

**Spokane River Regional Toxics Task Force
DRAFT MEETING SUMMARY**

Facilitated by Chris Page & Kara Whitman
August 27th, 2014 | 9:00am – 12:30pm
Liberty Lake Sewer and Water District Office
22510 E. Mission Ave | Liberty Lake, WA

Attendees

*Voting Members and Alternatives (*Denotes Voting Member)*

Tom Agnew*, BiJay Adams – Liberty Lake Sewer and Water District
Doug Krapas*, Ryan Ekre – Inland Empire Paper Company
David Moss*, Rob Lindsay – Spokane County
Bud Leber*, Edgar Scott – Kaiser Aluminum
Jerry White* – RiverKeeper
Mike Petersen* (on phone) – Lands Council
Mike LaScuola*, Sandy Phillips – Spokane Regional Health District
Dale Arnold*, Lynn Schmidt – City of Spokane

Advisors

Adriane Borgias, Jim Bellaty – WA Dept. of Ecology
Tom Eaton (on phone) – US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
Rebecca Stevens – Coeur d’Alene Tribe
Ben Jarvis (on phone) – Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (IDEQ)
Bryce Robbert – Avista

Public

Lisa Dally Wilson – Dally Environmental
Don Keil, Kris Holm (on phone) – City of Coeur d’Alene
John Beacham – City of Post Falls
Ken Windram – Hayden Area Regional Water Sewer Board
Dave Dilks (on phone), Cathy Whiting (on phone) – LimnoTech

Introductions: Get Started & Review Agenda

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

MOA & Transparency

Chris Page discussed the need for transparency and adequate notice when changes are made to materials brought before the task force. He stressed that it is important to avoid surprises and give adequate notice for consideration of issues and decisions. If this is not possible then new or altered agenda items need to be provided to the facilitator beforehand.

Idaho Permits Update:

The Idaho permit process will be final in the near future. There is potential to add Idaho permittees to the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) as members of the SRRTTF after the permit process is complete. EPA sent permits to Ecology on July 3, 2014 with a 60 day window to notify EPA if Ecology “determines that any or all of the subject discharges will affect the quality of its waters so as to violate any water quality requirements in the State of Washington.” EPA is planning to issue final permits if they do not receive a notification.

The MOA will be opened when the permits are finalized. It will be sent out to the group for review and a process will be started to revise the MOA. Preliminary review has already been performed and comments received. When the MOA is opened the SRRTTF will reconvene an MOA work group to collect and incorporate comments from the full task force into the MOA. Jerry White of Riverkeeper suggested the addition of Adrienne Kronebaugh of Coeur d’Alene Lake Keeper to the Task Force. This will be considered when the MOA is opened up.

TTWG Report and Technical Topics

Report from sampling field work

Dave Dilks and Cathy Whiting of LimnoTech reported on the sampling that occurred from August 12th to August 25th, 2014; focusing on the deviations. Field sampling went as planned with ambient and in-river sampling. There were a few minor issues during the sampling:

- On August 12th, the flow meter did not arrive as scheduled; therefore flows were not collected at the Greenacres Station (SR-9) at the time of sample collection.
- Lightning prevented sampling at the Green Street location on the afternoon of August 12th; therefore the sampling for this site was completed on August 13th.
- Samples shipped to AXYS on August 18th were not delivered as scheduled because of a service disruption. However, the samples did arrive on the morning of August 20th. There was no damage to the samples and there was sufficient ice in the coolers to keep the temperature regulated.
- It was necessary to switch to clear glass vials for the DOC samples for last two days of sampling.
- On Aug. 22nd, 2014 two sample bottles were broken during shipping by Federal Express.
- While there was rain throughout the sampling period, the river sampling, with the exception of one, went on as scheduled. It was necessary to move the final day of the lake outlet monitoring up by one day, as outlined in the Sampling and Analysis Plan (SAP).
- An issue arose on August 26th, 2014 with respect to blank samples. The transfer blanks were collected at both of the stations and the ambient sites instead of the planned field (bottle) blanks. The field crew filled the bottles and sealed them. While there is double representation of transfer blanks, there is no representation of bottle blanks. LimnoTech is in the process of asking AXYS to generate the needed bottle blanks. A series of bottle blanks is needed in order to see if there is PCB contamination from the bottles. The transfer blanks measure PCB contamination that may be introduced from atmosphere and field equipment when water is transferred into the bottle. Note that there are 3 types of blanks, lab blank and two types of field blanks (transfer and bottle). A transfer blank is an empty bottle that is filled with clean water in the field and

