

# Spokane River Regional Toxics Task Force Zoom Meeting

August 26, 2020 Meeting Notes

Facilitated by White Bluffs Consulting

Meeting Documents: <http://srrttf.org/?p=11462>

## Attendees:

### *Voting Members and Alternates*

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

Ben Martin – City of Coeur d’ Alene

Brent Downey – Kaiser Aluminum

Rob Lindsay, Mike Hermanson, Ben Brattebo – Spokane County

Jeff Donovan – City of Spokane

Galen Buterbaugh - Lake Spokane Association

Vikki Barthels – Spokane Regional Health District (SRHD)

Mike Zagar – Kootenai Environmental Alliance

Doug Krapas – Inland Empire Paper (IEP)

Mike Peterson – Lands Council

### *Advisors*

Karl Rains, Brandee Era-Miller, Sandy Treccani, Cathrene Glick, Bill Fees, Cheryl Niemi, Brook Beeler, Rebecca Lawson – Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology)

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

Joel Breems – Avista

Robert Steed - Idaho Department of Environmental Quality

### *Interested Parties*

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

Dave Dilks – LimnoTech

Ben and Lara Floyd – White Bluffs Consulting

Alyssa Gersdorf, Craig Borrenpohl – City of Post Falls

Ken Windram – Hayden Area Regional Sewer Board

Bruce Williams – SRHD

Andy Dunau – Spokane River Forum

David Darling – American Coatings Association

Robert Mott – Mott Consulting

Kris Holm

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

**Meeting Summary Action:** The Task Force (TF) approved the June 24 and July 22 meeting summary and Lara Floyd will post the final notes to the website.

**ACE Update:** Rob said they have several contracts recently put in place including SGS AXYS, Gravity and others. The Project Manager from Gravity was surprised with the mid-point sampling requirement and came back asking for an additional sampling budget of \$6,000. The total estimate for all the work was \$197,000 back in the spring and was bumped up to \$200,000 which was approved by the TF but now there may be a need for \$3,000 more in case Gravity

needs it. Rob said they put a contract in place with Gonzaga University regarding the PCBs in products database development. They also have a scope of work for Dr. Rodenburg to do analysis of data regarding the PMF phase 2 work.

**ACTION:** The Task Force approved the additional \$3,000 budget request for the Gravity work, for a new total of the field work, analysis and reporting of \$203,000.

Jeff shared the monthly summary for July and the commitment report. It shows \$400,000 in uncommitted funds, which doesn't account for the \$200,000 river and fish sampling that will occur. \$238,000 should be in the account for ongoing work and most of the state appropriation has been allocated. They received another round of Ecology reimbursement funding, which should show up next month.

**Data Management:** Mike H. said not much activity but doing work with database related to PMF work and they are trying to update some of the database features.

**Education and Outreach:** Andy Dunau and Vikki giving update later in meeting.

**Fish Sampling:** Update later with Tech Track.

**Funding:** Karl said there is no update from the Funding work group but gave a reminder that review comments for the draft revised MOA are due by September 15. . Ben asked if anyone had entity feedback yet on the MOA and no one did. We have a planned action at October TF meeting to decide about moving forward with the revised MOA. WBC suggested each entity send an email by September 15 letting us know their entity's response regarding the MOA.

The funding group will be reconvening soon to look at language to use for upcoming funding/grant opportunities.

**Green Chemistry:** No update.

**PMF:** Mike Hermanson said back in February they wanted to move from the first phase of PMF analysis and now they can move to Phase 2 since the Monsanto litigation is over. They determined Dr. Rodenburg could only work on municipal dischargers data back then in spring which required a lot of uploads to the database. She recently got started on the phase 2 work and has done some initial analysis. They will schedule a PMF work group meeting soon to discuss within the next few weeks. Dr. Rodenburg is reviewing the new draft scope of work to move forward and it will be discussed at the upcoming meeting.

**TSCA:** Doug said after several months of hiatus on the PCB EPA method study of TiO<sub>2</sub>, sampling of several TiO<sub>2</sub> pigments started in July. They should be getting close to being done with sampling and the samples will be submitted to SGS AXYS and they will report results by the end of 2020.

