

PCBs in the Lower Columbia River
July 30, 2009; Portland
Final Session Brainstorming on Next Steps

Dams

- Complete and evaluate information request from federal dams
- Request and evaluate information from non-federal dams in the Columbia Basin

Site Cleanup

- Expand a Portland-like PCB site identification and cleanup approach to other cities in the basin
- Most municipalities don't have funding for PCB work – need to get them money, make it a priority for municipalities or find other alternatives
- Look beyond the traditional PCB sources (e.g. transformer oil) to other sources (e.g. paint and caulk)
- Complete Portland Harbor clean up
- Need education and outreach to site owners
- Need Great Lakes Legacy Act-type work in the lower Columbia that is action oriented

Other Control Issues

- Need to also control sources above Bonneville Dam
- Address atmospheric sources

Monitoring

- Identify PCB hot spots (source identification)
- Conduct source loading (e.g. stormwater tracking)
- Need long-term monitoring for trend analysis
- Needs consistency in sampling approaches (congeners, aroclors, “total” PCBs) so studies are comparable.

Regulatory Issues

- PCBs are not addressed well through standard Clean Water Act approaches (permits for point sources)
- Difficulties issuing stormwater permits with PCB controls without TMDL; need to resolve this CWA regulatory issue
- Need a Lower Willamette River TMDL (or a better approach)
- Improve the states' ability to address PCB issues
- Need sediment standards; clean up levels are currently site specific
- Can recovery funds be used for PCB work?

Coordination

- Use coordination between EPA's PCB TSCA group, state regulators, and municipal site identification, education, and outreach
- Make sure regulatory efforts are not duplicated so resources are used wisely
- Need an overarching authority for Lower Columbia River?
- Need multiple actions (cleanups, prevention, new policies)
- Need to outline the responsibilities of counties and cities

National Level

- National-level rulemaking
- Reform TSCA: Under TSCA, 0-50 ug/L is “non-PCB” but 1 ug/L is used as a cleanup level.