Columbia River Toxics Reduction Working Group Meeting
January 21, 2010
Columbia River Discovery Center
The Dalles, Oregon

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Alan Maule, USGS
Andy Battin, EPA-HQ
Ann Stephenson, WDFW
Ann Williamson, EPA-R10
Anthony Barber, EPA R10
Chris Magan, SCBID
David Tetta, EPA-R10
Dixon Landers, EPA ORD - Corvallis
Elena Nilsen, USGS
Gary Turney, USGS
Gaurav Chatterjee, SWEAR
Gina Hoff, USBR
James M. Homer, Yakama Nation
Jason Braaten, EPA-R10
Jay Davis, USFWS
Jennifer Morace, USGS
Joanne LaBaw, EPA-R10
Joe McCanna, Warm Springs Tribe
Joe Rinella, USGS
John Piccininni, BPA
Karma Anderson, EPA-R10
Kevin Scribner, Salmon Safe
Kim Johnson, USACE
Krista Jones, LCREP
Larry Gabdois, EPA-R10
Laura Buelow, EPA-R10
Lorraine Edmond, EPA-R1-
Lorri Eberle, Columbia Riverkeeper
Lyndal Johnson, NOAA Science Center
Mary Lou Soscia, EPA-R10
Megan Thynge, EPA-HQ
Mike Cox, EPA-R10
Mike Karnosh, Grand Ronde Tribes
Mike Omeg, Omeg Orchards
Scott English, USACE
Steve Castagnoli, OSU Extension Service – Hood River
Susan Hess, Journalist
Tomme Cummings, WA Ecology
Tony Grover, NPCC
Tony Paulson, USGS
Val Brennis, LCREP

Introductions, Welcome and Updates

- Recap of September 2009 Meeting and discussion of the Feb 25th PBDE Workshop.
- Further discussion of the State of the River Report and how its release and goals have shaped what the working group has been doing.
- Salmon Safe discussion and updates on that program.

Data Exchange Tools to Support the Columbia River Toxics Reduction Strategy

Dave Tetta and Andy Battin presented information to the Working Group on the National Environment Information Exchange as a data exchange tool.

- National technology that EPA is building.
- Looking on how the system will work overall and how it will be used.
- It will serve as an exchange network for various agencies to exchange information and data gathered.
- Various agencies will align in a partnership to support this project. Developing organization will use NRCS standards for their data exchanges. Applications will be created that will pull data from multiple areas and increase cross integration with

multiple agencies. There will be an increased integration with GIS. The end goal is to get as much information into the system as possible.

Sustainable Practices at Omeg Orchards
Mike Omeg discussed the various steps that are being taken by his farm to increase sustainability including using multiple remote weather stations to determine optimal times to use pesticides, using natural predators to dispatch of vermin, as well as more efficient water methods are priorities.

Implementing Integrated Codling Moth Management in the Hood River Valley – Oppportunities for Pesticide Reduction
Steve Castagnoli – OSU Extension Service – discussed opportunities to reduce pesticides in agriculture focusing on codling moth reduction efforts in the Mid Columbia River area. Working around Pear Pest management (pears are a significant crop in this area). Included in this discussion were some possible alternative pest control measures.

How Can Ecosystem Services be Used to Reduce Toxics?
Dixon Landers, EPA Office of Ecosystems Service provided a introduction on the ecosystem services tool as a scientific process to understand the benefits of the environment. The process includes examination of activities that work with the environment and help humans in some way, for example pollination efforts. Also aligning education of general public with actual aims for ecosystem services. Determining what it is that the public is looking for.

Update on Oregon Team Toxics Work and Senate Bill 737 Work Efforts
Kevin Masterson, Oregon DEQ, presented the work underway on Senate Bill 737 to determine the development of the list of priority persistent bioaccumulative contaminants. Additional goals include identifying sources and pathways with chemicals. The eventual goal being to look at the current policy and determine what logical changes can be made and implemented. Also should be determined are long term strategies and potentially have a plan for these strategies implemented by Fall of 2010.

