

Panhandle Basin Advisory Group
 Idaho Department of Fish and Game
 Coeur d'Alene, Idaho DEQ
 December 11, 2007
 Final Meeting Notes

Members and Alternates Present	Guests Present
Scott Fields, CdA Tribe	Serena Carlson, IFA
Jack Filipowski, Agriculture	Tyson Clyne, DEQ
Mike Mihelich, Environmental Alternate	Jamie Davis, IASCD/ISCC
Robert Rider, Livestock	Bob Flagor, KSSWCD
Vince Rinaldi, Water Based Recreation	Donna Harvey, DEQ
W.C. Rust, Mining	Tom Herron, DEQ
Ruth Watkins, Representative at Large	Kristin Keith, DEQ
	Glen Pettit, DEQ
	Glen Rothrock, DEQ
	Robert Steed, DEQ
	Kajsa Stromberg, DEQ

Call to Order and Introductions: The meeting was called to order at 9:10 AM on December 11, 2007 at Idaho Department of Fish and Game meeting room in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho by Chairman, Scott Fields. Scott introduced Mr. Vince Rinaldi, the new Water Based Recreation BAG member. Mr. Rinaldi told the group that he was a native of the Silver Valley and that he had attended College of Idaho where he obtained his degree. He has worked for the Lucky Friday Mine, organized economic development projects in the Valley, worked as a consultant, and is now a Shoshone County Commissioner. Scott next introduced Tom Herron, who has taken over from Ed Tulloch as Water Quality Manager in the Coeur d'Alene regional office. Tom comes from Idaho Falls where he was a TMDL writer, working in grazing and urban areas. He has a master's in fisheries and is originally from Michigan.

Additions to the Agenda: Another agenda item that was added was term ending for three members. Ruth said that she would not be continuing as a BAG member. Terms for the Environmental and Timber member, Liz and Reid are also up, but they were not present.

The BAG has been without a Water Based Recreation member for some time and the term limit was not set for this position. Bill made a motion to make the Water Based Recreation member's term three years. Ruth seconded the motion; the motion passed.

Rob made a motion to approve the October minutes. Ruth seconded the motion; the motion passed.

North Fork Coeur d'Alene River Watershed Advisory Group: Kajsa Stromberg presented a Power Point presentation on the TMDLs for the North Fork of the Coeur

d'Alene River. The watershed is huge, 895 square miles and the TMDL will cover the entire HUC, comprised of 1,100 miles of streams. The beneficial uses of the North Fork are: cold water aquatic life, salmonids spawning, primary/secondary contact recreation, domestic water supply, Special Resource Water, agricultural and industrial water supplies, wildlife habitat and aesthetics.

DEQ has placed 31 temperature data loggers in the watershed and DEQ has also obtained some temperature data that the United State Forest Service (USFS) has collected over the past 9 years. The existing sediment TMDL was approved by EPA in 2001. DEQ needs to develop TMDLs for some streams for metals and temperature. Three drainages are impaired for metals: Beaver, Eagle and Prichard Creeks. Approximately 750 miles of Subbasin streams are impaired for high water temperature.

The North Fork Coeur d'Alene River WAG has been a recognized WAG since August of 2007. Four WAG meetings have been held. All of the presentations, plus other information on the North Fork Watershed appear on DEQ's website. Kajsa has flagged the newest information with a red "new" sign so that visitors to the website can immediately access the latest information. The Coeur d'Alene River Preservation Group, which is another North Fork-focused group, is concerned with an increase in human activity on the North Fork. Several bacteria assessments were done, but the bacteria count was below the standard for human health risk.

At the first meeting in 2008, the North Fork WAG will hear focus on implications of temperature TMDLs and strategies for meaningful implementation. The WAG will review proposed projects to improve water quality. The Temperature TMDL should go out for public comment in the spring of 2008. The regional DEQ staff is reviewing the metals TMDLs. There are some issues that DEQ and EPA need to resolve concerning metals criteria in the watershed. The five year review of the original Subbasin assessment and TMDL will be on the agenda also. Kajsa plans at least three tours of the watershed with members of the WAG. Glen Rothrock has promised to go over the Watershed Professionals' Report on the North Fork so that it can be presented to the WAG.

