Discussion guide for board meeting: April 19, 2023

The goal of the continuous improvement process is to identify and prioritize environmental review program changes in a strategic, transparent, and efficient manner. The information contained in this document accompanies agenda item #6 "Continuous improvement update" at the April 19, 2023 Environmental Quality Board meeting. This document may be used as a reference during discussion of the following questions:

- What questions do you have about the draft criteria?
- Do these draft criteria cover the important components of how environmental review work gets done and what environmental review covers?
    - If not, what's missing from the list of criteria?
- Do these criteria cover all of the aspects of effectiveness that you care about while still being easy to use?
    - Are there too many or too few criteria?

1. Draft Criteria

- **Accessibility** - It helps support, create, or refine a process which is easy to complete or participate in while maintaining its integrity and usefulness; it helps ensure the public participation process is simple and easy; it reduces barriers to participation
- **Accountability** - It increases a project proposer's, RGU's, or the board's accountability to the public through reporting, data sharing or explaining decisions; it increases the program's accountability to the environment and people in the state of Minnesota
- **Consistency** - It provides consistency in process and information and strengthens reliability in environmental reviews to allow for comparability, trust, and efficiency of process
- **Environmental protection** - It provides or supports provision of usable information to government decision-makers that serves to protect the environment and results in positive environmental decisions and outcomes
- **Inclusivity (environmental justice focused**) - It is inclusive of voices that have historically been excluded or who are disproportionally impacted by pollution; it creates the ability for those voices to influence the conversation
- **Measurable** - It helps provide data-driven decisions or quantify statewide health/environmental impacts
- **Programmatic integrity** - It mitigates or eliminates real or perceived conflicts of interest in systems and procedures
- **Quality assurance** - It promotes, supports, or increases the quality and accuracy of information in environmental reviews or petitions
- **Scientific integrity** - It uses or encourages the use of the most up-to-date and complete information for environmental protection
- **Supports public engagement** - It reaches or includes wider audiences; it makes public participation more likely, easier, systematic, or intentional
- **Transparency** - It increases access to information, access to decision-making, and promotes understanding of how decisions are made
- **Understandable** - It helps provide clear communication, clear procedures, plain language information, or is approachable for lay audiences to use and interact with

2. Draft Matrix Example

We will run each improvement through the prioritization matrix - this means we ask if it meets the criteria as defined above.

	Improvement "X"	Improvement "Y"	Improvement "Z"
Accessibility	X		X
Accountability		X	X
Consistency			X
Environmental protection		X	
Inclusivity (environmental justice focused)	X		
Measurable	X	X	X
Programmatic integrity	X	X	X
Quality assurance		X	X
Scientific integrity			X
Supports public engagement		X	X
Transparency	X		X
Understandable		X	X
Total	5	7	10

Considered outside the matrix, with precedence and respect to Tribes, treaty rights and sovereignty will be "Tribal status and relationship** – Does it support the unique status of the Minnesota Tribes, Tribal sovereignty, address an issue raised by Tribes, address resources that are important to Tribes, or improve government to government relationships with Tribes?"*