

# Spokane River Regional Toxics Task Force Zoom Meeting

February 24, 2021 Meeting Notes

Facilitated by White Bluffs Consulting

Meeting Documents: <http://srtrtf.org/?p=11733>

## Attendees:

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

Tom Agnew – Liberty Lake Sewer and Water District  
Doug Krapas – Inland Empire Paper  
Mike Anderson – City of Coeur D’ Alene  
Brent Downey – Kaiser Aluminum  
Craig Borrenpohl – City of Post Falls  
Rob Lindsay, Mike Hermanson – Spokane County  
Cadie Olsen, Jeff Donovan, Mike Coster – City of Spokane  
Vikki Barthels – Spokane Regional Health District (SRHD)  
Galen Buterbaugh – Lake Spokane Association  
Chris Donley – Washington State Dept. of Fish and Wildlife  
Mike Zagar – Kootenai Environmental Alliance

### ***Advisors***

Karl Rains, Adriane Borgias, Jeremy Schmidt, Cheryl Niemi, Brandee Era- Miller, Bill Fees, Diana Washington – Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology)  
Monica Ott – Avista  
Brian Nickel – Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

### ***Interested Parties***

Dave Dilks – LimnoTech  
Lisa Dally Wilson – SRSP and Dally Environmental  
Ben and Lara Floyd – White Bluffs Consulting (WBC)  
Brian Owen – Inland Empire Paper  
Bruce Williams – SRHD  
Chelsea Updegrove – Lands Council  
Robert Mott – Mott Consulting  
Gary Jones – Printing United Alliance  
Kris Holm

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

**Meeting Summary Action:** The Task Force (TF) approved the January 27 meeting summary and Lara Floyd will post the final notes to the website.

**ACE Update** – Rob shared that ACE has a list of projects they are preparing to send out contracts for that were approved previously. Jeff is working on an amendment on the contract with Ecology and the reimbursement request. Jeff gave an update on where ACE stands and they are waiting to get the Ecology contract to come through. The contract with WDFW is done and ACE had \$188,000 in the bank at end of January.

- Is the \$188,000 uncommitted balance? *Jeff said it is just cash in the bank. Uncommitted balance is roughly \$130,000 if assumed we will spend the full \$500,000 of Ecology contract. We may spill \$32,000 over into reserves depending on what happens by June. Karl said as they work together to put dollar amounts to projects over the next couple of months it will help determine spending for the entire biennium budget.*

**Data Management** – Update will come later in meeting.

**PMF** – Mike H. said he sent out the draft of analysis Dr. Rodenburg completed on influent/effluent from dischargers, and they are scheduling a meeting to discuss it soon, depending on Dr. Rodenburg’s availability. They are also working with ACE on the contract to move forward on holistic analysis. The budget was \$30,000 but the TF approved \$15,000 of it. Dr. Rodenburg felt she may be able to get the work done for \$15,000 and she may not need the full \$30,000. They will bring a discharger report back to the TF at one of the next two meetings.

**Education and Outreach** – No update at this time.

**Fish Sampling** – Chris said same status as last month.

**Funding/MOA** – Karl said that he had an opportunity to revisit boilerplate language Lisa developed and sent it off to other members of the Funding work group to review and get input by end of the month. Hopefully it will be brought to the TF at the next meeting. It will be tailored for whatever opportunity is being pursued and the group will want general approval from TF. It will not be a finished product.

Members of the Funding work group were given three grant opportunities to look at (Ecology PPA grant specific for local governments and two EPA Region 10 grants specific for projects that build on community health, resiliency and sustainability and National Exchange Network grant opportunity, which may be suitable for TF work with data management).

Ecology has a draft list of grants and loans being funded through the Clean Water Act Centennial funding. The group hasn’t looked to see which ones are for water quality issues or Spokane area but there is a map which WBC can send out in next TF email blast announcement. Karl shared an interactive map for water quality project draft offer list of grants and the link will be shared for this tool as part of the TF email.

Adriane said the grants and loans are annual solicitations by Ecology. Typically, the grant funding cycle starts in late summer and the applications are due in fall. The offer list is presented now and finalized after the legislative session. Grantees have included the cities, county for WWTP facilities, stormwater, and environmental groups for nonpoint projects.

Karl shared about the status of the revised MOA – half of the members have executed the revised MOA including Ecology and the Ecology Director would like to meet with the TF at some future point. Others that have signed off on the revised MOA are Inland Empire Paper, Lands Council, Lake Spokane Association, City of C’DA, Liberty Lake Sewer and Water, and WDFW. Most of the remaining members have said it is going through the signing process.

