Measurable Progress

Draft Definition

Presentation to SRRTTF

March 26, 2014

Measurable Progress Draft Definition

- Introduction
- How the Definition was Developed
- Adaptive Management
- Inputs, Outputs, Outcomes
- Implementation Timeframes

Background

- **What is a Total Maximum Daily Load?**
  - A calculation of the maximum amount of a pollutant that a waterbody can received and still meet water quality standards
  - TMDL = Waste Load Allocations (permits) + Load Allocations (other sources)
  - Ecology has flexibility in how a TMDL is developed
- **TMDL Process**
  - A traditional TMDL calculation requires environmental data.
  - It can take many years to complete with little emphasis on reducing pollution.
  - An alternative approach focuses on immediate source reductions and concurrent data collection.

Spokane River Regional Toxics Task Force

- The Task Force vision is to identify and implement actions needed to achieve the WQS
- If the Task Force fails to make measurable progress then:
  - Ecology is obligated to
    - *Proceed with the development of a TMDL in the Spokane River for PCBs, or*
    - *Determine an alternative to ensure that water quality standards are met."*

How the Definition Was Developed

- As a result of a series of listening sessions,

  Ecology concluded:

  1. Timeliness and use in the next permit cycle
  2. Achieving the goal may take several permit cycles
  3. There is a variety of metrics that can be used
     - Inputs, Outputs, Outcomes
  4. The relative importance of these metrics changes over time

Adaptive Management

- Focuses on reductions
- Fosters collaboration towards the goal
  - Inputs (organizing and working together) and
  - Outputs (work products) must exist to achieve
  - Outcomes (reductions, and environmental and health goals)
- Implemented at the end of each permit cycle

