

Columbia River Toxics Reduction Working Group Meeting
June 2, 2009
Final Meeting Summary
Hosted by Columbia Riverkeeper
White Salmon, WA

Attendees:

Agnes Lut, ODEQ	Liz Carr, WA Dept of Health
Alec Maule, USGS	Lonna Franz, USGS
Andrew Kolosseus, WA Ecology	Lorraine Edmond, USEPA
Ann Williamson, USEPA	Lyndal Johnson, NOAA
Anne Schwartz, DAL Naturals	Mary Lou Soscia, USEPA
Anthony Barber, USEPA	Michelle Hollis, Port of Portland
Aron Borok, EI	Mike Cox, USEPA
Barbara Stifel, OR Human Services	Rebecca Hawk Elwood, Yakama Nation
Brett VandenHeuvel, Columbia Riverkeeper	Steve Stampfli, Hood River WG
Clyde Lay, USBOR	Steve Waste, USGS
Dale Norton, Washington Ecology	Tristen Gardner, USEPA
Dave McBride, WA Dept of Health	Katie Humphries, Columbia Riverkeeper
Elena Nilsen, USGS	Dave Berger
Gary Turney, USGS	Jerry Yokel, Washington Ecology
Gina Hoff, USBR	Jurgen Hess
Greg Fuhrer, USGS	Dale Engstrom, Oregon DOE
Gwen Carter, Nez Perce Tribe	David Fast, Yakama Nation
James Thomas, Yakama Nation	Kathryn Tackley, USACE
Jay Davis, USFWS	Art Johnson, WA Ecology
Jeffrey Ullman, WSU	John Foltz, WSU
Jennifer Morace, USGS	Joe McCanna, Warm Springs Tribe
Jim Ruff, Northwest Power & Conservation Council	Marla Harrison, Port of Portland
Joanne LaBaw, US EPA	Mark Peterschmidt, WA Ecology
John Piccininni, BPA - Fish & Wildlife	Dan Kent, Salmon Safe
Kim Johnson, USACE	Susan Hess, Journalist
Krista Jones, LCREP	Summer Goodwin, USEPA
Laura Buelow, US EPA - Hanford	Bonnie , Consultant

Meeting Opening:

Brett VandenHeuvel gave remarks and welcomed attendees to White Salmon. Brett gave information about what Columbia Riverkeeper does.

Introductions and Welcome

Mary Lou Soscia welcomed everyone and the group did a round of introductions.

Updates:

- James Thomas announced that he had attended first Pacific Northwest biochar conference, which looked at cutting edge technology for applying to land.
- Jennifer Morace and Elena Nilsen updated the group on the USGS ConHab project. The 3 sites chosen for the contaminants in the foodweb assessment are located along a contaminant gradient: Columbia City/St. Helens (high), Longview (medium), and Rooster Rock/Skamania (low). This year's work included passive samplers, collecting osprey eggs and blood from the surviving young, and largescale sucker tissues. In September, they will also collect sediment and invertebrates at these sites.
- Columbia Riverkeeper talked about Senate Bill 737 is an unfunded mandate. There is a hearing in Salem this week.
- Alec Maule discussed a Study in Yakima Basin on climate change. Taking Black Rock evaluation and adding to it some scenarios including some flow, this will be put into a population viability of salmonids formula. Proposing to continue this for three years after this initial study is complete in another year and then maybe extend it to the Columbia.
- Joann Labaw said she is looking at other Superfund possible sites. Did look at Vancouver lake and some other sites
- Lyndal Johnson informed the group that Tracey Collier from NOAA Fisheries and Matt Larsen from USGS have been invited to testify in Washington, DC, at an oversight hearing on endocrine disruptors in the environment and the impacts on fish and wildlife. The hearing is before the House Natural Resources Committee and is scheduled for June 9.

Reporting Out:

Summer Goodwin, EPA summarized the May 13 Pendleton Toxics Reduction Workshop. EPA used an evaluation form to solicit feedback from participants in an effort to make future workshops as successful as possible. The evaluations provided useful information. All ratings were good to excellent. Of note were participant comments on things that they liked: invocations and watershed council presentations. Some participants thought that the agenda was too full and that it needed more time.

