2.3.2 Blank Correction

Total PCB concentrations were corrected for method blank contamination following the procedures defined in the QAPP. Specifically, individual congeners found in the sample at a concentration less than three times the associated blank concentration were flagged, and excluded from calculation of total PCB. ~~This blank correction method was selected to maintain consistency with other PCB monitoring QAPPs already in place in the Spokane area~~. Figure 2 shows blank-corrected versus non-corrected total PCB concentrations. This figure indicates that blank-correction generally reduced the estimated total PCB concentration by approximately 30 pg/l, compared to the non-corrected samples.

It should be noted that there is no standard blank correction method, and numerous approaches are utilized, both nationally and within the Spokane River Basin. The selection of the most appropriate blank correction methodology must consider factors such as: study objectives, sample matrix, sampling methodology, expected range of results, and tolerance for biased results.

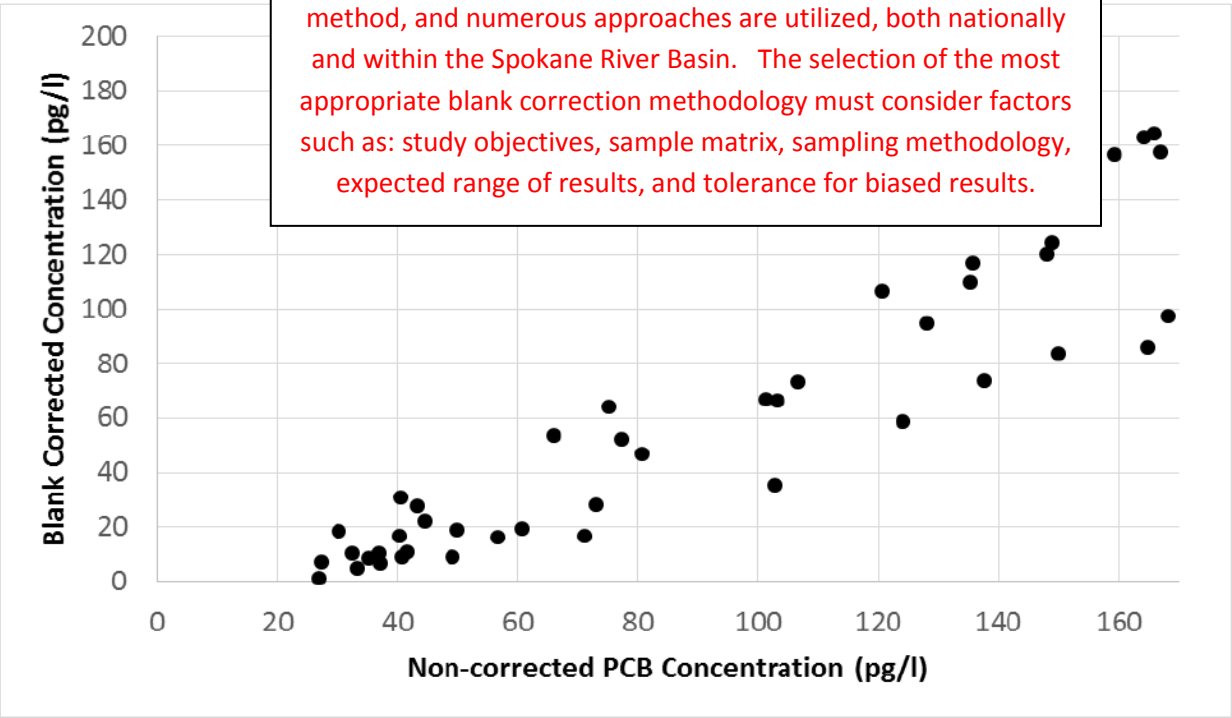

Figure 2. Comparison between QAPP Blank-Corrected and Uncorrected Total PCB Concentrations