

**Panhandle Basin Advisory Group**  
 Idaho Department of Fish and Game  
 Coeur d'Alene, Idaho DEQ  
 September 12, 2006  
 Final Meeting Notes

Reid Ahlf—Forestry	Jenna Borovansky—DEQ
Fred Brackebusch—Mining	Mark Compton—Congressman Otter's Office
Glenda Empsall—Non Municipal Permittee	Tyson Clyne—DEQ
Scott Fields—Coeur d'Alene Tribe	Donna Harvey—DEQ
Jack Filipowski—Agriculture	Robbin Simmons—DEQ
Patty Perry—Kootenai Tribe	Robert Steed—DEQ
Robert Rider—Livestock	Ed Tulloch—DEQ
Liz Sedler—Environmental Representative	
Ruth Watkins—Representative at Large	

The meeting was called to order at 9:05 am on September 12, 2006 at Idaho Department of Fish and Game's conference room in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho by Chairman Liz Sedler.

Members and guests introduced themselves. Ruth Watkins made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from the May 2006 meeting of the BAG. Robert Rider seconded the motion; the motion passed.

**Watershed Advisory Group Updates:** House bill 145, passed in the last legislative session, required that Watershed Advisory Groups (WAGs) be formed for every watershed requiring a TMDL. Also in the bill was a list of interests that must be represented on the WAGs. DEQ's intent is to develop TMDLs as quickly as possible in order to meet the court deadline, but at the same time, to meet the intent of HB145.

**Upper Hangman WAG formation:** Tyson Clyne outlined his efforts to form a WAG for the Upper Hangman watershed. Tyson sent out an informative letter to watershed interests along with a survey of participation in the WAG and the TMDL process. Out of 16 letters and surveys sent, 11 surveys were returned. The first meeting was held on August 2 at Tensed City Hall. Not every attendee wanted to be nominated to the WAG, but their interests and concerns will be addressed. A livestock representative is needed for this WAG and Jack Filipowski and Rob Rider will try to interest one of their colleagues in participating on this WAG at the next industry meeting to be held in Post Falls in the coming weeks.

**North Fork Coeur d'Alene River WAG formation:** Robbin Simmons is assisting Glen Rothrock with this WAG. Letters and surveys were sent out to potential interested parties in anticipation of forming a N. Fork Coeur d'Alene River WAG this fall. The response to the letter was good. The focus has been to find local residents to participate in this group along with agency people. One interest that the group feels is missing, is

the ATV (All Terrain Vehicle) interest as ATVs have had a significant impact in this watershed. There are a large number of interested stakeholders, but DEQ recognizes that when more than one person represents an interest, such as livestock, the WAG will have to decide who will be the voting member. This will be discussed when the WAG creates its operating procedures.

Two handouts to the BAG listed the potential members for the Upper Hangman and the North Fork Coeur d'Alene River WAGs. Ruth Watkins made a motion to approve the Upper Hangman WAG along with a recommendation to be included in the motion to continue to seek a livestock representative. Scott Fields seconded the motion; the motion passed.

Ruth Watkins made a motion to approve the North Fork Coeur d'Alene River WAG with a recommendation to be included in the motion to continue to seek ATV representation. Fred Brackebusch seconded the motion; the motion passed.

**Pend Oreille WAG:** The Pend Oreille WAG has been appointed by the Director. The major focus of the participants on this WAG has been the main stem river temperature and TDG (Total Dissolved Gas) TMDLs. These TMDLs are being developed in partnership with the Washington Department of Ecology, Kalispel Tribe and the EPA. DEQ recognizes that all of the appointees to the Pend Oreille WAG may not have interest in all Idaho tributaries where other TMDLs for sediment, temperature, and nutrients are being developed. DEQ recommended forming a tributary working group to advise the WAG on TMDLs for the tributaries. The tributary group would meet in the morning before an afternoon session of the Pend Oreille WAG. That way, participants could choose to attend one session or both sessions. Also, existing watershed groups (e.g. Pack River Watershed Council) would be notified of all work planned in their watersheds, so that they could attend tributary sessions.

