

Spokane River Regional Toxics Task Force Technical Track Work Group (TTWG) Meeting Notes

January 4, 2017 | 10:00 am – 12:00 pm

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

Meeting Documents: <http://srrttf.org/?p=7475>

Attendees

BiJay Adams (phone) –Liberty Lake Sewer and Water District

John Beacham –City of Post Falls

Lisa Dally Wilson (phone) –Dally Environmental

Dave Dilks (phone) –LimnoTech

Jeff Donovan –City of Spokane

Chris Donley –Was Department of Fish and Wildlife

Doug Krapas –Inland Empire Paper

Kris Holm (phone) –City of Coeur d’Alene

Mike LaScuola –Spokane Regional Health District

Bud Leber –Kaiser Aluminum

Dave Moss –Spokane County

Cadie Olsen –City of Spokane

Monica Ott –City of Post Falls

Adriane Pearson –City of Spokane

Chris Page (Video) –Ruckelshaus Center

Sandy Trecanni –WA Department of Ecology

Kara Whitman –Ruckelshaus Center

Introductions and Agenda Review:

After a round of introductions and agenda review, the group added an agenda item: Tech Workshop this year?

EAP Update: Adriane Borgias noted that the Environmental Assessment Program (EAP) has funded many past Task Force projects. A backlog of incomplete water quality projects means that EAP staff will focus on completing these over the next year. Lisa Dally Wilson mentioned that a small team had worked on an EAP project proposal looking at sediment and fish (currently out for review). Given that EAP funding will not be available this year, this project idea could be considered for Task Force next steps, perhaps using existing data. The group had planned to submit this project to EAP, but may need to consider other options.

Brandee Era-Miller provided, via email, updates on ongoing EAP projects:

- **Long-Term Monitoring of PCBs in Lake Spokane Using Age-Dated Lake Sediment Cores.** Update: Samples collected, awaiting laboratory results. Draft report for Task Force review due 10/31/17.
- **LSR Hatchery Case Study (sampling/analysis of hatchery fish—includes Trout Lodge (Avista) fish.** Update: Samples collected and processed. Awaiting receipt of data from Pacific Rim Lab. Draft report for SRRTTF review due 5/30/17.
- **High Volume Sampling/Long Tem Monitoring Station at Spokane Tribal Reservation Boundary.** Update: working on the report and should have a draft report for SRRTTF review by spring 2017. New QA coordinator at Ecology Manchester Lab, Ginna Grepo-Grove, is currently re-reviewing/validating all AXYS laboratory data for the project.
- **Atmospheric Deposition.** Update: Sampling underway, data collection and plume dispersion modeling of the WTE Facility slated for completion by June 2017. Draft report for SRRTTF review due 11/30/17.
- **Assessment of Methods for Sampling Low-Level Toxics in Surface Waters.** Update: Sampling underway. CLAM results collected June 2016 at the Spokane Tribal Reservation Boundary show excellent precision for PCB results and little to no PCB contamination from CLAM. Stainless steel

housing was used instead of PCB-contaminated LDPE housing. Another sampling at the Spokane Tribal Reservation Boundary is planned for February 2017.

Task Force Funding: Doug Krapas informed the group that the Task Force’s funding request did not make it into the Governor’s budget, with limited Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA) funding. The State would like individual watersheds (like Spokane) to become more self-sufficient. The funding request does still have a chance to make it into the legislative budget. Dave Moss reported that the Task Force has ~\$300,000 in the ACE account. Funding should go on the January SRRTTF agenda; budget could be a real limitation moving forward.

As in the past the Task Force’s biennial budget request needs to be accompanied by a basic scope of work. Doug said it will be difficult to get funding for still more studies, so the request should focus on *actions* that result in PCB reduction. Inland Empire Paper (IEP) has taken the lead role in lobbying for funding in the past, but would like to have others step up to remove the idea that it is an IEP effort alone.

ACTION ITEM: Kara to send EAP project update out to the full task Force. (COMPLETE)

ACTION ITEM: Chris page to add funding/budget to the 1/25/17 Task Force meeting agenda. (COMPLETE)

Technical Workshop in 2017?

In the past, each year there has been a “driver” or need for the workshop. Typically the Task Force has held a workshop in the winter months, but this year with focusing on completing the Comprehensive (Comp) Plan, the Task Force does not have a pressing, big topic to focus a workshop. The Task Force does have Comp Plan action items to tackle, and it may be worth looking at what other watersheds are doing in regards to specific actions in the Comp Plan. The Task Force could look for synergies between its plans and what other watersheds are doing. Workshop-related comments:

- Data Mining: could focus Workshop on this later on in the year after the work is done.
- River Forum: November 2017 – workshop could coincide with the Forum, during the same week.
- King County: Duwamish PCB cleanup person made an offer to present on blank contamination equipment. How long would it take—could it be done at a Task Force meeting?

ACTION ITEM: Chris Page to connect with King County about a presentation on the blank contamination study at a future Task Force meeting. (SENT EMAIL; AWAITING REPLY)

Dave Dilks: Monthly monitoring update.

