

Spokane River Regional Toxics Task Force

DRAFT MEETING SUMMARY

Facilitated by Chris Page and Kara Whitman
December 17, 2014 | 9:00 am – 12:30 am
Liberty Lake Sewer and Water District Office
22510 E. Mission Ave | Liberty Lake, WA 99019

Attendees

Voting members and Alternatives (denotes a voting member)*

Tom Agnew*, BiJay Adams – Liberty Lake Sewer and Water District
Dale Arnold*, Lynn Schmidt – City of Spokane
Galen Buterbaugh* – Lake Spokane Association
Doug Krapas*, Ryan Ekre, Eric Williams – Inland Empire Paper
Mike LaScuola*, Sandy Phillips – Spokane Regional Health District
Dave Moss*, Rob Lindsay, Toni Taylor – Spokane County
Bud Leber* – Kaiser Aluminum
Mike Petersen* – The Lands Council
Jerry White* – RiverKeeper

Advisors

Adriane Borgias, Alex Stone (*on phone*) – WA Dept. of Ecology
Kevin Booth – Avista

Stakeholders, Technical Advisors, and Public

John Beacham – City of Post Falls
Dave Dilks (*on phone*) – LimnoTech
Don Keil, Kris Holm (*on phone*) – City of Coeur d'Alene
Greg Lahti – WA Dept. of Transportation
Patrick Lagier, Alex Richards, Scott Weingart, Ryan Vannucci – Pullman High School

Introductions, Agenda Review, and Previous Meeting's Notes

Chris Page welcomed everyone to the meeting and went over the agenda. No changes were made to the agenda.

The Task Force reviewed the November Task Force Meeting, Conference Call, and Technical Track Work Group meeting summaries. Summaries from 11/5/14 and 11/17/14: Dale Arnold moved/Mike Petersen seconded. Notes were accepted. Summary for Conference Call on 11/12/2014: Bud Leber moved/Galen Buterbaugh seconded. Notes accepted.

DECISION: November 2014 Task Force meeting, Conference Call, and Technical Track Work Group meeting summaries were accepted by the Task Force for posting on the Task Force website.

DECISION: Poster produced for the Spokane River Forum will be available for Task Force use at the January Toxics Workshop.

TTWG Report & Technical Reports

Dave Dilks: Data analysis

Data is emerging, with the plan to give a dry run of the mass balance presentation at the next Tech Track Work Group meeting. One data gap identified—the flow out of Lake CDA. Gravity is looking into it, but we need to tie up this loose end.

Bud Leber: Workshop Update

Packets have been sent out to expert invitees, including a cover letter, hotel information, session documents, and information on registration. All session presenters have agreed to attend and four out of the five technical invitees are attending. Registration for the workshop is due by December 29th in order to get an accurate head count for ordering lunches. Other needs of the workshop include: sign in sheet, block of rooms at discounted rate, car shuttle for guests, webinar, and webinar recording.

ACTION ITEM: Kara Whitman to check on recording options with Webinar (Adobe Connect and Web Ex)

Question: Jerry White asked where the fish tissue conversation fit into the workshop agenda. Answer: Chris Page explained that the Task Force had previously discussed holding a separate workshop for this extensive and significant topic, in the spring of 2015.

Little Spokane River (LSR) Study and Environmental Assessment Program (EAP) Projects

Adriane Borgias reviewed the upcoming Department of Ecology (Ecology) EAP project funding cycle. Adriane discussed previous EAP projects proposed during the 2014-2015 Fiscal Year (FY), including funded and completed projects, funded projects currently underway, and projects proposed but not funded during the FY 2014-2015.