Dr. Skimabuku from Gonzaga has started phase one on the PCBs in Products Database project, and they are doing research with a plan to be done with the work by the end of this year. They have asked the TF for leads on helping with their investigation. Several suggestions have already been made.

Mike Peterson and Dr. Shimabuku received an invite to participate in the Roanoke River conference in October. Mike P. mentioned the Roanoke River also has PCB issues and Gonzaga has done a good job reaching out and making connections with others.

Northwest Green Chemistry did additional work on the iPCB workshop and they are trying to put a poll together to determine if there are pathways the TF needs to pursue, which will be discussed at the next TSCA meeting.

The TSCA work group have been looking at EPA research opportunities and are trying to find out the status of the National Toxicology Program (NTP) risk study regarding various congeners and aroclors. Lucy said everything has slowed down in the agency with COVID. Michelle Mullin is setting up a call with a couple of different people before they re-engage with NTP.

- Lisa asked when will we hear back from Gonzaga regarding their work? Doug said Kyle has a December 31 deadline for a final report and will ask Kyle for updates during monthly TSCA meetings. Ben suggested he give an update at the October TF meeting if possible.

**Tech Track Updates:** Lisa said there are so many moving parts with the SPMD water column sampling which started this past Monday. Dave will give a presentation of projects happening since the Data Synthesis Workshop (DSW) and Brandee will review the QAPP's and talk about a planned temperature float on the Spokane River in September.

Doug asked about funding from the Monsanto settlement and asked Karl about an update. The Ecology program submitted it, but they have not received an update on the request. There was a suggestion at the last Tech Track meeting for the TF to write a letter providing input to state leaders about TF activities receiving some funding from the Monsanto settlement fund. Karl mentioned that it would not hurt to submit the request. Ecology put forth a package of suggestions for the money and some was requesting it be used for PCB needs. Lisa suggested having WBC draft a letter with help from Karl and get approval on it from the TF. Rob said following the settlement of previous PCB claim with municipalities, Spokane County asked about funding available then and were informed by Baron and Budd law firm that they have filed an additional class action suit of \$648 million against Monsanto and if received Spokane County may receive funding from this.

**ACTION:** WBC will work with Karl on letter to Ecology asking for funding from the Monsanto settlement funds. WBC will get draft letter out to TF before Labor Day weekend for review, with a final letter sent by September 15.

Dave Dilks gave a presentation on technical analyses done over the last year. He said the water column sampling is underway and fish monitoring will start in October. There is a draft memo as part of the meeting materials regarding hot spot assessment if anyone wants to review it. They have looked at potential reasons for Mission Reach contamination and it is not clear what the source is, but they have identified future studies that can be done to try to narrow down the source options. It is on hold due to prioritization needing to be done first. Regarding non-point source load and improved assessment of dry weather groundwater, they are on hold due to prioritization also.

- Ben asked Brian Nickel if the Tetrattech report on groundwater wells upgradient of Kaiser is complete. *Brian said there is a draft out but he hasn't reviewed it yet. Brandee said it is shareable, but she wants to look at it first. TetraTech focused on mass balance of the Kaiser groundwater plume when we hoped they would focus on upgradient of Kaiser. Brandee wants to see if they properly integrated her prior comments since they underestimated the significance of the groundwater plume. She doesn't want anyone to be confused by it. She said they should be able to share it soon.*
- Joel asked if it was on the Kaiser site specifically or upgradient? *Brandee said the Kaiser site and they calculated the groundwater differently and underestimated conditions by orders of magnitude and she wants to make sure they addressed some of these issues before it is finalized. They asked them to redo it with new information. Brandee thought it may be ready to send out by September 30 and will share it with Dave Dilks also before sharing with the TF.*

Lisa added that Tech Track was going to meet soon to discuss prioritization but since we will be getting new information from current sampling, they want to wait to see what is learned prior to prioritizing next projects.

