

SRRTTF Technical Track Work Group (TTWG)

DRAFT Meeting Summary Notes

Department of Ecology | N. 4601 Monroe St. | Spokane, WA 99205

Attendees:

BiJay Adams – Liberty Lake Sewer & Water District
John Beacham – City of Post Falls
Ben Brattebo – City of Spokane
Galen Buterbaugh – Lake Spokane Association
Lisa Dally-Wilson – Dally Environmental
Dave Dilks (phone) – Limnotech
Jeff Donovan – City of Spokane
Brandee Era-Miller (phone) – WA Dept. of Ecology
Kris Holm – City of Coeur d’Alene

Doug Krapas – Inland Empire Paper
Bud Leber – Kaiser Aluminum
Pam Marti (phone) – WA Dept. of Ecology
Chris Page (video) – Ruckelshaus Center
Sandy Phillips – Spokane Regional Health District
Bryce Robbert – Avista
Jeremy Ryf – Department of Ecology
Kara Whitman – Ruckelshaus Center

Introductions and Agenda Review

No changes were made to the agenda.

Dry Weather Sampling Overview

Brandee Era-Miller explained that sampling went well; the recent forest fire smoke did not compromise the work. Flows were 30% less than during the 2014 synoptic sampling (700cfs at Barker), which will help parse out groundwater impacts. All “conventional” samples are at Silver Valley Labs (SVL), with AXYS doing the composites. The SVL data started coming in on September 1st.

Approximately 58 PCB samples were taken (five at each river location, a trip blank each day, three samples at each point source, and a transfer blank each day of source sampling). Data are expected back early to mid-October. Particulates from forest fire were seen on the surface of the water one day, though the sampling team assumed they were present (widespread, no localized distribution) throughout the whole sampling period. This is a good lesson: there are no perfect conditions for sampling; sources vary by circumstance. The challenge is how to convey this to EPA.

Questions and Comments

- **Q.** Were measures taken to minimize ambient air contamination of samples from smoke? **A.** Yes, it was all direct immersion sampling, so no exposure to smoke. Impact is almost zero; one potential impact would be particulates of ash on water’s surface. Transfer blanks and trip blanks were taken and will be included in the observations. A field report will be provided for every site.
- **Q.** Are PCBs like dioxins? **A.** Yes, they can be volatilized; fire can be a significant source.
- **C.** Take the data and produce visuals

EAP Project Updates

Little Spokane Verification Study:

Brandee explained that Michael Friese is working on data from this study and will have the draft report to Dale Norton by the end of September, then to client (Adriane Borgias) by end of October. The draft will be available for Task Force review in November. This project will ascertain if there is a PCB problem in the Little Spokane River by testing wild fish tissue, sediment, and water above and below potential sources. Kris Holm asked to see this data before sending comments on the hatchery general permit.

Little Spokane Hatchery Study:

Ecology should have the Quality Assessment Project Plan (QAPP) for this study by November. EAP will provide a page scope for this project by the end of September for review and input from the TTWG. The Budget for this project is approximately \$20,000.

ACTION ITEM: Brandee Era-Miller, Michael Friese to discuss the Hatchery Study and Little Spokane Listing Verification Data at the next TTWG meeting on October 7, 2015.

Other EAP Project Updates:

- Trout Lodge whole fish sampling and Little Spokane River Hatchery Case study will be combined.
- Lake Spokane Carp study is completed and published.
- High volume sampling at Tribal reservation boundary: sampling to begin the week of September 7th. The samples will consist of 20-liter CLAM composite samples.
- Atmospheric deposition study: Brandee will lead. Now doing scoping and QAPP.
- Groundwater data review project: Pam Marti produced spreadsheets on toxics sites and wells along the river reaches of interests. The report is in the publication process. The Task Force has seen most of the products. Wells to be sampled are on a list Pam prepared; this will be done this fall.

Q. High Volume sampling and Tribal Boundary sampling – Will the Task Force see interim reports of results from spring sampling? **A.** Results are available, awaiting data validation from Manchester labs. Validated data from May sampling will be available by October. A full report is due out by mid 2016.

Q. Are there changes in the river when Avista changes dam operations around Labor Day? If so, will it impact sampling? **A.** Bryce Robbert explained that Avista manages flows throughout the day. Yes, this will impact sampling; however, Bryce and Brandee can coordinate to reduce impacts from dam operations during the sampling.

ACTION ITEM: Bryce Robbert to talk with Brandee and Steve Esche (Avista) to coordinate for consistent flows for a more steady state during sampling.

Q. Were there any “ahas” found in the high volume sampling data? **A.** The data appear to be in the noise. Concentrations at reservation boundary are lower than they are throughout the system. Long Lake is a sink for what is coming downriver (this is seen in previous studies of sediments and fish tissue). They were not able to get as high of volumes from the CLAM as hoped (12, 15 and 20 liters). The biggest problem is the background concentration from the disc housing in the CLAM units. Ecology, may decide that the CLAM is not the best option for sampling low concentrations of PCBs in the Spokane River System. All three clam disc blanks showed about the same level of PCBs, which could provide a handle on background levels coming from the CLAM. Sediment traps are still collecting sediment, and this will give a good indication of what is going on in the water column.