sent to lab for analysis (looking for residual PCB and PCB due to contamination from the atmosphere and/or the sampling equipment used to fill the bottle). For the river samples, the sampling crew submerged the bottles to get samples to avoid atmospheric and sampling equipment contamination.

Question: Will the bottle blanks be done in the lab (AXYS) and when they do them will they use bottles from the same batch?

Answer: Dave Dilks and Cathy Whiting explained that if they run them, we can see the variability, without them we cannot see that variability. Cathy Whiting will ask the lab to use bottles from the same batch. The plan is to archive the transfer blanks and have AXYS run bottle blanks using bottles from the same batch so that variability up and down the river can be seen.

Question: Is there a variation in the character of the PCB contamination that can occur, based on the sample location?

Answer: Dave Dilks explained that he is not sure if we know enough at this point to see a variation in PCB congeners based on location. The Task Force can address this in a phased way after receiving the results from the transfer blanks. Adriane Borgias stated that Gravity is pretty aware of interferences that can occur when sampling; for example, combustion is a potential source. When they did the site reconnaissance, they also looked for potential interferences.

Sampling was finished on Sunday August 24th, with final samples shipped on Monday August 25th. Sampling went really well overall, Gravity had good expertise, and the sampling was a success. The task force can expect results back from the lab in mid-October, 2014. The results will be presented at the November Task Force meeting.

Sampling Methodology Work Group Update

Bud Leber went over the AXYS CLAM Study update. There were two sets of CLAM samples taken with the grab samples. The work group had a call with Richard Grace and Cynthia Tomey of AXYS. After this conversation they laid out a designed experiment to track down why analytical results from the CLAM sampler have a bias (higher PCB concentrations potentially due from contamination) than grab samples. Will Hodges and Bill Kamin are being requested to look at the experimental design (QAQC) to ensure that it is a robust experiment.

Bud Leber discussed the sample size and further evaluation of the CLAM sampling method. The plan is to wait until the Gravity results are available to inform the decision on sample size. If it is found that the 60 Liters size is not enough volume, as per the results from Gravity, then there will be a need to reevaluate the approach. If 60 Liters is yielding enough volume for a PCB determination, there will be a need to evaluate the costs and the feasibility of the two methods. The question of whether flow through the CLAM can be accurately measured also needs to be resolved via a field trial/evaluation to support the analytical results/analysis.

The designed experiment can be broken into two pieces. 1. The components of CLAM Sampler (blanks of disk etc) can be tested for PCB contamination and 2. 60 Liters of lab blank water can be looked at for PCB contamination. The work group previously identified and separated two issues related to sampling: bias in analytical results and bias in the flow measurements. The work group decided to test them separately, looking at samples “picking up PCBs” and samples “losing PCBs”.

Blank Correction Factors in Lab Contamination

Lynn Schmidt raised the question about corrections for PCB blanks. An example was provided that showed the different ways PCB blanks are corrected. The concentration of PCBs in the sample can vary greatly depending on the method of blank subtraction. The discharger permit Quality Assurance Project Plans also used different methods for blank corrections. For example, the County and Kaiser do “no correction,” the sampling uses a “3x blank correction,” and the City of Spokane uses a 10x correction.

Dave Dilks pointed out that everyone should be doing the reporting using the same convention for the laboratory results. Once those are received, LimnoTech will do a sensitivity analysis on all of the results. This could involve a range of methods in order to evaluate anomalies.

ACTION ITEM: Ecology to bring this topic to its Environmental Assessment Program for consideration and report back to the Task Force.

