

Questions to Guide Expert Panel Feedback to South River Science Team
October 6 and 7, 2009
VA DEQ Office, Harrisonburg, Virginia

This year's South River Science Team (SRST) Expert Panel Meeting will provide more opportunity for you, the expert panel members, to engage in discussion with presenters and team members, to ask questions, and to share your collective feedback with the SRST as a whole. You will see this reflected in the meeting agenda, particularly on the morning of October 7th, when you will have a 3-hour block of time to meet together privately to develop feedback on the briefing papers as well as the prior day's presentations and discussion. The South River Science Team asks that you use the following 3 questions to guide your feedback. Please consider the 80/20 rule when responding to these questions.

1. Has the SRST sufficiently characterized the South River aquatic environment, so that we can reach consensus on the predominant pathways by which inorganic mercury and other constituents/conditions necessary for methylation enter and move through the aquatic system to sites of methylation, and how the mercury subsequently bioaccumulates within the food web to fish?
2. Is the SRST considering an appropriate blend of innovative watershed management and innovative remedial technology options for managing risk and reducing methylmercury levels in fish? Are we overlooking opportunities to modify critical methylmercury production compartments and processes or bioaccumulation pathways that will reduce methylmercury concentrations in the South River biota?
3. Has the SRST collected and analyzed sufficient data to reach a consensus understanding of the fate and dynamics of mercury in the terrestrial environment adjacent to the South River?

For each of the 3 feedback questions above, the expert panel should also address the following clarification questions in their feedback to the SRST:

- A. What are the key uncertainties (ranked as High, Medium, and Low), along with the rationale for your ranking? A "High" ranking implies that further study and data collection are required; a "Medium" ranking implies that additional data collection would be helpful, but is not required; a "Low" ranking signifies that further study is probably not warranted.
- B. What can be done to close the knowledge/understanding gaps? What would the laboratory/field studies look like?
- C. If additional data collection and study are recommended, is it even feasible to collect these data?