

# Spokane River Regional Toxics Task Force Meeting

DRAFT Meeting Notes

Facilitated by White Bluffs Consulting (Ben and Lara Floyd)

Wednesday, December 12, 2018 | 8:30 a.m. – 12:00 pm

Liberty Lake Sewer and Water District | 22510 E. Mission Ave, Liberty Lake, WA

Meeting Documents: <http://srtrtf.org/?p=9776>

## Attendees:

### ***Voting Members and Alternates (\*Denotes Voting Member)***

Tom Agnew\*, BiJay Adams – Liberty Lake Sewer and Water District

Mike Anderson – City of Coeur d’Alene

Galen Buterbaugh\*(phone) – Lake Spokane Association

Doug Krapas\* – Inland Empire Paper

Mike LaScuola\*, Bruce Williams, Vikki Barthels (phone) – Spokane Regional Health District

Bud Leber\*, Brent Downey – Kaiser

Rob Lindsay\*, Mike Hermanson – Spokane County

Jeff Donovan – City of Spokane

Mike Petersen\* – Lands Council

Jerry White\*, Lydia Newell – Riverkeeper

Mike Zagar – Kootenai Environmental Alliance

### ***Advisors***

Karl Rains, Bill Fees, Jim Ross, Sandra Treccani, Catherine Glick and Brandee Era Miller (phone) – Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology)

Lucy Edmondson, Brian Nickel (phone) – Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

Joel Breems –Avista

### ***Interested Parties***

Lisa Dally Wilson – Dally Environmental and Spokane River Stewardship Partners (SRSP)

Ken Windram – Hayden Area Regional Sewer Board

Jim Kimball – JUB Engineering

Dave Dilks (phone) – LimnoTech

Lauren Heine (phone) – Northwest Green Chemistry

David Darling (phone) – American Coatings Association

Jay West (phone) – American Chemistry Council

Kris Holm (phone)

Amy Sumner – Spokane County

**Introductions and Agenda Review:** After introductions, Ben Floyd reviewed the agenda.

**Meeting Summary:** The Task Force (TF) approved the October 24, 2018 meeting notes with no changes. Lara Floyd will post the approved meeting notes to the TF website.

**TSCA Workshop Preliminary Outline:** Doug Krapas and Lisa Dally Wilson shared information about the workshop, which is a product of the TSCA work group. Lisa said the intent is to design a two-day multi-stakeholder workshop to address inadvertent PCBS in pigments and the downstream products that are manufactured using those pigments. Representatives from

packaging and other industries from around the U.S. will be invited to attend. The focus will be on pigments, and inks and dyes. The scope and budget will be put together for the TF for acceptance in the future. Lauren Heine has been participating in the planning and they may look at getting a small planning committee together from the TF to help. Besides those already mentioned, Karl Rains and Adriane Borgias from Ecology will be helping. The time frame for the workshop may be mid-2019 but a date has not yet been set.

**EPA letter follow up:** Doug Krapas said the TF submitted a letter to EPA and received a response from Chris Hladick, the Regional Administrator, and had not yet had the opportunity to review it in detail.

**Comments:**

- Doug discussed the last sentence of paragraph 3 on the 1<sup>st</sup> page, which describes the EPA process for additional rulemaking, where the agency must consider findings related to inadvertent PCBs a risk to health or the environment. The EPA analysis is very old, and it may be timely for a renewed review, including updated economic analysis as the prior economic analysis did not consider the cost to reduce inadvertent PCBs in treatment processes. Doug wondered if the TF or dischargers at least should submit a request to EPA for an update economic analysis? The economics to comply today are tremendous.
- Lisa said the 50 parts/million PCB standard is based on an economic analysis that did not consider the cost born by rate payers or other industries, and now the cost of treatment to meet this standard is very significant.
- Lucy said she does not know what the framework for the past economic analysis included. EPA is taking the steps to consider additional rule making and is working to develop additional data, which is the agency's way of communicating with the public that they are working on it. As EPA continues to make progress on the health assessment component, the TF can weigh in on economic considerations which would be helpful but probably it is not the right time now. She would like to ask someone in Washington DC how cost analysis gets considered.
- Lauren said it would be interesting to learn more about situations where treatment was not feasible in 1979 but is in 2019, and how EPA would address this from both a technical and economic standpoint. Lucy said she would further research these questions and get back with the TF.
- Doug asked Lucy why did they select the specific aroclor and congeners mentioned on the bottom of page 1? Lucy replied that a lot of different people in the agency have input and they do a call for requests, people put in suggestions, they prioritize it and then make their selections. Doug asked when will we have the results from the research on these? And Lucy said she did not know. Doug commented that it could be years before we get information based on risk or health assessment.
- A request by EPA for TF suggestions for additional research was discussed (at the end of paragraph 3 on page 2). Consumer product testing was mentioned as a possible relevant topic and the possibility of producing a database to inform people about consumer purchasing, risk concerns, etc.
- Mike P. said HP and Apple must have had some internal discussions about how to address their recently adopted PCB limits with suppliers.

