

# Spokane River Regional Toxics Task Force Zoom Meeting

October 28, 2020 Meeting Notes

Facilitated by White Bluffs Consulting

Meeting Documents: <http://srtrtf.org/?p=11544>

## **Attendees:**

### ***Voting Members and Alternates***

Tom Agnew – Liberty Lake Sewer and Water District  
Mike Anderson, Ben Martin – City of Coeur d’ Alene  
Brent Downey – Kaiser Aluminum  
Rob Lindsay, Mike Hermanson – Spokane County  
Cadie Olsen, Jeff Donovan, Mike Coster – City of Spokane  
Galen Buterbaugh - Lake Spokane Association  
Vikki Barthels – Spokane Regional Health District (SRHD)  
Doug Krapas – Inland Empire Paper (IEP)  
Mike Peterson – Lands Council

### ***Advisors***

Karl Rains, Adriane Borgias, Brandee Era-Miller, Jeremy Schmidt, Bill Fees, Cheryl Niemi, Brook Beeler, Pat Hallinan, David Giglio – Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology)  
Brian Nickel, Lucy Edmondson, Brooks Stanfield – Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)  
Joel Breems, Monica Ott – Avista

### ***Interested Parties***

Lisa Dally Wilson – Dally Environmental and Spokane River Stewardship Partners (SRSP)  
Dave Dilks – LimnoTech  
Ben and Lara Floyd – White Bluffs Consulting (WBC)  
Alyssa Gersdorf, Craig Borrenpohl – City of Post Falls  
Ken Windram – Hayden Area Regional Sewer Board  
Bruce Williams – SRHD  
David Darling – American Coatings Association  
Robert Mott – Mott Consulting  
Dr. Kyle Shimabuku – Gonzaga University  
Gary Jones – Printing United Alliance  
Kris Holm  
Curtis Johnson

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

**Meeting Summary Action:** The Task Force (TF) approved the August 26 meeting summary and Lara Floyd will post the final notes to the website.

**ACE Update:** Rob Lindsay said they executed the \$19,080 contract with WDFW for fish sampling. Jeff Donovan shared the balance of funds was \$177,000 at the end of September. Pending projects added another \$90,000 and ACE has around \$290,000 in committed funds. There is \$232,000 in additional funds and Jeff will share more details later in meeting.

**Data Management:** Mike H. said they are going to have a work group meeting by end of year and have been working with CDM Smith on updates to the database. They have been working with Spokane County IT on a web interface to display some of the data and will have some things to share with the work group at the next meeting.

**Education and Outreach:** No update.

**Fish Sampling:** Lisa said WDFW has been in the river and completed the Red Band Trout fish collection. Brandee Era Miller said the QAPP has been finalized and they are waiting on a few official approvals. It will be available to post soon. WDFW will prepare the collected fish according to standard operating procedures for fish handling and they will get the fish to SGS AXYS for analysis.

**Funding:** Karl said they had an MOA meeting where they discussed comments from the City of Spokane and Post Falls. They were able to make a few additional modifications, but the edits weren't substantial. The plan is to submit it to Ecology's AG for their legal review. Karl will share the time frame for receiving comments back from the AG when he finds out what it is. It can then be sent back out to each organization for final sign off. There will be a Funding work group meeting next week to discuss process and tools to track grant funding opportunities and develop some boilerplate language to use for future opportunities.

**Green Chemistry:** No update.

**PMF:** Mike Hermanson said they have been working on a scope for influent and effluent analysis of discharger data and will discuss later in the meeting. They have also been working on a scope for holistic analysis of all PMF work that has been done along with analyzing some new data. It was discussed at the Tech Track meeting and now PMF has a draft scope of work to review. They will have a PMF meeting next week on Nov 3 at 1 pm to discuss what data sets to further analyze. They will bring a recommendation back to the TF at the December meeting. Holistic analysis – a lot of PMF analysis was done for the Monsanto litigation and targeted on evaluating sources of legacy vs inadvertent PCBs and this work will attempt to look at how to use PMF to look at connections such as surface water data vs biofilm data and whether you can use surface water data to look at mass balance downstream and expand analysis results they already have.

**TSCA:** Doug said progress is being made on EPA method 1668 study of TiO<sub>2</sub> pigments and they are sampling with four facilities participating as manufacturers of TiO<sub>2</sub>. All of the samples will be collected and analyzed together at SGS AXYS and they estimate a 30 day turn around.

