

Panhandle Basin Advisory Group
 Department of Environmental Quality
 2110 Ironwood Parkway
 Coeur d'Alene, Idaho DEQ
 May 4th, 2016
Draft Minutes

Members and Alternates Present	Guests Present
Kennon McClintock - Timber	Tom Herron – DEQ
John Beacham – Representative at Large	Kristie McEnroe – DEQ
Ward Cooper – Discharge Permittee	David Fortier – KSSWCD
Robert Rider – Livestock	Kajsa Van de Riet – DEQ
Patty Perry – Kootenai Tribe	Bob Steed – DEQ
Scott Fields – Coeur d'Alene Tribe	June Bergquist – DEQ
Adrienne Cronebaugh - Environmental	Craig Nelson – DEQ
Dan Dining – Local Government	Dan Redline – DEQ
Jack Filipowski – Agriculture	
Vince Renaldi – Water Based Recreation	

The Panhandle Basin Advisory Group (BAG) meeting was called to order at 9:03 a.m. by Dan Dining at the Department of Environmental Quality in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. Introductions were made around the room. The minutes from the January 27th, 2016 meeting were reviewed. A correction will be made to remove Robert Rider from attending. A motion to approve minutes with changes was made by Robert Rider and seconded by Vince Renaldi. Motion passed.

Spokane River TMDL/WAG Update – Bob Steed

The Spokane River WAG focuses on the Idaho portion of the Spokane River. The pollutants they are focused on are cadmium, lead and zinc. They have had 2 meetings to date. The first was on April 5th and the second was just yesterday. Both were pretty well attended. They've discussed the BAG and WAG processes to get everyone up to speed. They discussed objectives and how they relate to the NPDES Permits, mainly addressing wastewater and storm water issues. They also discussed water quality standards, the DEQ data collected during monitoring in between 2013 and 2015, a call for data, the strategy paper and have scheduled the next meeting. Bob gave the WAG a copy of the procedures from the Priest WAG to see if they could build on them. The Spokane WAG decided they didn't see the necessity of having the quorum process, instead to have majority and minority votes. If the WAG cannot come to a consensus they will then record the majority and minority votes as advice to DEQ and proceed with that.

During the May meeting Pat Mayer from Avista gave a presentation to the WAG. Bob showed a few slides from the presentation to the BAG showing snowpack levels and temperature. These indicated lower snowpack levels and some of the high temperatures were above average. The higher temperatures have already started to affect lake level and Avista has begun closing some

gates on the dam. Also at the May meeting Jason Papani from the DEQ State office gave a presentation to show the WAG how criteria are developed.

North Fork & South Fork Coeur d'Alene TMDL/WAG Update – Kajsa Van de Riet

The North Fork WAG continues to be a very active WAG with a lot of projects going on. There are a few events coming up. DEQ partnered with the U of I extension to put together a workshop to be held on June 4th. The workshop is in response to the wild fires of last year. They wanted to educate people about wild fire prevention, protection, the benefits of riparian vegetation, and the importance of flood plains and how they are managed. Also at the workshop they have planned a virtual reality tool called Blaze for attendees to view actual simulations of how these managing practices benefit your property. On June 25th the North Idaho Flycasters are having a conservation festival. They have one every year. They do that with the WAG and the Forest Service. This year it will be held in the Moose Drool area at the headwaters of the North Fork. Last year around 80 people showed up. The WAG also supported a couple of grants that were funded by the Panhandle National Forest Resource Advisory committee. One went to Shoshone County and the other went to the Forest Service, both were for recreational projects.

Kajsa has been making some progress on the South Fork WAG progress and the topics that were discussed at the last BAG meeting; one of those was assessment work which is really extensive and Kajsa is still working through all of the Superfund information to get a really good grasp on historic events, what projects have been done in the past and what is planned for the future. The City of Wallace was awarded a grant from LTAC for the 6th Street bridge replacement. The 6th Street bridge goes over the South Fork towards Nine Mile. The bridge is literally crumbling into the river right now. There has been some delay in convening the WAG; it will be a little while yet before those meetings start taking place. They plan to meet in Kellogg or Osburn.

