

Action on Task Force Future

November 23, 2022

Background

At recent Task Force meetings, discussions have been held about the future of the SRRTTF, the PCB TMDL process for the Spokane River being led by the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) process for establishing an advisory committee for the PCB TMDL implementation plan. These discussions began with the fall 2021 EPA announcement that work was beginning for preparing a PCB TMDL for the Spokane River, as a settlement to a lawsuit on the matter, and have continued through 2022.

The Task Force process has been a voluntary alternative to the traditional TMDL process, but with the EPA TMDL announcement, many have wondered if the Task Force still has a purpose for existing. Also, representation on the Task Force has also been reduced in recent years, raising a question about whether the Task Force current makeup represents a broad enough cross-section of the community? Ecology has also acknowledged this uncertainty in the recent draft discharge permits, where language has been broadened to require dischargers to participate in the Task Force or similar community-based process.

Additionally, the ongoing administrative burden of managing the Task Force provided by the Administrative Contracting Entity (ACE) is substantial, and some of those volunteering for positions on ACE have indicated they do not plan to continue providing this support into the future.

Recent Task Force meetings have focused on potential futures for the Task Force, what would be required to sunset the Task Force and its Administrative Contracting Entity (ACE), and what the steps would be for the Task Force to take formal action on the Task Force future.

Purpose and Method

The purpose of this document is to provide a proposal for the Task Force to take formal action on regarding Task Force future. A rollcall will be conducted by the Task Force facilitator of all voting Task Force members present at the November 30, 2022 meeting to determine/confirm support for this action. Meeting notes will reflect the results of the vote on this action.

Statement of Action

Task Force members collectively agree to take actions to dissolve the Task Force and ACE. It is expected that the Task Force and ACE would be dissolved by no later than December 2023. Individual (and by interpretation - collective actions) would be taken by all participating Task Force members to withdraw from and terminate the Task Force and ACE prior to this date.