- Doug asked who else do we know that is adopting limits? We could get this from EPA possibly or discuss at the Inadvertent PCBs workshop, and the group could possibly invite HP or Washington State Department of Transportation to attend.
- Lisa said it may be nice to contact someone from HP or Apple and ask them to describe the process they followed to get to where they are today. Part of Lauren's phase 2 Green Chemistry scope is to try and track this down and provide information, maybe from sustainable packaging members? Yes, said Lauren and survey their members as to what they have done. One of the study goals is to get more information like this. Lauren will reach out to HP in an effort to obtain additional information. She will include her findings in the Phase 2 deliverables she is working on.
- Jim Kimball said Walla Walla had a lot of PCBs in its waste stream and wondered if it would be informative to look at the wastewater treatment process to see if PCBs being made are less reactive and therefore are less toxic?
- Lucy said any suggestions the TF has can be sent to her via email or a letter, but perhaps email and less formal would be better.
- Doug replied that the TSCA Work Group will consider suggestions and then bring recommendations back to the TF.
- Jerry cautioned that we should continue to focus on the mission of the TF, which is to find and reduce PCBs. He asked is follow up with EPA would be a TF effort or an individual stakeholder or SRSP request? Doug replied that this is about additional research topics.
- Lisa asked Lucy if there is a way to see EPA National Workgroup agendas based on relevance to their work? Lucy replied by saying Michelle Mullin leads it and she does not know if they have agendas but can find out. Doug replied that this national work group is an EPA internal workgroup and does not include external stakeholders.

**Education and Outreach Update:** Vikki Barthels gave an update on the Spokane River Forum Social Media Development, sharing with the TF a presentation provided to her by Andy Dunau and Tonilee Hanson on a proposed spring 2019 communication campaign. The goal of this campaign is to continue to engage and educate the public through social media posts on PCB levels in the Spokane River and ways to discard toxic chemicals. At a July 2018 meeting, the Spokane River Forum engaged communication specialists in the region to discuss different messages groups may want to share and an outbound marketing approach. The River Forum can get the messages out to more members of the public through the use of certain communication tools and services. The target audiences still need to be identified which will be discussed at the next Education and Outreach work group meeting. In February the River Forum would like to come to the TF meeting and propose the campaign for approval for the spring campaign, which is scheduled to run from April - July 2019.

**COMMENTS:**

- A few members of the TF questioned whether focusing on homeowners regarding remodeling and lawn care and automotive is the right emphasis? Would a better focus be on letting people know PCBs are in certain products?
- Doug said the Education and Outreach work group is struggling with identifying the target audiences.

- Lisa said we have legacy PCBs from older materials being removed during a remodel, for example, but we also have inadvertent PCBs in products that homeowners use.
- Joel commented that maybe the approach should be how to dispose of waste instead of targeting specific PCBs?
- Tom suggested the Apple/HP ink standard changes could be promoted through social media and endorsed products like these could incentivize other industries to follow suit.
- Doug said one example is washing your paint brush out in the sink and down the drain, which could be contributing to inadvertent PCBs.
- Lisa said another PCB source category could be all the things that are supposed to be recycled, like toner cartridges for printers, as we know these inks have PCBs.
- Ben said once we have confirmed the target audiences, then different strategies and associated social media will be identified and implemented. The \$5,000–\$10,000 range is the Spokane River forum budget for their proposed campaign, which is still being refined in the Education and Outreach work group.

