

SRRTTF Education and Outreach Work Group

DRAFT Summary Notes

May 6, 2015 | RiverKeeper 35 West Main, Suite 300 Spokane WA

Attendees:

Brooke Beeler (phone) – Department of Ecology
Marlene Feist –City of Spokane
Ben Jarvis (phone) –Idaho Department of Environmental Quality
Chris Page (phone) –Ruckelshaus Center
Sandy Phillips –Spokane Regional Health District
Toni Taylor –Spokane County
Jerry White –RiverKeeper
Kara Whitman –Ruckelshaus Center

Protocol for Opinion/Editorials

Jerry White discussed the use of Opinion/Editorials as a communication tool. The group agreed that there is a need to focus on the desired outcomes of education and outreach. The question is: does an op-ed move the Task Force forward in those goals? The Task Force recently met with the Spokesman Review Editorial board. This resulted in an Op-Ed on April 10th, 2015. Perhaps an editorial is not the right tool with a coalition of many parties. There may be better ways to communicate a shared vision and not highlight conflicting opinions.

Brooke Beeler explained that when an editorial board puts together these articles, the whole Task Force does not have control over what is focused on. It is a subset of opinions. The Task Force is a diverse set of interests that all have the same goal of getting to a clean river. And editorial does not necessarily communicate this vision.

- Guest editorials would be more appropriate, where there is control. However, there is a question of how much sway an editorial has anymore. Not the same level of sway as they used to have. Need to weigh the impact on outreach goals against the potential for conflict within the group.
- Individuals could use this method, with the caveat that the opinion may not reflect the opinion of the entire Task Force.
- Toni Taylor suggested the use of a standard sentence at the bottom of individual entity outreach pertaining to work of the Task Force or related to the Task Force, to allow for flexibility in viewpoint with the overarching view of the task force. (boiler plate language)

SRRTTF Education and Outreach Vision/goals: Review/Finalize

The Group discussed the vision and goals previously that were brainstormed at the last Education and Outreach work group meeting. Kara Whitman explained that she has reworded them to include “action” verbs that provide more measurable outcomes. The group compared these goals to the document “Joint Key Messages” that was approved by the Task Force at the May 2013 Task Force meeting.

ACTION ITEM: Education and Outreach Work Group members to review the May 2013 joint key messages and make sure the outreach goals are addressed. Send and edits or additions to Kara Whitman or bring to the next Education and Outreach Work Group meeting.

Boiler plate/template

Standard Communications boiler plate language could be used on all individual outreach. Could also link provide a link to the Task Force web page for more information.

Example language:

The _____ is a member of the Spokane River Regional Toxics Task Force. The Task Force is a coalition of entities in the Spokane River Basin tasked with identifying and eliminating PCB sources to the Spokane River. For more information on the Task Force please visit the website at www.srrttf.org. Individual entities could use different boiler plate language when their opinions/outreach may not be the opinions of the whole Task Force. “These are the opinions of the _____ and not the entire Task Force as a whole .

Education and Outreach activities of all Task Force members/organizations

Kara Whitman explained that this will be a running list. She will add outreach activities to the list as they are sent and it will serve as a reference for future outreach activities.

YouTube Video clips:

Interviews were conducted by Pullman High School students in January of 2015. This footage is available for use to create YouTube video clips. Each clip will focus on a small aspect of the bigger PCB issue in the Spokane River Watershed. Can highlight source reductions, best management practices (BMPs), innovative technology, fish tissue and fish advisories etc.

ACTION ITEM: Kara Whitman to put together 1st YouTube clip from the interview with Mike LaScuola that focuses on PCBs, fish and human health, and bring to the next Education and Outreach Work Group meeting for review.

ACTION ITEM: Kara Whitman to create a Task Force YouTube station for posting Task Force education and outreach videos.

Outreach Tools: What are the best ways to achieve an educated and engaged public?

What are the communication tools that are really effective as a joint effort?

- Can craft joint messages, that the Task force uses individual members tools to distribute (such as mailers)
- All members could include links back to the Task Force consistently.
- Facebook/twitter takes a lot of care. This is not necessarily a good option for the Task Force and how it operates. Could leverage members who use twitter and facebook etc.
- “Buckets” of Outreach
 - Bucket 1: History and purpose of the Task Force

- Bucket 2: PCBs, their impacts and BMPs
- General public and legislators are a different audience – different message.

Joint Key Messages

The Joint key messages were created in 2013. While much of it is still very relevant, there have been many accomplishments since it was approved. Need to add:

- City of Spokane product testing
- Ecology website with product testing information
- Waste directory
- River Forum
- EnviroStars
- etc

Need to state explicitly: We don't know a lot about how PCBs enter the river. There are many pathways such as aerial deposition, groundwater flow, and many more. The Task Force is working hard to identify and quantify these pathways in order to provide BMPs to reduce or eliminate this pollution. Also, need to do a better job of explaining the levels of PCBs in the Spokane River that the Task Force is dealing with. Could use an analogy/ tagline to help explain the levels of PCBs (from Adriane Borgias), "it is like trying to find a penny in all of Washington, and when we are cleaning up PCBs every penny counts".

ACTION ITEM: Toni Taylor to send County poster that was reworked to the group.

Other outreach events/ideas of interest

Survey

The Spokane River Forum is doing a survey (dealing with more than PCBs) that could be a good source of information to see how the public is informed. The survey will be out in 6 weeks. It will assess public knowledge, in general, of the river. It is an assessment of what people know, and who do they trust or believe when it comes to information about the river.

Note: the Health district has an assessment group that may be of use.

Lake Roosevelt Forum: River forum presentations

Sandy Phillips explained that a presentation given by Liz Carr from the state Department of Health (DOH) at the Lake Roosevelt Forum conference may be of interest to the group. DOH conducted a study of residents in the north eastern counties to update the messaging on fish consumption advisories. One of the questions asked was where residents received their information about fish in the Columbia River system.

The lowest response was the DOH website while the highest responses were community boards, signs and National Park boat launches. See slide 15 in the presentation link for the full list.

<http://www.lrf.org/conference-presentations/2015/LizCarr-WhitneyFraser.pdf> It's useful information to consider when deciding how and where to provide outreach to the public.

Kiosks

Kiosks may be a great way to get the Task Force information out there. The Trout Unlimited signage provides a good example. Could use/Tag on with Combines Sewer Overflow signage, and/or Health District signage.

Events

- May 16th, 2015 Open House: Adriane Borgias and Jerry White are both speaking at the event.
- County Fair: Agreed upon piece? Greenzone (pair with EnviroStars)
- Water Breakfast: sponsor table?
- Valley Fest- Mid- September
- Riverkeeper will be on the river a lot this year, talking about PCBs. (REI Training, Guide and Outreach Training)

Brochure

The group discussed using a brochure as an outreach tool. This could take the form of a smaller Task Force piece, that could become part of a larger, entity specific handout.

- Public Guide update.
- Tri-fold brochure-abbreviated/less expensive and can print on demand, better for outreach events) or 3 and 3/4 by 11.
- Design: Task Force logo, leave a spot for the individual organization to input their logo.

The Next Education and Outreach Work Group Meeting is June 3, 2015 at Riverkeeper

The next full Task Force meeting is May, 27 2015, 9:00am-12:30pm, Spokane County Water Resource Center