Brandee shared information on the fish QAPP. It is a draft and she has more questions about LimnoTech and Dave's role in it. It still needs to go out for review for everyone on the signature page. We should be able to finalize it well before the sampling starting in October. How much time is needed from the TF for review on the SPMD QAPP and what schedule makes sense?

Lisa mentioned TF review isn't required but we could ask for comments from the TF and then move it forward with the Ecology QAPP review process.

**ACTION:** WBC will send the fish QAPP out to the TF for review by September 15 and Brandee will send it out to everyone on the signature page as well.

Brandee gave an update on the temperature float happening from just above Mission Ridge down to Gonzaga on September 3, applying a SOP (standard operating procedure) using longitudinal depth profiling looking for temperature and conductivity changes to indicate if there is a groundwater input. It addresses future study of having a groundwater assessment.

#### **Comments:**

- Does this need to be done more than once to capture any changes? *Brandee said the main goal is to look for any potential groundwater inputs. It would need to be separate study approach for a really in-depth assessment. Dave agreed and if we don't see anything that doesn't shut the door on groundwater but if we do that will be strong data indicator and it's a good first step.*
- Would it be possible to get this type of data during higher flows? *Brandee didn't think you could do it during high flow.*
- Rob L. said a number of years ago Ecology was working with USGS on the bi-state aquifer study and did something similar but not sure if same procedures, so there is additional data out there. Brandee said they have the data and it was all upriver and

there was additional work that was never published from below upriver dam maybe down to Greene Street, but nothing was done in the hot spot section.

Karl said Ecology has been working with WSDOT regarding Trent Street bridge replacement and Bill Fees with TCP has collected some soil fill material from the area and will get more samples at each phase. Bill said they will get second round of samples when WSDOT says it's ready.

**Spring Media Campaign Results Presentation:** Any Dunau with the Spokane River Forum gave a presentation on the spring media campaign. The campaign started end of April and went to the end of June and the traffic ended up continuing through July. The campaign was a success but there some areas he might improve going forward.

**Comments:**

- Are the users individuals or are they repeat users? *They are referred to as unique users which equals an independent user, so yes.*
- When I think of waste disposal I think of home ownership and do we want to target more people that are homeowners? *That is something for the TF to consider.*
- The Education and Outreach work group will discuss some of the follow up actions further at their next meeting.

There is \$1,800 left in this year's budget and Andy wondered about running another 15 second video. The work group will discuss what to do with the leftover budget. He mentioned the Waste Directory is on schedule to get a face lift this fall with a new interface.

**EPA Update on Kaiser-Mead Site:** Lucy Edmondson mentioned requesting time at the October or December TF to give a presentation regarding this. Karl said it was briefly discussed at the February and June TF meetings. He mentioned a March 19, 2019 letter from EPA requesting help cleaning up this site. Ecology did some work with Spokane Recycling and sent a request to EPA asking for emergency removal action. There was a report done in 2016 that showed an unknown source in Deadman Creek on the Spokane River. Kaiser has been working with EPA and Ecology and anticipates working with all for the presentation given to the TF at an upcoming meeting. They anticipate starting their work out at the site this week.

- Do we have an idea of the magnitude? You said the congener levels seem to be similar to the load at the site? Rob shared that it was 7,400 ppq at the outfall and Brian said there is a site evaluation report available on the EPA website.

Brian said the latest information he has from August 15 is that they had been focusing on removing the siding that contained asbestos and PCBs and they were going to start looking at other buildings that have the same siding. They had removed a little over 100,000 square feet of material, which is about one third of the siding. There is some pipe insulation and waste piles to be removed also.

**Upcoming Task Force Meeting topics:**

- Tech Track work – sampling efforts update
- MOA follow up/decision on whether to amend or not

- State Legislature 2021 session strategy/Monsanto settlement \$
- Tetrattech update
- Move EPA update on Kaiser-Mead site to December meeting? Karl mentioned checking in with site coordinator first and Lucy agreed.
- Begin discussing 2021 Work Plan

**The next meeting of the SRRTTF is a Zoom meeting on October 28, 2020 at 8:30 am**