Previously there was a question about how AXYS blank contamination compares with other labs. Arianne Fernandez collected information from other labs and forwarded to LimnoTech. This still needs to be reviewed by LimnoTech. However, the preliminary analysis is that AXYS has more hits from contamination but at lower concentrations.

Quantifying & Communicating Budget: In-Kind Contributions

Bud Leber explained the SRRTF budget tables, emphasizing that it is a working document.

ACTION ITEM: All groups will send updates to the in-kind contributions to Ruckelshaus. Kara Whitman will update the table and post updates to the SRRTF website as a “living document”.

ACTION ITEM: Adriane Borgias to begin an inventory of what members are doing ancillary to the Task Force efforts.

Update on “Put a Pin on the Map” Sources + GIS

Adriane Borgias presented a “Map of Spokane River – PCBs”. The map will be used at SRRTF meetings to record “anecdotal wisdom”. Adriane noted that many of the items on the map do not have a reference, and asked the Task Force to make corrections, add new content, questions, new sites and any other important information to the map.

ACTION ITEM: Send all additions and corrections to Adriane Borgias, who will maintain the map and database. The map will be posted at future SRRTTF meetings for Task Force reference.

Events & Outreach, Funding

Columbia River Basin Conference in Spokane October 21st-23rd

This conference has a holistic focus on the operation of river and environmental quality. Columbia River toxics work group (policy level activities) is planning on meeting the afternoon after the conference, however this is not confirmed. The SRRTTF is invited to attend.

Spokane River Forum November 19-20th – confirm Nov. TF mtg.

The Spokane River Forum conflicts with the next planned SRRTTF Meeting. Many of the topics at the conference are directly related to the Task Force. Also, the Coeur d'Alene Lake Symposium will be held all day November 18th. Many of the Task Force members will be attending the Spokane River Forum and/or the Lake symposium.

DECISION: The November SRRTTF meeting has been changed to November 17th, 1-4:30 pm pending the availability at the Spokane County Water Resources Center. (CONFIRMED)

ACTION ITEM: Adriane will coordinate pulling together the abstracts for the SRRTTF session at the Spokane River Forum. (COMPLETE)

WA Municipal Stormwater Conference: Nov. 5-6th, Puyallup

Lynn and Adriane have submitted an abstract for this conference. The topic to be presented is the “direct to implementation” strategy of the SRRTTF and other work the City of Spokane is doing.

PNWIS Regional Meeting: Oct. 27th-29th

This is a regional meeting of the Pacific Northwest International Section (Air & Waste Management Association). Adriane is coordinating the multimedia session on PCB. Bud Leber, Lynn Schmidt and Dave Moss (or consultant) will give a talk at this meeting.

Communications Strategy

Chris Page described past discussions of a communications strategy.

Stories need to be told about the good work that the SRRTTF has accomplished thus far, what is in process and about the good work being done in the river. The Task Force emphasized the need to have a proactive and positive communication strategy.

Todd Norton and the Center for Environmental Research, Education and Outreach (CEREO) of Washington State University are interested in helping with a communications strategy. Todd is familiar with what types of communications are effective and the perceptions of the general public.

Suggestions from the Task Force moving forward with the communication strategy:

- The Task Force needs to tell the stories about the good work the Task Force and others are doing.
- “Saving the Spokane Challenge”: Need to reconnect to the students from this challenge.
- Strategically, the Task Force should be able to respond to editorials.
- The Task Force should “not recognize” inaccuracies, but feed the information channel with correct information.
- The Task Force needs to recognize opportunities (i.e. Doug Clark)
- It is about effectively communicating the work being done and the science behind it so that the public can make informed choices.
- There are differences in opinion as to what the narrative is or should be.
- Other groups critique the Task Force; however the Task Force has been relatively silent.
- Outreach to businesses through a brochure.
- The SRRTTF outreach presentation needs to be updated including talking points, funding, accomplishments of the SRRTTF and other new information.
- The SRRTTF should reconvene the public relations/outreach work group and there should be a strategy for members of the Task Force to work with their own PR in order to tell the story through their own narratives.
- Need to schedule an outreach workgroup meeting in October.

