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VIA E-MAIL and REGULAR MAIL

October 10, 2012

Melissa Gildersleeve
Washington Department of Ecology
P.O. Box 47600
Olympia, WA 98504-7600

*RE: NCASI August 2012 Human Health Water Quality Criteria Technical
Assessment White Paper*

Dear Ms. Gildersleeve:

On behalf of the Northwest Pulp and Paper Association (NWPPA), we're providing for your review and consideration an August 2012 technical assessment entitled "*A Review of Methods For Deriving Human Health-Based Water Quality Criteria With Consideration of Protectiveness,*" prepared by the National Council for Air and Stream Improvement (NCASI) and independent consultants.¹ As implied by its title, this white paper explains how the selection of "upper-end-of-range" values for multiple parameters in a risk equation will lead to very conservative estimates of risk or, in the case of human health-based water quality criteria (HHWQC), overly restrictive water quality criteria.

The Department of Ecology's eventual adoption of revised water quality criteria will necessarily be laden with regulatory policy and risk management choices. This NCASI white paper highlights many topic areas where these considerations will need to occur. In accordance with the recently filed CR-101 rule making for Surface Water Quality Standards (increased fish consumption rates and implementation tools), we understand the agency is intending the stakeholder Policy Forum to be the venue for educating and then eliciting stakeholder viewpoints. To that end, we suggest that the following topic areas, mostly drawn from the white paper, will be worthy of consideration early in the Policy Forum deliberations:

- Public Health Protection Target – Ecology should articulate the range of health protection outcomes under consideration in deriving revised HHWQC. This would

¹ The National Council for Air and Stream Improvement (NCASI) is an independent, non-profit research institute that focuses on environmental topics of interest to the forest products industry.

include discussion on directives in federal and state law, regulation, and guidance. This would also include reflections on the allowable fish tissue concentrations set by other U.S. and international health agencies, pollutant concentrations found in other foods, and consideration of the known health benefits of fish consumption.

- Parameters Values Used for Derivation of HHWQC – This white paper identifies and details the degree of protectiveness, conservatism, and the combined effect of conservative parameter choices in the derivation of HHWQC². Ecology should be prepared to discuss its preference for reliance upon EPA default parameter values or whether current science and survey-based values will be considered.

We appreciate the Department of Ecology’s commitment to engage the public and talk about the important public policy and risk management considerations inherent with this rule making process. This process has the potential to be a game-changing issue for not only the pulp and paper sector, but other public and private sector NPDES permittees in Washington as well. We expect to be active contributors to the process, and to work toward an outcome that is protective of public health, provides meaningful environmental and public health benefits, can be accomplished with AKART technologies, and is confidently compliant with the Clean Water Act.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this important information.

Sincerely,



Christian M. McCabe
Executive Director
Northwest Pulp and Paper Association

cc: Cheryl Niemi, Dept. of Ecology
Kelly Susewind, Dept. of Ecology
Tom Laurie, Dept. of Ecology
Gary Chandler, AWB
Courtney Barnes, AWB

Enclosure (1): NCASI August 2012 White Paper

² The NCASI white paper identifies and discusses the explicit exposure parameters (RfD, body weight, fish consumption rate, drinking water intake, substance exposure from other sources) and implicit parameters (other values that affect criteria calculation but that are not shown in the equation, like exposure duration, exposure concentration, cooking loss, relative bioavailability, bioaccumulation/concentration factor of fish) embedded in the HHWQC computation.