The next workshop will be a PCB workshop in Portland – July 30th. There will be another general toxics workshop somewhere in the Basin later this summer.

Presentations:

Rachael Pecore – Rivernose Monitoring

During June and July many windsurfers reported having “river nose” which is exhibiting flu-like symptoms. During 2008 CRK worked with EPA to conduct their own study. Mike Cox asked about whether there was a wastewater treatment plant between any of the sampling sites. (follow up)

Did you count any water fowl population counts during these studies? Bingen has a lot of waterfowl but no other sites had waterfowl on the days of the samples.

Two counts aromonads and pseudomonades, both exceeded EU standards. US does not have such standards

(Check with NEPs about whether they have any information about fecal coliform or aromonads)

All samples were low for blue-green algae

Pollen- people usually think symptoms are due to pollen. Pollen counts in the river are very low however. No data on air quality data on pollen.

Surface microlayer the uppermost centimeter of the water. They did grab samples and dip samples across the river until they had enough to conduct the analysis and they found more than 25 chemicals including lotions, silicones

No information on non-recreational users of the river.

Jeff Ullman – WSU Bioavailability Study – BPA funded innovative project

Very high levels of creosote at St. Maries site. 60 years of dipping logs and loading them on trains.

Conducting some experiments on composted material spiked with different antibiotic compounds and looking at how they become available in the soil that the compost is applied to.

Opportunity to use the lab and equipment that he has, if someone wants to do a study and co-author a report. Can work on sediment or can use the fish facility or the pathogen challenge lab.

Mark Petersmidt, WA Ecology – 2006 Fish Tissue Study and newer work that has not yet been published for the Yakima River. working with stormwater and NPDES dischargers on two studies to develop a TMDL for pesticides and PCBs

All agriculture drains exceeded the criteria for DDE and Dieldrin. Did not n't observe any exceedances for Chlorpyrifos. They would have preferred to sample twice a month or weekly.

Toxophene – most heavily used pesticide after DDT was banned. concentrations drop after irrigation season. Criteria was exceeded in many places, but not all. Human health criteria is lower than that for fish, which is rare.

PCBs tends to be a more widespread issue than any of the pesticides.

Stormwater study showed DDT, Dieldrin, Chlorpyrifos and Total PCBs at all sites

Laura Buelow – EPA- Hanford Monitoring Study – water samples, sediment core samples, soil samples, whitefish tissue. Bonneville was the lowest sample site in the study area. Sites went up above Wanapum. This was a DOE study for sediment, but Laura was able to grab some of this and it's now at the Manchester Lab. It was suggested that PBDEs are added to what they are looking at

Dan Kent - Salmon Safe – collaborative approach to solving habitat issues. Started as part of Pacific Rivers Council but was spun off as part of its own 501(c3). A lot of work with the wine industry, especially in Walla Walla. Working with Puget Sound Partnership also. Certification includes fertility and pest management, irrigation water use, riparian and wetland mgmt, erosion and sediment control, and biological diversity. Looking for input on their High Risk list. Entire site has to be managed in this way (“the whole farm approach”). There is also an urban certification process focusing on stormwater management, site design and management.

Jennifer Morace USGS – USGS Columbia River Sampling Update

This study is focused on assessing contaminant concentrations directly contributed to the Columbia River through (1) wastewater treatment plant effluent and (2) stormwater runoff from adjacent urban environments. The cities included in this study are Wenatchee, Richland, Umatilla, The Dalles, Hood River, Portland, Vancouver, Columbia City, and Longview. Data from Wenatchee and Portland was compared using typical pharmaceutical concentrations measured in the effluent and the resulting concentrations in the Columbia River. Several pharmaceuticals are showing up in multiple cities. A few stormwater samples were collected and a complete set will be collected from the same cities in the fall. All of these data will be summarized in a report prepared this winter.

Presentations of the Draft Columbia River Action Plan:

There was a discussion on the different components. There was agreement to share the draft with the working group as final action is developed toward the end of the year.