

Spokane River DO TMDL Advisory Group Meeting
Minutes
March 2, 2017

In Attendance: Bud Leber, Kaiser; Pat Hallinan, Ecology; Speed Fitzhugh, Avista; Thomas Herron, IDEQ; Tom Agnew, LLSWD; Jeff Donovan, City of Spokane; BiJay Adams, LLSWD; Karin Baldwin, Ecology; Jeremy Jenkins, LLSWD; Dave Moss, Spokane County; Doug Krapas, Inland Empire Paper; Monica Ott, City of Post Falls; Rob Lindsay, Spokane County; Ryan Ekre, Inland Empire Paper; Lars Hendron, City of Spokane.

Phone: Kris Holm, Attorney; Lisa Dally Wilson, Dally Environmental; Paul Pickett, Ecology; Don Kiel, City of Coeur d'Alene; Ken Windram, Hayden Area Regional Sewer Board; Jerry White, Spokane Riverkeeper.

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 and presentations can be found on the spokaneriver.net/dotmdl web site.

Updates:

CE-QUAL W2 Model Follow-up: Karin reviewed a hand-out summarizing boundary conditions used for the 2001 Spokane River & Lake Spokane CE-QUAL W2 Model. Paul summarized that an input for each condition occurs at all model boundaries. You can change an input variable for one or more conditions to determine model effect or sensitivity. Karin noted several scenarios were run testing the effect of adjusting various condition inputs. Such was the case with a scenario run in 2009 to determine the effect of new flows (600 cfs at Post Falls Dam instead of 300 cfs) resulting from Avista's FERC license. As the effect was minimal, the model was not recalibrated with the new flows.

Ecology is not aware of a list showing all scenarios run, but there are several modeling scenario reports written by PSU which can be found on the PSU website (http://www.ce.pdx.edu/w2/index.html?projects_spokane_river.html), or Ecology's Spokane DO TMDL website (http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/tmdl/spokaneriver/dissolved_oxygen/modelinfo.html). Doug thought some ideas on how to improve the model was done with Dave Dilks. Lisa will provide Karin what Dave provided SRSP. Sediment oxygen demand data would be good to collect, but the advice from Bob Cusimano before he retired was to wait until the 10-Year Assessment is closer.

As discussed at the last meeting, a decision to update the model will be based on whether it helps inform the 10-year assessment, better understand the river system, or provide dischargers insights into ways to optimize their operations. Distinctions between monitoring for this purpose vs. interest by some in informing adaptive management actions before the 10-year is on-going. Karin reminded people that the timing of decisions and actions is shown in the work flow chart reviewed at the last meeting.

NPDES Permit Update: Pat Hallinan reported that Ecology is still determining how, across the state, to proceed with draft permits effected by EPA promulgation of updated human health criteria standards. In the meantime, existing permits are being administratively extended. Once Ecology decides on an approach, they will meet with dischargers and stakeholders to lay out a process for completing draft permits.

Literature Review Scope of Work/Monitoring Work Group Meeting

The last monitoring work group meeting primarily focused on providing input into the Literature Review Scope of Work. Paul integrated suggestions and the final project work plan was distributed. As noted in the work plan, “The purpose of the literature search is to identify and evaluate alternative methods of analyses that could be used to measure improvements in water quality, reservoir health, and support for aquatic life in Lake Spokane.”

Paul requested that any suggestions for the review be sent to him. Thus far, he’s received a letter from the SRSP and a couple of comments. He will provide updates as possible at monitoring work group meetings. The final report is expected in December, 2017. The current hope is that Paul will be able to do a presentation as part of the Spokane River Forum Conference in November.

The next monitoring work group meeting is March 6th. In the future, the Forum will place monitoring work group meeting date notifications on the DOTMDL web site.

