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United States Department of the Interior

U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

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NATIONAL WATER QUALITY LABORATORY TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM 1999.02

October 6, 1998

Subject: Disposal of National Water-Quality Assessment (NAWQA) Program Depositional Targeted Habitat (DTH) benthic macroinvertebrate samples

Effective date
of changes: October 6, 1998

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Revision: None

Supplemental
material: None

PURPOSE

The purpose of this memorandum is to present two disposal options for the Depositional Targeted Habitat (DTH) benthic macroinvertebrate samples. On the basis of a recent recommendation by the Qualitative Multihabitat (QMH) Committee to discontinue DTH benthic macroinvertebrate sampling, the National Water-Quality Assessment (NAWQA) Program has decided not to process the DTH benthic macroinvertebrate samples currently stored at the National Water Quality Laboratory's (NWQL) Biological Unit (BU). As a result, the BU will be resolving the disposal of these samples before moving to a new laboratory.

BACKGROUND

The BU currently stores over 5,000 benthic macroinvertebrate samples that have been collected by the NAWQA Program since 1991. These alcohol-preserved samples must be stored in ventilated metal cabinets that meet local fire code requirements. During February/March 1999, the NWQL will be relocating to a new laboratory at the Denver Federal Center in Lakewood, Colorado. All Rarest Targeted Habitat (RTH) and QMH benthic macroinvertebrate samples in the possession of the BU at that time will be transferred to a new warehouse facility. However, storage capacity is limited and the BU will eventually have to dispose of NAWQA benthic macroinvertebrate samples that have already been processed in order to make room for arriving samples. Guidelines for the

archival/disposal of RTH and QMH benthic macroinvertebrate samples will be presented in a later NWQL Technical Memorandum.

****SELECTING A DTH BENTHIC MACROINVERTEBRATE SAMPLE DISPOSAL OPTION****

Study Unit (SU) Biologists must select one of the following two options for dealing with the disposal of DTH benthic macroinvertebrate samples:

1) instruct the BU to DISPOSE of all DTH benthic macroinvertebrate samples for a SU,

OR

2) instruct the BU to RETURN all DTH benthic macroinvertebrate samples to the SU.

A SU representative (e.g., the SU Chief or Biologist) must notify the BU of its disposal preference before November 30, 1998. This preference should be communicated via email to Steve Moulton (smoulto). If the BU is not contacted by November 30, 1998, the BU will discard the DTH benthic macroinvertebrate samples. It has been the policy of NAWQA to have all benthic macroinvertebrate samples analyzed through the NWQL. Any samples returned to a SU cannot be processed using NAWQA funding. As a result, the District must use another funding source to justify local processing of DTH benthic macroinvertebrate samples.

****COST TO THE SU FOR RETURN OF DTH BENTHIC MACROINVERTEBRATE SAMPLES****

Any SU requesting to have DTH benthic macroinvertebrate samples returned to them will be charged the cost (e.g., labor to pack, materials, shipping & handling) of returning samples which is estimated to be \$50.00 per sample. The cost for disposal at the BU will be paid for by the NWQL.

/signed/

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Key Words: National Water-Quality Assessment Program, NAWQA, National Water Quality Laboratory, NWQL, Biological Unit, BU, Depositional targeted habitat, DTH, Benthic macroinvertebrate samples, Disposal.

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