Spokane River Collaboration

Workgroup Starter Kit

What are we doing and where are we?

The aim of the current collaboration among the Petitioners (those that signed the Petition for Rule Making) and the Department of Ecology is to produce an understanding about the content of a TMDL Implementation Plan. The Petition for Rule Making and Ecology's issuance of a TMDL for the Spokane River are both placed "on hold" to provide an opportunity for open discussion among the Petitioners and Ecology about how the proposed TMDL might be implemented.

The focus of the effort is on implementation. The discussions also provide an opportunity to consider the Petitioners' Use Attainability Analysis and the Draft TMDL independent of the administrative processes that are "on hold" for the time being. Necessarily this will involve revisiting earlier assumptions, data and conclusions to assure uniform understanding of these foundations for an implementation plan. It is possible these discussions could lead to revisions of the earlier work. If this happens, then those revisions will be subject to the standard administrative processes used to develop the original material including public review and comment.

The Petitioners and Ecology are firmly committed to improving Spokane River water quality. Defining how that can happen within the requirements of law, technical feasibility and economic reality is the purpose of our current effort. Expression of our joint effort will take the form of TMDL Implementation Plan understandings or outline and may include specific agreements.

Since early March, 2005, when the Petitioners and Ecology first met to explore how to proceed, a few steps have been taken:

- The term "Full Group" applies to the assembled representatives of the Petitioners, Ecology and some others.
- The Full Group has agreed on Principles and Elements (please see attached, similarly titled documents).
- The Full Group has agreed on Workgroups to help with the overall effort, named each Workgroup its general concept, and decided on membership and co-chairs (please see attached document titled "Spokane River Negotiations and Workgroups).
- The Full Group has set some parameters for openness and public access which are still being developed (please see attached document titled "Public Process Description v 4.5).
- The Steering Workgroup has assigned "Fundamental Questions" to each Workgroup. These questions constitute the "assignment" to each Workgroup. It is expected the questions will be answered and the answers presented to the Full Group.

- The Full Group has "brainstormed" questions for consideration by the Petitioners and Ecology and these questions have been assigned to Workgroups for thought and recommendations after each Workgroup has completed its assignment.

What do Workgroups do?

There are fundamental differences between the Petitioners and Ecology. Some of these differences may be due to misunderstandings while others are professional disagreements. The Workgroups will sort through the "Fundamental Questions" assigned to them, clarify misunderstandings, list areas of agreement, areas of disagreement (together with the various viewpoints), and recommend solutions to whatever differences can be bridged. Each Workgroup will report on its progress at every meeting of the Full Group.

A Workgroup may have concerns about a "Fundamental Question" or feel another or different question should be posed. The Workgroup Co-chairs should immediately contact the Steering Workgroup using the e-mail address provided on the official Spokane River Collaboration web site. The Steering Workgroup is set up to provide prompt guidance so that a Workgroup need not wait for the next session of the Full Group. The Steering Workgroup exists to resolve Workgroup process issues, keep things moving briskly in a generally organized manner, and prepare the agendas for the Full Group.

When a Workgroup has a proposal or proposal with options concerning its part of a proposed TMDL Implementation Plan, the Workgroup will present its effort to the Full Group for consideration. The presentation will include the recommendations on which the Workgroup agrees and the list of significant issues on which there is not agreement. The list of unresolved issues must clearly state all positions.

In summary, a Workgroup tries to come to a common opinion on recommendations for a TMDL Implementation Plan within the framework of the "Fundamental Questions" assigned to it, and the Workgroup clearly spells out significant differences, if any. There will be status reports presented by the co-chairs or designated members at each Full Group meeting.

What are the "Fundamental Questions" for the Workgroups?

At its May 10th meeting, the Steering Workgroup considered the "Fundamental Questions" for each Workgroup. These were reviewed and modified at the May 12th Full Group meeting. Please refer to the Spokane River TMDL Collaboration website for the listing of Fundamental Questions. These questions must be answered. If agreement on an answer cannot be reached, the various differences must be described so that each viewpoint is fully represented.

Who are members of the Workgroups?

Please refer to the Spokane River TMDL Collaboration website for a listing of Workgroup membership.

How do we set up and hold meetings?

Notification:

The co-chairs are responsible for calling meetings and notifying Workgroup members of meeting logistics. (You might try using Kansas State University's free service http://www.meetingwizard.com.) Once a time and place are established, the co-chairs are expected to immediately notify Ryan Orth of Ross & Associates (ryan.orth@ross-assoc.com) who will secure the Facilitator's approval to post the meeting on the Spokane River Collaboration web site. The meeting times and places on the web sit are considered official and final. It is expected everyone, including the public, Petitioners and Ecology, will use the web site to keep track of Workgroup and Full Group meetings.