Some ideas on this WAG concept include sending a letter and survey to all possible interested parties and/or holding an informational open house. The Coeur d'Alene DEQ does not have the staff necessary to interact and support effectively with more than one WAG in the Pend Oreille Watershed, but the Coeur d'Alene DEQ can provide the technical staff to interact with one large group serving the many small tributaries in the Pend Oreille Watershed.

Patty Perry brought up concerns that the official Pend Oreille WAG is made up of Washington interests as well as Idaho, and that Washington members could possibly vote on Idaho TMDLs. Ruth said that the group has met in Newport, Washington twice and so more Washington people attended, but the next meeting is planned to take place in Idaho. The group is made up of approximately ½ Washington members and ½ Idaho members.

Patty said that there are many interests from Long Bridge in Sandpoint to the Idaho-Washington border and that these interests need to be represented. She also said that the Kootenais have an interest in some of the tributaries to the Pend Oreille. Scott Fields

suggested that the Kootenais seek a position on the Pend Oreille WAG. Liz said that both the Kootenais and Coeur d'Alenes have a seat on the BAG and that there is no reason that both tribes could not both have a seat on the Pend Oreille WAG. After some discussion, Ed offered to seek a legal opinion on the question of Washington members of the Pend Oreille WAG voting on Idaho issues, that is, if it is possible or legal.

Discussion followed on the subject of the Pend Oreille WAG operation. Some members felt that the issues for the tributaries could be too diverse to be addressed by one group and that several small WAGs may work better. Reid Ahlf said that smaller WAGs would also follow better what the local interest groups are doing and could keep these groups informed on TMDL issues in their respective watersheds.

**Clark Fork Watershed Advisory Group:** An additional person joined the Clark Fork WAG after the BAG's approval of the WAG's membership. Patty Perry made a motion to approve Liz Sedler as a Clark Fork WAG member. Reid Ahlf seconded the motion; the motion passed.

### **TMDL Status Updates**

**Kootenai-Moyie TMDL:** The Kootenai-Moyie TMDL is finished and has gone through many reviewers. DEQ is asking for the BAG's approval to send this TMDL to State Office. The public comment began May 15, a public meeting was held May 23, and the 45 day public comment period began on June 23. EPA has been included in the process all along, so this TMDL should be approved quickly.

Robert Rider made a motion to submit the TMDL to DEQ's State Office. Ruth Watkins seconded the motion; the motion passed.

**Lower Clark Fork TMDL:** The main stem of the Clark Fork River's temperature TMDL has been deferred with EPA's approval. The State of Montana is not ready to address temperature at this time. DEQ will wait until the next 5-year cycle to address temperature on the main stem.

Jenna Borovansky told the BAG that temperature TMDLs were written for all the tributaries to the Lower Clark Fork River and sediment TMDLs were written for the Lightning Creek drainage.

Patty Perry made a motion to send the Lower Clark Fork TMDL out for public comment. Jack Filipowski seconded the motion; the motion passed.

**Pend Oreille TMDL:** A list of all completed and in progress TMDLs in the Pend Oreille Basin was provided. Over 20 streams will be addressed.

**Sand Creek:** DEQ did some reconnaissance monitoring for VOCs (volatile organic compounds), oil and grease, benzene and other pollutants at Sand Creek at 5 stations in

downtown Sandpoint. A major concern in Sandpoint is the leaking underground storage tank at the former Gas 'n Go filling station. Liz Sedler and Ruth Watkins expressed interest in being sent copies of the results when they are available.

**Sediment Modeling:** A contractor has been working on sediment modeling process in the Pend Oreille tributaries.

Reid Ahlf said that there should be more consistency in modeling the streams. Bob Steed said that each stream is unique and that the sediment model is specific to each stream. On the Kootenai, DEQ looked at development for the first time in the state to calculate sediment load. Fred Brackebusch said that he believes natural condition sediment load has been underestimated.

### **Pend Oreille River Modeling**

**Portland State University:** Portland State University has been working with DEQ to create hydrodynamic and temperature models, and to run 8 temperature scenarios for the Pend Oreille River. The contractor is using The Potential Natural Vegetation method to determine tributary influences to temperature in the river. Portland State will use these technologies in their report to DEQ. Bob Steed said that the Pend Oreille WAG had some concerns about the use of Shade Curves.