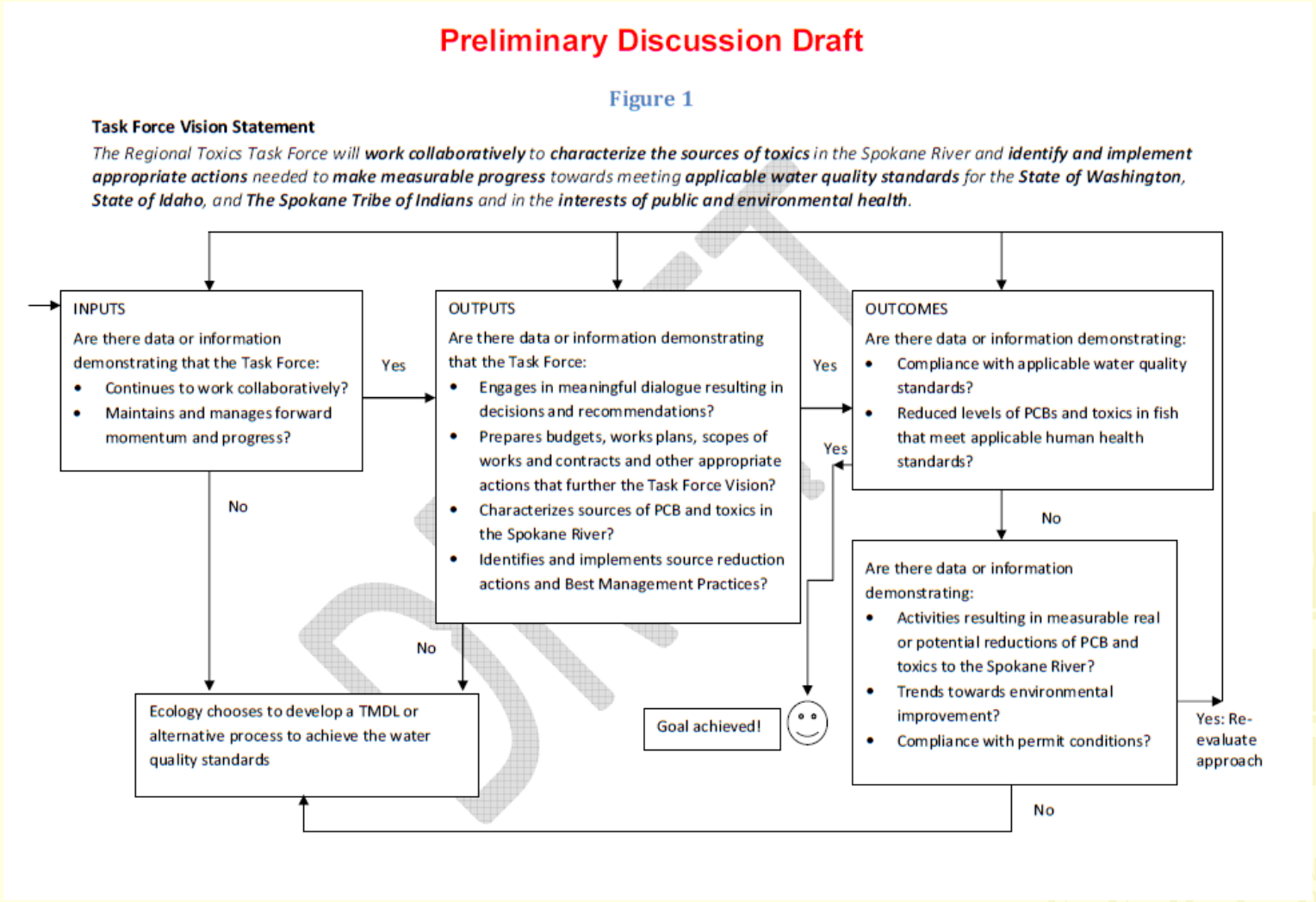
Three Fundamental Questions

1. Is the Task Force still working together in a collaborative manner?
2. Is the Task Force still moving forward on activities that will lead to
   - Reduction of toxics in the river
   - Development of Best Management Practices
   - A plan for achieving Water Quality Standards?
3. Is there environmental evidence that progress is being made towards achieving WQS?

The Answers (in Reverse Order)

3. If the river meets Water Quality Standards, then the Task Force has achieved its vision!
2. If there is little or no environmental progress, then Ecology will:
   - Reevaluate Task Force activities and results
   - Identify actions and changes needed to achieve WQS
1. If at any time the Task Force is not working together or is not moving forward on activities:
   - The Task Force is not achieving its stated purpose
   - Ecology will proceed with a TMDL

Flow Chart


Preliminary Discussion Draft
Figure 1
Task Force Vision Statement
The Regional Toxics Task Force will work collaboratively to characterize the sources of toxics in the Spokane River and identify and implement appropriate actions needed to make measurable progress towards meeting applicable water quality standards for the State of Washington, State of Idaho, and The Spokane Tribe of Indians and in the interests of public and environmental health.
INPUTS
Are there data or information demonstrating that the Task Force:
Continues to work collaboratively?
Maintains and manages forward momentum and progress?
Yes
No
OUTPUTS
Are there data or information demonstrating that the Task Force:
Engages in meaningful dialogue resulting in decisions and recommendations?
Prepares budgets, works plans, scopes of works and contracts and other appropriate actions that further the Task Force Vision?
Characterizes sources of PCB and toxics in the Spokane River?
Identifies and implements source reduction actions and Best Management Practices?
Yes
No
OUTCOMES
Are there data or information demonstrating:
Compliance with applicable water quality standards?
Reduced levels of PCBs and toxics in fish that meet applicable human health standards?
Yes
No
Are there data or information demonstrating:
Activities resulting in measurable real or potential reductions of PCB and toxics to the Spokane River?
Trends towards environmental improvement?
Compliance with permit conditions?
Yes: Re-evaluate approach
No
Goal achieved!
Ecology chooses to develop a TMDL or alternative process to achieve the water quality standards

Criteria Relating to Inputs

- Was the Task Force created?
- Did the Signatories to the MOA
  - Participate
  - Work Collaboratively and Cooperatively
  - Organize
  - Work towards achieving specific goals?
- Is there a
  - Forum for review of toxics issues?
  - Clearinghouse for data and reports?
  - Participation with the public?
  - An independent community technical advisor?
- Are funding mechanisms identified & established?

