

Draft Biological Water Quality Criteria Language

7.2 Narrative Standards

...responses in desirable resident fish, or other desirable aquatic life, or undesirable human health effects, as determined by bioassay or other tests performed in accordance with standard procedures; or determined by biological assessments in R317-2-7.3.

7.3 Biological Water Quality Assessment and Criteria

Waters of the State shall be free from human-induced stressors in concentrations or combinations which will adversely alter the biological integrity as prescribed by the biological assessment processes and biological criteria set forth below:

A. Quantitative biological assessments may be used separately or in conjunction with the chemical, biological, and physical criteria promulgated in R317-2 to assess whether the purposes and designated uses identified in R317-2-6 are supported.

B. The results of the quantitative biological assessments may be used for purposes of water quality assessment, including, but not limited to, those assessments required by §§303(d) and 305(b) of the federal Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. §§1313(d) and 1315(b)).

C. Quantitative biological assessments shall use documented methods that have been subject to technical review and produce consistent, objective and repeatable results that account for methodological uncertainty and natural environmental variability.

D. If the Division determines that a biological assessment is not appropriate for a water body, it will publish the legal and scientific justification for that determination through a public process.

Definitions (UAC R317-1):

“Biological assessment” means an evaluation of the biological condition of a water body using biological surveys and other direct measurements of composition or condition of the resident living organisms.

“Biological criteria” means numeric values or narrative descriptions that are established to protect the biological condition of the aquatic life inhabiting waters that have been given a certain designated aquatic life use.

“Biological integrity” means the capacity of a water body to support and maintain a balanced, integrated, adaptive community of organisms that has species composition, diversity, and functional organization comparable to that of the natural habitat of the region.

"Existing uses" means those uses actually attained in the water body on or after November 28, 1975, whether or not they are included in the water quality standards.

"Human-induced stressor" means perturbations directly or indirectly caused by humans that alter the components, patterns, and/or processes of an ecosystem.

"Use Attainability Analysis" means a structured scientific assessment of the factors affecting the attainment of the uses specified in Section 101(a)(2) of the Clean Water Act. The factors to be considered in such an analysis include the physical, chemical, biological, and economic use removal criteria as described in 40 CFR 131.10(g)(1-6).

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