

Panhandle Basin Advisory Group
 Department of Environmental Quality
 2110 Ironwood Parkway
 Coeur d'Alene, Idaho DEQ
 January 27th, 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	Kristin Larson - DEQ
Patty Perry – Kootenai Tribe – VIA phone	Bob Steed - DEQ
Scott Fields – Coeur d'Alene Tribe	June Bergquist - DEQ
Adrienne Cronebaugh - Environmental	

The Panhandle Basin Advisory Group (BAG) meeting was called to order at 9:05 a.m. by Thomas Herron at the Department of Environmental Quality in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. Introductions were made around the room. Motion for Melissa Driskell to replace Bradley Kucera as Mining representative made by Adrienne Cronebaugh, it was seconded by Ward Cooper. Motion passed. The minutes from the October 28th, 2015 meeting were reviewed. A motion to approve minutes was made by Scott Fields and seconded by Patty Perry. Motion passed.

Spokane WAG Formation – Bob Steed

Bob Steed informed the BAG that he has contacted all of the contacts the BAG recommended at the last meeting. He is moving forward with the WAG formation and he will be giving a presentation with the information DEQ has collected at the Our Gem Symposium.

South Fork Coeur d'Alene WAG Formation Update – Tom Herron

Kajsa was unable to attend today's meeting and asked Tom to tell the BAG about a few important topics regarding the South Fork WAG. She has developed a contact list and survey for potential WAG members that she will send out soon.

319 Grant Updates – Kristin Larson

Kristin addressed the questions that were brought up at the last meeting;

- Alder Creek Road: Their first deliverable on this project was supposed to be August 2014. To date nothing has been done. DEQ met with Benewah County and suggested they work with the Soil and Water Conservation group to get the project started, and tasked them with getting an action plan by February 19th, 2016. The deadline for this project is December 2017.
- Timely Reimbursement: Dave responded and said that yes, it is not as optimum as they would like. They try to get a 2 week turn around on invoices but more often than not it is around a 30 day turn around. Timing is also a factor when the invoices are submitted at the end of the fiscal year then get a flood of invoices and they get a backlog. He admits there is a problem but they do try as hard as they can.
- Length of time for funds to become available: This year was really bad because the money was held up until September. The BAG asked if there was a way to skip a year so DEQ would accept the EPA money and use the previous year's money to fund next year's projects. Dave said the EPA is at the mercy of congress as to when the money is available. This year we weren't notified of funding until late July, three months later than normal. They discussed waiting a year with EPA; and although it sounds like a reasonable approach, there are quite a few risks with going that route and they would not want to do that. If the BAG has any other questions Dave will address that in a separate discussion.
- At the BAG's request David Fortier of the Kootenai Shoshone Soil and Water Conservation District presented a slide show on the Wolf Lodge Creek project to the BAG with before and after areal maps and on the ground photos of their 319 projects showing their success.

Spokane Rivers Metal TMDL Update – Bob Steed

The WAG is still under formation. DEQ has finished 2 years of monitoring for Cadmium, Zinc and Lead on the Spokane River. A couple of interesting things came from those results. They show that almost all of the loading is coming from upstream sources. While the waste water dischargers are discharging they do not show any increase in those metals from the dischargers. The river does exceed criteria, Cadmium a lot less than was thought and Zinc, a lot more. But now they have the data set to look at those criteria. When the water is low they actually see a decrease in Cadmium at the State Line when the dischargers would be discharging into the river.

South Fork Coeur d'Alene River TMDL Update – Tom Herron

Tom gave a quick update to the BAG on the South Fork Coeur d'Alene River TMDL. The South Fork TMDL is for temperature. Solar Pathfinder data has been collected on two creeks in the

Silver Valley and the data is being reviewed and calibrated by tech services in the State Office. Kajsa has been working on an implementation inventory for the TMDL Watershed Assessment and has contacted mining and South Fork NPDES dischargers for outreach. She has developed a Fish Tissue Sampling Plan to identify some of the issues with fish tissue which should start next year in partnership with Fish and Game and the Coeur d'Alene Tribe. She has also been working on the 6th Street Bridge in Wallace that is a fish barrier to get a bridge replacement there.

