

**Spokane River Regional Toxics Task Force
Technical Track Work Group Meeting
November 7, 2012
Draft Meeting Notes**

Attendees

Laura Jones, Integral Consulting
Gary Andres, Sovereign Consulting
Bruce Rawls, Spokane County
Dave McBride, Washington Department of Health
Jeff Donovan, City of Spokane
Bud Leber, Kaiser Aluminum
Lynn Schmidt, City of Spokane
Don Martin, USEPA

Bryce Robbert, Avista
Diana Washington, Ecology
Jim Bellatty, Ecology
Arianne Fernandez, Ecology
Adriane Borgias, Ecology
On the phone:
Kris Holm, Representing City of Coeur d'Alene
Brandee Era-Miller, Ecology
Brian Nickel, USEPA

1. Analytical Methodologies for PCB and Toxics

Roundtable discussion about PCB sampling and analysis methodologies.

Bruce Rawls, Spokane County: Brown and Caldwell does the County sampling and analytical work. They sample the influent and effluent of the treatment plant. There is also a source detection program. The work is done under an Ecology approved Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP). The QAPP does not specify the version of 1668. The County uses Method 1668C and Method 8082 higher up the system.

Method 1668 is not an EPA approved method for compliance purposes.

Dave McBride, Washington Department of Health: The Department of Health relies on the data from the Department of Ecology to make fish advisory determinations. They use Aroclor data (in the range ppb) and congener data when lower detection limits are needed (in the range of ppt).

Jeff Donovan, City of Spokane, Utilities: Sampling and analysis is done under an Ecology approved QAPP. They use Test America Laboratory with Method 1668A and after the recent bid will switch to Pacific Rim. The QAPP does not specify the version of 1668.

Bud Leber, Kaiser Aluminum: Outfall sampling is a permit requirement. They use Method 1668A and Axys Analytical. They also monitor the inlet to the walnut shell treatment system using Method 8082 which has a 5 ng/liter detection limit. They do system sampling and source identification using Methods 1668A and 8082. They do SPMD samples using Method 1668A.

Lynn Schmidt, City of Spokane, Stormwater: Sampling is done for catchbasins and CSOs. Pacific Rim Laboratories does the analysis using Method 1668C and acceptance criteria for 1668C.

Don Martin, USEPA: EPA is in the process of writing the permits for Idaho. They are considering influent/effluent and in-stream sampling, as specified by Brian Nickel. 1668B was the proposed method.

Bryce Robbert, Avista: Uses Method 8082 to determine Aroclors in transformers.

Diana Washington, Ecology: The Washington permit QAPPs specific 1668 for initial analysis and allow for alternative methods when looking at the collection systems.

Jim Bellatty, Ecology: Method 1668 is not currently used for enforcement purposes. Ecology could petition EPA to do this but has not. It is anticipated that EPA would do this nationally.

Arianne Fernandez, Ecology: Ecology has used different versions of 1668 over the years to do assessment analysis. Pacific Rim does Method 1668A; 1668B was sometimes used with acceptance criteria adjusted to match A; 1668C has also been used with acceptance criteria for A. Ecology has decided to use 1668C with acceptance criteria for C in the internal QAPPs.

Also, there are areas in the data analysis where Ecology is creating boundaries for the data flags and evaluation of the blanks. This will be simplified for Ecology use and available for the Task Force to use.

Method 8082 is also used for upstream analysis for Aroclors or congeners and Method 608 is used at permitted facilities.

Doug Krapas, Inland Empire Paper: IEP uses 1668C at the effluent. They have also used 1668B in the past when looking for upstream sources at the recycle plant. The Algae system was operational 2 weeks ago. The influent/effluent will be tested for PCB using Method 1668C.

Kris Holm, Representing City of Coeur d'Alene: Idaho permits are predraft stage. PCB, Dioxin are required to be analyzed for. The proposed methods are 1668B and 608, if there is a target MDL. Method 608 is the only compliance/enforcement method, which also applies to citizen suits. There is a concern that this is clear in the monitoring requirements for the receiving water and for other discharges. There is a question as to how the data will be used and how it might play out in the future.

Brandee Era-Miller, Department of Ecology: Ecology has sampled fish, sediments, and water using SPMDs, CLAMs, and sediment traps. Fish tissue sampling is straight forward but every study has a different purpose which affects the sampling and analysis strategy. They use method 1668 and has varied between A, B, and C depending on when the study was conducted; also Method 8082 for Aroclors. The Toxics Cleanup Program uses Method 608 for PCB homologs. Ecology staff is doing a comparison of Methods 1668, 8082, and 608 in sediments.

Mike Neher, City of Post Falls: Would prefer that the permits specify only 1668 without the prefix.