Bill Rust mentioned that one problem encountered by landowners in the North Fork Watershed is that they cannot get permits to do water quality improvement projects. Kajsa said that the WAG wants to open up dialogue between stakeholders and agencies to facilitate the permit process. Lines of communication have been opened between the various entities interested in the North Fork Watershed, and DEQ is hopeful that solutions can be found to address problems in the watershed.

Pend Oreille Subbasin TMDL Status: This includes all tributaries to Pend Oreille Lake and all tributaries to the river. These TMDLs were due December of 2007. The 5 year review cycle will begin immediately and should be done in two years. A description of the TMDLs in this subbasin appears below.

Temperature TMDLs: 35 Assessment Units had TMDLs developed by DEQ's Technical Services using Potential Natural Vegetation methods. EPA's participation in this effort resulted in North Idaho shade curves. DEQ has had to work with less specific shade curves for other areas, but for this Assessment Unit, unique shade curves for the forests of this area were developed. The work was done by an EPA contractor as support for DEQ. Different shade curves were written for the nine different land types. This work will be most important in the implementation phase as it gives the people working on implementation projects a useful tool with which to work. The WAG has approved sending these TMDLs on to State Office.

Nutrient TMDLs: The Pack River and tributaries to the Pack River have been identified as impaired with "unknown causes." Robert Steed handed a list of creeks with assessment unit numbers and "pollutant(s) likely causing impairment" listed. Among the likely stressors are sediment, temperature, and nutrients.

Nutrient TMDLs have been done for Pack River and also a Nearshore TMDL for around Pend Oreille Lake. DEQ did not have enough data to realistically complete other TMDLs. Tyson did develop a temperature TMDL for Pack River. This TMDL did not generate much comment.

Sediment TMDLs in the Pend Oreille Tributaries: DEQ technical staff were validating if the method they were using for sediment TMDLs was the best possible method. With an EPA grant, DEQ hired a contractor to assess DEQ's methodology. The contractor took a look at how DEQ wrote their sediment TMDLs. The result was that DEQ was given the chance to ask the difficult questions of the contractor, Parsons. Parsons and EPA validated DEQ's method for the development of sediment TMDLs.

For the sediment, nutrients and temperature TMDLs in this watershed, the WAG established technical group to perform WAG review for these TMDLs. This group has given the go-ahead for DEQ to ask the BAG for their approval to send these TMDLs on to State Office. Ruth made a motion to send these TMDLs to State Office. Jack seconded the motion; the motion passed.

Pend Oreille River Temperature TMDL: Overall, temperature is cooler now than it would be under natural conditions. There are a few areas where temperature exceeds Idaho water quality standards criteria and the river is warmer than the river would be under natural conditions. However, progress on this TMDL has come to a halt. Many issues divide the participants, most of which came to light after the draft version of the TMDL appeared. Numerous comments were received concerning 62 issues and DEQ is sorting out the comments and attempting to respond to them. Combined waste water dischargers want the TMDL to include a larger reserve for their future growth. The entities involved include the Kalispel Tribe, Seattle Power and Light, the State of Washington's DOE (Department of Ecology), Idaho's DEQ, plus the cities in the watershed, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the Albeni Falls Dam.

DEQ has made an effort to keep lines of communication open and to keep the product of their studies in front of the working groups and the public as work progresses in this negotiation. DEQ is using websites to keep WAGs and the public informed of the process and DEQ is hopeful that the public will become accustomed to using these websites.

Coeur d'Alene Lake Management Plan: Coeur d'Alene DEQ office staff and the Coeur d'Alene Tribe have been under a negotiation process that is under the umbrella of the U.S. Institute of Environmental Conflict Resolution. A neutral third party was assigned to facilitate the process. The Operable Unit 3 Agreement between the EPA and State of Idaho states that the Coeur d'Alene Lake and metals residing on the lakebed could be excluded from CERCLA remedy if a viable Coeur d'Alene Lake Management Plan could be written and agreed upon.

