# Spokane River Regional Toxics Task Force

 Quarterly Report 23: (1/1/18 – 3/31/18)

**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.

**Q23 Meeting Schedule:**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|   | January |  | February |  | March |  |
| **Task Force Meetings** | **2017** |  **TT** | **EO** | **TF** |  | **TT** | **EO** | **TF** |  | **TT** | **EO** | **TF** |
| **4** | **4** | **25** |  | **1** | **1** | **22** |  | **1** | **1** | **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 and facilitated six meetings including three Task Force (TF) meetings and Three Technical Track Work Group (TTWG) meetings. Kara Whitman assisted in developing the agendas for, and facilitated, three meetings of the Education and Outreach Work Group (EO). 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 and other work groups to discuss and recommend next steps on technical and outreach issues to the full SRRTTF for decisions and actions.
* **Implementation Review Summary:** The Center Drafted the Annual Implementation Review Summary (IRS) on behalf of the Task Force, based on the actions identified for 2017 in the Comprehensive Action Plan. The IRS was approved by the Task Force at the January 2018 Task Force meeting. The Center also compiled work summaries for the Technical Advisor, each small work group, and from individual entities. The Center also compiled a list of action items, decisions, and accomplishments made throughout 2017 for inclusion as an addendum to the approved IRS. The Task Force approved the addendum at the March 2018 Task Force meeting.
* **Outreach:** The Center also continued to facilitate the Task Force Education and Outreach workgroup, which continued to develop the outreach website and developed new projects for outreach including: funding the Spokane/Kootenai Waste Directory Spring Campaign, Riverkeeper led LID presentations, and technical assistance from Ann Francis to complete the PCB outreach website.
* **Task Force Collaboration and Process:** Collaboration: Chris Page continued to facilitate the Task Force through discussions about sustained Task Force Collaboration. Chris Page contacted many Task Force member to discuss the collaboration and the Task Force facilitation. Chris also highlighted selected Task Force ground rules (from the Memorandum of Agreement) focusing on transparency, public communication, and trust.
* **Planning for Future Task Force Coordination and Management:** Since the Task Force has reached agreement on its Comprehensive Plan and has moved into the implementation phase, its facilitation needs have shifted toward project management. Thus, after six years of involvement, the Center recently informed the Task Force the time has come to identify and secure a different provider of facilitation and coordination services. Chris facilitated a small work group through identifying the duties that will need to be performed by another party after Ruckelshaus leaves. This work group identified the technical and administrative services that are needed to support the operation of the Spokane River Regional Toxics Task Force (SRRTTF) as the organization transitions from the planning phase to the implementation phase of their work.

**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, 2018.
* 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 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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