Kyle Shimabuku is researching the products database. There are other watersheds that expressed interest in what the TF has going on. Mike Peterson said watersheds back east expressed interest and how do we do this together? Maybe the TSCA work group can discuss outreach strategy, goals and metrics with help from Gonzaga? Karl said it is a great suggestion and since content has come out of iPCB/TSCA work group it may also be worth getting the Education and Outreach work group involved also. Also, if there is any funding effort needed by the TF. Mike P. will talk to Vikki Barthels about having Chelsea Updegrave share concepts and approach at an upcoming Education and Outreach meeting. WBC will also support.

Doug said they discussed the iPCB workshop and other work done by Northwest Green Chemistry and they have compiled information and put out a draft for final review to determine what 2021 projects will look like for the work group. He hopes by the December meeting they will have something for the TF as far as potential projects.

EPA has some projects addressing iPCBs but these have slowed down due to COVID. The work group is trying to get some status updates.

**Tech Track Updates:** Lisa said they met October 5 and discussed additional questions that may be answered by Dr. Rodenburg on the holistic PMF analysis. EPA's intern Emelia Drake presented some GIS coverages she had developed for sites that had been known to have PCBs and then they talked about the temperature float that Ty did in September on the river. He also took photos of outfalls or pipes that go into the river and there was discussion about it. Limnotech did a draft report in August of the Spokane multimedia data collection which justifies the focus on the Mission Reach. Dave Dilks has identified some work items that the TF may be able to do before end of biennium.

**PMF Phase 2 Scope Approval:** Mike H. said at the last meeting they discussed scope of work to do analysis of effluent data of dischargers and had discussion about if it should include influent data. We have brought back a scope regarding it which includes additional PMF analysis for a total of \$18,000 with additional \$12,000 being asked for. We saw some preliminary results that looked at composition of effluent of dischargers and the differences were interesting, especially with a factor that looked at silicone.

**ACTION: The TF approved the PMF Phase 2 Scope of work.**

**EPA Update on Kaiser Mead Site Removal Action Presentation:** Lucy shared that back in 2019 Ecology asked EPA to do an assessment at the site and they found high levels of hazardous chemicals. As a result, they went to emergency response with a team to do removal, which started over the summer. Karl shared the presentation about the history of the site and the coordination that has happened with Ecology, EPA, Kaiser and others. Kaiser will give an update at the December meeting once their activities are complete.

Brooks Stanfield (EPA region 10 removal program on site coordinator) went over the site layout and ownership, and shared an overview of cleanup activities completed. The whole site is over 500 acres and around 60 buildings still reside there. Part of it is owned by Kaiser and other was owned by former Spokane Recycling. There are stormwater settling ponds on property that Kaiser owns where water continues on to Deadman Creek. Two dozen of the buildings have Robertson siding that contains asbestos and PCBs. Inside and outside of buildings contain TSI pipe insulation which is comprised of asbestos also. There are uncontrolled waste piles of green coke, coal tar pitch and other mixed waste with PCBs and PAHs detected. They are tracking the amount of waste being removed and thousands of pounds are being removed. The workers have been working 10 hours/day for 6 days per week since end of July.

**Comments:**

- Do we know if PCBs are making way from this site to Spokane River? *Karl said the unidentified source of PCBs were likely from this site. The retention ponds were to pull PCBs*

*down into sediment but during storm events the speculation is that it went down to Deadman Creek into the Little Spokane and then into the Spokane river. A big focus of the December presentation by Kaiser will be on the settling ponds.*

