**Columbia River Toxics Reduction Working Group Meeting**
May 11, 2010
Holiday Inn Express, Astoria, Oregon

**Attendees**

Aja DeCoteau, CRITFC
Alec Maule, USGS-Cook Lab
Anthony Barber, EPA R10
Barbara Stifel, OR State Health Authority
Brett VandenHeuvel, Columbia Riverkeeper
Catherine Corbett, LCREP
Corie Lahr, Columbia Riverkeeper
Dave Densmore, Commercial Fisherman and Fisher poet
David Ambrose, Clatsop SWCD
Debra Sherbina, EPA R10
Dirk Rohne, Clatsop County
Elena Nilsen, USGS
Elizabeth Gaar, NOAA
Gina Hoff, USBR
Glenn Vanselow, PNWA
Helen Rueda, EPA R10
Hillary Renick, Yakama Nation
Ilene Goudy
James M. Homer, Yakama Nation
Jennifer Morace, USGS
Joanne LaBaw, EPA R10
John McKesson
Julie Carter, CRITFC
Kim Johnson, USACE
Laura Buelow, EPA R10
Lisa Howard, EPA R10
Lonna Frans, USGS
Lorraine Edmond, EPA R10
Lyndal Johnson, NOAA Science Center
Mary Lou Soscia, EPA R10
Mike Cox, EPA R10
Robert Grove, USGS
Sheila Marcoe, OR Dept of Agriculture
Steve Marx, Office of Congressman Wu
Susan Hess, Journalist
Tony Paulson, USGS

**Meeting Summary**

**Introductions, Welcome and Updates**

**Recap of January 2010 meeting**

Data Exchange Tools to support the Columbia River Toxics Reduction Strategy
DOE's Monitoring Project of fish, sediment, and surface water will be out in August (Laura Buelow)

EPA Completed Superfund site assessment at Beaver Army Terminal, data will be available 3-4 months. If a lot of contamination is found it could be a superfund site, analyzing for metals, PCB's, PBDE's, full sweep… (Joann Labaw)

The CONHAB project, is getting close to fourth year and last year. Sturgeon project is in what is supposed to be its last year.

Society of Environmental Toxicology is having a session on toxics in the Columbia in November in Portland at the Oregon Convention Center.

Jennifer Morace from USGS gave an update on the waste water treatment plant, testing. They are finding the number of compounds a challenge. They used 69 compounds and found 55 detections. There were low concentration levels on the detection notices. Jennifer is planning on sharing the results at the next meeting.

Oregon Health Division has been re-organized to the Oregon Health Authority, with more emphases on fish toxics work. Barbara is asking for fish sample data from other agencies.

**Welcome To Clatsop County and Background on Dairy Farming in Lower Columbia River Estuary**

Dirk Rohne, Clatsop County Commissioner and dairy farmer discussed key environmental challenges estuary farmers are facing including dikes and their effect on water circulation in the estuary of the Brownsmead area, creating stagnant water. He discussed the steps taken to remove the dike thereby increasing the tidal flow into the estuary, trying to improve the water quality, and decreasing the water temperature.

**Climate Change Conceptual Model Work – Yakima and Methow Basin – relation to Toxics Reduction**

Alec Maule, USGS, Cook Lab, discussed the various models used to produce global climate change effects. These models have been developed to use social and economic considerations along with temperature, hydrodynamic, watershed and GIS models to better understand the effects of climate change in the Yakima and Methow River Basins.

**Mid Columbia River RARE Monitoring - project update and preliminary findings**

Loraine Edmond, EPA Region 10 provided an update on the RARE monitoring. Three agencies are involved, and the majority of the pesticides found were in DDT's and related compounds. Vernita Bridge and Trotter Pt had the highest levels of PCBs and PBDE's. Upcoming analyses include relation of chemicals in fish to species trophic levels, comparison of results from ecofish to results from HH Fillets. Future work might also include landscape and human disturbance metrics, and water quality parameters such as mercury methylation co-factors.

**Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission Watershed Program New Directions**

Aja Decoteau. Manager, Watershed Program, CRITFC, provided information on current CRITFC watershed work efforts. They are working on an eight year project to evaluate the potential impacts of future climate change on first food resources. CRITFC is collaborating on a study with USGS in the Yakima Basin which will include modeling stream temperatures on steelhead stream tributaries under future climate. The USGS Study will assess overall impacts on Chinook and steelhead, and consequent social and economic impacts for tribal members and county citizens

**A Commercial Fisherman's Perspective**
Dave Densmore, Commercial Fisherman and Fisher poet, is a published poet who told his story of growing up fishing and his love of water through poems. Dave provided his perspective of the fishing challenges he faces as the environment has changes through the years, and he read some of his poems.

**Salmon Recovery Planning in the Columbia River Basin – Opportunity to Address Toxics Reduction**
Elizabeth Gaar, NOAA-Fisheries, discussed the Salmon and Steelhead ESA recovery plans in the northwest, and how they are developed and constructed. NOAA is looking at recovery strategies to address limiting factors for each major population groups (MPG) Elizabeth encouraged the Working Group to get engaged in recovery plans as there are definite opportunities to toxics.

**Update on Columbia River Legislation**
Brett VandenHeuvel, Columbia Riverkeeper, Catherine Corbett from LCREP and Steve Marx from Congressman Wu's office, gave an update on the Columbia River Legislation, S3025 and HR4652, the Columbia River Restoration Act of 2010

**Columbia River Basin Action Plan - Develop Priority Plan for 2010 – 2011**
Mary Lou Soscia, EPA, led a session for the Working Group to identify the priority actions for 2010:

- Research Meeting in early Fall to identify priority research
- Monitoring Workshop to develop the prioritization tool. Key question is how do we prioritize? What types and purpose?
- Address known hot spots for clean-up – requires funding.
- Develop a pilot in the estuary to compile toxics data (sediment, fish and water), do analysis for hot spots, monitoring design for sources and reduction strategies.
- Continue to use social media to reach broader base: https://twitter.com/EPAcolumbia
- Outreach/Media Training for Columbia River Toxics Group – to develop messages
- Link NOAA Recovery Plans with toxics efforts – connect with local recovery plan contacts
- Begin work on Data System – WQX? DOE Data?
- Start taking action in face of uncertainty
- Develop take back programs for legacy pollutants
- Increase connection and engagement with local communities – how?
    - Work with local Salmon Recovery Boards and Irrigation Districts
    - Help sponsor local take back programs