

Spokane River DO TMDL Advisory Group Meeting
Minutes
January 22, 2019

In Attendance: Cathrene Glick, Ecology; Karl Rains, Ecology; Mitch Redfern, Ecology; Chad Atkins, Ecology; John Beacham, City of Post Falls; Craig Borrenpohl, City of Post Falls; Mike Anderson, City of Coeur d'Alene; Joel Breems, Avista; Doug Krapas, Inland Empire Paper; Jule Schultz, Spokane Riverkeeper; Jeff Donovan, City of Spokane; Chelsea Updegrove, The Lands Council; Catherine Olsen, City of Spokane; Adriane Borgias, Ecology; Monica Ott, Avista, Meghan Lunney, Avista; BiJay Adams, Liberty Lake Sewer and Water District; Jeremy Jenkins, Liberty Lake Sewer and Water District; Rob Lindsay, Spokane County; Ben Brattebo, Spokane County; Casey Flanagan, Spokane Tribe of Indians.

Phone: Lisa Dally Wilson, SRSP; Ken Windram, Hayden Area Regional Sewer Board

Spokane River Forum Staff: Andy Dunau, Cami Haveman

Welcome and Introductions

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

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

Ecology Updates

Little Spokane River Dissolved Oxygen, PH and Total Phosphorus TMDL: Cathrene Glick reviewed objectives (see PDF of presentation for detail). The draft report will be ready for Ecology internal review in March 2019 and a final report is scheduled for completion in September 2019. In response to questions, Cathrene clarified that preliminary findings cannot be shared.

Tekoa Receiving Water Study: Cathrene shared objectives and time line for this study (see PDF of presentation for detail). All field work is complete and analysis underway. The final report is due May, 2020. Cathrene explained how the study supports permit requirements being developed for Tekoa facility and assessment of pollutant contribution affecting Spokane River DO TMDL.

Evaluation of Groundwater Quality and Discharge Conditions at The Terminus of Deep and Coulee Creeks: This report is expected to be complete in June 2019 and will help assess the nutrient loads into the Spokane River.

EAP Ambient Monthly Monitoring Review: Cathrene showed graphs of phosphorous, nitrogen and nitrate data collected at Spokane River locations through September 2018. As also reflected in biennial report, there is progress towards meeting water quality standards. Group discussed that contributions from Hangman Creek, particularly during high flow seasons and events, continue to not meet water quality standards.

Cathrene also clarified that grab sampling is done same time, same day on a monthly basis. Available resources (funding/staff) limit Ecology's ability to increase sampling to capture data during storm events. However, Ecology may consider data associated with storm events as part of the 10-year

assessment. Ecology could also use/incorporate data collected by third parties prior to the 10-year assessment sampling, if collected under an Ecology approved QAPP.

In response to questions, Cathrene summarized that technical reports (Tekoa Receiving Water, Hangman Creek, and Deep Creek/Coulee Creek studies) do not require or include a public review/comment process. As a TMDL document, the Little Spokane report will be available for public review and comment.

Biennial Report: The report was posted on Ecology web site in November. Karl noted that the report is focused on data for 2015-2016, but is cumulative in nature, covering 2010 –2016. Karl will be the lead in developing next report, which will focus on data from 2017-2019 and is scheduled to be finalized in Fall of 2020. Development and completion of the draft report will support development of the QAPP for the 10-Year Assessment. Stakeholder information and review of the draft report will be critical for informing data collection and methodology of the 10-Year Assessment. Ecology anticipates that the next Biennial Report will confirm the need for continued focus and need for NPS reductions.

Hangman Creek Settlement: The settlement has five main elements: riparian assessment, tillage watershed evaluation, livestock watershed evaluation, outreach and education and financial assistance. Mitch Redfern, who recently joined Ecology, is taking the lead on implementation. Initial annual contacting of landowners determined to have priority issues needing remedy occurred in 2018, and development of assessment activities is actively being planned and expected to be conducted this summer. Ecology is working with the Spokane Conservation District and others regarding outreach, education, technical assistance and financial assistance.

The 2018 landowner contacts resulted in projects being developed in Cottonwood Creek and California Creek; and not all contacts have responded to Ecology or agreed to develop remedies. Ecology determines when to bring further regulatory action on nonresponsive or noncompliant landowners on a case by case basis; there is no separate funding to support technical and financial assistance, e.g.—they must be identified from existing resources.

Stakeholder Updates

Treatment Plant Upgrade Schedule: Lisa walked through an SRSP matrix summarizing design and construction costs; annual operation and maintenance; and date (or projected date) of completion. Lisa noted the document continues to evolve as new information and an effort to assure summary information across projects uses consistent methodology. To date, total design and construction costs are reported at \$435.5m and annual operation at \$5.4m. Those with construction activities still in progress report they are on schedule to meet the completion year shown.

Nonpoint projects and Lake Spokane USGS Ground Water Study: Lake Spokane USGS preliminary information for Stevens County work is the same as what was reported at Annual Meeting. Due to government shutdown in January 2019, a published report is not expected until spring. Also due to government shutdown, Spokane Conservation District is on hold completing contract for Spokane County work with USGS.

