

Panhandle Basin Advisory Group
 Department of Environmental Quality
 2110 Ironwood Parkway
 Coeur d'Alene, Idaho DEQ
 August 5th, 2015
Draft Minutes

Members and Alternates Present	Guests Present
Melissa Driskell – BAG Mining Alternate	Tom Herron - DEQ
Dan Dinning – Local Government	Kristie McEnroe - DEQ
Adrienne Cronebaugh - Environmental	Kajsa Van de Riet - DEQ
Vince Renaldi – Water Based Recreation	Kristin Larson - DEQ
Ward Cooper – Non-Municipal Permittee	Bob Steed - DEQ
Patty Perry – Kootenai Tribe	
Scott Fields – Coeur d'Alene Tribe	
Kennon McClintock - Timber	

The Panhandle Basin Advisory Group (BAG) meeting was called to order at 9:04 a.m. by Dan Dinning at the Department of Environmental Quality, in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. Introductions were made around the room. The minutes from the May 6th meeting were reviewed. A motion to approve minutes was made by Kennon McClintock and seconded by Patty Perry, motion passed.

319 Applications for 2015 – Kristin Larson & Tom Herron

To date there are no applications for the 319 grant. The few that had turned in applications have pulled them. The deadline was this past Friday. The state office may have received some and Kristin should be getting an update from them soon.

Hazardous Algal Blooms – Bob Steed

This year has been a unique year in terms of the amount of water and climatic conditions, the results of those conditions being the harmful algae blooms we've had. Normally there is a fall bloom that occurs at the end of the summer that doesn't impact the recreation season as long. In 2007 DEQ set up a monitoring program to track the blooms. Every year since the start of monitoring the blooms are occurring more often and lasting longer. This is not unique to Idaho or even North Idaho. They are seeing this trend nationally. Blue-green algae are in the water all the time, they are always present but with the proper conditions they bloom. The blooms are a form of cyanobacteria and cyanobacteria is a bloom green in color. It is the only bacteria that also has the ability to photosynthesize and when conditions of the water are right they reproduce and rapidly. When the bacteria breaks down it emits the toxin so it can be in the water even when the algae is not visible. Bob showed the BAG a presentation on the algal blooms which explained the different toxins and photos of surface scum. During sampling bacteria counts are

taken; and if the bacteria reach over 140 cells per milliliter DEQ contacts PHD and a health advisory is issued. On each of the public health advisories we take hundreds of calls from the public with health concerns. There have been no documented human deaths due to the toxins but the risk is there. DEQ continues to sample and monitor and once the bacterial counts are at a safe level the health advisories are lifted.

TMDL Updates:

Spokane River Low Flow and Metals TMDL Update – Bob Steed

Coeur d'Alene never made it to full pool this year, which affects the Spokane River flow. Avista cut the flow back to the dam because of drought conditions.

DEQ does not have time at present to service a Spokane River Metals TMDL WAG so it is on hold until possibly fall. Bob has contacted the list of WAG applicants and has interested parties to fill the interest vacancies.

South Fork Coeur d'Alene River TMDL Progress – Kajsa Van de Riet

The South Fork TMDL has been on hold this summer in order to deal with other projects. They are working on getting a sampling plan for the temperature TMDL shade monitoring that needs to be done and gearing up to start monitoring this fall.

Restoration Partnership – Kajsa Van de Riet

The Restoration Plan for the Coeur d'Alene Basin is now going into the phase of developing an environmental impact statement. After which the draft Plan and draft EIS will come out for public review and comment. The plan was to shoot for the end of this year but it looks to be closer to the beginning of 2016.

NFCDA WAG Update – Kajsa Van de Riet

Kajsa shared a project that the Forest Service has been working on with the BAG. It has been going on for several years. This summer members of the WAG were able to volunteer to help out. A lot of the streams in this project were deemed sediment impaired in the 1990's and the Little North Fork was one of those. The Sediment TMDLs were approved by EPA in 2002; the Temperature TMDLs were approved in 2014, both being big drivers in this project. The project was supported by the WAG the entire way through. They are now in the fourth year of implementation. The actual project itself is to assess, plan and implement restoration activities that will improve the ecological conditions of this part of the watershed. The Forest Service has set this area as a high priority. From the early 1900's to the 1940's, there was a lot of harvesting activity in that area that added to the sediment problems. Some of the practices they have put into place are road decommissioning if the road is less than 300 feet from a stream. If they are not within 300 feet they have been excavated, the culverts removed and the rest of the road prism water barred. The floodplain restoration includes removal of non-necessary railroad dikes. They started to implement in 2012 and since then have decommissioned 97 miles of road, 51 of those

were fully re-contoured, enhanced 26 miles of stream habitat, placed more the 1,800 pieces of large woody debris and excavated 140 channel crossings. Not only have there been environmental impacts but also local economic impacts. In 2014 they employed 65 local contractors on site and rented over 26 pieces of heavy equipment, spending almost \$500,000 on the rental of that equipment. To date they have about 85% of the 22,000 acre project done.

