**Department of Environmental Conservation**

**Human Health Criteria Technical Workgroup**

**Roles, Responsibilities, and Ground Rules for Workgroup**

**Purpose**

The purpose of the technical workgroup is to review and provide feedback on key technical issues, identified by DEC, that affect how Alaska will develop human health criteria in State water quality standards.

**Participants**

The Technical Workgroup includes federal, state, tribal, municipal, industry, and environmental NGOs representatives.

**Outcomes**

As noted in the purpose statement above, DEC is seeking information and recommendations from

Workgroup members for development of human health criteria in water quality standards. DEC

understands that many different interests will be represented, and that it might not be possible to come up with consensus recommendations. So while there is a goal to achieve consensus, there is also recognition that some recommendations might be accompanied by diverging viewpoints from the various workgroup members’ constituencies. Regardless of the degree of consensus attained, all information and recommendations will be of value to DEC in the process.

**Participant Roles**

*Workgroup Members* – will represent their own and the viewpoints of their constituencies and participate in the process by:

1) attending the meetings and conference calls;

2) reviewing in a timely manner the workgroup notebooks and other materials circulated by DEC;

3) engaging each other in productive dialogue during the issue discussions; and

4) considering the “real world” aspects of implementing workgroup recommendations, working

toward consensus recommendations where possible, and ensuring considerate inclusion of

diverging views in the event that consensus does not emerge.

*DEC Staff* – will attend the meetings and conference calls in an informational capacity to

provide background, perspectives, and factual data on current DEC and EPA policies, agency resources, capacity to implement various recommendations, perceived statutory and regulatory requirements, and other contextual information that helps the workgroup identify viable recommendations. Staff will make presentations and be a technical resource to the Workgroup. Staff will develop the Workgroup notebooks, develop and disseminate background information, facilitate the meetings and conference calls, enforce ground rules, provide minutes, prepare agendas and meeting packets, and ensure effective use of time.

*General Public Meeting Attendees* - will observe meetings and conference calls, allowing the Workgroup

members and DEC staff to address the various topics on the agenda. Meeting attendees may provide public comment at the end of each workgroup meeting on issues addressed during the meeting. Those wishing to comment should indicate their intention on the sign in list. Public comments will not be taken during conference calls that are primarily informational. The public can also sign up for the water quality standards ListServ to be kept informed of meetings information and material including agendas.

**Ground Rules for Meetings and Conference Calls**

The ground rules for the workgroup meetings and conference calls are simple, and designed to help the process forward in a considerate, productive manner:

1. Treat each other, the organizations represented on the workgroup, and the workgroup itself with

respect and consideration at all times – put any personal differences aside.

2. Work as team players and share all relevant information. Express fundamental interests rather

than fixed positions. Be honest, and tactful. Avoid surprises. Encourage candid, frank discussions.

3. Ask if you do not understand.

4. Openly express any disagreement or concern you have with all workgroup members.

5. Offer mutually beneficial solutions. Actively strive to see the other’s point of view.

6. Share information discussed in the meetings with only the organizations/constituents that you

may represent, and relay to the workgroup the opinions of these constituents as appropriate.

7. Speak one at a time in meetings, as recognized by the facilitator.

8. Acknowledge that everyone will participate, and no one will dominate.

9. Agree that it is okay to disagree and disagree without being disagreeable.

10. Support and actively engage in the workgroup decision process.

11. Do your homework! Read and review materials provided; be familiar with discussion topics.

12. Stick to the topics on the meeting agenda; be concise and not repetitive.

13. Make every attempt to attend all meetings. In the event that a primary workgroup member is

unable to attend, that member is responsible for notifying DEC about alternative arrangements.

**Workgroup Process**

Workgroup members will participate in the meetings and conference calls, and provide input for

development of recommendations to DEC. Members will not be paid for their time, travel, or other

expenses. Meetings and calls will be public noticed and open to the public. Relevant materials (e.g.,

agendas, minutes, notebook items, handouts) will be posted to the DEC Human Health Criteria web site.

The following objectives will drive the overall workgroup process during the execution of this effort:

* Workgroup members will have a thorough understanding of key concepts and terminology associated with the EPA Methodology for Developing Human Health Criteria (2000)
* The workgroup will be organized, moderated, on topic, and on schedule.
* The workgroup will be guided in a transparent process and open to the public.
* The workgroup will provide recommendations to DEC about how the state should incorporate technical information into the criteria development process
* The workgroup will strive for consensus, meaning decisions that people can live with – rather than decisions they might enthusiastically support. Where consensus is not possible, recommendations from the group will be characterized as much as possible in terms of level of support, applicability, consistency with statutes and regulations, and other criteria, to inform future DEC discussions.

**Issues to be Addressed by Workgroup- Note that this may be revised based on the needs of the Workgroup and DEC**

The following issues and questions will be addressed by the workgroup. The list of issues and questions are subject to change as the workgroup proceeds through its deliberations. For each issue, the workgroup will develop options for state implementation; evaluate pros and cons for the options; and, where possible, develop recommendations.

**Issue #1: What information about fish consumption and fish consumption rates is available to inform the HHC process?**

**Issue #2: What options does DEC have for developing criteria on a statewide/regional/site specific basis?**

**Issue #2a: What modeling approach(es) should DEC consider (Determinstic v. Probabilistic)?**

**Issue #3: What is the appropriate level of protection for Alaska and its residents?**

**Issue #3a: How should DEC apply bioconcentration v. bioaccumulation factors?**

**Issue #3b: How should DEC address concerns about its carcinogenic risk value?**

**Issue #4a: What should Alaska include for deriving a fish consumption rate?**

**Issue #4b: What is the role of Relative Source Contribution (RSC) in relation to fish consumption rates and what are Alaska’s options?**

**Issue #5: What are Alaska’s options for implementing the proposed criteria?**

**Technical Workgroup Report:** An outcome of this process will be a report of options and recommendations to DEC. DEC will take responsibility for drafting the report based on the proceedings of the different meetings. Workgroup participants will be expected to provide feedback and edits on the report.