

Spokane River Regional Toxics Task Force

Technical Track Work Group (TTWG) Meeting

DRAFT Summary Notes

October 12, 2016 | 10:00 am – 12:00 pm

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

Meeting Documents: <http://srrttf.org/?p=7088>

Attendees:

Adriane Borgias –Department of Ecology
Lisa Dally Wilson (phone)
Dave Dilks (phone) –LimnoTech
Jeff Donovan –City of Spokane
Ted Hamlin –Department of Ecology
Kris Holm (phone) –City of Coeur d’Alene
Bud Leber –Kaiser Aluminum

Doug Krapas –Inland Empire Paper
Dave McBride (phone) –Department of Health
Dave Moss –Spokane County
Chris Page (video) –Ruckelshaus Center
Bryce Robbert –Avista
Jerry White –RiverKeeper
Kara Whitman –Ruckelshaus Center

Introductions and Agenda Review:

After a round of introductions, no changes were made to the agenda.

Gravity Report:

Dave Dilks said LimnoTech hopes to wrap up the “near final” draft by next week. They plan to have a draft ready for the Task Force meeting on 10/26, which the TTWG can then discuss at its November 2nd meeting, with the goal of approval at the November Task Force meeting. They received many comments on the Technical Report, but only a few on the Gravity field report. The Reports and comments are available on the Task Force website.

PCBs and CSPA

Kara Steward, who reported on the Child Safety Products Act (CSPA) rulemaking process at the September Task Force meeting, followed up on the possibility of adding PCBs to the list of chemicals requiring reporting (to an Ecology database) under the CSPA. She explained (via email) that nothing precludes the addition, but it would require that the reporting threshold be established at a much lower concentration than the current reporting ranges for listed chemicals. If the Task Force would like PCBs to be considered for the list, they need to submit a request in writing, clearly justifying the addition (must be toxic, and have an exposure pathway in the products that are covered under CSPA). Comments requesting other chemicals be included are due by November 5th.

ACTION ITEM: Lisa Dally Wilson agreed to draft a letter for the Task Force to consider with key points (e.g. the reporting range, testing methodology). The letter would also address the “loophole” (50ppm “inadvertent” allowance) aspect of the Toxics Substances Control Act (TSCA).

Comp Plan First-Year Commitments List → 2017 Work Plan

Chris Page discussed the first year commitments from the Draft Comprehensive Plan. Some of these actions can be spread out to years 2-4 if needed, based on ability to make these actions happen (capacity etc.). Many actions on education and outreach in the Comp Plan can be done with an ongoing, ad-hoc, “opportunistic” approach. Almost all the first year actions fall into this category except: outreach on color box requirements, recommendations to organization on implementing waste disposal, and outreach on green chemistry (these will need a champion).

The Task Force Administrative Contracting Entity (ACE) has been discussing the scope and budget for the next year. Each of the actions identified in the Comp Plan will eventually have a dollar amount attached. The Task

Force needs to prioritize the actions, and begin estimating costs so they can assign resources, including funding and human capacity to accomplish them.

Projects to consider in the early phases of Comp Plan implementation: year one or beyond?

- Properly mine data to help inform what the Task Force does moving forward. Reframe the action item on sites of concern for groundwater to broad mining of existing data (rather than just a focus on contaminated groundwater sites). Data needs to be put into a specific format in order for Positive Matrix Factorization (PMF) analysis can be done. There was a suggestion to focus on a specific geographic area –to identify sources where this appears to be a signal.
- Look into the connectivity between water and fish via homolog analysis. Homolog- and congener-level work can help advance Task Force understanding of key issues such as groundwater, PCB pathways to fish etc.
- Sediment is a placeholder, not sure how and when to move forward with this. Put together any sediment and fish data available on a congener level to get all data in 1668 comparable with congener and homolog information.
- Dave Dilks thinks bioaccumulation data would be important to examine; the food web model that Ecology put together needs updating with data from the 2012 Ecology study, informed by Will Hobbs’ recent study of the Wenatchee River. This can be backed up with a simple congener analysis.

Kris Holm would like to know how all this wraps around finalizing the Comp Plan and moves the Task Force forward with implementation. Wenatchee is taking a different regulatory approach: there are no PCB discharge limits on their municipalities and they are looking at delisting in some areas of the River based on fish tissue. Kris suggests the Task Force look at why the approach in Wenatchee is so different. It is not clear to Kris how the permits and the Task Force Comp Plan tie together yet, given the permits are not out for review yet and the Comp Plan is not complete.

Future Activities:

The Comp Plan future activities section will inform annual work plans. The Task Force will also need ongoing river sampling to track progress, bolster the dataset on River conditions, and to see if the Task Force is meeting milestones. The Task Force will also need to redo in-river concentration monitoring five years down the road.

