

**Panhandle Basin Advisory Group**  
 Department of Environmental Quality  
 2110 Ironwood Parkway  
 Coeur d'Alene, Idaho DEQ  
 July 27<sup>th</sup>, 2017  
*Draft Minutes*

| <b>Members and Alternates Present</b> | <b>Guests Present</b> |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Dan Dinning – telephonic              | Thomas Herron         |
| Scott Fields                          | Kajsa Van de Riet     |
| Jack Filipowski                       | Bob Steed             |
| Sharon Bosley                         | Andrea Boyd           |
| Patty Perry                           | Larry Mundt           |
| Melissa Driskell                      | Rebecca Stevens       |
| John Beacham                          | David Fortier         |
|                                       | Kristin Larson        |
|                                       | Craig Cooper          |
|                                       | Bob Flagor            |
|                                       | Craig Cooper          |
|                                       | Brad Shelton          |
|                                       |                       |
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The Panhandle Basin Advisory Group (BAG) meeting was called to order at 9:16 a.m. by Dan Dining at the Department of Environmental Quality in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. The minutes from the February 17<sup>th</sup>, 2017 were reviewed. Motion to approve by Patty Perry, seconded by John Beacham. Motion passed. The agenda for the meeting was reviewed.

**Sharon Bosley – Interim Director for the Kootenai Environmental Alliance**

Sharon Bosley was recommended by Adrienne Cronebaugh, the previous environmental representative, to fill her position. The BAG requested a copy of the letter from Adrienne be provided at the next BAG meeting and then a vote to accept Sharon.

**Spokane River Metals TMDL – Bob Steed**

Bob Steed of DEQ presented the BAG with an update on the Spokane River Metals TMDL. The Spokane River Watershed Advisory Group (WAG) has been on hold over the summer months. The WAG has made some really good progress looking at loads and making targets for loads. There's a couple really interesting things that were found. One is that all of the load (the excess cadmium, lead and zinc) are happening during the high flow events. And that is when we exceed criteria. When compared, the dischargers are unmeasurable compared to the high flow water and high concentrations. We are going to work on allocations that will be near what they are currently discharging. The other thing is that most of the permits for dischargers limit discharges

during low flow. The WAG will be using the term de minimis in the recommendations to EPA. The Spokane River is not exceeding standards during low flow and so the permit will reflect that. The meetings should resume in September.

### **TMDL 5-Year Review: Kootenai/Moyie Watershed – Bob Steed**

Bob Steed of DEQ presented the BAG with an update on the Kootenai/Moyie 5-Year Review. One of the big updates to the 5 year review was the fish distribution map. E DNA analysis was performed in the watershed and DEQ has had the data analyzed. Bob has seen some rough results but nothing final yet. Like the Spokane River, things should be picking up in the fall for meetings. Not all the species have been reviewed; until the WAG has a chance to go over all the data, it will not be released to the public. Bob doesn't believe there will be any big surprises other than electrofishing does not grab the full range of species in the river. E DNA should give more information on species because the fish don't have to be seen and caught for detection and identification.

The citizen group in the Kootenai/Moyie watershed have been deploying thermographs to measure stream temperatures since 2005-2006 so there is a really large data set to go through. The last time Bob analyzed it there was too much information to process. Last year DEQ purchased a program called Datasight which gives DEQ the ability to look at large amounts of data and do analysis on them.

