



COLUMBIA RIVER BASIN
RESTORATION PROGRAM

**Columbia River Basin
Restoration Program Working
Group Meeting:
TOXICS MONITORING SUBGROUP
APRIL 28, 2022**



Columbia River Basin Restoration Program Working Group: TOXICS MONITORING SUBGROUP

April 28, 2022
10:00am – 12:00pm Pacific
Teams Meeting

Meeting Attendees:

Tribal Governments & Consortia:

Dianne Barton, CRITFC
Tamara Knudson, Spokane Tribe of Indians
Genny Hoyle, Kootenai Tribe of Idaho

Local Organizations:

Catherine Corbett, Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership

State Agencies:

Aaron Borisenko, OR DEQ
David Gruen, OR DEQ
Margaret Drennan, WA AG
Karl Rains, WA Ecology
William Hobbs, WA Ecology
James Medlen, WA Ecology
Ralph Myers, ID Power

Federal Employees

Mary Lou Soscia, EPA
Cheryl Vincent, EPA
Lauren McDaid, EPA
Peter Brumm, EPA
Lisa Kusnierz, EPA
Mark Jankowski, EPA
Jill Fullagar, EPA
Dwane Young, EPA
Adam Griggs, EPA
Patrick Moran, USGS
Jennifer Bayer, USGS
Rebecca Scully, USGS
Gina Hoff, USBR
Cavan Gerrish, USBR

Facilitator

Greg Frey, The Council Oak

Welcome, Agenda Review, and Introductions:

Mary Lou Soscia welcomed the group and reiterated how this Subgroup relates to the larger Columbia River Basin Restoration Working Group. Jen Bayer (USGS) provided an overview of prior meetings and described how the day's meeting fits into a series of planned meetings for this Subgroup. Greg Frey (Council Oak) led attendees in introductions.

Becca Scully (USGS) led attendees through some initial poll questions to gather background on data management practices that are currently being used. Most attendees were familiar with WQX and either use it or know someone in their organization that does.

Do you use data management plans for your toxics monitoring projects?

0 1 2

Yes



No



How are your data currently stored/managed in-house?

0 1 2

Stored documents

☐ 0 %

Electronic spreadsheets (Excel)

☒ 42 %

Relational database/GIS database

☒ 42 %

Something else

☐ 17 %

Are you familiar with the EPA WQX and the Water Quality Portal?

0 1 2

Yes, we regularly publish data using the WQX

☐ 25 %

Yes, we don't publish to the WQX, but I know someone in my organization who does use the WQX

☒ 42 %

Yes, but we don't use it or know anyone in my organization who use the WQX

☐ 33 %

No, what is the WQX?

☐ 0 %

Presentation: Overview of EPA WQX - Dwane Young:

Dwane Young (Chief of EPA's Office of Water, Water Data Integration Branch) provided an overview of the EPA's WQX system for data and information sharing. Dwane, who has been instrumental in developing the WQX and the national Water Quality Portal, gave some background information on the legacy data system (STORET) which came before WQX, and the challenges that it presented, leading to the development of WQX. Dwane explained that WQX is a standards-based approach for sharing water quality monitoring data and as such provides a standard format for publishing data. Dwane gave an overview of how WQX is used and what it looks like, with examples. He also explained the different versions of WQX that can be used and who they are geared toward (WQX basic and WQX Web). All data that gets submitted is published to the Water Quality Portal within a few days. Dwane explained the water quality portal partnership with EPA, USGS, and the National Water Quality Monitoring Council. He showed examples of the Water Quality Portal and how it is used. Dwane went on to explain why it is important for data to be published. Access to the full presentation is available [here](#).

Questions and Answers:

- How many states and tribes are currently contributing data to the exchange?
 - 385 state organizations and 318 Tribal organizations.
- Does NOAA contribute data on estuary conditions?

- Currently there is no data from NOAA, but we do partner with several other federal agencies.
- Will there be technical guidance for incoming monitoring grant applications in the future?
 - Yes.
- Does the database allow for habitat information to be entered?
 - Yes.
- Can WQX incorporate large data packages that have a lot of quality control data which has laboratory flags and black data?
 - The model is very well designed to handle this type of data.