Vikki mentioned Toni Taylor with Spokane County has Google Analytics set up on the website to track usage. Also, the Education and Outreach work group would like to receive any additional comments from the TF about the website design and content. More graphics are needed for the website, and the work group is seeking additional pictures for work being conducted under each of the work groups. The Education and Outreach work group is still working on the one-page PCB fact sheet hand out, with a goal to have this ready for use in early 2019.

#### **Technical Work Update – Preliminary PCB Mass Balance Synoptic Survey Data Review Findings**

**Presentation:** Dave Dilks from LimnoTech gave the presentation. The study objectives were to fill in gaps from the 2014 and 2015 Mass Balance assessments. Data was collected August 4-8 of this year. A new location was added downstream of the upriver dam where the river transitions from a losing to gaining reach. The flows were a little higher than the previous synoptic surveys, but still considered low flow conditions. Dave said these are preliminary results and the concentrations are 25 percent lower than prior synoptic surveys, possibly due to the slightly higher flow conditions compared to earlier years. The report will be completed shortly after receiving the remaining data from the lab.

#### **COMMENTS (replies by Dave Dilks):**

- Doug asked about the area below Trent Avenue and if future sampling will be needed there? *We will work with existing information to see what makes the most sense and potentially do more sampling if needed.*
- Bud said there were two upriver sampling stations, between Barker Road and Mirabeau Point, to provide information to the Groundwater Upgradient work group and to support the Ecology biofilm study.
- Karl asked if the Mirabeau area is upgradient of Kaiser? *Yes, it is*
- Doug asked if Dave would comment on why there was negligible groundwater loading in the Barker Road to Mirabeau Point reach compared to prior years? *Evidence of loading there, when it has appeared, has been sporadic. There was no evidence of that load during our survey, but that doesn't completely rule out the possibility of a continuing sporadic load.*

- Dave was asked, why do we see a loss of lower chlorinated homologs between Trent Ave. and Greene St.? *This could be due to a couple of factors. One potential explanation is volatilization where you can lose PCBs to the atmosphere. More closely examining the results in the CEQualW2 model may help us understand what is happening in terms of volatilization. Another is that the groundwater inflows may be more complicated than initially thought, and the different homologs may partition at different rates.*
- Brian N. asked if this new sampling will help zero in on the GE site as a potential contributor to loading to river? *Yes, that's certainly the intent and goal of this sampling.*
- Bud said the design of the biofilm study was to also look more closely at data points around the GE site, to help better understand PCB sources in this area of the river.
- Ben asked about the schedule. *It all depends on when information comes in. The report is already written with draft numbers. Data should be coming in soon and the draft report should be ready for the February or April TF mtgs.*

**SRRTTF Preliminary Draft of 2019 Planned Actions:** Bud said the Tech Track work group brainstormed the list of potential 2019 actions by looking at the Comprehensive Plan control actions, along with potential actions identified from recent technical work. The work group also came up with potential budget ballpark costs. The table is only partially developed as a draft for the TF to see what the Tech Track work group has identified so far. The actions were identified at the late November work group meeting. Ben asked if any actions are missing that need to be emphasized?

**COMMENTS:**

- 6.3 (Studies to address data gaps) - Bud said they have multiple data now, so it would be nice to hold a workshop in 2019 where results from past studies are considered and discussed, and there is an opportunity to identify what has been learned over the last five years of data collection and where future efforts should go. The Tech Track work group would sponsor and organize the workshop, working closely with LimnoTech on the workshop design and information to discuss.
- Lisa asked if the current PMF scope also includes consideration of biofilm and sediment study findings? *Yes*

**ACTION:** Karl Rains to follow up within Ecology to determine the latest schedule for PCB Product Testing, including when the fish food report will be available and when other product testing will occur.

- Rob said he appreciates all the efforts described in the report Vikki gave earlier today. There is a lot more that can be done with Education and Outreach and it is an important part of the TF efforts. The gradual rise in the use of the Waste Directory was encouraging and it seems to be one of the most effective outreach tools.
- Karl said a lot is mentioned about 6.3 (Studies to address data gaps) in the Comprehensive plan. Focusing on identifying ways to reduce PCBs should be the goal.
- Dave Darling asked if the TSCA workshop will be focused just on paint? Lisa suggested it be called TSCA workshop to address inadvertent PCBs and pigments and the name needs to be changed as it is not only in paint pigments, but other pigments found in inks and dyes for a variety of products.

