

# Spokane River Regional Toxics Task Force Meeting

DRAFT Meeting Notes

Facilitated by White Bluffs Consulting (Ben and Lara Floyd)

Wednesday, October 23, 2019 | 8:30 am – 12:00 pm

Spokane County Water Resource Center | 1004 N. Freya St., Spokane, WA

Meeting Documents: [http://srrttf.org/?page\\_id=1721](http://srrttf.org/?page_id=1721)

## 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 (CDA)

Doug Krapas\* – Inland Empire Paper

Mike LaScuola\*, Vikki Barthels – Spokane Regional Health District

Brent Downey\* – Kaiser

Rob Lindsay\*, Mike Hermanson – Spokane County

Cadie Olsen\*, Jeff Donovan – City of Spokane

Mike Peterson\* – Lands Council

Mike Zagar\* – Kootenai Environmental Alliance

### ***Advisors***

Karl Rains, Bill Fees, Jeremy Schmidt, Adriane Borgias, Brook Beeler, Jim Ross and Brandee Era-Miller, Cheryl Niemi (phone) – Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology - DOE)

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

Joel Breems – Avista

Dave McBride – Washington State Department of Health

### ***Interested Parties***

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

Dave Dilks (phone) – LimnoTech

Ken Windram – Hayden Area Regional Sewer Board

Craig Borrenpohl, Alyssa Gersdorf – City of Post Falls

Amy Sumner – Spokane County

Bruce Williams – Spokane Regional Health District

David Darling (phone) – American Coatings Association (ACA)

Jim Kimball

Kris Holm (phone)

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

**Meeting Summary Action:** The Task Force (TF) approved the August 27 meeting summary after name change edits were noted. Lara Floyd will post the final notes to the website.

## **Project Management Update and Work Group Reports:**

**ACE:** Rob Lindsay shared that ACE members and dischargers have spoken about Bud Leber's retirement, and will meet soon to identify who on the ACE board will step up to assist in a variety of tasks that Bud had been taking care of, such as contract management, technical

discussions, and financial tasks. There is not a lot of money in the bank right now, so they are watching cash flow.

**Comments:**

- The ACE meetings need to be publicly disclosed with advance notice.
- Is SRSP the correct place to be having these discussions? *There were no actual decisions made except that ACE needs to discuss who will take on these tasks in future.* It was known Bud would retire for a while plus the TF has been discussing the MOA and how to manage work in the long run.
- ACE will decide if changes should be made as to how things are run.

**Database Management:** Mike H. said they had a work group meeting and they are working with CDM Smith to update the database and develop the web app interface. Ben asked if they are working on a naming convention for river sampling and other studies? Mike said the database already includes a scheme for naming sample locations, and they can go back and assign a sample name to show attributes, which are already set up. It depends on the person analyzing data and presenting it. He suggested when doing studies using the naming convention that is already set up within the database. Mike or Amy will pull it out as a separate document to share with others, including White Bluffs Consulting (WBC).

Brandee mentioned there may be a way to group locations so as not to have to rename them. Mike said there is a function in the database to group them. People can ask Spokane County for help with this.

**Education and Outreach:** Lisa spoke about the iPCB workshop and that some ideas for business outreach were identified. Andy Dunau from the Spokane River Forum talked about what the TF may want to do for the spring media campaign. Lisa mentioned an attorney from Monsanto was present at a recent work group meeting. A reminder was provided - if someone wants to record a meeting it needs to be made known to the group, and those present need to approve the discussion being recorded. Education and Outreach from the workshop is geared for reaching out to supply chains and other businesses more than the general public.

**Fish Sampling:** Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife is working on an approach for sampling. In early 2020 they will have a recommendation for the work group which will then be brought to the TF.

**Funding (MOA committee):** No current news although the MOA Ad hoc committee will be having a phone call on October 28 to discuss comments received for the MOA revision.

**Green Chemistry:** No update

**PMF:** Mike H. shared that the work group met to discuss the next phase of work. The first phase is done. Lisa Rodenburg did a lot of work over the summer but could not share it yet due to attorney/client privilege, but a lot of the PMF analysis work has been done and the TF will benefit from this. She will take the work she has done and make it suitable for the public. This will help shape the Phase 2 scope. She has enough in her current contract budget to complete this work. She will have a report to share for moving forward on Phase 2 in the next couple of

weeks, and the work group will meet to discuss what additional analysis would be beneficial to the TF and expects to be able to bring it to the next TF meeting in December.

**Tech Track:** Ben mentioned we are looking for a new lead for this work group. Mike Z. asked about the timing and did we know when Bud was retiring? It was actually fairly sudden as to when he was retiring. Someone asked if we have a written process for how Tech Track work group leadership is selected, or is the MOA silent on this? Maybe it is a discussion at the Tech Track level? WBC will work with the Tech Track work group for a replacement and bring back a recommendation to the Task Force.