The plan will commit the Task Force to producing a work plan with a schedule and timelines each year, allowing it to prioritize projects on an annual basis. Dave Dilks will tweak section 6 of the Comp Plan to put more definition on this. After the Comp Plan is approved, the Task Force will develop the 2017 annual work plan, and choose/prioritize the actions based on human capacity, funding, and timelines. A few items will require initiative to get them going and a “champion.” Adriane Borgias said Ecology could champion the Green Chemistry actions. WA Department of Transportation (Greg Lahti) is already championing the work on the Washington color box rules. Recommendations for organizations implementing waste disposal could be championed by the Spokane Regional Health District, the Outreach Work Group, and possibly the Spokane River Forum.

Year One: potential projects

- Focused data management project
- Data mining (high level)
- Updated Food web model
- Continual water column data collection
- Fish tissue analysis (based on WDFW feedback)
- Education and outreach activities
- Opportunistic actions

Comp Plan Discussion:

Dave Dilks has received hundreds of comments on the Comprehensive Plan Draft, the vast majority of which are easy to address. However, there are a few comments that need Task Force discussion. Specifically, Riverkeeper would like to see interim and final targets for control actions in the Plan. Dave Dilks would like clarification on this comment: targets on loading from specific sources, or instream concentration targets? Jerry White said they are talking about targets on loading, e.g. can put targets in for what treatment plant loads are expected to be based on control actions. City is doing five-year assessments – could potentially come up with targets, Kaiser GW cleanup – numbers. Dave cannot generate these numbers on his own, would need to rely on individual Task Force entities to provide this information. Jerry wants to be very clear that this is not about limits (as in a permit). They want “targets” to provide a numerically defined vision. Jerry explained that they think it would be possible to define a numerical target based on source control categories (A, B, and C), providing a reasonable goal for each category. Then they can align the plan with the scope of work. They also want to make sure that the plan ties back into Measurable Progress. Riverkeeper believes that if the Task Force is going to have a Comp Plan that is solid and defensible, then it need to have interim targets.

Q&A/Comments

There are so many things out of Task Force control that it is difficult to put out numerical targets, even at broad levels. There is concern about tying numerical targets in the plan that may somehow turn into regulatory requirements through the “Measurable Progress” determination which is an Ecology regulatory process. Some Task Force members already have numerical obligations on the permit side. The Task Force cannot set targets for permittees, but can set goals for what the Task Force can do. There is a difference between what the permittees are required to do and what the Task Force is doing. Doug Krapas explained that what the Task Force has accomplished has been profound. Jerry explained that Riverkeeper does appreciate the work of the Task Force. Jerry and Riverkeeper still want to see an outcome oriented implementation of a Comp Plan that is tied to Measurable Progress.

The group requested Riverkeeper consider the following questions:

- **Q.** How would these goals be used? **A.** To assess progress, tie back into Measurable Progress, and inform an adaptive process.
- **Q.** What is missing from the existing Measurable Progress procedure, how would this work? And how is what Riverkeeper is suggesting different from what is already existing with regulatory compliance?
- **Q.** Is Riverkeeper’s concern that regulatory actions in place are not enough? Or is the concern that the Comp Plan does not communicate adequately what the goals are (the boundaries, under existing programs)? **A.** A bit of both. We want to see all actions attached to an outcome.
- **Q.** Could Riverkeeper put these goals/targets together? **A.** In some areas yes, in some no.
- **Q.** Category A: loading reductions. What value system would be used to create these goals? How will the Task Force agree on an accurate and meaningful numerical value? The challenge is that that pathways are not direct, and setting a numerical goal is very complicated.

ACTION ITEM: Jerry White and other Task Force members to consider questions posed regarding the inclusion of targets in the Comp Plan for discussion at the October 26th Task Force Meeting.

Comp Plan process:

Dave Dilks can provide a revised Comp Plan before the 10/26/16 Task Force meeting, with the primary unresolved issue as the inclusion of targets. Note: so many things are up in the air right now: Policy 1-11, court case, permits, etc. all out at the same time—that’s why this Plan is adaptive, a living document.

Schedule:

Next version out before the 24th and a PowerPoint summarizing comments at the next Task Force meeting. Another deadline in early November. Then plan turned out by November 9th.

ACTION ITEM: Kara Whitman to send out a Comprehensive Plan schedule. (COMPLETE)

The next full SRRTTF meeting is October 26th, from 9 a.m. to 12:30 a.m. at the Liberty Lake Sewer & Water District
The next TTWG meeting is November 2nd, 2016 from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. at the WA Department of Ecology in Spokane.