

Spokane River Regional Toxics Task Force

DRAFT Meeting Summary

Facilitated by Chris Page and Kara Whitman

February 25, 2015 | 9:00am – 12:30pm

Liberty Lake Sewer and Water District Office | 22510 E. Mission Ave

Attendees

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

Tom Agnew *, Bijay Adams – Liberty Lake Sewer and Water District

Dale Arnold*, Jeff Donovan, Lynn Schmidt – City of Spokane

Galen Buterbaugh* – Lake Spokane Association

Bud Leber* – Kaiser Aluminum

Mike Petersen* – Lands Council

Dave Moss*, Rob Lindsay, Toni Taylor – Spokane County

Dave McBride*(on phone) – Washington Department of Health

Jerry White*, Rick Eichstaedt (on phone) – RiverKeeper

Mike LaScuola*, Sandy Phillips – Spokane Regional Health District

Advisors

Jim Bellatty, Adriane Borgias, Mike Hepp, Ellie Key, Brandee Era-Miller (on phone), Diana Washington –WA Department of Ecology (Ecology)

Tom Eaton, Brian Nickel (phone) – U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

Dan Redline – Idaho Department of Environmental Quality

Rebecca Stevens – Coeur d’Alene Tribe

Bryce Robbert – Avista

Public

John Beacham, Russ Connole – City of Post Falls

Lisa Dally Wilson – Dally Environmental

Dave Dilks (phone) – LimnoTech

Don Keil (in person), Kris Holm (phone) –City of Coeur d’Alene

Greg Lahti – WA Department of Transportation

Bruce Williams – GeoEngineers

Eric Williams – Gallatin Public Affairs

Ken Windram – Hayden Area Regional Water and Sewer Board

Introductions, Agenda Review, Approval of Prior Meeting Summary

After a round of introductions, the group reviewed the agenda. No changes were made. The group reviewed the December 2014 Task Force Meeting Summary Draft. The notes were accepted as written.

ACTION ITEM: Task Force members to send any revisions to Task Force meeting summary to Ruckelshaus Center.

Presentation: “Hatchery Permit Process”: Michael Hepp (Ecology) gave an overview of the permit process for Washington state hatcheries. There are two types of permits: the general permit and individual facility permits. There are 80 hatcheries permitted in the state; of these, 10 are private hatcheries and of those 75% are salmon hatcheries. EPA is writing hatchery permits for those on tribal land, with the exception of one not on a

reservation. The Draft general permit will be out by April 30th for public process and will be in effect by February 1st of 2016.

Q&A

- How many hatcheries are covered by the EPA general permit? The federal permit for tribal hatcheries includes 20-25 permits. The renewal time frame is five years (under the Clean Water Act).
- Is there or will there be language in the general permit addressing toxics? The language is not completed yet, but there will be wording addressing it as a Best Management Practice (BMP).
- Is there consideration of requiring monitoring of toxics in the permit? Not under the general permit. This will be addressed case by case.
- Is every hatchery going through this process? This is an “umbrella” process to cover all WA state hatcheries. Individual hatcheries go through a renewal process. Diana Washington explained that Ecology does evaluate on a case-by-case basis for different outfalls. Every facility is required to submit application for coverage under the general permit. Ecology reviews these and conducts site inspections as appropriate. If the general permit is not adequate, Ecology moves to an individual permit process. They are currently internally developing that language. All permitting decisions will include public notices and review and comment before issuance.

ACTION ITEM: Task Force to consider putting together position paper regarding toxics in the general hatchery permit during the public comment period.

TTWG Report, Technical Topics & Funding

Presentation: “Follow-Up to Mass Balance Assessment Based on Workshop Feedback”

Some highlights of Dave Dilks’ presentation:

- Interim results asserted that there may be another unknown source of PCBs between Trent and Greene Street.
- Follow-up activities: inclusion of j-flagged PCB data in the analysis, consideration of stormwater loading via combined sewer overflow (CSO) outlets, addition of the Greene Street segment, conducting of sensitivity analysis of groundwater quality assumption, evaluation of flows at Nine Mile, and summary of PCB concentrations at each sampling location.
- Next steps: closure of synoptic sampling issues, high level scoping for the next phase of work. Timeframe for completion: the end of April.
- Lessons Learned: Need flow measurement capability at Greene Street station, the outlet of Lake Coeur d’Alene, and below Nine Mile for future sampling efforts.

DECISION: The Task Force approved the Technical Track Work Group (TTWG) to work with LimnoTech on next steps.

ACTION ITEM: ACE to look at funding for Limnotech next steps, Green Street Gage, other projects.

ACE Update: Doug Krapas reviewed a pilot project proposal sheet put together by ACE. The Task Force agreed to form small work groups to address each pilot project.

PCB Removal Projects

Hydroseed Analysis and Reformulation. This project will assist manufacturers of Hydroseed in the analysis of their products and develop specifications/reformulations with reduced levels of PCB’s.