### **Boyer Slough – Bob Steed and Kristin Larson**

Bob Steed and Kristin Larson of DEQ presented the BAG with an update on the Boyer Slough Nutrients Productivity Characterization Modeling. Recently they discovered that water in the slough can flow up hill. Boyer Slough has been really hard to sample. There is a discharger to the slough and when sampled they realized that it exceeds criteria. Boyer Slough is in really bad shape with large levels of pollution compared to other waterbodies that have been sampled for creating a TMDL. In February they started the analysis, right now there is a blue green algae bloom but the concentrations after sampling are low. During the summer there's a lot of water that runs through the river into the lake and backs up into the slough. TMDL's are calculated by concentrations times (x) flow = load. The flow is going the wrong direction part of the year and is unmeasurable because of the unknown quantities coming in from the lake. This year they have focused on monitoring to get a good base of data to be able to determine what is going on in the slough in order to write the TMDL. They've started artificial substrate to grow paraphyton to determine what the excess nutrients are affecting. Between February and March the flow increased dramatically but the depth stayed the same which never happens. Bob believes it's due to the channel changes in the slough and erosion. The data collected and the back flow detected may affect the Nearshore TMDL already in place on the lake.

### **NPDES Permit Updates for the Kootenai/Ponderay WWTP – June Bergquist**

June Bergquist of DEQ presented the BAG with an update on the NPDES Permits for the cities of Sandpoint, Harrison and Kootenai/Ponderay. DEQ has submitted the recommendations to EPA on the City of Sandpoint in February of this year and the permit should be coming out later

this year. EPA has lost more staff so there is a delay in getting the permit finalized and out. The Kootenai/Ponderay sewer district permit is also in process. The draft certification was submitted to EPA in July 2016 and EPA has provided the draft permit for public comment. The end of public comment closes September 7<sup>th</sup> this fall. DEQ is meeting with the Kootenai/Ponderay sewer district board tonight to provide updates on what is going on and be available to answer questions. June was notified by EPA last week that they are going to start work on the City of Harrison waste water treatment permit.

### **Restoration Partnership – Kajsa Van de Riet**

Kajsa Van de Riet of DEQ presented the BAG with an update on the Restoration Partnership. They have been working on the project for quite a long time now. The draft plan and EIS went out and it ended up going for about 90 days. It was really successful. There are around 60 letters and hundreds of comments. The trustees have pulled together a package of all the changes and edits to the plan and to the EIS and a very large response to comments document which is in review right now. It seems like they are getting pretty close to finalizing the plan and moving into the next phase for implementation. If things keep moving along the way they have the past few months, the plan could be finalized later this year.

### **North Fork & South Fork Coeur d'Alene River Updates – Kajsa Van de Riet**

Kajsa Van de Riet of DEQ presented the BAG with an update on the North Fork and South Fork of the Coeur d'Alene River. For the North Fork the WAG is really active with regular meetings working on TMDL implementation and working on assessing unassessed waters with help from the BURP crew and Craig Nelson this past BURP season. It is expected that they will come back at full support but need the data to support that. There is a shade monitoring project in Graham Creek which had violations in the temperature criteria as part of the temperature TMDL. With the shade data will find that the creek is now in support and can be delisted. There is a river cleanup coming up on August 19<sup>th</sup> this year. There wasn't a cleanup in 2016 and in 2015 they were fired out so this year there should be a lot to clean up.

The South Fork - Kajsa is continuing to work on the assessments, review and the 5 year review for the sediment TMDL and the temperature TMDL will be the big project that's ahead. She's also been working on the waste load allocations for the point source dischargers in that subbasin. It needed quite a bit of work before that was ready to roll out a WAG.

### **319 Program updates: State general fund implementation funding of AG projects, Federal 319 Program status – Kristin Larson**

Kristin Larson of DEQ presented the BAG with an update on the 319 Program updates. In the 2017 legislation session, the legislature appropriated \$500,000 to the general fund which would be managed by DEQ for statewide agricultural best management practices. The money will be managed just like the 319 monies. There is a directive by the legislation that it can be in high priority water bodies only. The ones in our area are the Priest, Upper Spokane, Ponderay Lake, Lower Kootenai, South Fork Coeur d'Alene and Coeur d'Alene Lake. Because this legislation was passed in 2017 as soon as fiscal year 2018 came into effect DEQ was given the money.

