

Columbia River Basin Restoration Program Working Group Meeting

Facilitated by U.S. EPA Regions 10 and 8 with support from Greg Frey, The Council Oak

May 20, 2020
9:30am– 4:00pm

Webinar

Meeting Attendees:

Karma Anderson, USDA National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
Greg Archuleta, Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde
Patricia Atkins, Oregon Dept. Environmental Quality (OR DEQ)
Austin Baldwin, U.S. Geological Survey (USGS)
Brad Barnhardt, National Council for Air and Stream Improvement
Dianne Barton, Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission (CRITFC)
Jen Bayer, USGS
Jan Boll, Washington State University (WSU)
David Brooks, Montana Trout Unlimited
Paula Calvert, OR DEQ
Kris Carre, EPA Region 10
Julie Carter, CRITFC
Warren Colyer, Trout Unlimited
Kathy Conn, USGS
Catherine Corbett, Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership (LCEP)
Tim Counihan, USGS
Alix Danielson, Hood River Watershed Group
Jay Davis, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Bryan DeDoncker, Clark County, WA
Keith Dublinica, WA State Governor's Salmon Recovery Office
Whitney Fraser, Lodestone Consulting
Cami Grandinetti, EPA Region 10
Matt Graves, Port of Vancouver USA
Nikki Guillot, City of Vancouver, WA
Calla Hagle, Burns Paiute Tribe
Scott Hauser, Upper Snake River Tribes Foundation
Heather Hendrixson, Hood River Soil and Water Conservation District
Susan Hess, Columbia Insight
Gina Hoff, Bureau of Reclamation
Dena Horton, Pacific NW Waterways Association
Brian Haug, Bureau of Indian Affairs
Roy Iwai, Multnomah County, OR
Alex Kain, Spokane Tribe
Michael Karnosh, Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde
Dan Kent, Salmon Safe
Carol Kriebs, Kootenai Tribe of Idaho
Darrin Kron, MT Dept. Environmental Quality
Bridgette Lohrman, EPA Region 10
Cindy Marchand, Colville Tribe
Deb Marriott, LCEP
Kevin Masterson, OR DEQ
James Mc Ateer, QA/QC Solutions, LLC
Jenifer McIntyre, WSU
Ken Merrill, Kalispel Tribe
Jennifer Morace, USGS
Patrick Moran, USGS
Carl Morgenstern, Eugene Water and Electric Board
Michelle Mullin, EPA Region 10
Nancy Munn, NOAA Fisheries
Sage Park, Washington Ecology (WA Ecology)
Mark Peterschmidt, WA Ecology
Chris Rempel, Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde
Laura Robinson, Upper Columbia United Tribes (UCUT)
Rian Sallee, WA Ecology
Brenda Sanchez, OR Department of Agriculture
Kevin Scribner, Salmon Safe
Laura Shira, Yakama Nation
John Sirois, UCUT
Andrew Sumerau, Siletz Tribe
Andrew Swanson, OR Association of Clean Water Agencies
Chuck Thompson, Author
Denise Troxell, USDA NRCS
Yvonne Vallette, EPA Region 10
Kathryn VanNatta, NW Pulp and Paper Association
Torey Wakeland, Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde
Steve Waste, USGS
Krystyna Wolniakowski, Columbia River Gorge Commission

EPA CRBRA Team:

Peter Brumm, EPA Region 8
Michael Fischer, EPA Region 8
Greg Frey, Council Oak
David Gruen, EPA Region 10
Lon Kissinger, EPA Region 10
Peter Murchie, EPA Region 10
Vicky Salazar, EPA Region 10
Mary Lou Soscia, EPA Region 10
Michelle Wilcox, EPA Region 10
Ashley Zanolli, EPA Region 10

PowerPoint slides for the following presentations are available online:

<https://www.epa.gov/columbiariver/columbia-river-basin-restoration-working-group>

