

State of Oregon
Department of Environmental Quality

Memorandum

Date: Oct. 26, 2016
To: Environmental Quality Commission
From: Richard Whitman, Director *RW*
Subject: Agenda item H, Informational and discussion item: NPDES program updates
Nov. 2-3, 2016, EQC meeting

Purpose of item DEQ will present an update on process and next steps related to recommendations for Water Quality Program improvements.

Background In September 2016, consultants hired by DEQ to evaluate its water quality permitting program for process improvements issued their final report and recommendations. That report identified a series of actions for the agency and program in order to reduce its water quality permitting backlog and ensure all legal and process obligations are met. The consultants will also produce an implementation plan, which DEQ expects to provide as part of the discussion at the Nov. 2-3, 2016, EQC meeting.

To facilitate this work, Interim Director Shepherd appointed Keith Andersen, DEQ's Western Region administrator, as Special Advisor to the Director for Water Program Improvement. Andersen will ensure high-level ongoing attention to execution of the permit program implementation plan and serve as the primary communicator of agency progress on implementation.

In this new role, Andersen will report to the director and deputy director and his work responsibilities will include:

1. Marshaling resources and fostering implementation of the consultant's report as one of the agency's top priorities
2. The authority to request changes in existing resource allocation in support of implementation of the plan
3. The authority to authorize pilot programs to improve the permit program
4. The authority to implement systemic improvements and metrics in support of implementation of the plan
5. The authority to collect data and information necessary to inform implementation of the plan

**EQC
involvement**

There is no specific commission action associated with this informational item. DEQ will present regular updates on this issue at each commission meeting or as otherwise requested.

**Supporting
documents**

A. Consultant's report (PDF)

<http://www.deq.state.or.us/wq/wqpermit/docs/recrep0916.pdf>

B. Program review webpage

<http://www.deq.state.or.us/wq/wqpermit/review.htm>

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