- Tom said things seem to be driven by fish tissue bioaccumulation but there is only one mention of a study focused on fish tissue to help better identify what is going on. Fish have been identified as major source of PCBs in the Spokane River and the TF may be better served focusing on better understanding the bioaccumulation process and track levels of PCBs in fish tissue.
- Ben said the main focus of the recent Fish Sampling work group meeting was developing a plan or yardstick for measuring PCBs in fish tissue. At this meeting, there was a consensus that biofilm and synoptic sampling results were needed prior to developing a design for the fish tissue sampling study. The group felt this needs to be done but it may not happen until the fall of 2019 after the Tech Track workshop.
- Brandee said the next tissue sampling process being conducted by Ecology could be moved up to an earlier date from 2022, the currently scheduled date. Whenever a study is conducted to collect fish tissue, it is expected that both Ecology and WDFW resources can be put towards that effort.
- Dave Dilks was asked about the fish tissue plan for measuring PCBs, and he replied that the goal of the Serdar model is to assemble existing data into possible relationships that help us better understand where the fish are getting their PCBs and help with identifying next steps.
- Lisa said it would be helpful to know what the drivers are for PCB accumulations in fish, and what the pathways are.
- Karl said Ecology is continuing to do studies on this and the TF should be cautious of duplicating efforts.
- Ben asked about the other control actions page provided (Table 9) and if there needs to be a focus on any of them? Avista will continue with carp removal.
- The TF approved ACE coming up with a scope for LimnoTech to continue their general support to the TF and work groups for 2019.

**ACTION:** The TF members need to provide comments on the draft table and other control actions to WBC by January 11. WBC will send out an email reminder for comments after the holidays. It will be brought back to the TF in February and possible TF approval in April.

#### **BREAK**

**Technical Work Action – Database Demonstration Presentation:** Mike Hermanson and Amy Sumner from Spokane County gave the presentation. Mike said they are wrapping up the initial phase of database development. It was a major effort to assemble the data together. The Database Management work group has been meeting for a couple of years. They wanted to develop a database patterned after one developed for the Chesapeake Bay. The TF approved hiring CDM Smith to evaluate data management needs and intended uses, and to develop the database. They worked with AXYS lab to reissue results and Amy Sumner worked on entering the data. CDM Smith helped with updating the database. They have a draft final report which will go to the Data Management work group for review, and then to the full TF. Spokane County has given staff time to uploading data and working with CDM Smith, etc. Currently the database is available on the County FTP website and Amy has put together a user’s guide. Next steps are determining what to do with the data, uploading additional data, how to make it available to the public, and securing continuing data system support services with CDM Smith. Spokane County is the gatekeeper. Synoptic and biofilm data are next to be uploaded. Talk to Amy Sumner to

request the draft user's guide on how to use the database. The work group will discuss the schedule for finalizing the report from CDM Smith and making it available to the public. The database will be continually be worked on and adapted. The budget to maintain it is estimated at about \$15,000 per year.

Jerry asked about the criteria for accepting or rejecting data. Mike H. said that right now this function has been performed by the Data Management work group and for Task Force and Ecology data that was collected under the Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP). They do not have a protocol established yet, but it is something they will discuss with the work group. The information is available to the public.

**Strategy Confirmation – 2019 WA Governor/State Legislative Request Update:** Doug Krapas shared that the TF received an acknowledgement from the Office of Financial Management on the request for 2019-2021 funding. It is not known if the TF has made the Governor's budget yet, but if not then the State Legislature is still an option for securing funding, and the session begins mid-January.

**Information Update – Permitting Next Steps:** Karl Rains shared that the dischargers have received draft agreed orders and Ecology is working with them to set up meetings to go over these orders.

**Project Management and Work Group Reports not already covered earlier in the meeting:**

**ACE Update:** Bud gave a report on ACE financials. The financials show ACE is overcommitted by \$35,000 but this is because ACE has not billed Ecology for approximately \$155,000. Once they finish the commitments through the end of June 2019 and bill out the Ecology-funded work, the ACE financials will have a balance of around \$110,000. Rob said Dave Moss is retiring mid-year and the Treasurer duties have transferred to him.

**Groundwater PCB Upgradient of Kaiser:** Bud said the work group is taking a break while waiting for data. Once this information is received, then the work group will look at next steps. Kaiser committed to do additional groundwater analysis and this data was collected the last full week in October. Kaiser will pass on the results to LimnoTech once the data is received from the laboratory.

