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**TRACE ORGANIC COMPOUNDS IN THE ENVIRONMENT –  
AN INTERAGENCY PERSPECTIVE ON RESEARCH NEEDS AND FUNDING PRIORITIES**

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**ABSTRACT:** Recent exploratory team efforts led by Water Environment Research Foundation (WERF) emphasized a need to evaluate and communicate the perceived and potential risks to humans and ecological species from trace organic contaminants in wastewater, reclaimed water and receiving waters, including but not limited to pharmaceuticals, personal care products, surfactants, flame retardants, plasticizers and nitrosamines. WERF subscribers also have expressed an interest in funding targeted research that will address the key scientific uncertainties associated with wastewater-derived contaminants. In response to these needs, WERF released two requests for proposals (RFPs) to begin work on this topic. WERF plans to conduct a 2-day workshop of invited participants from universities, research organizations, government, utilities, and other potential collaborative funding partners. Together, these organizations will identify the future research needs and map a research roadmap of funding priorities associated with trace organic compounds. Co-principal investigators for this research effort are from Malcolm Pirnie and the University of California at Berkeley. WERF also plans to fund research to develop tools and strategies for communicating the risk associated with trace organic compounds to the public, the media and others. These first RFPs are just the beginning of WERF's efforts to address the broader issue of trace organic compounds in the environment, under a coordinated research program involving other similar funding agencies. This presentation will summarize the main findings from this workshop and highlight the workshop participants' recommendations to WERF regarding future funding priorities on trace organic compounds. The information will be synthesized using the following framework of risk assessment (e.g., human health effects, ecological effects, sources, fate and transport, treatment) risk communication (from the perspective of the public, media, researchers and utilities) and research coordination (e.g., interagency collaboration, standardization, synthesis of results). The research roadmap will be summarized as a "living" work product that can be maintained as a guide as research progresses and our understanding of trace organic compounds evolves. Because this issue is being pursued by numerous organizations, collaboration and improved awareness will lead to a better use of resources and complementary efforts that draw on each organization's unique abilities and resources.

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