# Spokane River Regional Toxics Task Force

Quarterly Report (04/1/17 – 06/30/17)

**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.

**Q18 Meeting Schedule:**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | | April | | |  | May | | |  | June | | |
| **Task Force Meetings** | **2017** | TT | EO | TF |  | TT | TF | TF |  | TT | EO | TF | |
| 5 | 5 | 26 |  | 3 | 10 | 22 |  | 7 | 7 | 22 | |
| **Chris Page, Facilitator** |  |  | 1 |  | 1 | 1 | 1 |  | 1 |  | 1 | |
| **Kara Whitman, Coordinator** | 1 | 1 | 1 |  | 1 | 1 | 1 |  | 1 | 1 | 1 | |

*TT: Technical Track Work Group*

*TF: Task Force*

*EO: Education and Outreach Work Group*

**Project highlights:**

* **Meetings:** Facilitator Chris Page developed meeting agendas for seven meetings including four Task Force (TF) meetings and three Technical Track Work Group (TTWG) meetings. Chris facilitated six meetings. Kara Whitman developed the agendas for and facilitated two meetings of the Education and Outreach Work Group (EO) and facilitated one meeting of the TTWG. Chris and Kara drafted and distributed announcements, materials, and summaries for each meeting and for general Task Force communications. 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.
* **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 provided communication assistance to, and quarterly check-ins with the multiple working groups of the Task Force related to the Comp Plan.
* **Outreach:** The Center also continued to facilitate the Task Force Education and Outreach workgroup, which has begun to address outreach actions in the final Comprehensive Plan. The Outreach work group has developed a work plan, vetted the website communication campaign, and presented their plan for the website to the Task Force. The Task Force gave the work group the green light to proceed with the development of the outreach website, and to fund multiple URLs with Spokane County.
* **Other Communication:** The Center provided communication assistance between the Task Force and EPA, Ecology, and others to request the attendance of key personnel to present information on key topics of interest to the Task Force.
  + **Fingerprinting and Positive Matrix Factorization (PMF) in the Duwamish. The center coordinated with Dr.** Lisa Rodenburg to attend a Task Force meeting to present her PMF work with the Duwamish River PCB Cleanup.
  + **Color Pigment Manufacturers Meeting:** The center provided assistance with communication leading up to the meeting with the color pigment manufacturers held at Inland Empire Paper on May 9th, 2017.
  + **EPA Headquarters/Region 10 and Task Force Meeting**: The Center provided assistance scheduling, meals, and communication for a meeting held on April 26thwith the purpose of discussing the challenges presented by the Toxics Substances Control Act (TSCA) and inadvertent PCB production and Washington State Water Quality Standards, and to discuss solutions. The meeting was attended by EPA’s headquarters personnel, EPA Region 10 personnel, and Task Force members.
  + **TSCA HR 2576 Modernization Act of 2015, call for comments:** The Center helped to facilitate the drafting of, and consensus decision on, a letter to congress in response to the HR 2576, TSCA Modernization Act of 2015, concerning PCBS. The Center submitted the final letter to congress via online submission and mail on behalf of the Task Force.
  + **Policy 1-11 update:** The Center facilitated the attendance ofSusan Braley at the April 26th, 2017 Task Force meeting where she provided an overview of the status of the Policy 1-11 policy review and public process.
  + **Duwamish River PCB Cleanup:** The Center facilitated the attendance of Rachael McCrae at the June 28th, 2017 Task Force meeting to discuss the Duwamish River PCB cleanup activities and provide an overview of potential topics that could be presented in much finer detail at a future meeting.
* **University Resources:** Kara Whitman oversaw the work by a Washington State University undergraduate student working with the Task Force developing a system map of PCB outreach in the Spokane Basin (with interviews of all public information officers of Task Force member entities). This work will provide the Task Force valuable information about the PCB/Water Quality outreach work currently being implemented in the Spokane River Basin, and summarize gaps and potential leverage points for future outreach to meet goals in the Comp Plan.

**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 Center will continue to assist in identifying and scheduling presentations on topics of Task Force interest by the Environmental Assessment Program, Representatives from the Duwamish River PCB Cleanup, and other groups.
* The Center will facilitate the Task Force through identification and prioritization of future sampling needed to monitor the success of the Comprehensive Plan.
* 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 any future work that the Task Force will complete in the implementation phase of the Comprehensive Plan.
* The Center will continue to provide support for Task Force ad-hoc work groups as they work to develop and implement work plans (Comp plan work groups, education and outreach, database management, fish and hatcheries, TSCA, 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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