Projects funded and complete or underway:

- Sampling for Spokane River Synoptic Studies (funded, EAP provided technical assistance)
- Assessment of PCB concentration in Spokane Valley Groundwater (funded, lit review underway)
- Listing verification on Little Spokane River: PCB (funded, underway)
- Lake Spokane Carp Analysis (funded, underway)

Projects proposed FY 2014-2015, not currently funded by EAP

- Spokane River Water Quality Long Term Trends
- Wet and Dry Deposition of PCB in the Spokane River Watershed (not funded locally, however Statewide program is underway)
- Atmospheric Deposition of PCBs (not funded locally, however Statewide program is underway)

Projects Proposed FY 2016

- PCBs in 2, 4-D
- PCBs in Hatchery Fish
- PCBs in Building Materials
- PCBs in Spokane River Bridges
- Exposure Pathways for PCBs (interstitial spaces in sediment and fish exposure)
- PCBs in Building Materials and Foods
- Evaluation of Water Sampling Systems (SPMDs, CLAMs, Infiltrax systems, HPV2900 etc)
- Concurrent Water Sampling Events (Idaho doing 2 annual surface water sampling events for PCBs, would like to do the same in Washington concurrent to this work)

Discussion points and questions to address around fish and PCBs:

- What is the question: LSR hatchery permit? PCB sampling? Sampling hatchery discharge?
- Where do stocked fish come from?
- What are the concentrations now in food, fish, and stocked fish in general? Is the Spokane River being stocked?
- What is the potential loading to a waterbody from stocking fish?
- What are the long term bioaccumulative effects? To other fish in food web?

- Rainbow trout are in Lake Spokane from commercial hatchery; what are the implications?
- Stocked vs. hatchery fish how can you tell which is which? How are fish used in the listings (stocked vs. hatchery)
- Feed or product used?
- What about a case study: Little Spokane River Hatchery, PCB in food, fish, and discharge: this drives another project regarding regional questions.

Adriane Borgias explained that the Task Force can submit as many projects as they want to EAP; however, the question(s) in the proposals need to be honed and tailored to the type of work that EAP can do. The purpose should be clearly defined in a proposal.

Question: Mike LaScuola asked if the Task Force had made contact with anyone from the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW). Answer: we are reaching out.

Question: Tom Agnew asked if it is possible to get a thumbnail sketch of why the hatchery fish were not included in the listing study. Answer: Adriane explained she is not sure of the exact reason for the exclusion; however limited resources may have limited the study scope. Given limited resources, they excluded hatchery fish. At this time the LSR hatchery does not stock the river with its fish; however there is a water discharge into the river.

Adriane recommended framing the specific question, with several questions pertaining to the following:

- Impact to the Spokane River from the Little Spokane River,
- Little Spokane fish hatchery having fish with PCB in them,
- People catching fish and being exposed to PCB through consumption, and
- Lakes being listed because of receiving hatchery fish.

Doug Krapas stressed that the Task Force needs to look at the impacts to the Spokane River. For example: Are hatchery fish a source of PCBs to the Spokane River? If so, what are the impacts?

Lisa Dally Wilson recommended look at the fish and PCB issue in “two buckets” of questions:

- Non-Spokane specific question: What is the potential loading to water bodies from hatchery fish across Washington state, and what are the bioaccumulative impacts?
- Spokane River question: What is the contribution of stocked fish to PCB loading of the Spokane River? Measure the discharge, survey of the stocked fish in the Spokane River system, focus on the LSR Hatchery: PCBs in hatchery fish food and in fish and the discharge waters, and if found in food/fish/discharge, then another project looking at where those fish go.

Doug Krapas discussed the need to take information known about PCBs in products to the next level and make recommendations. Is this next level a good fit for an EAP project? For example: What is the probability that PCBs from hydro-seed (and other products) are entering the food chain? The group may need to prioritize by products that are a pathway to the PCB levels in the river (while concurrently looking at the larger issue of public health).

ACTION ITEM: Adriane to provide contact from WDFW from the Little Spokane River Study.

EAP Project Prioritization

To prioritize projects to propose to EAP, Chris Page the group divided into stakeholder groups to discuss. Each stakeholder (including voting members, advisors and participants) then voted for their top three priorities from the proposed project list. Doug Krapas stressed that the Task Force should focus projects on the goal of the Task Force and what EAP is capable of completing (scope and resource requirements).