It is expected that "next meetings" or a series of meetings will be scheduled at the first meeting of each Workgroup. This information should be sent immediately to Ryan Orth for posting so there can be as much advanced notice as possible.

Meeting Procedure:

All Workgroup meetings are open for anyone to attend. Participation, however, is limited to Workgroup members. Public comments about Workgroups should be addressed to the Steering Workgroup using the e-mail address on the Spokane River Collaboration web site. The Steering Workgroup is committed to rapid consideration and response. Time constraints are limiting public comment and participation to meetings of the Full Group which has responsibility for making determinations and will always meet in open session.

Co-chairs are responsible for conducting the meeting. Time should be reserved at the end of each meeting to outline a meeting summary and the topics to be prepared for and dealt with at the next meeting. Co-chairs are responsible for preparing the meeting notes and description of the next meeting and getting this information posted as described below.

It is critical for a Workgroup to stay on-point with its "Fundamental Questions." The Workgroup is responsible for providing in-depth information about these questions. Information from the Wastewater Flows and Loadings, Reuse and Conservation and Non-Point Source Workgroups will be forwarded to the Technology Workgroup for integration into a broader context for use in a Draft Implementation Plan. Generally, in the interest of time and efficiency, Workgroups should avoid broadening their focus.

How do we present our regular report to the Full Group?

With this "Workgroup Starter Kit," each Workgroup co-chair is being supplied with a Word© template (SRC workgroup report.dot). The co-chairs are expected to use this template for presenting meeting notes and a status report in the form of a Word© document. The file name of the document should follow the example below:

	Name	*Subscript*
Protocol	(workgroup name)* (date of meeting)	.doc
Example	nonpointsource 051705	.doc

*Please use no capital letters or hyphens or slashes or periods

As noted above, the information for the template should be generally discussed prior to the close of each Workgroup meeting. The co-chairs must jointly approve the document e-mailed to ryan.orth@ross-assoc.com for posting on the Spokane River Collaboration web site. Prior to posting, the Facilitator, Bill Ross, will review and approve the document for clarity and balance.

All reports for each Workgroup will be posted on the web site. Reading them in order should present a summary of discussions and evolution of answers to the Workgroup's "Fundamental Questions."

Clarity and brevity are greatly appreciated. The aim is not to document every nuance but rather keep track of key milestones and conclusions. It is recognized that there are no final conclusions until there is final agreement, however notes about past discussions should help with uniform understandings of concepts and options.

The "Topics for Next Meeting" section is very important. This will not only focus Workgroup members, it will also aid others in deciding whether to attend a particular Workgroup session.

At every Full Group meeting, Workgroup co-chairs will be asked to "rise and report" concerning the status of the Workgroup's effort. The aim is to provide a brief oral summary of your most recent report(s) since the previous Full Group meeting. You will be allowed approximately ten minutes (shorter is better). If you will require more time or anticipate significant questions/discussions, contact the Steering Workgroup well in advance (at least more than 10 days) before the Full Group meeting to make appropriate agenda arrangements.

How do we present our recommendation(s) and final report?

Each Workgroup will be scheduled to present its recommendations and final report to the Full Group. The Flows and Loadings, Reuse and Conservation, and Non-Point Source Workgroups will make their presentations to the Full Group first, prior to their being forwarded to the Technology Workgroup.

The expectation is each Workgroup's "Fundamental Questions" will be answered with a separate section devoted to each question. If there are significant issues about which agreement cannot be reached, the disagreement will be described and the various viewpoints expressed.

A Workgroup's final report should be in written or presentation form (Word© or PowerPoint©) so that it can be posted on the Spokane River Collaboration web site. Workgroup co-chairs should also expect to make an oral presentation to the Full Group supplemented as desired with handouts, a visual presentation, and/or a written document.

What about the "brainstorm" questions?

Below are the "brainstorm" questions assigned to your Workgroup. Recall that these questions were developed during an April 2005 session of the Full Group. Keep these

questions "in mind" as your "Fundamental Questions" are being answered. Initial efforts must be aimed at the fundamentals, but the context that the "Fundamental Questions" create will likely shape perspectives on the "brainstorm" questions.

The list below contains the "brainstorm" questions assigned to your Workgroup. It may be that you decide the questions belong with another Workgroup or are outside the scope of the Spokane River Collaboration. Please take this up with the Steering Workgroup to assure no "brainstorm" question is left unattended in some way. The numbers to the left of the questions below indicate the order the particular question was raised during the "brainstorm." For a complete list of all "Brainstorm Questions," please see the document of the same name attached.