**TSCA:** Doug mentioned the white paper for the yellow road paint project is under development. A draft will be available soon. They also have the TiO<sup>2</sup> project looking at raw materials using method 1668 to determine the presence of iPCBs. They are working with a third party to develop a QAPP and may have information to present at the next TF meeting.

**Data Synthesis Workshop follow up and future Work Plan discussion:** Lisa said the intent of this discussion topic is to determine long range goals for the TF and to be intentional about future work. They shared the Data Synthesis Workshop findings for future work. Five different categories were identified as priorities: long term effectiveness monitoring, focused investigations, education and outreach, administrative support, and other. The Tech Track group met, and Bud put more detail with it and came up with the recommendations shared at the meeting. LimnoTech helped come up with a matrix to bring to the TF a summary of what we do and do not know. The TF needs to determine what is important and prioritize, which is the focus of today's discussion.

Dave went through the matrix characterizing the various tasks along with estimated budgets. Ben mentioned with long term effectiveness monitoring that it is identifying what the media are, how it is implemented, what the TF responsibilities would be and others who would help with the work. Karl said in the permits Ecology determines what is measurable progress and that this effort should be coordinated with Ecology and others.

**Comments:**

- Will the Task 2 work be reach specific or looking at the entire stretch of river? There was previous discussion of not knowing effectiveness of high flow monitoring so we may want to look at a small stretch first? *Yes, it would be prioritizing what reach or area the TF wants to go after first.*
- Is there enough commonality in the tasks that we could formulate a basic QAPP then supplement with project specific and get buy off from Ecology to reduce time? *Dave liked the idea but would need input from the TF on prioritization and a more global QAPP would be nice.*
- Isn't this how we have been doing it all along with a basic QAPP and then doing addendums? *Yes*
- Adriane said there is a new QAPP officer at Ecology and she has very specific expectations around QAPPs and how they are done. It may be worth it to take the base QAPP and make sure it is meeting her requirements and then add addendums as the TF are doing project specific work. It may take six weeks initially to do a QAPP review.

- Would we have to pass the addendums off with this officer as well? *Adriane thought they could be done through the Ecology water quality program.*
- Could LimnoTech work with Ecology and have Dave coordinate the effort involving the base QAPP? *Yes*
- Does the new person have established guidelines they would like us to follow? *Adriane said the guidelines have not changed and water quality has a process that has been delegated to the program. In the past they have been able to do things internally in their office and now there is a person at headquarters that will do the review.* Cadie asked Adriane to share the flow chart.
- Ben asked whether there were any drawbacks to focused investigations. *They address the question of are there additional PCBs entering the river that we are currently unaware of? Even if we find them there may not be a clear path of stopping it from coming in.*
- There may be a load, but it may not be possible to do anything about it, so how far should go if there is not a clear path to remediate the situation? *Have to wait and see what we learn and then decide from there.*
- The vision is to identify and there is value in that, and the question about how to reduce follows.
- It is important for us to identify sources to the watershed and limitations, as applicable, in being able to achieve water quality standards.
- Regarding number 2di, does the scope and magnitude have any impact based upon the results of 2019 biofilm study or is it independent of the 2019 biofilm sampling? *It is narrowly defined and a repeat similar to what we did on that reach in 2018.*
- The scope of work elements will feed into the ACE contract made with Ecology to fund these contracts and the TF does not have to have all of it figured out up front to get the contract in place. There are also other work groups activities that may not fit into these categories and the TF needs to remember they may have other needs to fund through the Ecology contract.
- There are four activities within the first three tasks that are first steps, and others are contingent on those steps. If you add them up it comes to about \$60,000-\$90,000.
- There are a couple of things that could happen right away like the Kaiser one. Identifying the magnitude of PCBs is important even if the TF can't do anything.
- Do you support doing long term monitoring and do you have any other guidance to suggest?
- How do we measure our progress and support it for that reason?
- Coordination to make sure what comes out of scoping meets the needs of what Ecology would like to see prior to implementation. Like the idea of defining goals and objectives and taking them and looking deep at who would implement those.
- Multiple people mentioned focusing on other media also. SPEs (solid phase extraction) and using passive samplers like SPMDs (semipermeable membrane device) can use a second look.
- The long-term monitoring seemed to rise to the top at the Tech Track level. WDFW is looking at developing a yardstick method in coordination with planned Ecology monitoring.
- What about focused investigations?