Kajsa has been putting a lot of effort for waterbody assessment both of those subbasins and getting things ready for the 2016 Integrated Report. It looks like there will be more sediment delistings for the North Fork streams.

Cd'A Restoration Partnership Update – Kajsa Van de Riet

The Coeur d'Alene Basin Restoration Plan is an inter-agency group of natural resource trustees cooperating as part of the Restoration Partnership. They are planning a restoration for the Coeur d'Alene basin which includes: the St. Joe, St. Maries, South Fork, North Fork, Coeur d'Alene Lake and Spokane River subbasins. The draft plan has been prepared and they are currently finishing a draft EIS. The next step is to have the drafts rolled out for public comment.

§319 Grant Updates – Tom Herron

Kristin has done a wonderful job matching needs to surplus money from §319 Grants that didn't use all of their allocation to projects in need. One of those projects was the Alder Creek project that was approved through the BAG a few years ago. One of the key organizers retired and it fell into a slump for a little while but with surplus funds from other projects the project has been redirected and looks to be on the right track now. The other project that has benefited from the surplus was a project on Wolf Lodge for the development of a planning document. They are working on a comprehensive plan to work on flood plain issues and land management potentials

within the watershed. Kristin has attended several community meetings letting others know about the comprehensive plan and it has been really well accepted. The §319 Grant application period is open until August 5th. There hasn't been a lot of progress on the applications that have been submitted so far. There shouldn't be any changes this year from years past on the amount of funding available. There have been changes to the application process limiting the amount allocated for administrative funds that has made the process harder for applicants.

WBAGIII Public Comment Period – Tom Herron

DEQ had the WBAG III presentation and that is moving toward public comment. That should be complete and ready to use by October in terms of the new assessment guidance. DEQ is doing away with the assessment database which will be replaced by a cloud app which should make things flow better and DEQ will be able to create waterbody assessments faster and maybe close some of the gaps on the Integrated reports.

Integrated Report Update – Tom Herron

The 2014 Integrated report is going out for public comment that should be done in August and then sent to EPA. At the same time we are starting the 2016 Integrated report. There has been some discussion because it's so close to 2017 that the 2016 report be grouped with the 2018 report. DEQ did that back in 2002 and it went well. That will hopefully get it in sync with the actual dates of the report to the year they come out. DEQ's turnover rate has been high in the past few years which has hindered the report progress. The State office solicited comments on the 2014 Integrated report from the Basin Advisory Groups. Melissa Driskel provided comments from our area. That comment period is over but the Basin Advisory Groups will have another opportunity to comment during the public comment period that is going on now. If there were any comments that came to the group since then we can provide those to the State office.

Kootenai/Movie 5-Year Review Planning – Bob Steed

EPA has given the states some stimulus money to get the 5 year reviews completed, one payment per year, for three years. The final year DEQ picked the Kootenai/Moyie watersheds to make sure we get the 5 year reviews completed on all of the TMDL's we've written. DEQ finished the 2014 Shade TMDL. There were TMDL's put on 27 streams. Bob met with the WAG and talked about meeting those conditions and about "original statute". They feel the criteria haven't changed so the assumptions that were made are still valid. So there shouldn't be a lot of work in the whole thing but they are trying to put together the report that was expected out of that statute which is 15 pages rather than hundreds of pages of technical information. They are trying to meet the intent and to set a new example around the state of products that were asked for out. DEQ has come into an agreement with the EPA that all of the TMDL's prior to 2009 that we'll go back and use the targets that were developed state wide for the a PNV process, they will be reevaluating Deep Creek and Boundary Creek for a temperature TMDL through the PNV process. If the results are the same or if the loads are the same we probably won't make any recommendations to change but at least we'll have the documentation to show that it would be the same values. The 3 person BURP crew will be up there this summer sampling 30 target sites for habitat, aquatic insect collections and fish assemblies. One of the elements we are just working on now is a fish distribution map. Bob is working with Patty Perry on that and the watershed advisory group to evaluate supplementing that and getting a newer fish distribution

map is worthwhile. They are proposing to do that with Rocking Mountain Research Station using an E DNA methodology.

