQA) program, showing levels of pesticides that are even higher than in many agricultural area streams. These data have potential uses for identifying sources of urban pesticides, and EPA will evaluate how the USGS data could be integrated into the Geographic Information System (GIS) database system.