

Meeting Summary
Technical Track Work Group Meeting
February 16, 2012

In Attendance:

On site:

Bud Leber, Kaiser (Co-Chair)

Bruce Rawls, Spokane County (Co-Chair)

Lynn Schmidt, City of Spokane

Jon Welge, Tetra Tech

Galen Buterbaugh, Lake Spokane Association

Mike Petersen, Lands Council

Bart Mihaliovich, Spokane RiverKeeper

Arianne Fernandez and Diana Washington, Ecology

On the Phone:

Doug Krapas, Inland Empire Paper

Sarah Hubbard-Gray, Hubbard Gray Consulting, Inc.

Diana opened the meeting with introductions and housekeeping. The group agreed that they will accept the meeting summary from the February 1, 2012 meeting and Diana will send to Andy to post to the website.

Bud moved to the agenda and went over the documents that he sent out to everyone for consideration. He started with a review of the Technical Track Work Group (TTWG) Purpose Statement:

Purpose Statement

Technical Track Work Group

To: Fulfill the technical information and data needs of the Spokane River Regional Toxics Task Force (SRRTTF) as requested.

In a way that: Allows for a common level of understanding on technical issues by all the members of the SRRTTF.

Is responsive to the technical needs of and the direction provided by the SRRTTF.

Provides work plans that comply with the scopes and budgets approved by the SRRTTF.

Provides data and assessments of that data in a form that can be used by the SRRTTF for planning subsequent scopes of work and budgets.

So that: The SRRTTF can develop a comprehensive plan for achieving the PCB water quality standard for the Spokane River.

The TTWG members provided comments about the budget component of the “**In a way that**” section. Language will be added indicating that the work group will identify scope that is consistent with available budget as identified by the SRRTTF. Additionally, questions will be brought to the SRRTTF meeting regarding the technical consultant and the role of the TTWG and whether or not the SRRTTF envisions the TTWG as having an ongoing role or as a short term get the ball rolling work group.

The TTWG agreed that the purpose statement will be presented to the SRRTTF as a draft for consideration.

The group went through the same process with the technical workshop purpose statement.

Technical Workshop Purpose Statement

- Review and discussion
- Finalization

Purpose Statement

Technical Workshop

To: Provide a forum for the open exchange of information on the current state of knowledge both nationally and locally related to PCB water quality issues and sources

In a way that: Allows those involved in PCB water quality in other geographic areas to discuss their activities and provide insights into what they have learned from their efforts in areas applicable to Spokane River issues.

Provides for a detailed review of the Ecology collected data on PCB in the Spokane River and how that data was analyzed and used to develop the 2003-2007 Source Assessment Report and other related reports.

Provides for an update on source identification and control efforts actions within the Spokane River watershed.

Provides the opportunity for SRRTTF members to have discussions with presenters and among themselves.

Provides the opportunity for SRRTTF members to “brainstorm” how learnings can best be used to identify future technical information and data needs.

So that: All members have the opportunity to develop a common level of understanding prior to setting the technical direction for the SRRTTF’s activities.

Comments from the group included identification of the three types of possible presenters: regulators, academics, and consultants. Additionally, text will be added indicating that this is an opportunity to introduce consultants to SRRTTF and what we will be looking for with respect to the RFP for a technical consultant. The group agreed to take the draft to the SRRTTF meeting and request feedback and direction with respect to the PCB workshop.

Workshop Content Discussion:

Sessions:

Bud provided a conceptual model of the PCB sources and sinks. The group used this model to begin discussion about the PCB workshop. The group recognizes the need to get approval for the workshop from the SRRTTF prior to moving forward with speaker invitation, venue selection, and announcements to the community. The TTWG will provide an update to the SRRTTF and request approval to move forward but in the mean time, given the short preparation time frame, the group began brainstorming about the sources, sinks, and what technical path the workshop should take.

Potential presenters:

Bruce provided a list of potential speakers and Arianne read her list of potential speakers and the issues they could address. The group had a discussion about PCB source tracing and Arianne identified that understanding what PCBs are found in fish could help identify the source of those PCBs. Diana indicated that a lot of work has been done in the area of source identification and ask why we can’t just build on it. Arianne indicated that one of the complex issues is that the fish numbers are driving the water quality standard and that the fish in our area will be different from those in other areas because of the difference in river and watershed behavior. As an example, we have very little sediment transport and deposition throughout the river. Sediments tend to be deposited in specific location and that the water column is going to be the compliance point versus sediment. The uniqueness of the area will drive the type of work we will need to pursue to get arms around the PCB sources. Arianne indicated that understanding what PCBs are being found in the local fish will help lead to identification of sources.

Everyone agrees that this is a very complex issue and that we will need some sessions at the workshop that help us to get an understanding so that we can identify the path forward and that it will be an iterative path. Everyone agreed that we will need to look at the conceptual model, attached, and bring our ideas back to the next meeting. The group recognized that they may want to make a change to the original concept for the workshop agenda given the need to fit in as many technical presentations as possible.

Breakout sessions and/or brainstorming session:

The next topic was workshop breakout groups and brainstorming sessions. We evaluated how we want to do this and decided that each group will need a good facilitator. Additionally we agreed that we may want to have the groups focused around a particular topic. The topic would be facilitated by someone with skills facilitating and each group would have the expert presenter for that topic available.

Workshop venue and logistics:

The TTWG agreed that we need a venue with an auditorium and breakout rooms. We are not sure if the City's fire training center is the best place given the limited space. We will bring this question to the SRRTTF to find out if there will be any funds available to acquire a venue. We will also find out if they will make funds available to pay for travel and stipends for technical experts.

Report out to Task Force:

The TTWG Co-Chairs will present a summary of the TTWG sessions to the SRRTTF. We will need decisions on the following topics and will request approximately an hour of time in the February 28th meeting agenda.

- The chairs will present the TTWG purpose statement for approval by the task force and verify that this is the purpose of the WG.
- The chairs will present the idea of the Workshop and the purpose statement for the Workshop for approval.
- The chairs will request directions with respect to the selection of a venue assuming that the group agrees with the idea of a workshop.
- The chairs will request funding for the workshop and presenters.

Meeting was adjourned and the next meeting will be set by Doodle Poll for next week.