Interactive discussion:

TOPIC #1: DATA SHARING

The group discussed the data sharing proposal (i.e., that toxics monitoring data be published to the EPA Exchange Network's WQX data system and that we create a new dashboard to access CRB data from the WQX). Some expressed reservations about sharing data in WQX. Nearly all attendees were interested in training on the tool, which EPA can provide. When asked about what would be most useful in a data dashboard, some common themes included location, gaps, and trends. The results of the data sharing questions are presented below.

Would you be interested in training related to publishing data to the WQX?

0 1 4

Yes



No



Do you have reservations about using WQX for publishing these data?

0 1 4

Yes



No



If you publish data using other tools, what do you use?

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- WSDA publishes data to Ecology's EIM database and also publish to our own website with ARC dashboard
- Agency database - Washington State Department of Ecology - Environmental Information Management System
- internal DEQ-developed RStudio Connect database
- RISE (Reclamations Database)
- AWQMS
- Usgs ScienceBase
- N/A

Do you share or publish machine readable metadata in a standard format (FGDC, ISO, EML) with your data?

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No, what is that?



Yes



If we were to build a CRB Toxics Data Dashboard to access and display data, what is the top question you would ask of the data?

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(1/2)

-
- Hazard quotients
 - Spatial and temporal trends
 - Are concentrations of an analyte increase or decreasing through time at a particular location?
 - Is this an area of concern that needs extra attention/monitoring? Is this a potential contaminant source area? Where are the datagaps (by parameter)? Is this an area of importance for aquatic species?
 - Potential health risks.
 - Who has done similar monitoring
 - Where are the holes? (locations, analyses, etc?)
 - that I can seek out for advice before I start my project?
 - Spatial map - regions of concern, areas of low probability of adverse impact from toxics, areas of inconclusive data
 - Are there trends over time for a specific constituent?
 - Quantity comparison
 - Where are toxic contaminants above aquatic life and human health benchmarks?
 - Are the values comparable?
 - Where?

TOPIC #2: RECURRING RESEARCH AND EMERGING CONCERNS WORKSHOP.

Next, the group discussed the utility of a recurring workshop to discuss emerging concerns and coordinate research priorities. Most felt that an in-person meeting every two years (in winter) would be the most helpful.

How often should we conduct a research priorities and emerging concerns workshop?

0 1 3

Annually



Every 2 years



What is the best time of year to conduct a research priorities and emerging concerns workshop?

0 1 4

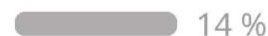
Spring



Summer



Fall



Winter



When we conduct a research priorities and emerging concerns workshop, who should attend?

0 1 0

(1/2)

- SME's. 30-50 people. A couple toxicologists who can actually speak about the real world impacts of new contaminants, both animal and human health
- Scientists - the people doing the current research. Members of marginalized communities - people who can express the priority concerns of their community.
- toxicologists
- Lab managers; representatives
- Scientist
- from agriculture/industry/forestry/transportation sectors; technical staff; water quality regulatory agencies
- Invite only
- SME and deliver information back to management.
- Tech staff from Tribes/States
- Tribal representatives, state representatives, federal representative, analytical managers (we need to understand methods)
- Regulators

What is the best format for the research priorities and emerging concerns workshop?

0 1 0

In-Person



Virtual



TOPIC #3: CONTAMINANTS OF CONCERN FRAMEWORK (FINALIZED AUGUST 2020).

Finally, David Gruen (OR DEQ, formerly an EPA ORISE Fellow) described the process for developing the [Columbia River Basin Contaminants of Concern Framework](#). Jen Bayer proposed revisiting this list in 5–10 years and the group largely agreed with this approach.

We propose to we revisit the Priority Contaminants of Concern List in 5-10 years. Do you agree yes/no?

0 0 8

Yes



No



Wrap Up and Next Steps - Jennifer Bayer:

This is the second meeting in a planned series of meetings to develop a strategy coordinating monitoring activities, including supporting a forum to exchange information specific about monitoring. Materials from the March and April 2022 meetings can be found [here](#).

The next Toxics Monitoring Subgroup Meeting will be June 2 1:00-3:00 (PST). If you would like to participate, contact Greg Frey (gfrey@thecounciloak.com).

The next CRBRP Working Group meeting was held May 11, 2022. Learn more [here](#). A short overview of this work was shared at that time.