Focus group: Doug Krapas (lead), Greg Lahti, Adriane Borgias, and other (AXYS representative).

Things for group to consider:

- Can they use the approved Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) from Ecology?
- Can they get a source reduction estimate?
- If the group runs into budget problems, contact Tom Eaton.

DECISION: The Task Force approved the proposed Hydroseed project, with the work plan and budget to be worked out with ACE for Task Force consideration.

Catch Basin Waste Facility Analysis and Mitigation. The City of Spokane, Spokane County, and Spokane Valley have catch basins that currently require only sand filtration prior to infiltration into the groundwater. This project would study PCB concentrations at the inlet and outlet to the sand filters, and analyze the effectiveness of PCB reductions through the use of bio-char or activated carbon abatement techniques.

Focus Group: Dale Arnold (lead), Mike LaScuola, Mike Petersen, Adriane Borgias, Greg Lahti, Jeff Donovan, and Kris Holm.

DECISION: The Task Force approved the Catch Basin Waste Facility Analysis and Mitigation Pilot Project, with work plan and budget to be worked out with ACE for Task Force for consideration.

Hatchery Fish Meal. This project to analyze fish meals in use by all hatcheries either in or contributing to the Spokane River basin to ascertain PCB content and determine if lower-PCB fish meals are available. Note: An Ecology Environmental Assessment Program (EAP) study will look more holistically. This project will look specifically at fish meal.

Focus group: Bijay Adams (Lead), Galen Buterbaugh, Jerry White, Adriane Borgias, other (WA Department of Fish and Wildlife representative). Things for group to consider:

- Look at discharge water (part of EAP proposal).
- EAP proposal and EAP Little Spokane study
- Body burden uptake is very high from the food (significant pathway).
- Should this be approached more broadly? Part of initial work plan.
- Likely next step: explore fingerlings flesh PCB concentrations.

DECISION: The Task Force approved the Hatchery Fish Meal Pilot Project, with work plan and budget to be worked out with ACE for Task Force consideration.

ACTION ITEM: Ruckelshaus Center to pull together all the relevant Hatchery studies and post to single location on the Task Force website. (i.e. 2005 study, Little Spokane Study, and proposed EAP project) (In Progress)

Education: Information/Documentation of SRRTTF Progress and PCBs in Products. Update the Task Force website to provide a comprehensive summary of the progress achieved by the SRRTTF. Develop documentation/brochures for use as a takeaway that summarizes SRRTTF progress to date. Develop or identify a website to serve as the clearinghouse for all of PCB-in-products information being produced by various entities (Ecology, City of Spokane, Spokane County, University of Iowa, etc.)

Focus Group: Organizations Public Information Officers, Ruckelshaus Center, Jerry White. Others?

Things for group to consider:

- Need specifics from individual entities.
- Messaging/website/visual representation
- Resources/funding to work on this?
- Documentation of Measurable Progress.
- Public outreach: Comprehensive public outreach piece (ties with work planned by RiverKeeper in the near future).
- Another website linked from Task Force website? Other organization to tie in with? Alex Stone (Ecology) web resource. Should contain consumer information, health information etc.

ACTION ITEM: Ruckelshaus Center to investigate potential Washington State University resources for outreach and put together a proposal.

ACTION ITEM: Ruckelshaus Center to follow up with Alex Stone and Carol Kraege about integrating product information into their database.

Upgrade Flow Gages at Green Street, Upriver Dam and Outlet of Coeur d’Alene Lake.

Greene Street Gage: David Stasney, water resource instructor at Spokane Community College, spoke to the Task Force regarding the gage at Greene Street. He operates a gaging station at Green Street and uses it to train gage station technicians. The station needs a modern data logger. David asked the Task Force to partner with Spokane Community College to fund the upgrade of this station to be comparable to United States Geological Survey (USGS) gage stations. The National Weather Service has agreed to provide access to satellite and make data available in real time, free of charge. The upgrade will cost approximately \$9,000. David would like to order the new equipment within the next few months. There is also the potential for cooperative work on the Nine Mile gage station in the future. There is a need to evaluate the efficacy of gauging stations and the scope of work needed. The Task Force agreed to form a small work group to take on this task.

Gage Station Focus Group: Rob Lindsay (Lead), Dave Dilks, Lisa Dally Wilson. Also invite David Stasney, an Avista Representative, and John Covert (Ecology).

DECISION: The Task Force to fund the upgrade of the Green Street Gage.

ACTION ITEM: Small team to evaluate the efficacy of gaging stations and the scope of work needed. Focus group lead Rob Lindsay will invite Dave Stasney, an Avista representative, and John Covert to join the group.