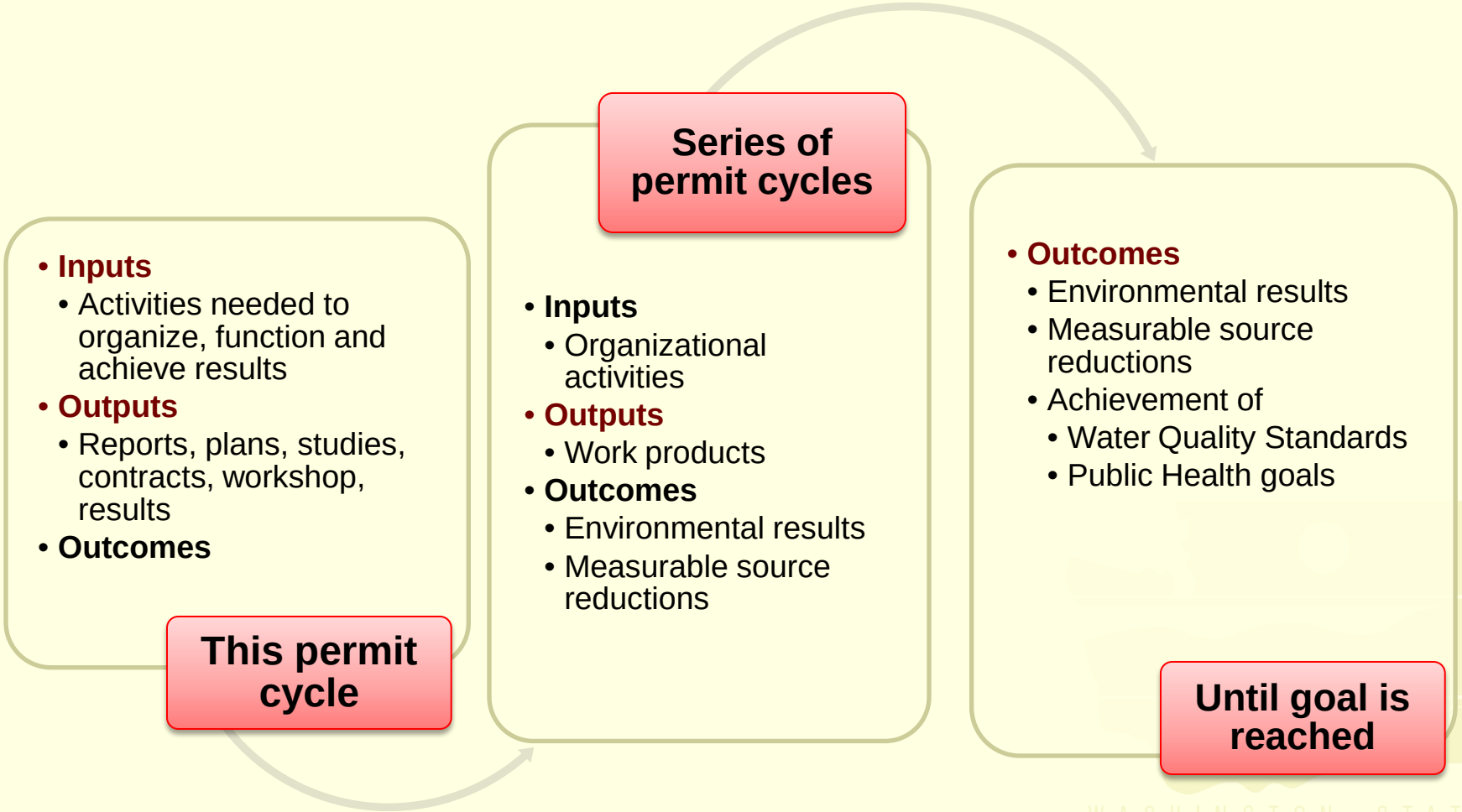
Criteria Relating to Outputs

- Did the Task Force Advance the understanding of toxics in the river:
  - Increase region-wide understanding of toxics
  - Identify data gaps and collect necessary data on PCB and other toxics
  - Engage in technical studies and analyze data?
- Did the Task Force develop:
  - Toxics and Source Management Plans
  - Best Management Practices
  - A comprehensive toxics reduction plan?
- Did the Task Force provide information to the public?