Pend Oreille Tributaries 5 year review – Kristin Larson

Kristin had a brief update on the 5 year review to add to the discussion in the previous BAG meeting. Kristin is currently in the process of writing the report on the data. It looks like quite a few of those creeks are in good shape. She plans to ask the BURP crew to look at them and see if they can be de-listed.

WBAG III Consultation – Bob Steed

DEQ is currently assessing all of the BURP data. The crew uses Waterbody Assessment Guidance version II. There is a new Waterbody Assessment Guidance version III. What it does is - when samples are collected, whether its water, fish and insect samples, they run it through a matrix which determines if the stream is full support or not full support. The data is extremely reliable when the stream is either full support or severely degraded. It is the middle ground where the matrix is lacking. This new version of the guidance addressed the middle area. Every year the data is collected by the BURP crew, that data is input into the matrix and every other year the data is compared to the previous samplings to see what has changed in those streams. Those streams then go through the listing processes to see which streams can be delisted for full support. The BURP crew has about 40-50 sites to do this year in the Kootenai Moyie Watershed.

2014 Integrated Report

DEQ is getting ready to submit the data for the 2014 Integrated Report. DEQ has also already requested the data for the 2016 Integrated Report. The goal is to get to every waterbody every 5 years but realistically the time line is closer to ten between the amount of waterbodies and the man power to assess them. There will be an opportunity in 2016 for the Spokane WAG to look at the criteria and the data set for cadmium levels and that might be one thing they will look to do in the TMDL and possibly delist the river for cadmium and start that process. The last chapter of the Integrated Report is to set the priorities. It's the BAG responsibility to set those priorities. It hasn't been discussed with the BAG because the State office has been sending the priorities for the Coeur d'Alene Office. What will be great about the 2016 integrated report is that the priorities addressed will be coming from the region and not the DEQ State Office. All of the projects that have been discussed with the BAG will be represented in the 2016 report.

Sandpoint NPDES Permit Development and Water Quality Certification – June Bergquist

DEQ is very close to issuing the draft certification for Sandpoint. June explained a bit of the back story to the permit process. In 2014 it went out for public comment and the city asked for a five million gallon increase to their permit. The current draft was for a three million gallon increase.

DEQ looked into it and found there was going to be trouble with mercury, phosphorus and ammonia loads due to the design flow increase. Several models were developed for the river to really look at what these limits were going to do to the streams all the way to the Washington/Idaho border. June showed the BAG slides from all the different models that were used to show the effects of the discharge. DEQ now has the draft certification written that addresses the concerns with treatment actions and sampling schedules which is getting reviewed now. The draft will be sent to EPA. EPA will then release a draft permit with a public comment period. Those comments will be incorporated into DEQ's final certification that is sent back to EPA and EPA will issue the final permit.

Harmful Algal Blooms wrap-up – Bob Steed

Bob passed around the statistics on the Algal blooms. The waterbody most constant with algal blooms is Fernan Lake. This year the bloom lasted for 167 days. They analyzed for count and identification of the algae. 40,000 is the cutoff number for the concentrations of algae. Any number higher than that is a possible health risk to the public. Microcystis, Gloeotrichia and Anabaena are the blooms of concern. These blooms are normally localized, but to protect the public a whole lake health advisory is issued on Fernan.

Hayden Lake is a big lake and they get a really strong bloom in the northern part of the lake. Again an entire lake advisory is issued. The fallout for doing a partial health advisory are the multiple calls from homeowners asking if their docks are affected. Bob has been in communication with the State Office to try to develop an interactive map on the DEQ webpage that would assist homeowners. The blooms on Hayden Lake are shorter in duration but the toxins concentrations are significant. The Hayden Lake bloom is the hardest to manage to give the public information to go on especially with 500 homes with water intakes directly off the lake in the affected areas.

Avondale was unique. They found a new species that they have never seen before called Lymbia.

All the lakes are included in the monitoring action plan. There has been a trend with all lakes with a greater number of blooms per year.

Next Meeting Agenda Items and Adjourn

The next BAG meeting tentatively scheduled for April 20th, 2016. Meeting was adjourned by Tom Herron at 12:22 PM.