Evaluation of High-Volume Sampling. Will Hobbs and Brandee Era-Miller will look at CLAM and centrifuge sampling in an upcoming EAP project located in two places: at the Spokane Tribal boundary and in Walla Walla. Some things to consider:

- How to collect wet weather data?
- Match scope to budget and pair with other work.
- Third step beyond the EAP study: look at all the components of the sampler (as a companion to the EAP fieldwork). Brandee explained they will look at the media and components as well.

ACTION ITEM: The Technical Track Work Group to discuss this project proposal at the next work group meeting.

Funding Request Letter

Doug Krapas has talked with legislature responsible for funding. It appears that the Task Force has support from. The funding request letter is very similar to the 2014-2015 request. The letter requests a funding proviso in the

amount of \$800,000 in both the House and Senate budgets. Adriane Borgias, Department of Ecology, requested a budget breakdown that justifies the dollar request from ACE.

ACTION ITEM: Kara Whitman to make requested changes to the funding request letter and send to Doug Krapas. (COMPLETE)

ACTION ITEM: Ruckelshaus Center to request that Task Force members send letter of support for the funding request and attach the Inland Empire Paper letter as an example/template. (COMPLETE)

ACTION ITEM: ACE to put together a budget breakdown of the request to legislature.

Presentation: “Measurable Progress: Process, Analysis, and Timeframes”

Adriane Borgias gave a presentation of Ecology’s Measurable Progress determination process and timelines for completion. The Task Force is on track; however they cannot say Measurable Progress has been made until they go through the process of determining Measurable Progress. This is the first time this has been done in the state and Ecology wants to take their time and do it right the first time. The Permit Managers are Pat Halinan (Industrial) and Ellie Key (municipal). The determination will most likely come out with a list of recommendations. The first measurable progress determination will be the baseline period.

Q&A/Discussion

- How will fish and fish consumption rule be involved in the determination? The fish consumption rule will not come into play in this watershed, and it will not change the goal post.
- Ecology’s assessment of Measurable Progress is not applicable to Idaho Dischargers. Idaho Dischargers will be developing data. Will this data be used by Ecology for determination? Yes.
- Fish tissue lag time response to PCB mitigation and removal. The most recent fish tissue analysis shows that there may already be reductions in fish tissue concentrations. Could not statistically verify that this is happening. This information will be used in the determination.
- Individual permit managers will set up meetings to discuss this process and can provide additional information at this time.
- **Parking Lot:** The relationships in bioaccumulation are not well understood, and that could be a gap. What is progress in this respect and how many years will it take? What is the pathway from water to fish? The Task Force needs to be able to connect this to water quality standards. Need to understand this to achieve and show Measurable Progress. Planting clean/non PCB fish in the river to get a baseline.

MOA Work Group Update:

Chris Page gave a brief overview of the work that the Work Group has been doing. The group has been meeting two times a month and has made substantial progress. A couple of issues that need addressed by the full Task Force are the annual work plan, agency review, and expansion of membership. The workgroup hopes to be ready for Task Force review no later than the April Task Force meeting.

PCBs & Hatcheries: what Qs do we have for WDFW, ECY staff?

Chris Page suggested the Hatchery Fish meal focus group work with the TTWG to distill a list of questions for WDFW.

ACTION ITEM: Ruckelshaus to contact WDFW and other entities, to inform the Task Force about these issues.

Events & Outreach, Funding:

Chris Page updated the group on the Op-Ed submitted to the *Spokesman Review*. The article has not been published and Chris has made repeated attempts at contacting the Spokesman Review about this with little traction. Chris asked for Task Force involvement.

ACTION ITEM: Eric Williams to connect with Spokesman Review about Op Ed.

Adriane Borgias received a letter from Dennis McClerran (EPA) in response to a letter sent 16 months ago from the Task Force to EPA about regulations pertaining to the inadvertent production of PCBs. The letter generated a significant amount of discussion at EPA, but there are many significant challenges to proposing reforms to the Toxics Substances Control Act. EPA would like to meet with Task Force members to discuss these challenges.

ACTION ITEM: Tom Eaton to work with Adriane Borgias on setting up a meeting with EPA senior managers.

Ken Zarker (Ecology Green Chemistry Program) will be in Spokane on March 9th or 10th to introduce the Green Chemistry center, provide regional success stories, and discuss product testing and other related items. Adriane Borgias requested 5-6 Task Force Members meet with Ken regarding what they would like to see included in the Green Chemistry workshop. The group agreed that March 9th would be the best day for the meeting.

ACTION ITEM: Adriane Borgias to solidify plans with Ken Zarker, and Ruckelshaus to sent out announcement of the time and place that Task Force members can meet with Ken. (COMPLETE)

ACTION ITEM: Adriane to show Bhopal India slideshow at 8:30 at next task force meeting.

The next SRRITF Task Force meeting March 25th, 2015 at the Spokane County Water Resource Center from 9am –12:30pm

The next Technical Track Work Group Meeting is March 4th, 2015 from 10am-12pm at the Department of Ecology.