The 737 list began as over 8000 listed chemicals that were gradually weeded down to a smaller list of chemicals. The 737 list contains any chemicals that adversely affect surface water.

Oregon Fish Consumption Human Health Criteria Work Efforts
Kathleen Feehan, Confederated Tribes of Umatilla Indian Reservation, discussed the work underway in Oregon on revising the human health criteria to protect tribal communities and other who eat large amounts of fish. These fish consumption regulations are going to alter the way NPDES permits are handled. Fish consumption rates, as well, will eventually determine what is permitted with these discharge permits. Her organization is working extensively with EPA and ODEQ on NPDES issues while they are also requiring high point source pollution standards which are helpful to the fish consumption standards to begin with.

Mercury Deposition in the Columbia River Basin and: A Discussion of Regulatory Strategies for Reducing Mercury

Lauren Goldberg from Columbia Riverkeeper discussed opportunities in the Columbia River Basin for reducing mercury, specifically at the Durkee cement plant. There has been an evaluation on air mercury emission levels at the facility, and Oregon DEQ is currently working the facility to reduce mercury emissions at the facility. Public comments are being accepted at the time of this announcement.

Agnes Lut discussed Oregon mercury emissions and concentrations in fish, sediment and water, specifically in the Willamette Basin. The Willamette basin is within the Columbia River Basin. EPA REMSAD monitoring has helped ODEQ identify mercury emissions, and will be used to provide a more in-depth assessment as ODEQ develops a Phase 2 Willamette Basin Mercury TMDL. EPA has awarded a grant to ODEQ for the data collection to complete the Phase 2 TMDL. The Phase 1 TMDL was submitted and approved by EPA in September 2006. It has been determined in the Phase 1 TMDL that 48% of the mercury in the Willamette Basin comes from air deposition and that an additional 48% comes from the erosion of native soils. The Phase 2 TMDL will provide more information on point source, river sediment, and air deposition contributions.

Draft Columbia River Toxics Reduction Action Plan

Mary Lou Soscia, EPA, presented the five components of the Draft Columbia River Toxics Reduction Action Plan:

- Increase public understanding and political commitment to toxics reduction in the Basin
- Increase toxic reduction actions
- Conduct monitoring to identify sources and then reduce toxics
- Develop a regional, multi-agency research program
- Develop a data management system that will allow us to share information on toxics in the Basin

The Working Group discussed the Action Plan and provided specific comments on the Action Plan (attached).

Next Meeting- The next meeting was tentatively scheduled for May in Astoria..

Columbia River Toxic Reduction Working Group - Jan 21 Meeting
Comments on Draft Columbia River Toxics Reduction Action Plan

#1 Increase toxic reduction actions:

- call out erosion control / sediment reduction (for legacy contaminants) (Kevin Masterson)
- tie "use grants better" to "technical assistance for BMPs"
- Identify specific actions that speak to Salmon Safe-- would help leverage efforts with other funders (but how detailed do we want the plan to be?) (Kevin Scribner)
- :challenge with no standards for emerging COCs, many obstacles to getting to formal standards, need to work together to identify some risk-based "action levels" whether based on human health or ecosystem function (Kathleen Feehan)
- concerned about "non-standard standards" - it takes too long to set the real ones! (Brett VandenHeuvel)

#2 Monitor to ID sources / reduce toxics

- integrated plan to look at point / nonpoint / atmospheric sources-- is there an airshed component? (Dixon Landers)

#3 Research program

- Alec Maule from USGS offered to work on sub-group for this action

#4 Data Mgmt

- Revise bullets with help from Dave T et al regarding the "single entity" approach
- Reword suggestion - "create data stewardship program
- Integrated with distributed data generators" (I'd suggest making this more understandable to a normal non-data person, though.)

#5 increase understanding and political commitment to toxics reduction

General discussion

- Get EPA air toxics people involved to figure out sources, etc. – Kim Johnson
- Increase air toxics monitoring – Sandy Halstead
- Plan should come out and clearly state that the largest obstacle to progress is that this is the largest LAE with no Exec. panel or dedicated funding – Kathleen Feehan