# Spokane River Regional Toxics Task Force

 Quarterly Report (7/1/16 – 9/29/16)

**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.

**Q17 Meeting Schedule:**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|   | July |  | August |  | September |
| **Task Force Meetings** |  **2016**  |  **TT** | **TT** | **TF/WS** |  | **TT** | **TF** | **TF** |  | **TT** | **TF** |
| **6** | **20** | **27** |  | **3** | **10** | **24** |  | **7** | **28** |
| **Chris Page, Facilitator** | 1 | 1 | 1 |  | 1 | 1 | 1 |  |  | 1 |
| **Kara Whitman, Coordinator** | 1 | 1 | 1 |  | 1 | 1 | 1 |  | 1 | 1 |

*TT: Technical Track Work Group*

*TF: Task Force*

**Project highlights:**

* **Meetings:** Facilitator Chris Page developed meeting agendas for eight meetings including four Task Force meetings and four Technical Track Work Group (TTWG) meetings. Chris facilitated seven of the Task Force and TTWG meetings, and Kara Whitman facilitated one TTWG meeting. Kara Whitman drafted and distributed announcements, materials, and summaries for each meeting. Kara also helped manage communications at the meetings including conference phones, presentations, and the use of webinars.
* **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. Kara regularly updated the Comprehensive Plan page on the website that houses all information related to the development of the Comprehensive Plan, including: scope and timeline, draft and final versions of memos, comments and revisions on memos, and more.
* **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.
* **SRRTTF Comprehensive Plan:** The Center facilitated communication, transparency, and document access for draft chapters of the Comprehensive Plan. This included developing and (continuously) updating a Comprehensive Planning page on the Task Force website, and gathering of and distributing new drafts, comments, and revisions of the Comprehensive Plan memos and appendices. The Center also worked with the Technical Track Work Group, the Task Force, and the Technical Consultant on the development of the format and the agenda for the July 27th Comprehensive Plan Workshop. The Center also facilitated the Workshop and helped the Task Force reach consensus on PCB control actions to include in the Comprehensive Plan.
* **Outreach:** The Center worked to identify opportunities for university research and expertise to inform outreach and public education and the process of reducing PCBs in the River. The Ruckelshaus Center connected with undergraduate student Brenden Campbell. Brenden will be working with the Spokane Regional Toxics Task Force on Education and Outreach as part of his Ignite grant program. The Ignite program provides funding for undergraduate students to engage with faculty in research projects. The Center also continued to facilitate the Task Force Education and Outreach workgroup, which will begin to address outreach actions in the final Comprehensive Plan.
* The center facilitated the process of the Task Force the development and wording of a letter to Governor Inslee requesting funding in his upcoming biennial budget.

**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, 2017.
* 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 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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