

**Spokane River DO TMDL Advisory Group Meeting
Minutes
March 5th, 2015**

In Attendance: Dave Knight, Ecology; Karin Baldwin, Ecology; Galen Buterbaugh, Lake Spokane Association; Thomas Herron, IDEQ; Lars Hendron, City of Spokane; Ben Brattebo, Spokane County; BiJay Adams, Liberty Lake Sewer and Water District; Amanda Parrish, Lands Council; Meghan Lunney, Avista; Dave Moss, Spokane County; Jeff Donovan, City of Spokane; Doug Krapas, Inland Empire Paper; Tom Agnew, Liberty Lake Sewer and Water District; Ellie Key, Ecology; Dale Arnold, City of Spokane; John Beacham, City of Post Falls; Jerry White, Spokane Riverkeeper.

On Phone: Kris Holm, Attorney; Lisa Dally Wilson, SRSP

Spokane River Forum Staff: Andy Dunau, Cami Haveman

Welcome and Introductions

Andy Dunau welcomed participants to the meeting, each of whom introduced themselves.

Materials handed out can be found on spokaneriver.net/dotmdl web site.

Biennium DO TMDL Report

Karin Baldwin thanked the group for various comments and assistance since the first draft was distributed in August, 2014. A workgroup formally met in November, 2014, resulting in a number of detailed suggestions.

Karin reviewed the modified table of contents that incorporates suggestions. She noted a number of areas NPDES permit holders and those implementing non-point projects provided data, reports and graphs. She also noted certain areas, like forest roads, that are being added. Further, she discussed that, for context, the report provides information showing water quality improvements since the 1970s. The PowerPoint presentation provides additional specifics on what's now included in the report.

Dave Moss asked where needs for additional studies would be placed. Karin suggested under “Future Outlook, Recommendations.” Tom Agnew asked about inclusion of phosphorus bans (dishwater and fertilizer). Consensus was reached that Karin will include this with summary information.

There was a general discussion regarding how to report and account for nonpoint source reductions, and progress over time.

The time line for completion of the report was reviewed. The workgroup will again meet March 16th to review the draft document. Karin will distribute another draft of the report to the advisory group for review between April 16 and 20. Final comments from this review will be due back to Ecology by May 8th, and the final report is expected to be issued by the end of June. With this first report in place, the advisory group believes the framework is in place to issue an updated report every two years, as called for in the TMDL.

The advisory group thanked Karin for integrating many suggestions and comments.

Nonpoint Source Workgroup Updates

Karin reviewed nonpoint source workgroup meetings that evaluated a number of different tools for measuring P reductions, some of which are quite complicated. The current tool used by those receiving Ecology funding is STEPL, which has a number of limitations. For instance, STEPL is only able to estimate P reductions from a limited number of BMPs, and thus the estimates may be poor. A new version of STEPL is expected to be released that will include 28 more BMPs that cover a range of categories (cropland, pasture, urban, septic systems). This upgrade will make the tool more robust and useful. The workgroup recommends using the updated STEPL method and has a tutorial scheduled for its next meeting. Alternative tools considered are posted on the web site.

An update was also given on establishing measurable progress, which includes establishing inputs, outputs and desired outcomes by 2021. This follows the same framework being developed by the toxics task force. Doug Krapas asked how “beneficial use” will be measured. Karin said the committee is discussing measures like better habitat and riparian restoration.

The group discussed the cultural/societal and enforcement limitations inherent in reducing nonpoint sources. Outreach and education as well as monitoring and use of empirical data are considered critically important. At the March 25th workgroup meeting, the group will continue to develop and refine the measurable progress framework. A key discussion item will be what are considered reasonable measures to achieve by the time of the ten year assessment.

Karin described progress being made to track implementation of nonpoint source projects. She thanked the Spokane Conservation District (SCD) and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) for pulling information dating back to 2000. There are now almost 200 projects with summary information recorded. If the Forum receives funding through a 319 grant submitted by SCD data will be made available on line using google mapping and other tools. Tom noted IDEQ is using a similar technique. If the project is funded, the group asked Andy to review the information IDEQ is collecting and match up information to the greatest degree possible.

Ecology's Water Quality Program staff ranked clean water grant and revolving loan fund applications. In the Spokane watershed, twenty projects were submitted (4 nonpoint, 2 wastewater treatment and 14 stormwater). The total value of these projects over two years is 25.1 million dollars. Of this, over 16 million in loans is for wastewater treatment plant upgrades; over 8.1 million in loans is for stormwater projects and \$958,000 is for nonpoint source grants. The loan funding is considered highly likely as they are part of a revolving fund. Whereas, the grant funding will occur if the funding level request by the governor is adopted by the legislature.

Amanda described the Lands Council request for a 319 grant for \$208,000 dollars over the biennium. This will be for work in Hangman Creek and feature riparian restoration, educational outreach to landowners, and stormwater education. This also includes a survey activity with landowners, which has proven difficult in the past because of their reticence in sharing information.

The Spokane Conservation District, Stevens County Conservation District, and City of Spokane each requested a grant for \$250,000 in state dollars.

Elaine Snouwaert with Ecology is also working with partners on a very ambitious NRCS proposal that would provide a 1 to 1 match for nonpoint

source work. This includes activities like riparian restoration, conservation easements, monitoring and outreach. The preliminary proposal is due within four months.

Little Spokane TMDL

Dave Knight reported that Tighe Stuart's review of data collected by a private contractor for the Little Spokane DO TMDL had significant issues. Rather than try to develop the TMDL without the data, Ecology will collect a new data set over the next year. This will result in a one-year delay in developing the TMDL.

Idaho Permits

Idaho NPDES permits became effective December 1st.

DO TMDL Annual Meeting

The DO TMDL annual meeting will be Thursday, May 21st at Spokane Community College. Andy will distribute a draft agenda after the March workgroup meetings for review and input.

Meeting Adjourned