- *What is the value of the 17 times the removal management levels? Brooks Stanfield said he will figure out the value of it for PCBs and get back to the TF (Brooks replied with 94,000 ug/kg). The aroclor analysis from the removal assessment is publicly available and has some of the removal management level concentrations. Once the removal report is complete it will be available. They will provide the link to WBC to share.*
- *Is the settling pond the only nexus for contamination from this site to ultimately get to Spokane River and are there mitigating efforts now to prevent it from getting there? Brooks said the Kaiser clean-up has put a barrier into the aqueduct that has intercepted the water and has pumped it through a treatment system and diverted the settling pond before being reintroduced to the conveyance system. What is the treatment system being used? It is a pretty robust filtration system involving carbon, sand filters and a complex series of components. Karl said another reason Kaiser is waiting to present their information until December is they are in the process of working with regulators and other property owners to see if there are other available options to remove it all together.*
- *Where is the sludge in the pond going to be disposed? Kaiser will cover at December meeting update.*
- *Is there a possibility of groundwater contamination entering Spokane river as well? There are some unknown potential loads and wonder if this has been discussed. Karl said he doesn't know if there has been any monitoring of PCBs on this but will ask. It would be good to know if groundwater has been tested for PCBs.*
- *What about slide 10 which showed outfall for Spokane recycling. Brooks said it is not a focus. They did some limited sampling and didn't detect PCBs and aren't looking at it as a concern.*
- *Someone asked about the outfall and Kaiser is looking at options to eliminate stormwater discharges. Is water currently entering Deadman Creek through the outfall and if an arrangement isn't made within next month to remove aqueduct will discharges continue, and what are the clean-up targets and goals of concentration of PCBs? Karl said since clean-up has started he believes it has only gone through the treatment system Kaiser installed and based on size of pond they would have ample storage capacity to get through entire winter without a discharge if it isn't completely retired. As far as clean up targets, Karl would need to talk to people in water quality program about it. We may know more by December meeting.*
- *Before they said Kaiser treated the water and it sounded past tense, but is it ongoing? Brooks said It is a temporary system while they were moving water around looking at sediment. A system won't remain there permanently.*

**Discussion of Potential Additional Task Force Work Activities:** Jeff D. shared report he had put together for the meeting. Regarding the \$500,000 state money they have \$290,000 under contract and TF has approved additional \$200,000 for long term SPMD and fish tissue monitoring. Work needs to be completed by June 30, 2021 and it looks like the TF will not spend all of it. The TF has between \$30,000 and \$60,000 roughly that is not allocated at this

point. We just approved \$18,000 for PMF analysis so \$30,000 to 40,000 may be closer to the number we can use.

**Comments:**

- Lisa said The Tech Track work group has outlined general scopes of work for a couple projects but are waiting to get SPMD water column data to do prioritization of larger projects. If the PMF work is going to be included as part of the biennial budget, do we need to amend the Ecology contract with that work? *Jeff said we do need to look at what point we need to amend the contract with Ecology.*
- Dave Dilks has outlined some smaller sampling projects for the TF to consider. Two have been previously identified from Mission hotspot investigation. One is using sonar to shoot down into riverbanks and look at PCB sources and another is sampling of sub bottom material in Mission Reach area to see if there are sources of PCBs or identify hot spots. A third is the artesian well located from project of temperature float and looking at it for PCBs. They will do a feasibility assessment to see if Gravity can do the sub bottom profiling by spring and see which projects are feasible to do by June.

**Phase 1 PCBs in Products Research Presentation:** Doug shared this is a work product developed from Gonzaga to research what else is being done in the world regarding product testing of iPCBs. Is there potential to develop a products database with help from others? Where do we go from here?

Kyle Shimabuku from Gonzaga gave the presentation and shared results of their research. Doug said iPCB/TSCA work group has discussed and there isn't a robust data set outside of what has been done here in Washington so they do not feel there is a lot of information out there to support a database. Getting a format that is consistent is difficult also. If there is going to be an effort here in Washington state, Department of Environmental services may be better suited with doing something like this or may be a better starting point. We don't see it as a benefit from the TF perspective to continue this. The connection from the Roanoke River Conference seems beneficial though.

**Comments:**

- It may be best developed by a university than a government agency since there are often more loopholes to jump through for governments.
- It is work to find more information out there and how do we make this work useful? How can we compile references? *Kyle S. said he has it in a citation software that he can share, and other sources are at the end of the presentation and WBC will share on TF website.*
- There are challenges with developing a database and the interest from the other watersheds are the key pieces to moving forward. The TF should continue those connections to get more information. How can we track this going forward? Maybe through the Education and Outreach work group or some other individual?
- There seems to be consensus not to pursue the products database, but Gonzaga could be a good resource going forward for other projects regarding PCB issues.

Ben asked the TF to think more about this and have the work group leads look into an official path forward to discuss at the next TF meeting.

**Upcoming Task Force Meeting topics:**

- Mike P. suggested adding iPCB outreach at the national level and a path forward
- Add measurable progress update?
- Add an update from Kaiser-Trentwood and interim action that is happening in early 2020

Cadie said they included language adding adaptive management approach in the MOA so it will be important to add all the 2020 accomplishments and make it robust due to all the work that has been happening.

Ben said we are planning to schedule meetings every month like last year but adjust accordingly due to meeting content and will share draft schedule at next TF meeting.

**The next meeting of the SRRTTF is a Zoom meeting on December 2, 2020 at 8:30 am**