

Spokane River Regional Toxics Task Force Meeting / Technical Track Work Group Meeting

October 7, 2015 | 10:00am-12:00pm

Department of Ecology | N. 4601 Monroe St. | Spokane WA, 99205

Attendees: * indicates voting member

BilJay Adams*—Liberty Lake Sewer & Water District
Dale Arnold*—City of Spokane
John Beacham—City of Post Falls
Kevin Booth—Avista
Adriane Borgias—WA Dept. of Ecology (Ecology)
Galen Buterbaugh*—Lake Spokane Association
Ben Brattebo—Spokane County
Lisa Dally-Wilson (video)—Dally Environmental
Dave Dilks (phone)—Limnotech
Brandee Era-Miller (phone)—Ecology
Michael Friese (phone)—Ecology
Ted Hamlin—Ecology

Mike Hermanson (phone)—Spokane County
Doug Krapas*—Inland Empire Paper
Greg Lahti—WA Dept. of Transportation
Bud Leber*—Kaiser Aluminum
Rob Lindsay—Spokane County
Dave McBride* (phone)—WA Dept. of Health
Brian Nickel (phone)—US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
Chris Page (video)—Ruckelshaus Center
Sandy Phillips*—Spokane Regional Health District
Don Keil*—City of Coeur d’Alene
Jeremy Ryf—Ecology
Kara Whitman—Ruckelshaus Center

Introductions and Agenda Review

The LimnoTech documents on the 2014 synoptic sampling are final. The Task Force should look at these documents again when the data becomes available from the 2015 monitoring.

Decision: Accept comment letter on Ecology’s draft hatchery general permit? (Quorum reached, 8 out of 13 voting members present at the meeting).

The only comment received was from Spokane County. The Task Force discussed the duplication of requesting Ecology require monitoring for hatcheries on 303(d) listed water bodies:

- One looks at existing vs. future permits. Could remove bullet -d (page 5) under general permits or leave it; they are about two different sections in the permit.
- Rob Lindsay explained that the County does not applaud Ecology potentially denying new permits, based on this factor. They agree the new permitted dischargers should be monitoring for 303(d) listed constituents, but are sensitive to language that applauds those efforts.
- The group suggested dropping the first 2 sentences in bullet d on page 5, and leaving the portion that starts “it does not appear that...” The County would be fine with this change.
- Remove “of the NPDES Permit” from the last paragraph of page 3. The rest would read the same.
- Page 6, typo: bottom H, last sentence. Pico grams not Picto grams

DECISION: The letter response to Ecology’s draft hatchery general permit was approved by the Task Force voting members, with the noted edits for submission to Ecology.

ACTION ITEM: Lisa Dally Wilson will make agreed-on edits and send to Kara Whitman to put on Task Force letterhead. The Ruckelshaus Center will send letter via email and mail hard copy to Ecology, for the Task Force. (COMPLETE)

LimnoTech Draft Scope of Work for Comprehensive Plan

Dave Dilks requested feedback. The plan is to develop a menu of viable best management practice (BMP) options, including estimated total PCB reduction by, and implementation cost of, each option. Tentative timeline:

- May 2016: draft memo with menu of options (final version in June).
- July 2016: workshop to work toward draft list of options for inclusion in the Comprehensive Plan (CP).
- September 2016: draft CP ready for review.

Rob Lindsay expressed concern that this is a bit ambitious. The County has requested an additional three weeks to submit comments on the draft scope/timeline. In Rob's his experience in developing regional plans with many moving parts and many stakeholders, it is very difficult to pull together a plan all at once that everyone can agree to. There are many hard decisions to be made by stakeholders and those around the table, and the Task Force needs to recognize that they are putting together a set of recommendations. The County recommends extending the review time to get Task Force members to consider how this will all come together by 12/31/16.

Q&A/Discussion

- **C.** The deliverables from the 2015 synoptic study are not mentioned; need coordination and inclusion of the 2015 study in the CP.
- **C.** Scope should not refer to EPA's response to the judge. Focus on CP description in MOA.
- **Q.** At what point does the Task Force decide what water quality standards it must meet? **A.** Dave Dilks stated the plan should focus on BMPs rather than TMDL compliance. Dave asked the group to consider whether loads and water quality standards should be included in the CP. Need consensus on this.
- **C.** The Task Force will do all they can to identify all the sources, implement control measures and BMPs, but we may not be able to say that the CP will meet water quality standards.
- **C.** The plan should recommend steps to better understand the system, sources, etc.
- **C.** Dave would like the group to really think about the timeline and the ability to come to consensus. A two-month period may be more realistic based on past Task Force work (a month before and after workshop to digest the information and come up with final recommendations).
- **Q.** Should the Task Force outline ground rules for how to go through this? How to move through each recommendation, agree on ahead of time.
- **Q.** BMPs: The Task Force has a lot of info that comes in June; how will this be phased in? **A.** There will be a list of draft BMPs, with a parallel process; the sooner the Task Force starts working on them the better.
- **C.** In many cases the Task Force will not have authority to implement BMPs for PCB sources; there will not be one responsible party. It will be hard to define the responsibility associated with some sources. What mechanism will ensure that BMPs actually get executed? No feasible responsible party to do this, and stakeholder voluntary actions likely not sufficient. Regulatory driver will be needed.
- Costs vs. benefits of each BMP.