BURP Site Selection – Craig Nelson

Craig Nelson showed the BAG a map of the sites selected for this year's Beneficial Use Reconnaissance Program this year, focusing on the Kootenai Moyie area to help with the 5 year review. Craig met with the WAG prior to get advice and where to sample and a lot of great access information. The season starts after July 4th and runs into September. There are 40 sampling sites that are budgeted this year. They will be collecting data on habitat and aquatic insects before coming through and electrofishing to study fish population. We have the same crew as last year so they are familiar with all the procedures already which was really beneficial. Next year so far on the agenda is Priest, Upper Moyie and Harlin Creek which ties into a \$319 project.

Sandpoint NPDES Permit Development and Water Quality Certification – June Bergquist

The City of Sandpoint wastewater treatment plant discharge permit is out for public comment. DEQ has provided EPA with the draft permits. June showed the BAG aerial photos of the plant and the mixing zone. The Kootenai Ponderay Treatment Facility is also under permitting and June is working on their draft certification. June showed the BAG an aerial of their site, outfall and discharge to Boyer Slough. DEQ received the preliminary draft permit from EPA for the City of Sandpoint. DEQ then devises its certification based on that preliminary draft. That has been done once, sent for public comment and then the permit was changed. The facility wanted the flow increased from 3 million gallons per day to 5 million. That change resulted in a lot of modeling and analysis. Mercury, phosphorus and ammonia came up as problems with the almost doubling of pollutants into the river which was almost at its limit already. DEQ devised another draft certification; EPA incorporated that into a draft permit. The draft permit is out for public comment now, the comment period ends on May 25th. So far DEQ hasn't received any comments. DEQ gave them interim limits for ammonia and phosphorus and gave them enough time to either upgrade the existing facility or to build a new facility. There is still a way to go but we're on the home stretch.

Harmful Algal Bloom Planning – Tom Herron

In the managers meeting last week they went over some of the budget accommodations for harmful algal blooms. DEQ expects this year to be similar to last year in the number of blooms. The Coeur d'Alene Regional office was able to get more funding to manage the costs associated with that.

Spokane River Regional Toxics Task Force (SRRTTF) Update – Dan Redline

The SRRTTF is a collection of several entities that are actively working on making improvements on the Spokane River, mainly on the Washington portion to address PCBs. PCBs are carcinogens and have been banded from manufacturing since 1979. The task force is an alternative way to solve this problem rather than going the TMDL route. The task force has been called challenged over going with the traditional TMDL as the better action to take. It has gone

to court and resulted in judicial requirements that the Washington Department of Ecology has taken on. They have responded to the judge with addition information but as for now it is still unclear whether they will continue down the path with the task force or step back and go with the traditional TMDL route. The goal is to develop a comprehensive plan to bring the river into compliance. It is only out of compliance in Washington for PCBs which bases there finding on the amount of toxins found in fish data. Dan showed the BAG maps from the Dept. of Ecology showing the fish sampling locations and the variety of species that were sampled. They have been collecting data from the river as well as discharges to the river. What they are using as a tool is “measurable progress” similar to the criteria of a TMDL. Dept. of Ecology developed a definition for measureable progress and each year the task force along with Ecology must submit a documentation stating whether or not they are making measurable progress. The task force submitted that information last fall and Ecology made its determination that what they have been doing to date they are meeting that goal of measurable progress. The task force meets monthly and has been doing a lot of work trying to address the PCB issue. They have an annual workshop that they present data and have been bringing national experts to these workshops.

Next Meeting Agenda Items and Adjourn

The next BAG meeting tentatively scheduled for September 1st, 2016. Agenda items to include 319 Grant submissions, Super BAG meeting, 319 Grant Funding Committee and funding for the Soil and Water Conservation Groups. Meeting was adjourned by Dan Dining at 11:50 A.M.