There is a process right now where people can apply, they need to be shovel ready and implemented and done by the end of the fiscal year which is June 30<sup>th</sup>. The same rules as the other 319 program applies, with the 60/40 cost match, 10% admin costs. The due date for applications is August 15<sup>th</sup>. There is supposed to be a special BAG meeting in September to rank these AG projects. Kristin asked Dave Pisarski if the Mica Creek project could be presented again with the changes the BAG suggested in the 319 meeting last October. He said because it's been presented before it would be ok to present again for the AG 319 funds. There aren't very many projects so far.

The Federal 319 funds have not gone through yet; the budget hasn't been finalized so there is no update yet for that.

### **Mica Creek Project – Larry Mundt**

Larry Mundt, a property owner in Mica Creek, presented an AG 319 project to the BAG. The original 319 application has been scaled down to fit the new 319 AG fund rules. It's shovel ready and will be a three step process. There are livestock grazing there now that will need to be removed and provide temporary fencing. The entire area has riparian exclusion fencing on it and in order to access the sites that will need to be removed as well as the vegetation that has collapsed into the stream. The project encompasses 360 feet of rock armoring and about 600 feet of vegetation management. The goal is to repair and protect the banks from further erosion. The project total comes to around \$70,000. 319 funds would be about \$41,000 with the rest matched by the Mica Bay Property Owners Association.

Kristin asked the BAG if they would like to get together for another meeting if there are more project applications. They would like to have another meeting to review the projects.

### **Coeur d'Alene Lake Management Plan update – Jamie Brunner**

Craig Cooper of DEQ presented the BAG with an update on LMP field work and projects. They are right in the middle of the field season right now. The monitoring sites include Tubbs Hill, University Point and a couple of bays, Blue Creek Bay, Echo Bay and Rockford Bay. One of the things going on in the bays is a paraphyton study going on with artificial substrates and measuring algae growth. There are buoys out in the bay marking the locations which has garnered some phone calls. There is also phytoplankton productivity study, stream bank planting and a Wolf Lodge monitoring station. The Our Gem symposium is set for November 14<sup>th</sup> and they are also in the process of finalizing the internal draft of the phosphorus inventory for the entire lake which is one of the primary objectives for the LMP. The 2015 status report for the state of the lake has been completed and there is some final internal commentary to be done before being release for external comments.

### **Kootenai River selenium and nitrate issues – Thomas Herron**

Thomas Herron of DEQ presented the BAG with an update on the Kootenai River selenium and nitrate issues. There really isn't much to report. When DEQ received the letters from the

affiliated tribes identifying that as an issue it was forwarded on to the administration in Boise and they haven't gotten back to us as to what our role would be.

### **Integrated Report updates – Bob Steed**

Bob Steed of DEQ presented the BAG with an update on the integrated reports. These reports are completed every 2 years but are roughly four to six years behind by the time they are approved. It gives the list of streams DEQ bases TMDL's from. The 2014 integrated report was just approved by EPA and is on the DEQ website. There is a new person in the state office and we've already done the assessment for 2016 and his goal is to release it in 2017 so there will be two back to back. His internal review is complete and our region is on hold until after the summer busy monitoring time. Every year the reports have better information and better documentation to base TMDLs and listings.

### **Beneficial Use Reconnaissance Program (BURP) Update – Thomas Herron**

Thomas Herron of DEQ presented the BAG with an update on the 2017 BURP season. The crew had great success up until a few weeks ago when they started to run into dry creeks with this dry weather we've had lately. They moved on into the upper Pack River and Priest Lake and they expect to be able to hit all 30 sites that are on the schedule. We're a little bit lucky not to have the fire season we did last year. It looks to be a successful year with great data collected.

### **Next Meeting Agenda Items and Adjourn**

The next BAG meeting will be tentatively scheduled for the AG 319 projects on August 22<sup>nd</sup>, if there are no further applicants to move forward to the October 24<sup>th</sup> for the 319 Project Ranking. Meeting was adjourned by Scott Fields.