**Tech Track** – The Tech Track work group met last week. Dave provided an overview of SPMD preliminary results and had discussion regarding the impacts of drywells, especially old school

ones and the PCBs entering groundwater or river via these wells. They discussed how to assess this situation. LimnoTech will be taking a look at stormwater runoff concentrations to see if potential exists for contamination to the river or at least if there is the potential to sample and test for it.

Brian Nickel's virtual intern has also been doing an analysis of biofilm and stormwater samples which will be presented at the next Tech Track meeting.

The work group spent time walking through projects identified by Tech Track or from the Data Synthesis Workshop or results from projects already implemented and they are doing a straw poll to determine what projects are most important. They will do a one page write up of each project and then bring recommendations to the TF around the time the TF knows state funding for the next biennium. It would be good to get a tracking tool to see what projects are coming from each work group along with grant opportunities that may come up with state funding.

**iPCB/TSCA** – Doug said the TiO<sub>2</sub> study done by TDSC (Titanium Dioxide Stewardship Council) has results received for all samples tested from the lab, and currently is going through QA/QC through a third party and will have draft results shortly. They plan to have a presentation on it at the May TF meeting.

The work group has spent time discussing projects for 2021:

- Develop an industry list of pigments, chlorinated vs non chlorinated and need to develop scopes of work. Want to do some graphing printing trials. (The group recently had an interesting presentation by Living Ink, producing ink from algae and they have a good black ink but working on colored inks now. They could feed into green chemistry aspect of what the work group is looking into.)
- Support Education and Outreach on iPCB outreach national campaign effort.
- Lower procurement limits campaign - HP and Apple have developed policies purchasing and distributing products with lower PCB limits. Curious to see how they are enforcing the limits.
- Sources and pathways of PCB 11 - To perform a Mass Balance around current data to see if accounting for all PCB 11 being seen in the watershed. Dave Dilks is taking a closer look at this.
- Two EPA projects – petition to enforce PCBs in products under TSCA and petition to perform cost benefit analysis and reevaluate their TSCA allowance. Doug will contact Adriane regarding this.

Ben asked about the prioritized list of projects and when will they be available to come to the TF? Doug said PCB 11 has been scoped – the plan for Dave Dilks is to look at existing work done and then will make a recommendation under current scope or need additional task for work and that will come in next week or two. The scopes may be developed over the next four weeks. Ben said if it is ready to share at the May meeting it may line up well with the Tech Track schedule.

**SPMD Data Sampling Report** – Dave Dilks shared the preliminary results of the first round of water column SPMD sampling. Sampling was done at four locations: WA/ID state line, Upriver Dam, Upper Falls/Mission Reach and Nine Mile Dam. Currently processing data to calculate

concentrations with some technical issues to be resolved. Raw SPMD data shows presence of PCB load near Mission Reach, roughly triple of other locations, which is consistent with what was seen with biofilm monitoring. Second round of deployment is underway. Adaptive Management may be needed to support the program for Long Term trend assessment. Gravity went out the last one to two weeks and deployed for 28 days and it will take a couple months for the lab to process the data. Hopefully the fish tissue data report can be given at the next meeting and maybe second round of SPMD in May or possibly June.

**Comments/Questions:**

- This was the first of three rounds of SPMD sampling and it was for low flow sampling in river. Do we know how many precipitation events occurred? *Dave said there was a trace of rainfall for one day and no large events during the time.*

**Tableau Application for SRRTF PCB Data Placement Approval** – Mike H. said goal of Data Management work group was to make data available to a broader audience. Over last year Spokane County staff have been evaluating how to do this and with using Arc GIS they were running into issues. They found Tableau and this program allows public entities to host data and develop a web app to view the data. He showed the app for the TF data and put some data on it but not all of it yet. The interface allows the user to select location, display by date and done by homolog. You can look at range of dates and different locations. It provides a real story to the average person if they want to dive into the data.

The plan is to take this data visualization and embed in Spokane PCB free website or TF website and they are working with Toni Taylor from Spokane County on doing a demo page. Then more context can be added such as links to the reports from the TF that data is pulled from and add more data such as discharger and biofilm data. We shared this with the Education and Outreach (E & O) work group already and Data Management work group and would like to move forward with making this available. It will be available on TF website with link to Spokane PCB Free site.

