

Pend Oreille River TMDL Watershed Advisory Group
Meeting Notes
September 28, 2007
U of I / Bonner Extension Service Office
Sandpoint, Idaho

Participants: Scott Jungblom and Curt Knapp, Pend Oreille PUD; Todd Johnson, agriculture representative; Dean Cummings, Pend Oreille County; Charlie Holderman, Kootenai Tribe; Jon Jones, Washington Dept of Ecology; Don Martin, EPA; Bob Steed, Idaho DEQ; Ruth Watkins, Tri-State Water Quality Council; and by phone: Christine Pratt and Barbara Green, Seattle City Light; Tarang Khangaonkar and Jenna Borovansky, contractors for Seattle City Light; Helen Rueda, EPA; Paul Pickett, Washington Dept of Ecology; Kent Easthouse, Corps of Engineers.

Introductions: Ruth explained that the purpose of the meeting—to review the status of the temperature TMDL in light of recent issues that have come up regarding the modeling, and to revise the temperature TMDL schedule.

Major points of discussion regarding the model: Bob noted that the Corps of Engineers submitted a letter to Idaho DEQ in which they have raised some key issues regarding the model. The proposed presentation to the WAG on the draft TMDL in August was postponed and since that time a sub-group (consisting of agencies, modelers and several WAG members) has held two conference calls to discuss the major issues. These include:

- **Hydrologic budget:** The COE's review of the model indicated that one spillgate at Albeni Falls Dam had been left open for Scenario 1. PSU reviewed the model and agreed that the spillgate had been left open. Bob just received the PSU report and has not had a chance to review it in full yet, however, according to PSU, it appears that the conclusions in the current TMDL draft will not be affected by the revised calibration. PSU also indicated that the slower river flows of the revised model resulted in the deep holes being more isolated, and thus cooler.
- **Assumptions:** The COE has asked Idaho DEQ for further explanation about the assumptions used, stating that the model oversimplifies the river system. There is also concern that the COE is singled out as the only source with a reduction load needed. Bob has invited the COE to write up an assumption statement about the complexities of the river system and that the complexities are not accounted for in the model. He agrees that we need to make it clear in the TMDL that the river is much more complex than what we've shown in the model, so he will add COE's write-up into the document. Don asked if the Pend Oreille is a data-rich system; Bob said that there is good data in some areas, but not in all areas.
- **Deep zones in model:** The COE is concerned that modeling with the spillgate closed is showing cold water being trapped in certain areas, making the deep zones an even bigger issue. DEQ agrees that the deep areas are not circulating (i.e., cold water is being trapped), but that there is not enough data to prove or disprove this theory. Bob noted that there aren't any loads associated with these areas in the TMDL.
- **Pulses (lag time):** There is concern that the model only looks at a single place/single time and is not capturing pulses that move through the system. Bob explained that DEQ does not have a way of evaluating this, so he has invited the COE to do any other analysis to assist with this—either for the TMDL now, or when it comes out for the five-year review.

Group discussion:

- Bob noted that Idaho DEQ is trying to stay on track with this TMDL. He expects just some minor changes to the document at this point and would like to move forward with having Tetra Tech present the current draft to the WAG. He also explained that Idaho DEQ's contract with Portland State University has been completed, so additional work from PSU on the model will be difficult.
- In addition to the COE letter, comment letters have also been received from Seattle City Light, Southside Water & Sewer District, and the City of Sandpoint. Bob suggested getting the current draft presented to the WAG, and then the agencies can address all the comments.
- The wastewater treatment facilities are concerned that there is not a big enough allocation to allow for growth. Bob is working with the Engineering Department at DEQ to evaluate the new numbers that the dischargers are requesting (10 million gallons/day); recalculations will then be undertaken. He is expecting to contract with PSU to develop a "white paper" on one scenario focused on the discharges in Idaho. The river is a candidate for being listed as impaired by phosphorus and, if listed, a phosphorus TMDL would need to be completed. Bob will need to use the same allocation numbers as in the temperature TMDL and at 10 million gallons/day, the phosphorus load could be huge.
- Paul noted that the COE also raised a question regarding the Box Canyon model. Regarding the period of river impairment in May, the COE's calculations suggest that the impairment could be a model error or model bias. Paul is looking into this. Although there appears to be a model bias, there does still appear to be impairment, however the date and level of impairment may change. Ecology will complete internal discussions; some changes to the current draft TMDL are likely.
- Bob noted that he will be posting the comment letters onto the DEQ website and will let Ruth know when this has been done.
- Christine said that Seattle City Light's comments—sent as a participating WAG member—were intended to help make the TMDL a sound document.

Revised temperature TMDL schedule: The group reviewed and revised the temperature TMDL schedule; the new schedule is attached to these meeting notes.

Next meeting: The next WAG meeting was set for **Thursday, October 25**, from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. at the U of I / Bonner Extension Service Office in Sandpoint. The Council's contractors from Tetra Tech will attend the meeting to present the current version of the temperature TMDL to the WAG. Scott suggested that we also discuss comments that have already come in on the draft, with a highlight on those comments that can be readily resolved. It was further agreed that we would include a discussion about the remaining issues that still need to be addressed. After the next meeting, the WAG will still have two weeks (until November 9) to submit comments on the current draft. The following meeting of the WAG will be held in December (no date set yet).

The meeting adjourned at 2:45.

Pend Oreille River Temperature TMDL Schedule
Revised September 28, 2007

May 25 '07	All info (modeling results and states' analyses) to Tetra Tech
June 1	Conference call with coordination group/Tetra Tech
June 25	Draft TMDL from Tetra Tech to coordination group
June 25th	WAG meeting to preview draft TMDL with WAG members
June 25-July 13	Coordination group reviews draft
July 20th	Conference call with coordination group/Tetra Tech to review and finalize draft for presenting to WAG
Week of August 6th	Draft TMDL (including implementation section) to WAG
August 16th	WAG meeting to discuss status of modeling issues
September 28	WAG meeting to discuss status of TMDL and revise schedule
October 25	WAG meeting, Tetra Tech presents current TMDL draft
November 9	Comments due from WAG
Nov 10-early Dec	Revisions made to draft from WAG comments; revised draft sent to WAG
First week December	WAG meeting to review revised document
January '08	Additional WAG meetings as needed to come to consensus on TMDL and agree to recommendation to BAG to begin public review process
February 4 (tentative)	Public comment period starts
March 3 (tentative)	Public comment period ends
Early March (tentative)	Responses to public comments prepared
Late March (tentative)	Final TMDL submitted to EPA