Glen Rothrock expects a draft of this lake plan to be ready early in 2008. This draft will then go to the stakeholders, including counties, cities, agencies, and the public. The draft is approximately 60-70% finished at this point in time. In October, DEQ held ten separate stakeholder meetings and sent draft products to the participants ahead of time. Representatives of cities, counties, environmental groups, chambers of commerce and legislators were allowed to voice their opinions.

The Coeur d'Alene Tribe and DEQ have taken over the sampling on Coeur d'Alene Lake that had been done by USGS in the past. The Tribe is doing the south part of the lake and DEQ's Glen Rothrock and Glen Pettit are doing the north part of the lake. At this time, DEQ is seeking funding for a second year of sampling in 2008.

The neutral third party took a survey of people with varied interests around the lake. The information gathered illustrated that many people were unaware of water quality in the lake or often had conflicting information. The consultant suggested that this situation was counterproductive to producing a lake plan. The Coeur d'Alene Tribe and DEQ put together a Power Point presentation that informed people about the water quality in the lake from data collected as early as 1975 to the present. The presentation, entitled "State of the Lake" has been shown three times over the last month as part of the community outreach effort. Some of the areas covered include what water quality standards are and how metals affect the lake.

Interest in obtaining the Power Point presentation was expressed by a BAG member. Glen Rothrock said he would make sure the presentation was put on the website so that the public and public agency representatives could access it.

Fish Creek TMDL: 14,000 acres reside in the Upper Spokane watershed. DEQ decided to split the TMDL process because there were different problems in the various small watersheds. Fish Creek watershed includes land owned by Inland Empire Paper Company. Fish Creek is a third order stream, and its smaller tributaries are second order streams. Fish creek is impaired for sediment, bacteria, and temperature. The tributaries are listed for temperature and sediment. Five WAG meetings have been held with

varying attendance. The TMDL is at the technical editing stage in State Office. After the WAG reviews the TMDL, the document will go out for either a 30 day or a 45 day public review, depending on the WAG's wishes.

Lower Clark Fork TMDL: The Idaho portion of the TMDL was approved by EPA in October of this year. The impairments include metals, TDG (total dissolved gas), temperature, and sediment. Another issue that has come up is that Lightning Creek drainage has been radically altered due to a severe storm one year ago. The Forest Service is proposing to fix one part of the drainage, but leave the other part as nature has formed it due to lack of funding needed to fix the entire watershed. The Forest Service will be asking for comments on their proposal for the Lightning Creek restoration.

319 Grant Applications: Tyson Clyne outlined the efforts made by DEQ to train applicants in the computerized 319 process. Fifteen applicants attended the training in Coeur d'Alene. There are 7 pre-applications from the Northern Idaho region alone. Last year there were none. Nineteen pre-applications have been received statewide. The final application is due February 8, 2008. The State Office will then send the passing applications to the BAG to judge and prioritize. The Chair usually travels to Boise for the "Super BAG" meeting that prioritizes projects statewide, sometime in the spring. Scott Fields said that last year the main sticking point was the sediment load reductions had been calculated using many methods, some not making sense. The message from the State Office and BAG Chairs was that sediment calculations need to use approved methods and they need to be realistic for projects to be accepted.

2007-2008 BURP Season: Glen Pettit, BURP Coordinator, said that the 2007 season was spent supporting temperature TMDLs and ground proofing for the Potential Natural Vegetation Method. Fourteen sites were done consisting of 9 randomly selected sites and 5 trend sites. In 2008, the St. Joe, St. Maries, Kootenai and Moyie Rivers, and Hangman Creek will be sampled by the BURP crew.

Next Meeting: The next BAG meeting was scheduled on March 12, 2008 at Idaho Department of Fish and Game, 2750 Kathleen Avenue, in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho from 9-noon.

Rob made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ruth seconded the motion; the motion passed and the meeting was adjourned.