**Comments/Questions: (answers in italics by Mike Hermanson)**

- Can we gain access to this currently? *Yes, there is a link in this meeting announcement.*
- Do you see any correlations between this in the water column concentrations and flow in the river and is there a way to add that info? *There may be a way we can add that data in.*
- Is there a way to associate the data with list of products that typically contain the PCB groupings when you put it on the website? *Yes, it comes with a description of associated information that we provide that surrounds the visualization. If it is part of the Spokane River PCB website there is a lot of information which would help orient the user to other pieces of information related to PCBs.*
- If you go back to the Spokane County website, we will want to populate information around where data came from, referencing QAPPs, etc. This also has broader application that may be posted on other regional websites that may have broader or more diverse viewers. We may want to post on SRHD site or Spokane indicators website also? Know this is down the road but something to consider. Mike said they will consider all of these things.
- Any organization could use a link for others to get to this information.

- We have GIS coverage of losing and gaining reaches and it may be helpful to add that layer? Mission Reach is a hotspot and is there a way to label the reaches to show it better on the map?
- Dave said we have looked at correlation to flow and flow in river the lower the concentration they don't drop as much as we would expect.
- Any sense of timing and when it may go live? *Currently we are working with Toni Taylor and hopefully within next couple of weeks we may be able to have a page that can be sent out to the TF to look at before we put links on the website.*

**ACTION:** The TF approved making the data information publicly available via Tableau.

**WA State Legislature 2021 Session Update** – Ben shared in early January the TF sent a letter to Spokane area legislators with a 10-year outline of projects and funding request and a specific two-year state biennium funding request. Since then, members of the TF have been meeting with and giving presentations to various State senators and representatives. Some happened in December and some happened more recently. They have met with Senators on the Ways and Means Committee and have a few more to meet with. They are sharing background on the TF, focusing on implementing the Comprehensive Plan, and the need for a long-term funding source with a request to secure some of the Monsanto settlement money. Senator Billig supported the two-year funding request. The TF will be posted on any progress and when the legislature takes action on specific bills TF members may be asked to help testify.

Tom said the important thing to remember is Monsanto settlement funds represent dollars that our Spokane area ratepayers won't have to spend chasing this PCB challenge. It's a perfect use for these funds and our efforts seem to be well received.

**Measurable Progress Update** – Karl said this was paired down from the update he gave in 2019 and the information he is presenting will be shared to post on the website. It reflects the efforts of the TF in reducing PCBs. It evaluates the status of three key metrics: Inputs, outputs and outcomes. This time it will be more focused on outputs and hopefully can include outcomes. He will use existing data from SRRTTF, permittees and other members of the TF. Karl said he has received some input from several members, and he welcomes other input by next Monday.

**Comments/Questions:**

- Does the report update status on variances? *No, Ecology was in a position they had to put a pause on variances in June 2020 due to the 7 parts per quadrillion (ppq) no longer being valid. This (the measurable progress update) does not have anything to do with the variances.*

**SRRTTF 2021 – 2023 Work Planning** – Ben asked what will the work plan look like over the next two years? Where are we going as a TF? The TF is doing a lot of technical work focusing on identifying sources. There are other control actions in the Comprehensive Plan. There is an opportunity to do other work if the TF is able to secure the \$2 million. He shared other control actions listed in the back on the annual accomplishments table, which are described in more detail in the TF Comprehensive Plan. Are there any of these other actions that we should be looking at and if so, what are they? What are the priorities we should be focused on? This will be discussing at the next couple of TF meetings.

### **Comments/Questions:**

Karl said there are some of these control actions that individual entities are doing on their own that he is capturing them in the Measurable Progress (MP) report. We may want to update this document, or do we leave it as part of MP report and only focus on the collective things the TF is doing? I support idea of revisiting this table of actions (from the Comprehensive Plan) as it does seem it has become stagnant and maybe we update things identified through Adaptive Management. Perhaps we update with things identified as critical that may not have been in the Comprehensive Plan. *Ben noted we do have individual actions from Avista, City of Spokane, etc. already and would be nice to make this more complete next year.*

Ben has asked if there are other things we could be doing as a TF to find and reduce PCBs, like some of these control actions listed in the table? We may want to take some off the list and will talk about this more at future meetings.

### **Upcoming Task Force Meeting Topics to add –**

- Tetrattech update – not sure if will be ready for March meeting but Brian will check into it.
- Brandee - 2018-2019 biofilm update will be ready for the May meeting.
- Add SPMD like Dave mentioned earlier for May meeting.

Reminder that if you are planning on providing comments on the Spokane Riverkeeper Toxics web page and map get those to Karl Rains and cc Vikki Barthels also by end of February.

With the Tableau data and the need to consider where you are going to include caveats about use of data and where data collection assessment issue is concerned and use of analysis method 1668, if go to original reports and QAPPs this is semi-quantitative. It will be considered going forward.

**The next SRRITF meeting will be held on March 24, 2021 at 8:30 AM**