Q. Doug Krapas: What is the status of the Trout Lodge Fish Sampling project? EAP will combine the analysis of the Trout Lodge frozen samples with the Little Spokane Fish Hatchery study. Ecology will provide a one-page scope for TTWG input on Oct. 7th.

Q. Ben Brattebo asked about the 2013 study that looked at river, groundwater and sediment samples through Urban Waters program. Ecology is currently working on entering this data into Ecology’s Environmental Information Management (EIM) system. Kristin Carmack is entering the data; Melissa McCall will do QAQC on it. Brandee will let the Task Force know when the data is available.

ACTION ITEM: Add the 2013 Ecology Study to the list of Ecology projects to follow up on. (COMPLETE)

Vactor Waste Project

Jeff Donovan explained that they saw the same levels as have been previously observed in the local stormwater sediment. The Washington Department of Transportation (WSDOT) uses a sand filter, which removes most of the PCBs to levels typically lower than those usually seen in stormwater. The PCBs appear to be contained in the solid material. The waste solids from City of Spokane facilities go to the Northside landfill. WSDOT recycles the solids in barrow fill pits. There is a well in the vicinity of the landfills where vactor waste is disposed of and the Northside landfill has leachate coming out of it. Ecology (urban waters) has sampled on this site. Follow up with urban waters or Adriane? The facilities have a yearly spray-down when sediment is collected and taken to the same disposal destination. **Q.** Are these disposal locations lined? **A.** It is a concrete pad with a filtration system. Not sure if it is lined.

Hydroseed Project

Doug Krapas sent the Draft Report out for review. The does not appear to be any “smoking gun” among hydroseed components for PCBs (using a testing method with a higher detection method than 1668), though the dyes from three suppliers had 2ppb-range detections. Dyes appear to be contributing to the PCB content. Doug has set up a meeting with the suppliers to discuss the results. One supplier had a tackifier (used on steep slopes) that had an aroclor. Doug recommends confirming that dyes are problematic (perhaps urging WSDOT and Spokane County to move away from dyes in hydroseed) and using 1668c to take a closer look.

- **Q.** What are the relative magnitudes? How much gets applied and what “load” does this contribute to the state of Washington PCB load.
- **Q.** Can we use the State purchasing law to work with suppliers? Work with suppliers, city, state etc.
- **C.** Need to clearly delineate this information in the language in the Certified Erosion and Sediment Control Lead (CESCL) certification requirements.

ACTION ITEM: TTWG members consider and recommend next steps for this project at next meeting.

ACTION ITEM: Ben Brattebo and Jeff Donovan to find out total purchased hydroseed and/or total hydroseed applied in the City and County.

Comprehensive Plan

Limnotech has provided a basic outline for beginning to pull the Task Force’s comprehensive plan together. Bud Leber drafted a letter to EPA requesting guidance on the comprehensive plan as well as the contact person who will determine the adequacy of the plan. Kris Holm asserted that the City of Coeur d’Alene representatives believe that the five elements EPA stated the plan must contain goes beyond the scope of the Task Force Memorandum of Agreement (MOA). They think it is premature to follow through with what is outlined in the EPA response before the court has responded. They also do not think EPA should be included in how the comprehensive plan is put together.

Doug added that based on what EPA has put out there, he feels uncomfortable at this time following the EPA proposed path. Doug emphasized that the Task Force needs to be very careful about committing themselves to something before the court case is completed. The Task force can work on the Comprehensive Plan without reaching out to EPA. Many Task Force members are not in agreement with what EPA has submitted to the court.

Bud noted the clock is ticking, and the unknowns, the Task Force still must produce a comprehensive plan. The Task Force does not want to be blindsided by the court decision and EPA's five elements.

Chris pointed out that the Task Force MOA delineates what will be in a comprehensive plan, much of which lines up with the five criteria. Only one sentence in the draft letter would need to be reworded to make sure the SRRTTF is not committing to EPA's five criteria. "As a result, the SRRTTF, through its TTWG will be preparing an outline of what it believes will adequately" (Page 2 paragraph 1)

ACTION ITEM: The discussion on the letter going out or not will happen at the September 3rd Task Force meeting. (COMPLETE)

Dave Dilks explained that EPA's five bullet points do track well with the MOA, but does not specify timelines nor does it specify numeric limits vs. Best Management Practices (BMPs). This could be a significant issue. Other regions have plans that recognize that sources are diffuse, and timelines can be more fluid. If the plan is designed to comply with standards, then somehow they need to decide how much loads need to be reduced to comply.

Q. Who is going to write the comprehensive plan? **A.** Limnotech can put together a scope and budget for developing the comprehensive plan.

Brandee Era Miller can help Limnotech with data summaries and general help if needed.

ACTION ITEM: Ruckelshaus to check on the Limnotech database link posted on the Task Force website and coordinate with Dave Dilks to update.

The next SRRTTF meeting is Wednesday, September 23, 2015 at the Spokane County Water Resource Center.
The next Technical Track Work Group meeting is October 7, 2015 at the Washington Department of Ecology.