

Columbia River Toxics Reduction Working Group
Tuesday, July 17, 2007
City of Vancouver Water Resources Education Center
Vancouver, WA

Attendees:

Andrew Kolosseus, WADOE	Helen Rueda, EPA
Lyndal Johnson, NOAA	Jennifer Morace, USGS
Leyla Arsan, LCREP	Sondra Miller, Boise State
Lorraine Edmond, EPA	Jill Leary, LCREP
Agnes Lut, ODEQ	Tracie Nadeau, EPA
Ann Williamson, EPA	Mary Lou Soscia, EPA
Jay Davis, FWS	Summer Goodwin, EPA intern
Mike Cox, EPA	James Thomas, Yakama Nation
Socorro Rodriguez, EPA	Rachel Pecore, Columbia Riverkeeper
Yvonne Vallette, EPA	Joanne LaBaw, EPA
Linda Bingler, PNNL	Elena Nilsen, USGS

Next Meeting: Wednesday October 24, Location TBD

Purpose: Identify activities for development of the State of the River Report for Toxics and provide forum for subgroups to meet

Desired Outcomes:

- Clear understanding of needs for State of River Report for Toxics and discussion on potential indicators for Report
- Information exchange on several activities and issues within the Basin
- Receive updates from subgroups and have subgroups meet to discuss progress and future work

Announcement and Introduction:

- There will be a pesticide collection event in Milton Freewater on July 20 and a second event is planned for Hermiston in the fall.
- Lorraine Edmond reported that only a few applications have been submitted for the REMAP money and it was hoped that more would be submitted. They are due July 18th.
- LCREP report will be available soon.

The Group reviewed the April Action Items:

- Develop outline for state of the river report for toxics (today)
- Contaminant subgroup update (today)
- Data and sources subgroup meet to develop outline for work (today)
- Convene effects subgroup (today)

Overview of the Working Group Refresher

Goal: Prevent and reduce toxic levels in the CRB; this includes reducing toxics in the aquatic life that people eat and ensuring the survival, reproduction, and growth of fish and wildlife

Purpose

- Information exchange, Provide work products, Facilitate securing resources, and Provide recommendations

Structure: Steering Committee, Subgroups, and large Working Group

Steering Committee: Provide direction for working group (representatives from LCREP, USGS, Yakama Nation, NPPC, WADOE, ODEQ, NOAA, FWS, WADOH, and EPA.)

Subgroups: Contaminant and media; Data; Sources; Effects; Monitoring design; and State of the River for Toxics. Large groups meet quarterly and subgroups meet as needed. Rotate venues. Majority of resources at this time is staff time.

Presentations (see power points on website):

Contaminants and Potential Effects on the Reproductive Physiology of White Sturgeon from the Columbia River (Gene Foster - ODEQ)

Yakama Reservation Irrigation: Best Management Practices Demonstration Project (James Thomas - Yakama Nation)

State of the River Report for Toxics by Mary Lou Soscia and Mike Cox, EPA.

- Mary Lou provided background on the rationale behind developing the report
- Ann Williamson provided information about possible funding for the report and other efforts
- EPA will provide \$50K and is working with another government entity to secure an additional \$75K.
- In addition there is the REMAP funds \$384K and other possibilities include projects via EPA's Office of Research and Development (~200K).
- Discussed the outline for the report (see attachment). The report will include the Snake River. Idaho is an active partner in this effort. And there will be a communications plan that goes along with the report.
- Discussion on what the report will address and the need to refine the questions that will be addressed. Some questions may not be answerable.
- Report should understandable by the public and useable for decision makers.
- People who want to know more information can drill down via the website report.
- Battelle is the OWOW contractor for many of these reports so the idea is that they could hit the ground running. Parts would be written by Battelle, EPA and WG members. The contractor would work to smooth all of the pieces together.
- Discussion on the scope of the contractor work.
- EPA will share draft scope of work with the working group. Mary Lou proposed that the first phase of the report includes (scope of work):

Contaminants and media subgroup report (Andrew Kolosseus, WADOE et al)

- Andrew K. presented the updates from the last meeting
- The prioritization rationale was updated to reflect changes that the group made at the last meeting and the subgroup meetings. Contaminants of Concern are pretty much summed up by the subgroup's work and this can be used for the report.
- Will add sidebars in State of the River Report on emerging contaminants or contaminants we know the public is concerned with.
- Current members include: Andrew Kolosseus, Lorraine Edmond, Jill Leary, Greg Furher, Jennifer Morace, Lyndal Johnson, Elena Nilsen, Helen Rueda, and Rachel Pecore

Data subgroup report (Helen Rueda, EPA, et al.)

- Helen Rueda presented the status of the data subgroup.
- For the report the subgroups would like to have graphs and maps and also for the website. For the spreadsheet it should include data from tributaries, but right now it is just main stem. The 200 miles between Grand Coulee and Vernita Bridge is the greatest data gap as far as data points.
- Helen discussed the areas they need the most help with are: evaluating datasets available for each Tier 1 contaminant; determining which data sets are usable; data quality; value of data in assessing larger picture; evaluating which data is comparable; and help with chemistry questions
- Current members include: Helen Rueda, Jennifer Morace, Jay Field, John Sands, Matt Gubitosa, Jill Leary, John Piccininni, Curtis Cude, James Thomas, and Chris Newmiller

Sources subgroup (Lorraine Edmond, EPA, et al.)

- Lorraine discussed the overall direction for the sources subgroup and presented several options for moving forward.
- Group discussed whether to look at sector by sector or by contaminant and how to break up into smaller work products
- There was also discussion on the overlap of the data and sources subgroups
- Need help with Major gaps: Major tributaries, CSO and storm water
- Current members include: Linda Bingler, Brent Foster, Kevin Masterson, Joanne LaBaw, Elena Nilsen, Agnes Lut, Mike Watson, John Sands, Andrew Kolosseus, and Helen Rueda

Effects Group Report (Mike Cox, EPA, et al.)

- Discussed potential indicators, but generally we won't have trend data but we could look at levels as compared with other data from the region outside of the main stem.
- Discuss convening a ½ day meeting to discuss potential indicators for State of the River Report. Current members include: Dave McBride, Liz Carr, Jay Davis, Agnes Lut, Lyndal Johnson, Rachel Pecore, and Tracie Nadeau

Direction

- We had a general discussion on direction for the different subgroups
- We discuss whether we should start with the contaminants one by one and whether we should combine several of the different subgroups (e.g., sources and data)?
- Decided to concentrate on mercury first and we stay with the three distinct groups separately for the next meeting (sources, data and effects separately).

Action Items for next meeting

- Subgroups will concentrate on mercury and will come to next meeting prepared to discuss findings (All)
- EPA will develop a Scope of Work for the State of River Contract and share with working group (Tracie and Mary Lou)
- EPA will convene a small group to discuss possible indicators for State of the River Report (Mike)
- EPA will provide a definition of what is included in for PBDEs, DDTs, and PCBs (Mike)
- Rachel volunteered to join effects subgroup. Elena, Jennifer, Sondra, and Agnes volunteered to join the sources subgroup