The North Idaho Fly Casters hosted the Annual Conservation Festival this year in June. They had more than 80 volunteers show up. They planted white pine, larch and cedar trees on one of the sites and they went back in July and most of the trees were still alive.

At the end of July the WAG hosted a tour of the watershed. They invited members of the Idaho Panhandle Forest Collaborative, some of the members from the Restoration Partnership and the Bottom Canyon Project to view the implementation projects that have been done on the North Fork, some of which are planned for the Bottom Canyon Project.

There is some work still needed. There is some stream channel work and a plan to relocate a road that is down by Horsehaven.

EPA Measures 27 and 28 to identify deliverable TMDL products through 2022 – Tom Herron

Tom gave a quick overview on the EPA water quality measures 27 and 28. They are still in development. These are the most recent measures that have been added to the TMDL measures that EPA measures and reviews. It is an inventory of what the support status of streams are, the number of plans that have been developed, what plans have been implemented and has there been an effect yet. The measures are also referred to as the EPA TMDL Vision document. It is developed by the TMDL peer group and is part of the Performance Partnership Agreement. The measures can be found at: http://water.epa.gov/resource_performance/planning/FY-2015-NWPG-Measure-Definitions-Water-Quality.cfm

DEQ Updates:

Lake Coeur d'Alene Management Plan - Tom Herron

The Lake Management Plan (LMP) staff has been out doing some scubas transects for milfoil recently and have found Eurasian Water Milfoil in Mica, Windy and Wolf Lodge Bay. They will continue to coordinate with the Department of Agriculture for them to work into a treatment prescription.

The first Local Gem recipient will be awarded at the Upbeat Breakfast at the Coeur d'Alene Chamber of Commerce in late August. We've had a couple nominations for that. A few nominees include; the Moose Drool project, the SEEP program and IdaH20.

LMP is working with the Girl Scouts to implement beneficial shoreline landscaping on Windy Bay. And they are getting ready for both the Bonner County fair and the Kootenai County Fair outreach.

Rule Making Updates on Fish Tissue Consumption and Use Attainability Analysis – Tom Herron

The fish tissue consumption rule goes back to 2005 when DEQ developed alternative to fish tissue consumption levels. In 2005 the level was 7 grams. DEQ bumped that up to 17 grams. Now in 2015 the survey has been completed. It was targeted to interact with 4,500 individuals; they got about 2,500 but that met the minimum statistical needs to complete the survey. This was a parallel process with the Tribes. The survey targeted Idaho fish and hatchery rainbow trout even though they are raised in controlled conditions. The fish feed could be a source of PCB's. Ultimately the survey outcome came out last month. Tomorrow from 8am to 2pm there is a negotiated rulemaking to finalize it so it can be on the legislative docket by September 6th to move ahead to official rule making to set the fish consumption rate that would equate to the level of toxins.

The Use Attainability Analysis (UAA) is required by the anti-deg water quality standards. It protects beneficial use for Waters of the US that are identified under the Clean Water Act. The Federal Government wants a UAA for all the waters that are private and/or manmade but the state doesn't have the authority to designate jurisdictional waters. EPA promulgated in 1977 a federal rule for Idaho which provides for fishable and swimmable private waters. EPA cannot withdraw the federal rule; their perception is that DEQ would need to do a UAA to change the assumptions of fishable and swimmable waters. Any Watershed Advisory Group or Basin Advisory Group can request a UAA. The public comment period has ended for the UAA but it is still a work in progress.

BURP Update – Tom Herron

Tom passed out a map that indicated the areas the BURP crew has focused on. He believes even with the low flows and elevated temperatures that they should be able to reasonably meet their objectives.

CVMP Monitoring Overview – Tom Herron

DEQ is continuing to do the Citizen Volunteer Monitoring Program. (CVMP) DEQ has been getting some good data back from that program regarding Blue-green algae blooms, temperature and oxygen levels. The data will be summarized in the fall or winter and then will have a meeting in March with the lake associations to identify interest and funding sources. This year the CVMP participants have had reasonable input to the Kootenai County shoreline protection zones and the Rathdrum Prairie lakes council.

Next Meeting Agenda Items and Adjourn

The next BAG meeting will be held on October 28th. Agenda items for the next meeting to include 319 applications. If no applications are received DEQ will arranged for past 319 applicants to give updates on their grant progress. Meeting was adjourned by the chairman at 12:04 PM.