ACTION ITEM: Kara Whitman will work with Todd Norton and members of CEREO on outreach materials and the communication strategy.

Funding: Proposal for \$50M Columbia River Restoration Fund

This bill was introduced into Congress and includes funding for toxics work in the Columbia River basin. The SRRTTF has a number of projects that are “ready to go” and should be able to showcase these in support of this bill which could potentially provide funding for these projects.

ACTION ITEM: The Task Force Funding Work Group will put a letter of support of the bill for the SRRTTF. The Letter will be placed on the agenda for the September 24th Full Task Force meeting for approval.

Updates and Announcements:

Roundtable: Updates, news and other developments from meeting attendees.

Doug Krapas (Inland paper): The TSCA (Toxic Substances Control Act) coalition is reconvening to develop a strategy. Approximately 20+ people are now involved. The coalition has been expanded to Senator Crapo’s office in Idaho and to Senator Boxer and Feinstein in California. Various Tribal resolutions have been submitted to EPA on PCBs. They have established a communications package, including fact sheets, presentations and other materials. Inland Empire Paper has brought in several algae membrane pilot installations. The numbers are very encouraging. Doug has invited the task force members to come

by and see these two systems before they are removed. Department of Ecology has published the draft PCB Chemical Action Plan (PCB CAP). The plan will be completed by end of 2014 for public review.

ACTION ITEM: Doug will send the TSCA Coalition communications package to Ruckelshaus as a resource for the SRRTTF communication strategy development.

Don Keil (City of Coeur d'Alene): The City is getting closer to having the design for tertiary treatment (filtration) complete. They are working on the toxics management plan and scoping services at this time.

John Beacham (City of Post Falls): The design is under way for tertiary treatment, but they are a few years away from completion.

Tom Agnew and BiJay Adams (Liberty Lake Sewer and Water District): Design for tertiary treatment is 90% complete. There is also a proposal from a developer for a low income housing development that will use geothermal heat. The development calls for 700 450-foot wells in a concentrated urban density. The main drinking water wells are in the area and Liberty Lake is concerned about potential contamination of the Spokane Aquifer from the heat transfer fluid, particularly because home owners will be responsible for maintaining them.

Dale Arnold (City of Spokane): Selected membrane filtration as tertiary treatment. The City is doing a study to test different systems. Final selection will happen after the study is complete, in the next six months. Rick Romero thinks the City will be successful at getting funding for the Integrated Clean Water Plan.

Lynn Schmidt (City of Spokane): The grant to do product testing is underway. This is being coordinated with Ecology's additional product testing associated with the PCB CAP. The City submitted 100 personal care products to Ecology as suggestions for testing.

Sandy Phillips (Spokane Regional Health District): Sandy is working with a group updating the Aquifer Atlas. They are adding in sections on stormwater, pollution and stewardship and also including some history and native stories. Expect publication by Ecology in Summer/Fall of 2015.

Question: Tom Agnew asked if there had been any feedback on the request to the Governor's office for funding.

Answer: Not much feedback at this point.

Tom Eaton (EPA): EPA is in the early stages of planning a green chemistry workshop on the topic of PCBs in pigments. The Workshop is slated for summer or fall of 2015.

Adriane Borgias (Ecology): Arianne Fernandez is moving to Lacey to join their toxics cleanup program. Ecology will fill the position; however what that position will look like is still being developed.

Rebecca Stevens (Coeur d'Alene Tribe): The Panhandle of Idaho has certified more than 50 contractors as Stormwater and Erosion Control specialists through the Panhandle stormwater and erosion program.

Rob Lindsey (Spokane County): Spokane County has hired Toni Taylor as a communication specialist. She can help with the SRRTTF outreach work group.

Public Comment: No public comment

The next SRRTF Task Force meeting is Sept. 24th, 2014 at the Water Resource Center

From 9am – 12:30pm

The next Tech Track Work Group meeting is Sept. 3rd, 2014 from 10am –
12pm at the Department of Ecology