ACTION ITEM: Comment deadline extended to October 26th (Monday). Post draft scope one week before November TTWG meeting, with decision/approval on scope at November TF meeting. (COMPLETE)

ACTION ITEM: Ruckelshaus to send revised scope on Monday October 12 (after Dave sends to RH) out notice of comment deadline extension and request for review and comment. (COMPLETE)

Little Spokane Fish Hatchery Case Study: Michael Friese

Michael Friese of Ecology's Environmental Assessment Program (EAP) explained that the project will call it the "Spokane Fish Hatchery" (not the Little Spokane Fish Hatchery). He asked the group to finalize the project scope.

The objectives of the project are to:

1. Determine if discharge from the Spokane fish hatchery is a significant source of PCBs to the Little Spokane River.
2. Evaluate concentrations of PCBs in trout being planted in the Spokane River as a source of PCBs to the system.

These objectives will be accomplished through

1. An evaluation of the PCB discharge from the hatchery (composite sample of sediment and analyze for PCB congeners; three seasonal samples of suspended solids and effluent).
2. Evaluate the hatchery trough as a source of PCBs to the Spokane River (composites of 15 fish from Trout Lodge, and 15 fish from Spokane Fish Hatchery).

The group agrees on the basic objectives of the study.

Q&A/Discussion

- **C.** Missing the fish exposure from inputs. **A.** Michael explained that it is pretty clear which homologs or groups are more likely to be in feed vs. water etc. The project will concentrate on what is coming out of the hatchery into the system rather than the inputs, to spend the dollars more efficiently. If a problem is identified, then the next step would be to extend the scope.
- **Q.** How big a budget? What is the ultimate goal of this study? About \$20,000 to complete the study.
- **Q.** Task Force financial support to expand scope of project? **A.** Brandee will ask.
- **C.** The Task Force could do a separate fish food study. Keep in mind the food source changes throughout the year. Sample food the month before the sampling? Could sample and analyze later if needed.
- **C.** Idaho stocks the lakes and rivers, and there is a connection upstream.
- **Q.** There are only 3-4 manufacturers of the food comes in Western North America. Can we get data from those suppliers? **A.** Michael: could propose this as a separate EAP study.
- **C.** Study objective #2 The Task Force would be more interested in approximate loadings rather than concentrations. (Can get flow volumes, and seasonal concentrations to calculate load).
- **Q.** Is there be a way to do a rough calculation on the assumed concentration of fish with 155,000—is this a big number? **A.** Michael will look at Dave Serdar’s study to see if he did whole fish or filet, could possibly use his range of concentrations (*update: previous study appears to be filet*).
- **C.** Ted Hamlin is sampling Waikiki Springs, could do sampling at the same time. Griffith Springs could be added as concurrent sampling with the EAP sampling.
- **C.** John Whalen of WA Department of Fish and Wildlife has retired. He has been replaced by Chris Donley.

ACTION ITEM: Ruckelshaus Center to add update from Michael Friese to future Task Force meeting. (COMPLETE)

ACTION ITEM: Michael Friese will look at “back of the envelope” calculation from Dave Serdar’s study.

EAP Updates:

For FY 17 (after comp plan): Ecology meeting Oct. 8th to work through all project proposals. The Task Force submitted four projects: technical assistance from EAP, assistance with Environmental Information Management (EIM), sediment sampling for PCBs, and invertebrate sampling for PCBs. Another project suggested: work with City of Spokane on stormwater basins to refine estimates of PCBs in stormwater (higher priority than 2017).

ACTION ITEM: Adriane Borgias will report back to the Task Force on the results of the review of the projects.

- Data Management work group: Duwamish: contractor looked at the Delaware database, a Duwamish database and EIM, and mapped and compared all the fields. The group used some of this during discussion on Oct. 5th. The following items were highlighted by the group in their October 5th meeting:
 - Archive data: EIM, recognize improvements needed to link QA information with the PCB information.
 - No permit database for PCB information (a conversation in Ecology needs to happen)
 - Usability of data-mapping, sorting, etc.
 - Need a workshop to get other groups (Delaware, Seattle etc.) together in conjunction with development of the comp plan: what are the database requirements for the comprehensive plan?
 - Resource allocation who will manage database? This needs addressed as part of the comp plan.
- Hydroseed: from the City and the WA Department of Transportation confirm the pilot project study results: recent samples show significantly lower levels than the original City of Spokane product study.
- Workshops: are experts needed? Topics suggested:
 - Aquifer and In-river sampling, springs, groundwater (a lot of data)
 - Fish feed/tissue/hatchery (wait till EAP study comes back?).
 - Data Management
 - Comp Plan- prioritization of BMPs –July 2016
 - Retrospective analysis status refining estimates for stormwater? Adriane submitted as an EAP project, but more time-sensitive. Could be part of the LimnoTech scope of work. Add to Task Force agenda soon? (may not be good for EAP 2017)
 - **February Workshop:** Tie in with data management, new data, fish and BMPs for comp plan.

ACTION ITEM: The Task Force formed a small work group to plan a workshop for 2016: Lisa Dally-Wilson, Bud Leber, Brandee Era-Miller, John Beacham, Adriane Borgias, and Dave Dilks. The work group to meet prior to the November 4th Technical Track Work Group meeting. (COMPLETE)

The next SRRTTF meeting is Wednesday October 21, 2015 at the Liberty Lake Sewer and Water District Office
 The next Technical Track Work Group meeting is November 4th, 2015 at the Washington Department of Ecology.