**PMF analysis:** Mike H. said the PMF has focused on the question of whether PMF analysis would be useful in analyzing low level PCB data? The work group has concluded that the PMF analysis method will work on this data. A question was asked about if you can blank correct the data and how this would be done to realize useful results from the data? Mike H. responded that the work group has a good idea of how to blank correct the data and will be moving on to the second phase of conducting the PMF analysis. He also said it is a little more open ended on how to use this tool to identify sources, and what sources are brought in for consideration. He will schedule a PMF call for January. Joel asked when he thought a draft report would be available? Mike said it would be after the January call with the work group and Dr. Rodenburg. He will send out the draft report to the work group for review and comment once he receives it.

**Funding:** Karl gave an update about the recent Funding work group meeting. The work group is going to identify outside sources of grant funding to supplement legislative funding through

private or agency sources. Then the sources of funding will be compared to the project list identified from the Tech Track work group and will be vetted through the TF. Hopefully the TF can respond more quickly to sources that emerge through this process. Mike P. from the Lands Council subscribes to Grant Station, which is a database of private and government grants. The Lands Council has an intern that is looking for opportunities for the TF.

**Green Chemistry:** Lauren Heine is continuing to work on the Titanium Dioxide (TiO<sub>2</sub>) tech memo and she is working with Doug and the TSCA work group on the inadvertent PCBs in pigments workshop. Lauren will have a draft memo by the end of December that she hopes to bring before the TF at the February meeting, after review by the Green Chemistry work group. She is planning to meet with Michael Ober from Chemours to learn more about how TiO<sub>2</sub> is processed. They are trying to understand the data in waste and products of TiO<sub>2</sub>. Ben said a Green Chemistry work group call will be scheduled in January to discuss the draft memo.

**MOA/TF Orientation Summary:** Ben went over the changes discussed at the last TF meeting.

**Comments:**

- Lisa commented that the 2<sup>nd</sup> bullet on the first page may be outdated soon as it is not known what will happen with the permits.
- Joel said it seems most suited for interested parties and did not feel it would be as useful for new members of the TF.
- Brent said a date should be added noting when the document was last updated.
- Lisa said there is no mention of PCBs on the first page and it would be good to include a discussion on PCBs in the background. She said the TF process is an alternate approach to reducing PCBs in the Spokane river to the traditional TMDL approach. Maybe use PCBs instead of “sources of toxic pollution” in the Background section text?
- Ben said if anyone has additional comments please provide them to the facilitation team by the end of the year.

**SRRTF Preliminary Draft 2018 Implementation Summary:** Ben went over the table and asked for any additional information for 5.1 Wastewater Treatment control action to be submitted to the facilitation team. Ben said the summary will be discussed again at the next Tech Track meeting, to be scheduled in late January or early February. Comments have already been received from Ecology, Kaiser, Avista and City of Spokane.

**Comments:**

- Lisa asked if in section 5.7 (Support of GC alternatives) the workshop can be changed to inadvertent PCBs found in pigments.
- Ben suggested a change identifying Green Chemistry with support from TSCA as the lead group description for Control Action 5.7.2
- Add BMPs under section 5.9.2 (Waste disposal assistance) as discussed at the Education and Outreach meeting
- If anyone has more detail about what has been done this year or next steps please provide this information to the facilitation team, especially under Additional Control Actions (6.2)

**ACTION:** Comments on the 2019 work plan and 2018 implementation summary are due by January 11. WBC will send out a reminder email the beginning of January. These will be on the February TF agenda for approval.

**Future Task Force Meeting Topics:**

- Change draft Fish Sampling Study Proposal to June
- Funding work group update change from February to the TF meeting in April
- Proposed 2019-2020 work plans change to just proposed 2019 work plans

**High Country News follow up and other items:** Ben emailed High Country News back and did not receive a response. Doug said he thinks the reporter came to tour their IEP facility and he had a good discussion with him.

Lisa asked about the River Forum conference in April 2019, as she thought she saw something about a technology part on the draft agenda. She wondered if anyone else knew about this and if follow up could occur with Andy Dunau if he could be asked about it at the January Education and Outreach work group meeting. Rob Lindsay said he will talk to Andy.

**The next SRRTTF meeting is February 27, 2018 at Spokane County Water Resources Center, 8:30 am – noon**