PUGET SOUND MONITORING CONSORTIUM

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday, 1 April 2009 1:30 AM – 3:15 PM
Tacoma Nature Center, 1919 S Tyler, Tacoma

Draft Summary

OF THE MEETING'S KEY DISCUSSIONS, DECISIONS AND AGREEMENTS

ATTENDED: **Chris Burke**, City of Tacoma; **Heather Kibbey**, City of Everett; **Doug Navetski**, King County; **Tony Paulson**, USGS; **Jim Simmonds**, King County; **Rich Sheibley**, USGS; **Heather Trim**, People for Puget Sound; Project Manager **Karen Dinicola (**Ecology); and Facilitator **Jim Reid**.

BRIEFING ON STATUS OF PILOT PROJECTS PROVIDES GLIMPSE OF THE CHALLENGES OF COORDINATION AND WHAT MAY BE NEEDED TO OVERCOME THEM

This was the third update of the Technical Advisory Committee on the status of implementing the four pilot projects. The projects are: 1) the Stream Benthos Gap Analysis, Coordination, and Data Management Program; 2) the inter-calibration study; and 3) the In-Line Ditch Stormwater Treatment Best Management Practices Program; and 4) the Development of Standardized Operating Procedures (SOPS) and Quality Assurance Project Plans (QAPPs) for Stormwater.

Based on the briefings, a key finding at this juncture of our process is this: Significant issues of coordination and resource capacity challenge the entities participating in the projects. While the individuals involved are being creative and resourceful in overcoming these challenges while implementing the "pilots," we need more efficient and less burdensome ways to coordinate in the future if the regional monitoring program is going to achieve our expectations.

As work on the projects nears completion by the end of June, the Technical Advisory Committee may submit recommendations for streamlining processes and procedures to make coordination less difficult and more efficient. While the Committee neither discussed solutions in detail nor tried to agree on recommendations, there appeared to be a mutual interest in protecting and judiciously using the resources devoted to regional monitoring. To achieve this interest, an idea expressed by more than one Committee member was to "pool" the resources of participating entities, including staff, even if those resources continue to be housed within the individual entities. "Pooling" resources is seen, at least preliminarily, as a means to overcome some of the operational and fiscal challenges that each of the pilot projects appears to be encountering.

THE STATUS OF EACH PILOT PROJECT

Chris Burke updated the group about the status of the Standardized Operating Procedures (SOPs) and Quality Assurance Project Plans (QAPPS) for Stormwater.

The project's goal is to expand and standardize stormwater SOPs for any agency conducting monitoring, and to have a broadly available library of SOPS that could be easily referenced and used.

The highlights of Chris' remarks were:

- Four SOPs will be delivered by the conclusion of this pilot project: automated sampling; grab sampling; sediment traps; and pollution loading.
- Each of these procedures is being designed with a multitude of users in mind; they should be useable for industry as well as government.
- The SOP for automated sampling is currently being reviewed by a small group and then will be submitted to a larger group of organizations for review and comment.
- With regard to the sediment traps (but in truth this applies to all the SOPS), a primary goal of is to clarify when it is appropriate to use the traps and how to appropriately use them.
- In addition to the four SOPS, other deliverables of the pilot project are a glossary of terms, data base scoping project, and training of jurisdictions' and organizations' staff in using the SOPS. The first stage of training is occurring this month.

One lesson learned so far in the process of implementing this pilot is that it difficult to maintain a large enough base of participants.

Jim Simmonds of King County provided an update on the Stream Benthos Gap Analysis, Coordination, and Data Management Program.

The project's goal is to expand and improve the data management system for stream benthos by standardizing the methodology for collecting, organizing and analyzing the information.

Highlights of Jim's remarks were:

- The data management system will be web-based. The data will be owned by individual entities, but shared. In collecting information from individual entities, the participants in this pilot project will be able to produce a "gap analysis" to determine what data is missing from the collective.
- To date over 200 entities representing government, business, labor, and non-profits have been contacted. Approximately nineteen of them have data to share, and one-half of that number has done so. Staff is now phoning jurisdictions and organizations in an effort to collect more.
- It will be a challenge to have the data "loaded" by 30 June.
- Another challenge is ensuring that smaller jurisdictions can participate because they cannot afford to pay King County to manage data collection. This is one reason why it may be useful to create a funding "pool" that could be used for all jurisdictions. But one of the early lessons of this pilot project is that it is not easy to develop a standard agreement that all participating entities can use because of differences in contracting procedures and contracts.

Jim also mentioned that King County has submitted a "green infrastructure" proposal for federal stimulus funding. Components of the proposal include data collection on weather precipitation, stream flow, and stream temperature.

Jim also updated the Committee on the Laboratory Inter-calibration Study.

Highlights of his comments included:

- This pilot project is intended to achieve both standardization of the management of data among jurisdictions and more efficient data loading.
- As part of this pilot project, there are two rounds of sampling. Participating labs took the first set of samples on 26 March, and the second set of samples on 1 April.
- The data from these events will be submitted to King County by mid-April.
- A draft report of the findings will be issued in mid-May, with the final report being released by the end of June.

Once these first three briefings were concluded, project manager Karen Dinicola suggested that the Washington Monitoring Forum (WFM) would be very interested in hearing about them, and the findings from each. The group agreed, and Karen will work with Ken Dzinbal, staff lead for the WMF, about scheduling a briefing of the Forum in either May or July.

Jim Simmonds then reported on the In-Line Ditch Stormwater Treatment Best Management Practices Program pilot project on behalf of his King County colleague Rob Fritz, who was prevented from attending by a last minute commitment.

Highlights of Jim's comments were:

- A lesson already learned from this pilot project is that there are challenges of coordination within one agency.
- This is a three-year project; "pilot project" funding is targeted to outreach and communicating results.
- Data was collected this winter at four sites. Best Management Practices (BMPs) for local stormwater treatment ditches will be implemented this summer. Data will then be collected next winter to determine the effectiveness of the BMPs by comparing the 2010 data to the 2009 data.

COMMITTEE UPDATED ON OTHER INITIATIVES OF THE CONSORTIUM

Karen Dinicola updated the TAC on the Governance Committee's meeting with three members of the Puget Sound Partnership Leadership Council on 25 March. The Leadership Council wanted to better understand the thinking of Governance Committee members on the strengths of the two governance models outlined in the Committee's December 2008 report to the State Legislature. The summary of the meeting is posted on the Puget Sound Monitoring Consortium's website.

Jim Simmonds, newly chosen chair of the Stormwater Work Group, reported on that group's recent progress. The Work Group is hosting a public workshop on 19 May from 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. to get early input for the development of the stormwater monitoring strategy and to identify opportunities to link the stormwater monitoring strategy to other efforts. Approximately 200 people have been invited to the workshop. A second workshop will be held in November to present the draft stormwater monitoring strategy.

THE NEXT MEETING OF THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The final update of the TAC on the progress of the pilot projects will be 10 June from 1-3 p.m. At this meeting the Committee will also review, discuss, and, hopefully, agree on recommendations to accompany the report outlining the key findings from each pilot project.