

Spokane River Regional Toxics Task Force

DRAFT MEETING SUMMARY

Facilitated by Chris Page & Aubri Denevan
October 23, 2013 | 9:00am – 12:30pm
Liberty Lake Water & Sewer District Office
22510 E. Mission Ave | Liberty Lake, WA 99019

Attendees

Voting Members and Alternates

Tom Agnew* – Liberty Lake Sewer and Water District
Galen Buterbaugh* (*on phone*) – Lake Spokane Association
Bud Leber* – Kaiser Aluminum
Doug Krapas* – Inland Empire
Bart Mihailovich (*on phone*), Rick Eichstaedt (*on phone*) – Spokane RiverKeeper
Dave McBride (*on phone*) – WA Dept. of Health
David Moss* – Spokane County
Mike Peterson* – Lands Council
Mike LaScuola*, Sandy Phillips – Spokane Regional Health District
Dale Arnold*, Lynn Schmidt, Elizabeth Schoedel, Jeff Donovan – City of Spokane
**Denotes Voting Member*

Advisors

Adriane Borgias, Jim Bellatty, Arianne Fernandez – WA Dept. of Ecology
Greg Lahti – Washington State Department of Transportation
Mary Lou Soscia (*on phone*), Tom Eaton – EPA

Public

Lisa Dally Wilson – Dally Environmental
Kris Holm – City of Coeur d'Alene (*on phone*)
Rebecca Stevens – Coeur d'Alene Tribe

Introductions: Get Started & Review Agenda

Facilitator Chris Page (Ruckelshaus Center) welcomed everyone to the meeting. No changes were made to the agenda.

WSU “Saving the Spokane River” Student Challenge

This was postponed until the next Task Force meeting.

Contract between ACE & Ecology

Bud Leber updated the group on the contracting processes. The biennium is through June 2015, not 2016 as previously mentioned. ACE and Ecology need to work out what parts of the scope can be done between now and June 2015. A couple more ACE discussions are needed before they are able to map

out the scope and budget. A number of tasks will be solidified at the Workshop on Dec. 4/5. Ecology would like to have the contract ready by the end of the year.

TTWG Report & Technical Topics

Update on Tasks 6-8 – Task 6: Chris passed out the memo for LimnoTech’s (LT) Task 6, entitled *Draft Identification of Data Gaps*, presented at the last Task Force meeting. This version was revised with comments from that meeting and the following week.

Tom Eaton asked about the percentage of PCB loading coming from Idaho (30%) listed in the LimnoTech memo vs. the 13% in the presentation. Bud wasn’t sure if that was taken from the known sources or unknown sources.

ACTION ITEM: Bud will follow up with LT to see how they came to the 30% number.

DECISION: Task 6 was approved with the provision that Bud check with LT on the percentage question and LT add clarifying language.

Task 7: This memo was also distributed at the September Task Force meeting. The new version includes revisions based on comments at the meeting and the following week. Doug Krapas commented on the Dioxin on page 7, noting an error: Inland Empire does not use chlorine for bleaching (they are the only mill that on the river and they don’t use bleach).

ACTION ITEM: Bud Leber will talk to LT about removing the reference to mills using chlorine on page 7.

Under Table One addressing PCBs (page 3), Doug suggested adding “inadvertent” to “consumer products.” Arianne suggested adding (Table 2) structure fires. Dale asked whether grass burning would be an issue. Arianne thought they’d eliminated a lot of it, but there is some controlled agriculture burning going on. Mike Peterson suggested defining “true sources.” Doug stated that true sources have been defined. He suggested using the term “potential true sources.” Kris thought dioxins are created from almost any combustion process (it might not be from the product, but a combustion process). Bud suggested calling it “potential presence of true sources.”

DECISION: Task 7 memo was approved with revisions as noted.

Task 8: Wasn’t received seven days in advance of this meeting. Bud Leber is doing a final copyedit. It will be posted once his review is complete.

Discussion on Monitoring Workshop – Right now the Monitoring Workshop is scheduled for Dec. 4. However, the Tech Track Work Group (TTWG) sees a need for an additional day (Dec. 5). Bud Leber walked the group through the workshop proposal. The purpose is to have an open exchange of information to inform the development of a comprehensive monitoring strategy: to figure out what data is needed, and how to collect that information. The TTWG proposed bringing in outside involvement, academics, and other watershed experts to help guide the planning process.

Bud clarified these are working sessions to develop the nuts and bolts to give to LT. Mike Peterson would like to ask what to do with the data:

- Who holds it?
- How is it transferred?
- Are the labs able to deal with it?

There will be a session that will cover that information. Lisa Dally Wilson made changes to the document during the discussion.

Quality Assurance –Arianne noted this goes beyond working with certified labs. Dale would like to get a perspective from the folks who are coming in. It would be great to get their criteria standard (how much they would like to get the number down to). Bud envisions mapping this out on a white board with LT.

Monitoring Plan for loading assessment – Identify what should be collect and what time(s) of the year to do the sampling. This is about what’s in the river flow, getting at the unknowns on the pie chart from the PPT presentation. Maybe suggest to LT to put the pie chart on here.

Doug suggested sending the visiting experts information about the current state and monitoring of the Spokane River before the workshop so they can tailor their presentation.

Source Identification Plan – This session will focus on inventory of sites/sources that could be contributing to the contamination.