Priority Level	Project Proposal Topic	# votes	Appropriate for EAP?
1	PCB in building materials, hydroseed, and bridges, connect to PCB loading and pathways of exposure. (This combines a number of projects on the list.)	11	A piece of this is a fit for EAP. Okay to submit, but product testing done in other places.
2	Spokane River specific: Measure PCB Levels in hatchery fish: Feed, fish tissue, discharge, entrée points of stock fish etc. surveying where the stock fish being stocked (Soap lake hatchery to lake Spokane, private hatchery)	9	Yes
3	Atmospheric Deposition (Wet and Dry)	8	Yes
4	Evaluation of CLAM and other Sampling methods	3	Yes
5	Fish exposure pathway via sediment/interstitial spaces	2	Yes
6	Groundwater monitoring (spring):springs or seeps	2	Yes
7	Potential loading to any water bodies and other fish from stock hatchery fish (bioaccumulation)	1	Maybe?
8	Concurrent Idaho and Washington Sampling : PCB grab sampling (surface water)	0	Not an EAP project

ACTION ITEM: The Technical Track Work Group to develop/refine specific project proposals for EAP based on the prioritization list from the Task Force.

Measurable Progress, Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) Update:

Chris explained that Adriane has put the word out to Ecology for feedback on Measurable Progress. Diana Washington and her two permit managers update the Task Force on this in February.

The MOA work group held its first meeting on December 4th, 2014. The group had a productive high level discussion of what works well and what needs improvement. The MOA work group will caucus with the entities that they represent and arrange to ensure that there is attorney feedback. The Ruckelshaus Center will maintain distinctly labeled versions of MOA during the Work Group deliberations and post them to the Task Force website.

Lynn Schmidt is to replace Elizabeth Schoedel on the MOA work group as the representative for the Washington dischargers. On December 18th, 2014 the group will review what can they can accept and then will have meetings in January with a goal to have something before the Task Force in February. It was recommended that our organizations’ attorneys be on board sooner rather than later.

Recommendation from the TF that we either 1) don’t make major changes or 2) make changes now that Idaho is coming on board and that 3) EPA’s participation is important.

City of Spokane Product Testing + Review of Ecology Results:

Alex Stone summarized the PCB product testing his group has been doing. They do product testing for supplier enforcement purposes (example, the new state PCB-free purchasing rules). Products in the Spokane area tied to State purchasing could be tested as part of this program. Holly Davies may have other waste-to-resource and Persistent Bioaccumulative Toxin program funding. Hydro seed, fish food, and fertilizer testing could potentially be done in Alex Stone’s group, if it is in a state contract. They tested 194 samples with full congener spreads. This information is not yet available yet; however the report will be available at the end of February.

Rob Lindsay noted that there was an amendment to Spokane County’s purchasing code related to PCB content.

ACTION ITEM: Lynn Schmidt to coordinate with Alex Stone to share information from the product testing done in City of Spokane.

Presentation by Lynn Schmidt “The Search for inadvertently produced PCBs “ presentation on the product testing for the City of Spokane, presented previously at the Spokane River Forum.

Questions/Comments:

- Other Items to look (products/fertilizers)? Follow up testing to the hydroseed: In-situ.
- Greg Lahti: WA Dept. of Transportation does not use newspaper in hydroseed in this region, they use chopped up straw (although it does have fertilizer in it).
- Repository of this product testing data? Ecology announced a product testing database (Ecology product testing database), as soon as the testing is done it is made available to the public including pictures and raw data.

ACTION ITEM: Alex Stone to ask about including City’s data to the Ecology database.

ACTION ITEM: Alex Stone to report back to the TF in February or March.

Events & Outreach:

Pullman High School: PCB documentary

A group of students from Pullman High School is making a documentary film about PCBs and the Spokane River. The group requested interviews with Task Force members. The Task Force suggested that the group try to get interviews on the day of the next TTWG meeting on January 7th. Task Force members who expressed interest in being interviewed: Jerry White, Galen Buterbaugh, Doug Krapas, John Beacham, Mike LaScuola, Adriane Borgias, Bud Leber, and Rob Lindsay.