1. **Clean Water Act Section 123 Working Group Update**
2. **Toxics Reference List & Columbia River Basin 303(d) Toxics Impaired Waters Report**
3. **Columbia River Basin Contaminants of Concern Update**
4. **Update on Willamette River Toxics Reduction Partnership and Story Map**
5. **Abandoned Mine Clean-Up Efforts in Montana**
6. **Reducing Toxics Through Stormwater Management**

Clean Water Act Section 123 Working Group Update

Presenters: Mary Lou Soscia, EPA Region 10 and Peter Brumm, EPA Region 8

Mary Lou and Peter provided an overview of EPA's work efforts to implement Section 123, the [Columbia River Basin Restoration Act](#) (CRBRA), a 2016 amendment to the Clean Water Act. The two main components of the CRBRA are a competitive grant program focused on addressing toxic pollutants, and the establishment of the Columbia River Basin Restoration Program Working Group. In September 2019, EPA released a Request for Assistance for FY 2019 funding. Grant program awards based on FY 2019 and FY 2020 funding will be finalized and announced in Summer 2020. The CRBRA also directed EPA to establish a voluntary work group building upon the Columbia River Toxics Reduction Working Group, in place since 2005. This May 20 meeting is the inaugural meeting of the CWA Section 123 Working Group.

Columbia River Basin Toxics Reference List & 303(d) Toxic Impaired Waters Report

Presenter: David Gruen [ORISE Participant], EPA Region 10

David presented two documents intended to provide technical information to support toxics assessment, reduction, and restoration in the Columbia River Basin. Both documents are located on EPA's Columbia River Basin Restoration Working Group website. The [Toxic Contaminants Reference List](#) is a collection of 220 peer reviewed science articles and federal, tribal, and state government reports/publications related to toxics in the aquatic environment. The second document, the [Toxic Impaired Waterbodies on 303\(d\) Lists in the Columbia River Basin](#), provides an overview of all the toxic pollutants known to impair surface waterbodies (category 4a and category 5 waters) in the Columbia River Basin portion of Idaho, Montana, Oregon and Washington; summarizes the location of TMDLs and impaired waterbodies for 10 selected contaminants; and links to 31 TMDLs covering one or more toxics in the Columbia River Basin.

Contaminants of Concern Update

Presenter: Ashley Zanolli, EPA Region 10

Ashley presented an update on the progress of the Contaminants of Concern (CoC) subgroup, a voluntary collaboration to update the 2007 list of priority toxics in the Columbia River. The updated CoC framework organizes toxic pollutants by common pathways into the environment (i.e., agriculture, wastewater treatment plants, etc.) and types of actions (i.e., keeping sediment in place, source reduction, etc.) that can be taken to reduce the pollutants. The updated CoC framework does not prioritize or rank contaminants. In addition, the updated CoC includes: an introduction/background document, the consideration factors that were used to identify the CoC, links to best management practices resources, and a supplemental spreadsheet with additional information on toxic contaminants.

Grand Ronde Tribe Work Efforts to Understand Metal Contamination in First Foods

Presenters: Greg Archuleta & Chris Rempel, Grand Ronde Tribe

Greg and Chris presented on the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde's efforts to evaluate metal contamination in Wapato, a tuber that is an important First Food. The work is composed of two key efforts: 1) population site surveys, and 2) Wapato tuber testing. The goal of the population site surveys is to better understand where Wapato is found along the Willamette and Columbia Rivers from Portland to

Corvallis, OR. A survey of the Columbia Slough in north Portland was recently completed. Few Wapato were found in the eastern, upper end of the slough, but large clusters were found near the Smith and Bybee Wetlands Natural Area. In addition, Wapato tubers from 11 different sites were sampled for 32 contaminants, including lead, mercury, and copper. Samples taken from sites along the Willamette River had higher levels of certain contaminants. The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde hope to conduct additional testing of Wapato tubers and soils, including for pesticides. The Grand Ronde Tribe is developing a Story Map to share information on Wapato and their work to assess and understand toxic contamination. EPA will update the presentation summary with a link to the Story Map when it is publicly released.

