

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION AWARD

March 2026

EMPLOYEE: Zachary Larson
UNIT: NPDES Compliance and Enforcement
TITLE: Scientific Aid
SUPERVISOR/TITLE: Xuan Luo, Senior WRCE

Zachary Larson is a Scientific Aid in the NPDES Unit of the Compliance and Enforcement Section. Zachary (Zac) quickly became an asset to the unit upon joining in July 2025, bringing his background as a biologist and his excellent skills in data analysis and presentation.

Zac provided valuable insights into the underlying causes of persistent chronic toxicity at one of the NPDES-permitted facilities. He reviewed years of chronic toxicity data and compared the results with multiple effluent parameters over the same period. He prepared graphical representations of these comparisons and suggested possible causes of the chronic toxicity based on his experience and known historical cases. He shared his findings in a meeting with NPDES Unit staff and the Discharger. His insightful input was highly appreciated by the Discharger.

Zac has made constructive contributions to the unit's review of Discharger Self-Monitoring Reports (SMRs). He has developed automated tools that streamline the review process and help identify issues that may have previously gone unnoticed. Findings from Zac's reviews have been incorporated into SMR review letters, and in some cases, Dischargers have modified and improved their reporting procedures as a result.

Zac's biological perspective, technical expertise, and eagerness to take on new tasks have made him a valuable member of the NPDES Compliance and Enforcement Unit.