ACTION ITEM: Kara Whitman to provide contact information for interested Task Force members to the high school group for setting up interviews. (COMPLETE)

Public Information Officers (PIOs) and Communications Strategy:

Eric Williams (Gallatin/Inland Empire Paper), Toni Taylor (Spokane County), and Marlene Feist (City of Spokane) met on November 5, 2014 and developed a strategy for updating the communications materials for the Task Force. The following is a summary of the strategy presented by the PIOs.

The PIO group believes that the Task Force needs a shift in the tone of communication materials and that more information is needed about the progress of the Task Force. This includes:

- Messages to transition from planning to action
- Top 3 actions taken by each of the Task Force members to address PCBs and Toxics and include this in the communications materials (email sent to Chris Page on 11/7/2014)
- Report on the global task force actions, like the completion of PCB testing on certain products
- Report out on the initial results of PCB product testing. Products tested include de-icer, road paint, motor oil, vehicle wash soap, hydroseed, and more. The idea was to identify products that come in contact with stormwater and potentially get washed into the Spokane River. Initial results for some products arrived in mid-November and more are expected soon.
- Report on the addition of Idaho dischargers to the group that ensures a more comprehensive solution to this problem
- Demonstrate how these “direct-to-implementation” strategies are delivering results at a more affordable price (value for the dollar).

The PIO Group Recommends to the Task Force:

- Dropping the word “Toxics” from the group’s name. Citizens don’t necessarily understand that “toxics” means PCBs, dioxins, and furans. Additionally, we think it’s a negative, not a positive.
- Pursuing an annual “State of the River” event as proposed by the Lands Council’s Mike Peterson
 - Compile the “actions” by Task Force members into a report that can be shared through all the members’ web sites and other communication tools
 - Hold a press event, perhaps around Earth Day, with highlights from that report
 - Ask members to share the information with their City Councils, governing boards, etc.
- Assisting with the development of a 90-second “elevator” speech that all the members can use as they talk to legislators and other decision makers.

ACTION ITEM: Task Force members to send top three actions taken to address PCBs and Toxics to the Ruckelshaus Center, to be highlighted in the communications materials.

Funding

Doug explained that the Task Force may not obtain funding through the combined legislative request. The Task Force needs to think about requesting separate funding from the State (not combined with the City request), to go with an updated fact sheet, then at some point a letter ask and delegation visit. In the interim, the Task Force members need to talk to their legislators about the need for funding.

DECISION: Task Force agreed to move forward with seeking funding separately from the City ask.

Updates and announcements

- Riverkeeper is looking for money to redo the toxics guide and for other public outreach programs. Fish consumption etc.
- In-kind contributions
- January Task Force meeting: based on format of workshop and amount of material to consider. Proposal is that LimnoTech will take input from the workshop, then TTWG will take a closer look and make recommendations to the Task Force (as a work plan). The Task Force decided to not hold a separate January Task Force meeting.
- Dave Moss spoke with Lisa Brown (waste manager). Lisa would like to get feedback from the Task Force on the job description/duties for the job that was previously filled by Arianne Fernandez. What kind of support does the Task Force need?
- Tom Agnew updated the group on the developer that proposed drilling wells into the aquifer. They have pulled their proposal (they were required to do an environmental impact statement).

ACTION ITEM: Request Lisa Brown (Ecology) to stop by and get feedback on the Urban Waters position (COMPLETE)

DECISION: The group agreed to cancel the January Task Force meeting.

No Public Comment.

The next SRRTTF Task Force meeting is the Toxics Workshop on January 13-14, 2015 at CenterPlace Regional Event Center
 2426 N. Discovery Place, Spokane Valley, WA 99216

The next Technical Track Work Group Meeting is January 7th, 2015 from 10am-12pm at the Department of Ecology.