Brian Nickel, USEPA: Thought that it would ok to be general with respect to specifying the method. He also agrees that coordination with the other river monitoring activities is beneficial. However, due to the fact that there is not much data about PCB in Idaho, it is also important to begin collecting data.

Roundtable discussion about Standard Operating Procedures

The Work Group discussed the concept of establishing Standard Operating Procedures for sampling, analysis, and data evaluation. The purpose is to be able to have comparability of data across the watershed. It is important that the data collected is appropriate and consistent for all sources.

The thought is that this would be defined through the Technical Consultant. The Technical Consultant would do the data review, gap analysis, and prepare a workplan/QAPP for further assessment work. So we are building towards the concept of SOPs which would most likely be next year.

These would include, sampling protocols (how to collect, what to do, how to determine what to sample); analytical methods, and data validation. Cost is an impact as 1668 is expensive and we should consider using 8082 when the samples have higher PCB concentrations.

The Idaho dischargers have a river monitoring requirement above and below the discharge point. There was a concern that there would be a duplication of effort with respect to data gathering. Should this be better coordinated with the Task Force activities? It was mentioned that there is not much data available regarding the concentration of PCB in the Idaho portion of the watershed. Timeframe of sample collection, flow rate, and coordination with the Washington activities are important.

2. Collaboration with Lisa Rodenburg on STAR Grant Research

General feedback and comments of the Work Group

1. 53% of the sources in the watershed are not identified. A possible research project could focus on analysis of snow pack at the “top of the mountain” and getting a better understanding of aerial deposition of PCB in the watershed.
2. There was a question about the timeframe of the funding opportunity. It would fund a fellowship starting in fall 2013, for a maximum of 2 years.
3. This year we had a lot of forest fires. We are aware that there is the potential for forest fires to impact PCB concentrations with respect to aerial deposition. This could be an area of study that would need to be coordinated with fire season.
4. One of the questions that we have is to get a better understanding of the fate of PCB from snowmelt to groundwater to surface water to source water. There are some monitoring wells in the area that could be used to test for PCB.
5. Stormwater and congener data is available to do PCB congener patterning, possibly to better understand aerial deposition.
6. Also interested in understanding PCBs in air, snow, rain, particulate, urban, etc.; “build the map or model, share the data.”
7. Is there a possibility of collaboration with researchers at Washington State University (Brian Lamb and Candice Clayborn)?
8. An interlaboratory comparison would be worthwhile. If there is chemical analysis work that is done outside of Ecology, then accreditation by Ecology may be needed.

<http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/eap/labs/lab-accreditation.html>

3. Other Discussion

Update on 2012 Fish Sampling

Brandee Era-Miller reported on the status of the 2012 fish sampling. Fish have been collected from the area below Little Falls Dam, Stateline, Upriver Dam, and 9-mile. The fish will be 7-composite samples for Aroclors so there will be good statistical confidence in the results, especially with respect to long term trends.

Keith Seiders and Brandee are trying to figure out how the best way to analyze the fish (which methodology to use for which samples) since there is not enough money to do all analytes on all samples. They will archive the fish for future analysis and then analyze in the future if funding is available.

The Continuous Low level Aqueous Monitor (CLAM) worked well. At 9-Mile Dam the water was lowered by 12 feet and there were high levels of sediment. Even so the sampler still worked .

Pacific Rim Laboratories is analyzing for PCB congeners and PDBE. Manchester Environmental Laboratory is doing the Aroclors. They are getting good information about precision and accuracy.

Other samples include whole water (24 hour composites) and sediment traps in the river (the current ones will be removed in January and another set redeployed to be removed in April).

There was a question as to how this information is used for the 303(d) listing. Brandee explained that the CLAM data would not be used for this but the fish tissue analysis will, probably in 2015. The process is that the data is put into the Environmental Information Management System, then it is polled. Ecology and outside data is used for the assessment. Some changes in this include the fact that the segments of the river will be changed to match the reaches in the National Hydrography Database set. Also the Fish Consumption standard could change which would affect the water quality criteria and subsequent listings.

However, this doesn't have an effect on the current focus or process of the Task Force.

Action Item: *Adriane Borgias to post the draft QAPP on the website for Task Force comment by November 21st. (Complete)*

Measurable Progress

There was a question as to process regarding the discussion of this item. Jim Bellatty explained that Ecology is willing to listen to input on this topic from Task Force members. However, it is too soon for Ecology to make a determination on this and the process needs time (about a year) to mature. The permits and the MOA both use the term measurable progress and it is important to understand the distinctions. It was suggested that a chronology of Task Force success stories be maintained.

Action Item: *Adriane Borgias to post list that was created at the Administrative Work Group in September 2012 on the website. (Complete: see http://srtrtf.org/?page_id=1281)*