For the monthly sampling for 2016, results are available through October. The study aimed to determine seasonal variability of in river PCB concentrations. The study had a tiered schedule, conducting monitoring March – June 2016; assessing data during summer 2016; then concluding with monitoring (October and December, 2016). LimnoTech received the October data and reviewed them; the data are available at http://srrttf.org/?page_id=6608. The December lab results have not arrived; they will be posted to the Task Force website when available. Highlights after adding October results in:

- The in-river concentrations are similar to the 2014 and 2015 synoptic surveys. Concentrations increase progressively going downstream from Lake CDA to Nine Mile.
- One sample at Latah Creek from October shows a high PCB concentration coming out of Latah Creek, even with the low flow. The 2014 showed one other high number for Latah creek. The new data hint that this may not be a routine phenomenon, but one that occasionally appears. Dave Dilks

no longer views the high PCB level(s) at Latah as outlier(s), given that previous sampling saw a spike at this location.

- Homolog Distribution: A seasonal variance in homolog distribution can be seen; however, a more detailed analysis looking at river flow and concentration (mass load, concentration) will help to get a better picture (rather than just proportions/percentage).
- Dave Dilks will provide a more detailed analysis after the December 2016 results arrive. At first glance, it appears that the Homolog distribution points to more of a legacy PCB issue during higher flows, rather than an inadvertent issue. As flows reduce, the homologs for inadvertent PCBs are higher, but still not the majority of the PCBs. Positive Matrix Factorization (PMF) could help better understand this.
- October Data: Concentrations fairly similar to what was seen during other months.
 - Jeff Donovan/City of Spokane: Wet weather opportunistic sampling at Cochrane Basin – no surprises, similar to results of past sampling.
 - Latah Creek spike:
 - **Q.** October vs. spring – can we do a PCB mass calculation? Can we see a mass source that is continuous? Is the mass loading similar? **A.** Just about identical.
 - **Q.** Could this be a continuous source? **A.** All other samples were different, except these two events (out of 12 or 13 samples)
 - **Q.** Is the Combined Sewer Overflow outlet into Hangman Creek still active? **A.** Yes but it did not overflow. However, WSDOT has a big stormwater basin that comes in there (from I-90).
 - **Q.** Was October the only sampling event done when during a rain event? **A.** It rained once in spring, up-stream in the Latah Creek basin (higher Latah Creek flow).

Data Mining and Work Plans

Chris Page noted that the Comp Plan contains two separate efforts related to data mining, though the group had previously only discussed one, “ID Sites of Concern for Contaminated Groundwater” (Section 5.14) The other (Section 6.3) involves “Future Studies,” that some suggest could begin with mining all available SRRTTF data collected using Method 1668. Bud Leber suggested a sequential method for the Task Force to undertake both data mining efforts, starting with the latter (Section 6.3), to allow the former (5.14)—and other future studies—to be driven by data, i.e. the results of analyzing the full body of SRRTTF data, reach-by-reach (geographically).

Bud walked the group through his diagram of a suggested process for this data mining (posted as “Work Plan Concepts” at <http://srrttf.org/?p=7475>). He encouraged the group to start high-level with compiling and formatting existing data to analyze. That can be used for two tracks:

- Homologue and key congener analysis for each gaining reach to characterize “unknown source” contribution; and
- Comparing results from analysis for each river monitoring station and point source to already-available fish tissue data from each river segment.

Many in the group liked the “logic path” laid out by Bud, and requested more detail by geography. Others in the group emphasized connecting this (and all upcoming SRRTTF work) to key actions in the Comp Plan. Also, work plans, for which a logic path can lay the groundwork, should include regular environmental monitoring to gauge reduction of PCBs (ideally, both in-river and in fish).

Mike LaScuola noted that this data mining and analysis will inform future outreach by the SRRTTF and its individual entities. Sandy Treconi explained that the discussion of data mining at the last TTWG meeting would have been an incredibly big task, and that Bud’s proposed logic path could greatly reduce this workload by allowing the SRRTTF to focus on particular sites of concern.

Next steps:

- Option: SWAT Team leads for PCB Control Actions requiring Work Plans could use a similar logic path or stepwise approach, coming back with more detail for a work plan including target dates and costs, and grounded in Comprehensive Plan (milestones etc.). Logic charts and Gant charts could be good tools for getting moving on the Comp Plan actions and identifying timelines and funding needs.
- The idea of a five-year work plan (previously suggested for the SRRTTF to consider) makes sense for the full Task Force to discuss.

ACTION ITEM: The Ruckelshaus Center to put together a list of the SWAT teams and their leads and send out to the full Task Force. (COMPLETE)

Task Force Comp Plan Press Release

The group generally liked the new version of this document (drafted by Toni Taylor and Jerry White, with comments from Chris Donley). Brooke Beeler sent comments in on 1.4.17, mostly minor.

Comments:

- Doug Krapas requested an overarching opening statement about what has been discovered in the last five years: the PCB levels in the river are very low, ascertained through extensive testing. Not all in the group feel this should be included.
- Focus on the victory of completing the plan.
- Whose name goes on the top with phone number for further comment? At meeting on 1/25/16, ask for who wants to be listed.

ACTION ITEM: Kara Whitman to incorporate all comments and send to the Task Force for review. Ruckelshaus Center to post Draft on January 18th, 2017 for a decision at the January Task Force meeting.

Next full Task Force meeting is January 25, **2017**, 9:00am-2:30 pm, **at Liberty Lake Sewer and Water District Office**

Next scheduled TTWG meeting / SRRTTF meeting: February 1, 2017 from 10:00am-12:00 pm at Dept. of Ecology