

Spokane River Regional Toxics Task Force Zoom Meeting

December 2, 2020 Meeting Notes

Facilitated by White Bluffs Consulting

Meeting Documents: <http://srtrtf.org/?p=11578>

Attendees:

Voting Members and Alternates

Tom Agnew, BiJay Adams – 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

Vikki Barthels – Spokane Regional Health District (SRHD)

Doug Krapas – Inland Empire Paper (IEP)

Mike Peterson – Lands Council

Mike Zagar – Kootenai Environmental Alliance

Advisors

Karl Rains, Adriane Borgias, Brandee Era-Miller, Jeremy Schmidt, Cheryl Niemi, Brook Beeler, Pat Hallinan, Cathrene Glick, Diana Washington, Curtis Johnson – 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

Bud Leber, Edgar Scott, Kyle England – Kaiser Aluminum

Chelsea Updegrove – Land Council

Toni Taylor – Spokane County

Lisa Rodenburg – Rutgers University

David Darling – American Coatings Association

Robert Mott – Mott Consulting

Gary Jones – Printing United Alliance

Tom Briggs – Landau Associates

Kris Holm

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

Meeting Summary Action: The Task Force (TF) approved the October 28 meeting summary and Lara Floyd will post the final notes to the website.

ACE Update: Rob Lindsay said there wasn't a lot of action this past period but he has coordinating with AXYS on some different items. Jeff Donovan shared that ACE has committed funds of \$264,000 with \$274,000 left in the Ecology grant.

Data Management: Mike H. said he will be sending out a doodle poll to the work group to go over the online data tool that Spokane County IT has developed and they will provide an update on database work.

Education and Outreach: Update will come later in meeting.

Fish Sampling: There was an update from Chuck Lee at last Tech Track meeting on fish sampling work WDFW has been doing.

Funding: Karl said they met on November 3 and made progress on developing boilerplate language on grant proposals. Mike P. is helping develop a spreadsheet on tracking different grant opportunities. Minimal edits were received from Ecology AG on revised MOA and several members expressed concerns over one edit and those edits have not been included in the final revised MOA. Minor word edits in a single paragraph remained and with several opportunities for review, it has been vetted widely by the Task Force. By end of today Karl will provide final copy to WBC and will edit to 2020 date with summary document which will include one edit from Ecology AG. This can be sent out to each organization for approval. If all members sign the revised MOA, then the TF can go forward with the new revised MOA. WBC will send out the clean version with the edits summary and a paragraph to share with each organization on how to communicate the request for action.

Comments: (Responses in italics by Karl Rains)

- Will the boilerplate language be reviewed and sent back to Funding work group or discuss at next TF meeting? *It will be reviewed with the TF after I review it first. As we move in to applying for grants, the responses will be individualized. The Funding work group will respond to grant opportunities and the boilerplate is a starting point.*
- Lisa said she included past language from other TF letters/documents which have already been approved and included in sections where different topics can be placed in different grants depending on what is needed.
- A selection process was recommended to prioritize grant applications in keeping with advancing the Comprehensive Plan (Comp. Plan). If we bring something up that isn't in the Comp. Plan how do we account for it and establish a mechanism for changing what we are doing? Ben suggested flagging and talking about those items as they come up.
- What role will others outside the funding group have in identifying and pursuing grants and will recommendations come to the Task Force? *Not all of the prioritization will land in the Funding work group, but tracking of grants will occur and pursuit recommendations will be shared.*
- Is there any hope of ever completing the Comp. Plan? *I don't think the TF work is complete if we check all boxes in Comp. Plan and it should remain a guiding document. But with adaptive management and what TF learns over time using a combo of annual reports and work plans going forward in combination with Ecology 5 year measurable progress as a*

collective, we can document things that have been achieved in Comp. Plan or others that drop on priority list due to new information.

- Ben suggested planning in 2021 for a review of the Comp. Plan, along with possible updates.

Green Chemistry: No update. Is there a value of this working group going forward? This group could potentially sunset at the end of 2020.

PMF: Mike Hermanson said his update will be covered later in the meeting.

Tech Track Updates: Lisa said water column sampling and with SPMD sampling there will be three and the first one is done and samples sent to SGS AXYS and waiting on results. WDFW is completing their fish sampling and able to collect for 6 sections of river. They will finish one more section but weren't able to find enough young yearlings so they have chosen not to collect this year but will keep in QAPP for future years. Jeff D. looked at stormwater flows one weekend and there do not appear to be any issues at this time. More of an update will come later in meeting.

iPCB/TSCA work group: Doug said with the EPA method 1668 study, still looking to have a draft available by end of 2020 and final report of study in spring of 2021. We have tabled the iPCBs in products database project but have connected with some watersheds that are interested in work we are doing. We are further trying to develop an Education and Outreach program for the iPCB issue. We have developed a list of projects for 2021 for iPCB/TSCA work group to chart path forward and will talk about tomorrow at the work group meeting and present those ideas at the next TF meeting.