- 2a, 2b, and 2dii seem logical to start with. Are there any that you feel are critical to identifying sources? Should they all move forward if we had funding or are there any that should be taken off the list?
- If the one coming into Kaiser we can't do anything about, maybe it is not as important although we do not know the amplitude of it. *Dave said we do not know but we could de-prioritize it for now. Mike H. said it is four or five wells and two sampling events so looking at that data is not a big deal.*
- What is the relative threat of various potential source locations? What is the magnitude compared to other sources? Without knowing it is hard to put a lot of testing into large areas.
- What about Ecology 2019 data collection efforts and the timing of when they become available? Can we do these preliminary scoping tasks for 2a and 2b while Ecology is finishing the 2019 biofilm study? *Brandee said they will have those results by December or early January. One place that we didn't look at closely is downstream of Spokane Gage and it would be useful for the TF to look at this area. Below Upriver Dam and all the way down to Spokane Gage is where they looked at sources.*
- Biofilm source identification and hot spots is important, but it does not give relative load.
- Dave said looking at all data and what kind of load may be driving things is the next step.
- LimnoTech can look at data for task 2dii from Kaiser (Brent Downey)
- The TF agreed to do the scoping for task 1 except the last bullet of implementation (\$15,000 -25,000), 2a (matrix and prioritization - \$20,000-30,000 first bullet), 2b with all except implementation, Education and Outreach (3b) and add the 2020 spring campaign of \$15,000, LimnoTech support and WBC support (4) and 2dii – part of other technical support and decide if further evaluation needed.

#### **Technical Support and Facilitation guidance for 2020 contracts:**

- WBC was asked if they had an idea they would be helping with work groups when the scope was written? *Yes, with Education and Outreach at least and Tech Track.*
- Do we look at hiring a manager for the process similar to what Bud was doing?
- Are we willing to keep supporting all WBC is doing and do we need to have more meetings?
- We want to make sure you aren't doing things that are outside of the scope of the contract.
- WBC was hired to help with project management also along with facilitation.
- Make sure work group leads are doing what they can so WBC does not have to be as involved.
- We have been building relationships and WBC has helped with a more collaborative stance. Do we need more formalization of who and what we are?
- Do you think that a meeting like this every other month is sufficient?
- We need to have a plan of what to do for the long term and meetings monthly not necessary to accomplish this but maybe we need to meet more regularly while we are in a transition?
- Need to have timely decision making but sometimes this could be done through phone calls.
- The Tech Track work group should have the longer meeting or additional meetings then bring things to the TF for approval on a call or at a meeting.

- Define the process on when someone leaves like Bud and how to move things forward when necessary.
- Develop a schedule for moving forward based on the work plan approved earlier in the meeting.
- If we look back at the biennium schedule, we have a good idea of when pinch points are, so we could plan accordingly. If we move into executive director idea it may warrant a revision to MOA.
- The facilitation of Tech Track meetings is critical. We may be able to skip meetings when WBC sees they are not necessary.
- ACE reports to the TF and the TF provides direction to ACE. Is that written in our MOA? It is in the written articles of incorporation with ACE. We may want to cross reference this in the MOA edits.
- WBC will come up with a scope of work and meetings schedule for the coming year for TF approval

**Measurable Progress report: (see presentation)**

Karl Rains gave an update on Ecology efforts to prepare report. The last one was over a three-year period. Measurable progress reflects the TF success in reducing PCBs in the Spokane River and towards achieving applicable water quality criteria for PCBs. This document was done in 2014 and it is on the TF website. Education and Outreach is a big component of the output. The TF website has an area dedicated to inputs, outputs, etc. and only the input has information. WBC will put summary reports for 2018 and 2019 on the website in this area. The Comprehensive Plan will be a big focus in the next year. A lot of this supports what is in the scope of work and TF plans going forward.

**Comments:**

- Someone asked about doing TMDLs (Total Maximum Daily Loads). *Permitting and the variance process are separate from a TMDL. It is a tool that is available from Ecology to use. As long as progress is being made, then do not need to prepare TMDL. Cheryl Niemi said that EPA has said if there is a TMDL in a water body and a variance is done, the TMDL is no longer applicable to a discharge that we are doing the variance for. Are we learning things on the regulatory front that are past our understanding? I'm reading the notes from the past when EPA was asked this question, but I would be happy to verify the statement with EPA.*
- Lucy said there was some litigation regarding lack of TMDL being adequate, but some follow up can happen.

**OECD Application submission:**

Doug shared that they had to have a draft application being prepared and had help from Northwest Green Chemistry (NWGC) to meet the deadline. They would like the TF to provide input and a lot of what is in it has been published before. They can get additional input from NWGC

**Comments:**

- There is a conference in February to do a preliminary discussion of the case studies.
- Mike P. had a concern with suggestion 5 regarding mono and di-chlorides and questioning if it is accurate. It may be controversial and have seen studies that they actually do cause health problems.
- Adriane commented that there is a policy piece about how laws and regulations require risk assessment methods, and how it supports the circular economy. It would help boost this for the audience. Doug will follow up on this.

**Upcoming Task Force Meetings:**

Thursday, December 5 at Spokane County Water Resource Center. WBC will determine other meetings for 2020 based on the work plan.

**Future meeting topics:**

- Follow up on application for OECD
- General QAPP update
- iPCB workshop report
- TiO<sup>2</sup> QAPP approval
- Report from ACE on transition
- MOA update

Karl Rains mentioned the November 14 Ecology variance workshop will start at 9 am

**The next SRRTTF meeting is Thursday, December 5 at Spokane County Water Resource Center, 8:30 am – noon**