Update on Willamette River Toxics Reduction Partnership and Story Map

Presenters: Kevin Masterson, OR DEQ and Mary Lou Soscia, EPA Region 10

Kevin and Mary Lou discussed the Willamette River Toxics Reduction Partnership, a collaborative group formed in May 2017 as a part of OR DEQ and EPA's commitment in the Portland Harbor Cleanup Record of Decision. EPA and OR DEQ co-lead the group's efforts to assess and reduce upstream toxic contamination to prevent re-contamination of the Superfund site once clean-up is completed. EPA helped fund DEQ assessments of river sediments in the Upriver Reach, just upstream of the Portland Harbor Superfund site, to determine possible sources of contamination. Thus far, the results indicate the few areas of elevated toxics contamination appear to be localized and are likely not contributing to re-contamination of Portland Harbor. A [Story Map](#) was developed to serve two goals: 1) an alternative information sharing mechanism to a watershed plan for the Willamette, and: 2) to tell the story of tribal governments and environmental justice communities who are historically and culturally connected to the Willamette River and are leaders in Willamette River Basin restoration work efforts. The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, the Yakama Nation, and the Blueprint Foundation are featured in the Willamette River Toxics Reduction Story Map.

Abandoned Mine Clean-Up Efforts in Montana

Presenter: Warren Colyer, Trout Unlimited (TU)

Warren shared information on Trout Unlimited's work to clean up and restore stream reaches affected by historic mining practices. In Western Montana, TU has completed or is working on nine restoration projects in the Clark Fork River Basin on tributary reaches that are outside the boundaries of the Clark Fork River Superfund Complex, which covers 120 miles of the mainstem Clark Fork River. TU works closely with state agencies to clean up abandoned mine sites. Often, state agencies remove the contaminated mine tailings. Once that work is complete, Trout Unlimited will re-engineer the form of the stream channel and valley floor to create self-sustaining riverine habitat, including native riparian vegetation.

Reducing Toxics through Stormwater Management

Presenter: Jenifer McIntyre, WA State University/WA Stormwater Center

Jen shared information on work being done by the Puget Sound Stormwater Science Team (WSU/NOAA/USFWS) and collaborators at UW Tacoma to understand the impacts of stormwater on aquatic species, particularly salmonids, and to develop and test solutions that will prevent aquatic toxicity from stormwater runoff. In Puget Sound urban streams, coho salmon have experienced up to 100% mortality following rain events. The affected fish die quickly of unknown causes. Other salmonid species, such as steelhead and chinook salmon, are less sensitive to stormwater runoff. Compared to other land uses, high coho mortality is most strongly correlated with roads, and specifically roads with high traffic rates. Research shows that road runoff must be highly diluted to prevent coho mortality. Tire wear particles appear to be an important source of toxicity. Potential solutions to toxic stormwater pollution include source control of toxic chemicals and infiltration of stormwater through green infrastructure such as bioretention (engineered soils). Ongoing research is being conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of

various bioretention designs, including the use of novel amendments such as biochar and fungi. Additional work is required to understand the optimal scale and location of bioretention facilities to reduce stormwater toxicity.

End of Meeting Summary

The next Columbia River Basin Restoration Program Working Group will be held in Fall 2020. EPA is prepared to host the meeting via webinar and will make a determination on the feasibility of hosting an in-person meeting based on local, state and federal guidelines. EPA requests feedback from meeting attendees about the format of the May 20 remote meeting. EPA wants to hear what worked well and what aspects of the format and/or meeting facilitation could be improved. In addition, EPA welcomes suggestions for presentation topics at future events. Please submit comments or suggestions to Mary Lou Soscia via email at Soscia.MaryLou@epa.gov.