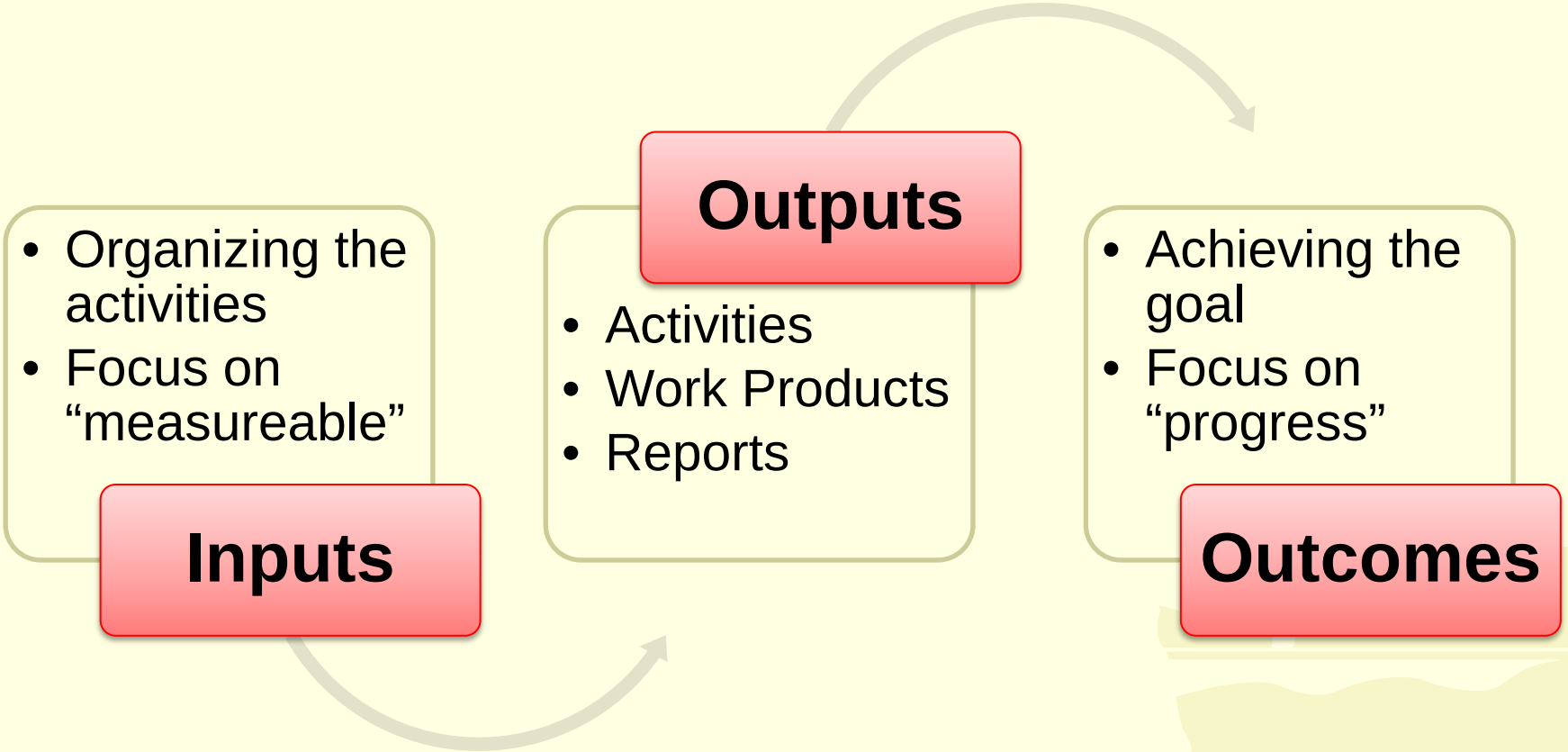
Criteria Relating to Outcomes

- Was there effectiveness monitoring and assessment?
- Were the applicable WQS achieved?
- Were public and environmental health standards achieved?
- Did the implemented actions
  - Eliminate, remove, or isolate sources of PCB to the river?
- Were the recommended actions of the comprehensive toxics reduction plan implemented?
- Were the identified Best Management Practices implemented?

Implementation Timeframes



Measureable Progress



We want to answer honestly the question, “Did we make measurable progress?”

Schedule

- **December 2013**
  - Ecology internal discussion with AGO
- **January 2014**
  - Ecology discussion with sovereigns
- **March 2014**
  - Draft definition at SRRTTF meeting
- **April 2014**
  - Comments accepted on draft definition
- **May 2014**
  - Definition finalized

Best Case Scenario

- The current way of doing things is a better use of resources and results in fewer lawsuits.
- Have consensus about what “measurable progress” is and how it is determined.
- Every year we can look back at the work that has been done and say that it has been effective.
- Recognize that some things may not result in direct or immediate impact but there is value in figuring this out.
- Participation results in watershed-wide improvements.
- Build on successes.