Source reduction in other watersheds – How have other watersheds gone about characterizing their watershed conditions relative to PCB water quality and what types of PCB sources were identified? These are key things the TTWG would like to learn from outside experts. BMPs are not well-understood in this watershed; that might be interesting to hear about form other watersheds.

TTWG proposes three working sessions, with the general presentations during the day, then an informal dinner, and a second day working directly with LT.

Venue – Day one planned to be at WSU Spokane, Day two could be at DOT or the Water Resource Center.

ACTION ITEM: Greg Lahti will check into the conference room at the DOT Spokane.

ACTION ITEM: David Moss will look at Water Resource Center.

Experts – Bud will speak to LT, and the Delaware River folks. He also has a contact at the San Francisco Bay estuary. Adriane has a few contacts there as well. Tom Eaton will check with the EPA Office of Research and Development.

Conflict of Interest Statement re: LT work on DO TMDL –

Lisa Dally Wilson drafted the conflict of interest statement regarding LT’s proposed work on Spokane River DO TMDL activities outside of the Task Force. If ACE had a contract with a contractor, there’s a clause that if they are going to do work that will potentially conflict with the work done through ACE they are obligated to let them know. Would the Task Force have any problem with them doing anything in this regards? Doug reminded that they addressed this at the last meeting and no one felt that this

would be a conflict for LT to do this type of work. Lisa wrote it broadly enough to cover all LT work in this area.

Jim Bellatty asked what the approach is if either the Task Force or LT thinks there will be a conflict. Bud clarified: there is a clause in ACE's agreement with LT that they may take on professional assignments while being under contract. However, if there's any water monitoring, they would supply a notice to ACE. ACE would bring that to the Task Force and then ACE would send responses to LT.

DECISION: No conflicts from the Task Force

ACTION ITEM: Bud Leber will notify LT of their decision.

Update on Measurable Progress Conversations

Jim Bellatty updated the group on this subject based on the requirements. Adriane is putting together a presentation on this for the next meeting. Ecology has scheduled a number of meetings with various stakeholders to sit down one-on-one. They have met with their state colleagues, federal government, and tribes asking, "How does this concept of measurable progress impact your business? What would you describe as a major issue on this topic? And, do you have something you are currently sampling that could show measurable progress with PCBs?"

They met with the Attorney General's office; they seemed to think they are on the right track. They ultimately would like to come up with a definition that works with everyone. It affects the permits, Task Force, and a lot of other things. Adriane will do a presentation on Nov. 20, and then between that meeting and the end of the calendar year they will come up with a draft definition. Then sit down with the tribal representatives. In Jan/Feb they should have this rolled out.

Ecology has invited the Spokane Tribe to be a part of this but they turned it down because they are in a federal litigation right now. EPA will be meeting with the Spokane Tribe next month.

Protocols for Posting & Distributing Information

This discussion is on what the group would like send out and posted using the SRRTTF email and website. Doug would like us to use our judgment. Make sure that the subject line is descriptive, and then use our best judgment. The group doesn't feel like they are bombarded with emails now.

Doug would like to open the MOA at the same time as the Idaho groups sign on. EPA will have some comments and suggest some changes. Their current schedule is getting this ready for signature the same time the ID permits are ready in Jan/Feb. Tom Eaton can get comments in by next month.

All voting members will have to resign the MOA with the inclusion of the ID dischargers.

Updates & Announcements

Decision: Consider final acceptance of letter requesting EPA enforcement – Letter from the Task Force asking to eliminate the loop hole. Letter is approved.

DECISION: The letter to EPA was approved by the Task Force

ACTION ITEM: Adriane will send this to EPA, with the meeting date of Oct. 23, 2013

ACTION ITEM: Adriane will post the clean version with the right date on the web and it out.

Outreach Calendar – National Toxics Tribal Council: Doug updated the group on his speaking opportunity. On Oct. 7, Adriane also spoke. About 50 people in the room, followed up with a tour of the Inland Empire facility.

Lynn Schmidt brought up Storm Con next year in Portland. She would like to submit an abstract (August 2014, abstracts due Nov. 14).

Doug hasn't heard back from EPA regarding the small business representatives forming an advisory committee. Doug and Rick volunteered for that effort.

ACTION ITEM: Tom Eaton will check on this, Doug will send his contact information to Tom.

Arianne thinks the Task Force members should get involved with the STAC Conferences. It's a hardcore science conference and networking opportunity. They have a local and national conference in November. Maybe consider submitting an abstract. Ecology has a toxicologist going this year. The labs the Task Force wants to work with would be there, as would other PhD researchers.

ACTION ITEM: Dave Moss will ask his consultant if he's going

Funding Opportunities – City of Spokane did get their grant submitted. Jim went to the workshop – Ecology goes through an annual cycle, storm water, BMPs, education and outreach opportunities. The proposal has to be specific, making improvements, pollution control. Q: What about catch-basin control? A: Yes, it could fund that.

Meeting topics – Suggestions for future agenda items. Chris ran through agenda items for the next Task Force meeting. Arianne would like to add the ARC GIS online map. Some of the data sets have geographic info, so they will play with it.

Another meeting venue option for upcoming SRRTTF meetings: 1) Aquifer protection group – Panhandle Health Building in Idaho. Yes, there is general support moving this to ID and other places like DOT.

Public Comment

No comments.

The next SRRTTF Task Force meeting is November 20, 2013 at Spokane County Water Resource Center
The next Tech Track Work Group meeting is October 30, 2013 from 10am – 12pm, and the next Funding Work Group meeting is November 6, 2013 from 10am – 12pm at the Department of Ecology