Zinc Inhibition

Jim Ross provided information indicating potential effect of zinc inhibition on water quality standards. First, he reviewed the zinc freshwater criteria for Washington. He then showed a graph noting continued reductions in presence of zinc at state line over a 20-year period. The group postulated this probably corresponds to mining related cleanup activity in the Coeur d’Alene Basin.

Jim then showed the impact of hardness in effecting acute level as measured at Nine Mile. The general conclusion is that trends are moving toward meeting standard; and that, based on comparison to lab results, current levels of zinc are unlikely to be toxic to fish. Tom Herron noted that the Coeur d’Alene Management Plan is looking at ways of assessing possible effect of removing more zinc from the system on Lake Coeur d’Alene once the new central plant is installed in Kellogg around 2020.

Biennial Report

Karin led discussion regarding elements of the next biennial report. These include:

- Should each biennial report be separate? The group recommended that the upcoming biennial report build on the previous report, thus showing developments, progress and challenges from where the last report left off. This can be done by adding years to graphs, narrative, etc.
- Should the regional activities section be left in? The group recommended it should. Each stakeholder will be invited to add information to this section to tell as complete a story as possible.
- Should the funding section be included? Ecology pulls funding numbers from the Greater Spokane watershed, some of which does not relate directly to the Spokane River. For 2015-2016, this was \$352,461,280. Figures do not include loan repayments; and numbers do not include investments made beyond what Ecology tracks. The recommendation is to retain the

section, showing additional funding from the previous biennium. Ecology will do some categorizing of funds, e.g.—point and nonpoint source projects; and stakeholders will be invited to provide figures for investments beyond what Ecology tracks.

Karin showed an example of a graph in previous biennium report that could be shown in a different way. Tweaks and changes to graphs will be reviewed as draft document becomes available for review.

Lisa inquired as to whether there would be a “report card” section reflecting on developments over time. Karin said this would be discussed at next monitoring work group meeting. Andy cautioned the group to distinguish between a section summarizing trends vs. drawing conclusions before the ten year assessment.

Open Q & A

- Doug announced that IEP is sun setting its AlgEvolve test project after five years. Their next project is installation of membrane bioreactor (MBR) system similar to what the county installed. People wanting to see the AlgEvolve system before dismantling should do so in March.
- Lars asked if further model scenarios related to sediment oxygen demand, red field ratio and buoyancy of dead algae had been run. Since adoption of the DO TMDL in 2012, there have only been discussions. Per earlier meeting discussion, the monitoring work group will review if additional scenarios or updating of the model is recommended as part of the 10-year assessment.
- Karin shared three pictures showing winter conditions at Nine Mile Dam, below Qualchan Golf Course and Deep Creek confluence. Freezing cold and runoff conditions resulted in severe ice conditions, hillside sloughing and sediment loading. This will be an interesting year to monitor effects on water quality.
- Karin shared aspects of Potential Revisions to Ecology’s Water Quality’s Funding Rule that will be out for public comment shortly. One item committee members may wish to comment on is including a provision that the interest rates on State Revolving Fund loans be reduced with the difference (savings) going toward funding nonpoint source projects. Idaho currently has such a provision. This is not currently included in the rule but could be added based on comments. Andy will notify the committee when the comment period opens.

Action Items, Annual Meetings, SRF Conference

Andy reviewed quarterly meeting schedule for the year.

- The next meeting will be the annual meeting, which will be scheduled in the June timeframe. Andy will work with Dave Moss to assure meeting time does not conflict with SRSP and SRTTF meetings. The agenda will be developed in March.
- Quarterly meeting in September.
- Quarterly meeting as part of SRF Conference November 15 -16. Conference planning will start in April and members are encouraged to share session ideas with Andy.

Other action items include:

- The monitoring work group will meet Monday, March 6th.
- The committee will be informed when Ecology is planning to move forward with NPDES updates.
- The committee will be informed when Ecology Water Quality Funding Rule is open for comment.
- Karin will begin development of the biennial report.
- Paul will begin literature review this spring.