# Spokane River Regional Toxics Task Force

 Quarterly Report (1/1/16 – 3/31/16)

**Project Staff:** Chris Page, Facilitator; Kara Whitman, Project Coordinator; Michael Kern, Strategic Advisor; Cheryl Rajcich, Operations Manager

**Project Purpose:** The Spokane River Regional Toxics Task Force (SRRTTF) is a collaborative group of governmental agencies, private industries, environmental organizations, and interested parties attempting an innovative approach to the reduction of PCBs within the Spokane River.

**Q15 Meeting Schedule:**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|   | January |  | February |  | March |
| **Task Force Meetings** |  **2016**  | **WSP** | **TT** | **TF** |  | **TT** | **WS** | **TF** |  | **TT** | **TF** | **TF** | **RF** |
| **5** | **6** | **27** |  | **3** | **9,10,11** | **24** |  | **2** | **16** | **28** | **22 -24**  |
| **Chris Page, Facilitator** |  | 1 | 1 |  | 1 | 2 | 1 |  | 1 | 1 | 1 |  |
| **Kara Whitman, Coordinator** | 1 | 1 | 1 |  | 1 | 3 | 1 |  | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |

*TT: Technical Track Work Group*

*TF: Task Force*

*WSP: Workshop Planning Work Group*

*RF: Spokane River Forum – Unofficial Task Force meeting and Panel Discussion*

*BMP: Best Management Practices Work Group*

*WS: SRRTTF Technical Workshop*

**Project highlights:**

* **Meetings:** Facilitator Chris Page developed meeting agendas for eight meetings on nine days, including four Task Force meetings, three Technical Track Work Group (TTWG) meetings, and one two-day technical workshop. Chris also facilitated those eight Task Force and TTWG meetings. Kara Whitman drafted and distributed announcements, materials, and summaries for each meeting. Kara participated in the Task Force Workshop Planning Work Group and attended the Spokane River Forum. Both Chris and Kara assisted with the facilitation of the Task Force three-day workshop in February.
* **Website Management:** Kara managed and updated the web page on behalf of the Task Force for all meetings facilitated by the Ruckelshaus Center. This included posting meeting announcements, materials and supporting documents, and meeting summaries.
* **Technical Advisor:** The Task Force worked with the Technical Advisor (LimnoTech) and other technical staff (Department of Ecology Environmental Assessment Program staff, representatives from Task Force entities, and TTWG Chair Bud Leber) to assist in Task Force understanding of technical issues, to ensure adequate vetting of presentations and reports before meetings, and to enable the TTWG to discuss and recommend next steps on technical issues to the full SRRTTF for decisions and actions.
* **February 2016 Technical Workshop:** The Center assisted the Task Force in the planning, coordination, and facilitation of the February 2016 SRRTTF Workshop. This included participation in the workshop planning work group, developing and refining the workshop agenda, preparing venue, ordering food, monitoring registration, meeting with venue and food managers at the Spokane Convention Center, printing workshop materials (agendas, nametags, posters), procuring graduate student logistical assistance from Washington State University (WSU), communicating webinar information, facilitating the overall flow of the event, and assisting with the facilitation of individual workshop sessions.
* **Outreach:** The Center updated the SRRTTF outreach posters and presented them at the Spokane River Forum. The Center also assisted the Task Force in finalizing and sending responses to both the Ecology and the EPA on their Draft Hatchery permits.
* **WSU Resources**: The Center pulled in WSU resources to assist with work of the Task Force and its members.
	+ Two Washington State University graduate students, Jennifer Johnson and Korey Woodley, assisted with the February 2016 Task Force Workshop.
	+ Kara Whitman initiated as study with a WSU undergraduate student (Ryan D. Clark), with Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) permit writer Catherine Gockel serving as technical advisor, investigating the level of PCB monitoring/requirements contained in Hatchery Permits across the United States. This work will be made available to the Task Force as Ryan and other future undergraduate students produce findings.
	+ The center coordinated the guest opening speaker, Dr. Allyson King, for the 2016 Task Force Workshop.

**Upcoming Center work with Task Force members and Work Groups:**

* The Center will facilitate and coordinate meetings of the Task Force and its work groups, as well as to identify opportunities for university research and expertise to inform outreach and public education and the process of reducing toxins in the River, at least through June 30, 2016.
* The Task Force and work groups will continue to meet on a monthly basis.
* The Task Force will continue to work with the Technical Consultant on completing assigned Tasks as well as on Phase Two of the Technical Consultant’s work.
* The Center will facilitate the development of the Task Force’s Comprehensive Plan to bring the Spokane River into compliance with applicable water quality standards. This will include the facilitation of a comprehensive planning workshop in July.
* The Center will continue to provide support for Task Force ad-hoc work groups (hydroseed, vactor waste, education and outreach, database management, fish and hatcheries, etc.) as needed.
* The Center will facilitate the Task Force’s process of considering the addition of new members along with agreement on any further needed changes to the group’s Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) if that becomes necessary. The Center would also assist in inviting new parties as identified by the Task Force after MOA legal review.
* The Center will continue to assist the Task Force as it documents activities and develops and implements a communication strategy.

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