We have some EPA projects and trying to find contact in NTP program regarding toxicity testing to get updates. Lucy said the last time she spoke with them it was over a year ago and request was to go through national office of toxics and Lucy will check in with them to see if she can get a work status update.

Update on Kaiser Mead Site Removal Action Presentation: Edgar Scott and Bud Leber shared the work that Kaiser completed on the Mead property this past summer. Bud along with others provided technical support on the project. The project went 2.5 months from middle of August to end of October of this year.

Comments: (Comments in italics by Edgar Scott and Bud Leber)

- Why isn't there a new sand layer covering the new liner? *The existing pond was done in the 1980s so suction dredging was used for removing sediment and 40 years later you pump down and use pressure washers to consolidate it and use a vac truck to take out sediment.*
- Does the groundwater from swale discharge to creek and how will swale work? *It will be constructed in terms of percolation rates and amount of surface area that has to be drained and will be designed and reviewed by Ecology. With groundwater, in that vicinity it drains to the little Spokane river and that is where the aquifer discharge goes to.*
- Did you do more testing of sediment and water when removed and what were the concentrations? *Yes, we had to profile for disposal and we used all of the data EPA*

gathered in 2019 when got sediment from upper and lower ponds and there were petroleum hydrocarbons, metals, volatile and semi volatiles.

- *Were the sediment clean ups historical contamination? Are there concerns with ongoing contamination in water from Spokane Recycling (SR) discharge? Karl clarified that the water is stormwater and not coming from SR facility and the legacy contaminants from stormwater ponds were coming from the things on that site for decades. The big effort has been with source removal from EPA being combined with Kaiser putting these ponds back in operation which should take care of vast majority of PCB issue. Will there be a monitoring program? Ecology is looking at options to have a PCB requirement for SR.*
- *How large were the ponds? The total footprint is about 3 acres.*
- *Are there monitoring wells showing that the ponds were not leaking into the groundwater? With respect to groundwater monitoring, there are a lot of wells in area but not downgradient of where these are located. For ongoing work, the stormwater permit controls that.*
- *Brooks Stanfield (EPA) give an update on remediation working going on at the site. There are three main areas targeted in removal, the Robertson siding on buildings which is the main source of PCBs and it is 100% complete. The waste piles (770 tons) are more of a PaH source and that is about 90% complete and expect to be done next week. The last area was asbestos pipe insulation (15,000 linear feet) and risk to anyone who comes on site and have removed 13,000 feet and plan to complete by end of next week. There are some other smaller sources that are actively removing also. We can begin demobilizing by mid-December.*
- *Back in 2016 the TF monitored quite a few springs and groundwater sites, one being in direction of way groundwater would flow from this site. Would this Waikiki springs be a part of this? Historically the discharge area for groundwater was from the springs downriver of Dartford bridge on area of little Spokane. Someone suggested they are cross gradient from the site. Mike H said Deadman Creek gains several cubic feet per second from Highway 2 down to its confluence with the Little Spokane, and there are springs along the hillside above Deadman Creek. There is also discharge from a spring on Wandermere golf course.*
- *With the infiltration do you expect any additional PCB sources? Karl said Ecology would ultimately approve the proposed infiltration swale and have staff that have been working with Kaiser for this swale to be protective with groundwater. Looking at meeting all requirements to be protective of groundwater.*

State Funding Reallocation Opportunities update: Ben gave a status of the TF having \$60,000 possible to commit for additional projects.

Education and Outreach: Vikki gave an update on the spring media campaign. Next year WA will do a paint stewardship campaign, and it may coincide. We recommend the radio 30 second ads, banner ads targeting audiences of construction and do it yourself, plus the pre roll videos and possibly doing 5 of those. The remaining budget from this year Andy Dunau is working on doing an additional pre role video and putting it on Facebook and Instagram. The scope is similar to the one submitted for spring 2020. Vikki said the campaign usually starts in April and

at the latest would need approval by the February TF meeting. Budget being asked for is \$17,000.

- Mike A. asked for information on results from the last campaign and it was shared during the August TF meeting.
- For the spring media campaign, how are you measuring success, is it outcomes based? *Andy has that information but with measuring success they can get access to google analytics for people going to the Waste Directory.*
- They also measure “conversions” meaning how many people heard the ad and then clicked through to the website.
- It would be good to know if the person clicking through to the web site actually took the identified action.