**Upper Hangman Creek TMDL:** Only 10,000 acres lie within the State of Idaho's jurisdiction in the Upper Hangman Creek Watershed. The remainder of the lands in the watershed are governed by the Coeur d'Alene Tribe and the State of Washington. Forested land and agricultural lands lie in Idaho's portion of the watershed. Draft TMDLs were done by DEQ's technical service for sediment, temperature, and bacteria. The creek will be delisted for nutrients. The next meeting will be September 20 at the Tensed City Hall. Beneficial Uses and Idaho's Water Quality Standards will be reviewed. In October, the Hangman WAG will review the draft TMDL and make comments. In November, the draft TMDL is scheduled to go out for public comment.

**The DEQ web-based resource for water quality issues:** Now the public and the BAG and WAGs have access to draft documents, BAG issues and WAG progress via a web-based water quality site. The BAG members were sent the website address in July via Email. Ruth has used the site and was favorably impressed.

**Upper Spokane TMDL:** A WAG has not been formed for this watershed. Some of the same issues that face the Pend Oreille are present in this watershed. The Spokane River has multiple issues which are being addressed in the relicensing of the Post Falls Dam. However, Fish Creek, which is in the Twin Lakes watershed, has totally different issues than other creeks in the watershed, and forming just one WAG may not work. DEQ has hired a contractor to develop a sediment TMDL for Fish Creek. Technical Services in State Office will work on temperature TMDLs.

**North Fork Coeur d'Alene River TMDL:** A sediment TMDL was approved by EPA in 2002. A grant provided for a watershed assessment in 2004 and a contractor is doing an

assessment and inventory of hydrologic modifications on the North Fork. Letters and a survey have been sent to interested parties and volunteers have come forward to be members of a North Fork Coeur d'Alene WAG. Temperature and metals TMDLs are scheduled for Beaver and Prichard Creeks by the end of 2007. The first meeting of the North Fork WAG will be scheduled in late fall of this year.

**Integrated Report:** Previous 303(d) lists (lists of impaired waters of the state) took ½ year to be approved by EPA. The 2004-2006 list took much longer as negotiations between the State of Idaho and EPA were lengthy. Not all assessments have been completed for the 2006 list, resulting in a possible delay in the appearance of the 2006 Integrated Report. DEQ uses the last available approved list when doing TMDLs. However, when DEQ knows of an impairment that is not listed, DEQ will go ahead and prepare to do a TMDL in anticipation of the waterbody being listed for the pollutant.

**319 Grant Update:** Dave Pisarski of DEQ's State Office has taken over the 319 Grant program. He has listened to the previous participants in the state and has streamlined the process. The application process forms are now online. There will be training across the state for the newest version of the 319 application process. The closest available training will be on October 4<sup>th</sup> in Moscow. Also, five 319 projects in Northern Idaho will be audited by State Office this month.

**BURP 2006:** Of the 64 sites planned for BURP this summer, 21 could not be sampled due to inaccessibility, no flow or low flow of streams. Included in this season's BURP sampling were 5 sites on Blue Joe Creek in Boundary County to determine the effectiveness of a mine remediation done two years ago, and electrofishing on the Coeur d'Alene River to evaluate bank stability in areas where the banks have been stabilized. DEQ State Office sampled large rivers, including the Moyie, Kootenai, Coeur d'Alene, and the St. Joe. Patty Perry requested the data for the Kootenai and Moyie. Scott would like a copy of the St. Joe and Coeur d'Alene data, and Liz would like a copy of all BURP data for 2006.

**WAG Funding:** The legislature appropriates \$17,000.00 annually to help WAGs finance meetings. This money can be used for room rent, hiring someone to take minutes, etc. Local Soil and Water Conservation Districts or the Soil Conservation Commission staff can help WAGs with their applications for this money.

**BAG Terms Ending:** BAG terms for livestock, Kootenai Tribe, Non municipal permittee and local government are expiring in December of 2006. Rob Rider said that he would like to serve another term as the livestock representative. Patty Perry volunteered to serve another term for the Kootenai Tribe as well. A letter will be sent to Dan Dinning, local government representative, asking him to name an alternate as he has missed several meetings.

**Next BAG Meeting:** The next BAG meeting will be January 17, 2007 at Idaho Department of Fish and Game in Coeur d'Alene from 9 am until noon.

Chairman Liz Sedler adjourned the meeting at noon.