

Bryant Thomas bio
Nominee for WQGIT Vice-Chair, 2024-2025 term

I have spent a career working in programs which work towards promoting, maintaining and achieving water quality goals. I think my knowledge and experience in water quality programs would be beneficial in helping to lead the WQGIT.

I've worked in water quality programs with the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) since 1999. My experience with the DEQ includes management of staff and physical resources, knowledge of federal and state water quality management programs and water pollution control technologies, and my academic training in environmental science, policy and planning. For 14 years, I managed the Wastewater Permitting and Planning divisions in the Northern Regional Office of DEQ. In this capacity, I managed technical and administrative staff in implementing several federal and state programs, including: the Virginia Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (VPDES) permit program, the Virginia Pollution Abatement (VPA) permit program, the regional component of the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) program, the Industrial Pretreatment program, and the water quality monitoring, assessment and Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) programs. For the past 2 ½ years, I have managed the Office of Ecology in DEQ's Central Office. In this capacity, I oversee technical staff and resources for managing and implementing the Water Quality Standards (WQS) regulation established to maintain and protect the beneficial uses of state waters, DEQ's Chesapeake Bay program which facilitates Virginia's programs and initiatives to achieve WIP goals and DEQ's water quality monitoring and assessment programs which includes overseeing Virginia's monitoring in support of the Chesapeake Bay Program.

I am intimately familiar with WQS and the programs which focus on collecting water quality data and assessing the information against the WQS, developing control plans through TMDLs to achieve standards, and implementation of permits to maintain the standards. In these various roles, I have worked with a wide spectrum of stakeholders, including federal, state and local governments, elected officials, industry representatives, NGO's, and various citizen groups to promote and implement programs to achieve clean water goals.

I look forward to learning more about the responsibilities involved in helping to lead the WQGIT and how my background and experience may align with the needs of the GIT moving forward.