Tech Track: Lisa shared the group has been identifying projects that are priority from the 2019 Data Synthesis Workshop. They wanted to wait to see results of SPMD monitoring before prioritizing other projects. They discussed what shorter term projects could be done by June 30. The hot spot identification was identified as a possibility and sampling of artificial bottom fill materials, contaminated bottom sediments, upland surface contamination and upland subsurface contamination. Gravity can safely get out in the river between January and March and collect samples of artificial brick for \$22,000. Ecology collected some samples during Trent Bridge piling and could be analyzed for \$2,700 at most. These are the top items the work group identified. Collection of the artificial bottom fill for \$22,000 is the main recommendation.

Comments:

- Dave asked how detailed of a QAPP would be needed? If one needs to be done from scratch, there may not be time but if we could do an addendum to existing QAPP that can work.
- Brandee sent an email already asking if an addendum can be done and assumes that one can be done quickly.
- Dave said the biofilm QAPP would be the ideal one to use. The QAPP addendum could be done out of LimnoTech’s current budget.

The TF approved the task of \$22,000 for the sampling of artificial bottom fill materials work subject to the provisions outlined above.

Lands Council: Mike P. said it’s a continuation of efforts to create a national campaign of iPCBs in products. The plan is to do an active outreach to community leaders, municipalities, state entities, health departments, fish advisories, etc. Create a tool kit which would include a website and education materials for the public and supply chain. We want to work with Kyle S. from Gonzaga who did a good job with the iPCBs in products database research. The budget we are looking at is \$25,800 and we have staff that can help with this and ultimate goal is to get PCBs limits in TSCA to a lower level so the inadvertent PCBs will be less as they enter the Spokane area.

Comments:

- Dave Darling said that the white road paint is the lower PCB and the yellow is actually higher. He would like to look the proposal over more. Mike said there is a grant due Dec. 15 that they would like to pursue if this is approved.
- Integrating with other communities is an excellent idea and there is general support from the TF on going after the grant.

Phase 2 Municipal Influent/Effluent PMF Analysis Draft Presentation: Dr. Rodenburg gave the presentation and the point of the work was to look at PCBs coming from five dischargers (City of Spokane, Spokane County, Post Falls, Hayden Area Regional Sewer Board (HARSB) and City of C'DA). Some plants have been upgraded and some have not.

Comments:

- What do you mean by the term PCB 11 travels with aroclors in the influent data? *It is saying that the PMF program is having trouble separating PCB 11 off as a separate factor and don't read too much into it. The model doesn't quite know what to do with PCB 11.*
- In our effluent (IEP) and since installed membrane technology, it is effective at removing higher molecular weight PCB congeners but not as effective with lower PCB congeners and they tend to be more soluble and not as readily attached to solids. We are seeing 99 to 110 percent removal of higher weight congener PCBs. I would tend to believe the PCB 11 in the effluent is real. The toxicity testing being performed by NTP is valuable.
- None of the dischargers have installed anything for PCB removal, right? *Yes*
- On slide 11 with the influent PCB concentration of 11, it seems like they track somewhat with having largest flow and largest concentrations, etc. Across the board in all the wastewater data I have looked at you generally don't see the size of plant and influent PCB concentrations but since we are seeing this for PCB 68, that is very interesting.
- Ken Windram (HARSB) said according to the lab, they are using masterflex tubing. Lisa asked if there are any silicone o-rings and Ken said no.
- Lisa said Liberty Lake's flow is even lower than Hayden's and Lisa R. will take a look at it.
- The WWTFs are removing PCBs, and presumably they are ending up in the sludge. Since most of the sludge is land applied, where it can be eroded back into the water, what have we accomplished?

PMF Phase 2 (B) Holistic Analysis Scope Approval: Mike H. shared that the PMF work has been done at different points in time and the scope has been done to bring all of the work together and look at samples as part of the various studies. What can we learn about different sources by putting all of the pieces together?

Comments:

- This was also discussed with the Tech Track work group and they provided a lot of input as did the PMF work group.
- It lends itself to the goals of the TF.
- Is there a time urgency to this and is the timing right? I feel it is interesting and of value if and when performed. If not an urgency, shall we hold and include in the discussion in the January meeting?
- We don't have all of the data yet, so it isn't timely right now.
- Can this be done by June 30? *Yes*

The TF decided to wait until the January TF meeting to discuss these proposals further.

WA State Legislature 2021 Session Strategy Update: Ben gave an update that seven out of the ten legislators have confirmed or expressed interest in participating in the upcoming meetings scheduled for December 7, 10 and 15. WBC will put together a brief presentation for the meetings and there will be a brief summary from the meetings, along with recommendations shared.

SRRTTF 2020 Draft Accomplishments Summary: WBC will send it out to the TF members and alternates by email along with the 2021 schedule.

The next meeting of the SRRTTF is a Zoom meeting on January 27, 2021 at 8:30 am