Walt updated progress on “River Mile 17” project, which is providing 3,300 feet of bank restoration on Hangman Creek. They expect to be complete by this summer. He also noted RCPP funding and restoration work continue to move forward. Ecology 319 funding request for \$3.5m (\$3m in loan and

\$500k in grant) for nonpoint source reduction efforts in Hangman Creek was declined. This will significantly impair their ability to address Hangman Creek needs over the next biennium. They will work with Ecology to review why funding was not approved and consider options such as legislative request.

Per question, Walt clarified that phosphorus levels in Hangman Creek primarily occur from a combination of erosion and sediment loading. The flashiness of the system, storm events such as rain on snow and after effects of fires can result in large scale loss of streambanks and erosion. Their work, including edge of field monitoring, will be shared at the 2019 Spokane River Forum Conference.

Advisory Group Planning

ERO/EAP Coordination and Resources: Karl explained that Ecology's Environmental Assessment Program (EAP) is the "science arm" of the agency. It's an independent unit that services various Ecology program unit needs across the state. Cathrene is housed in Spokane and her work is currently focused on the Spokane River watershed. The Eastern Regional Office (ERO) has received a greater share of EAP resources over the past few years. Between now and field data collection for the 10-year assessment, ERO anticipates that EAP resources will be focused on other priority watersheds in Ecology's Central Region. Therefore, while baseline data collection work will continue, there is no bandwidth for additional studies or data collection. The exception would be a third party successfully receiving a grant or other form of sponsorship for a consensus monitoring project that collects data under an Ecology approved QAPP.

Roles and Responsibilities: The current list of members (primaries and alternates) was shared. In addition, the email list for who receives DO TMDL meeting notices and other information was shared. Stakeholders were asked to send Andy any edits, deletions or additions to both lists.

Karl reviewed the current schedule of activities. Over the next couple of years, efforts will focus on development of the next biennial report and development of the QAPP, budget and related materials for the 10-year assessment. The schedule assumes water treatment plant modernization and optimization, permit compliance and nonpoint source reduction efforts are on-going. A five-step process initially developed by Dave Knight was reviewed.

Questions and clarifications include that the literature search report would be mined for items and practices that can be integrated into 10-year assessment, and that Ecology anticipates a continued priority and focus on Hangman Creek monitoring and nonpoint source reduction efforts. Further, the DO TMDL Advisory Group is a function of Ecology implementation of the DO TMDL. Karl conveyed that there will be key points at which it will be critical to gain input from the members of the Advisory Committee, including input on the amount and quality of data being used, discussions about the model, and how we are measuring success. Ecology will provide specific windows for input and discussion leading up to the 10-year assessment, but Ecology is ultimately the decision-maker on timelines, studies, and regulatory decisions. In comparison, the Spokane River Regional Toxics Task Force functions under a different set of roles and responsibilities.

Relationship between 10-Year Assessment, nonpoint source reduction, and Ecology Water Quality Program Policy 1-11: Adriane led the group through how the DO TMDL, Policy 1-11 and the 10-year assessment function both independently and collectively to achieve water quality standards. Ecology administers all 3 parts to provide a regulatory framework, policies, procedures and data necessary to

monitor and achieve water quality standards. For more information on workings of Policy 1-11, Susan Braley from Ecology can be invited to a future meeting.

Within the context of meeting water quality standards, the TMDL implementation plan identifies: waste load allocations for point sources and load allocations for nonpoint sources; technologies and practices; and monitoring. The 10-year assessment for Spokane River DO TMDL monitors progress and informs adaptive management decisions. It does not modify the TMDL.

Ecology uses Policy 1-11 to evaluate and classify the status of waters as required by the Clean Water Act. Ecology periodically reviews water quality data and prepares stream listings based on whether or not the water meets water quality standards and/or there is a cleanup plan (TMDL or alternative) in place. A water that does not meet standards is placed on a 303(d) list. Cadmium, on the Spokane River, was given as an example of pollutant that was removed from 303(d) listing during the last evaluation using the Policy 1-11 procedure.

10-year Assessment: Cathrene reviewed the schedule and tasks to initiate 10-year assessment. Reports identified earlier in the meeting need to be complete to help inform the QAPP and future study needs. Planning, budgeting, QAPP and other needs are expected to occur through 3rd quarter (Q3) of 2021. The collection of data, modeling and assessment would occur from Q4 2021 through mid-2024, at which point a report is scheduled to be finalized.

A half-day workshop was proposed to review goals and objectives for 10-year assessment, identifying data needs and gaps, role of modeling, and related needs. A jumping off point would be a review of goals and objectives previously identified by the monitoring work group. The group reached consensus on this and a meeting will be scheduled for June. This would be the first of a series of input opportunities to inform the assessment.

2019 Meeting Schedule and Action Items

A doodle poll will be sent out to determine 10-year assessment workshop date in June.

Group discussed and agreed that Annual Meeting would then occur in the July—August time frame.

Spokane River Forum Conference will occur in April and provide more information on nonpoint source reduction and other topics of interest.