

Summary of notes from the Lower Basin Project Focus Team (PFT) meeting 3/27/08

Notes taken by: Rebecca Stevens- Coeur d'Alene Tribe

The meeting started off with introductions and a brief overview of why we decided to meet as per BEIPC direction from their 3/27/08 meeting. An agenda was put together by the above said note taker and brief presentations of ongoing projects in the basin followed.

Coeur d'Alene Basin Environmental Monitoring Plan (BEMP)

- A PowerPoint presentation was provided by Anne Dailey- EPA regarding the collaborative development of the BEMP, the goals, objectives, and principles of the monitoring plan design.
- Anne also discussed the relationship that BEMP has with other environmental monitoring programs. She then gave specific updates on lower basin monitoring of surface water at Cataldo and Harrison as well as sediment monitoring at Cataldo, Rose Lake, Medimont, and Harrison. BEMP monitoring does not include groundwater monitoring because the interim cleanup plan does not address groundwater. Additional surface water sites were added at the mouth of Canyon Creek as well as between Elizabeth Park and Smeltonville to address key data gaps.
- She mentioned that Biological resource monitoring is conducted by USFWS for EPA.
- The BEMP results are available on EPA's web page and the surface water, soil and sediment results are also available for viewing at www.storet.org. An interactive map of all of the sampling sites is also available on the website.
- Anne stressed that the BEMP will evolve over the 30+ year implementation period and it is important to keep in mind that it requires adaptive management.

Coeur d'Alene River bank stabilization

- A PowerPoint presentation was provided by Mark Addy- NRCS on bank stabilization projects along the Coeur d'Alene River.
- Mark stressed that over the years the bank erosion has occurred mostly due to boat wake erosion and water level fluctuations. There was discussion regarding monitoring of bank erosion and Bob Flagor with the Kootenai-Shoshone Soil and Water Conservation District updated the group on bank pins that had been historically placed.
- As slides came up pertaining to different agencies, they provided detailed descriptions of techniques and materials used.
- Mark provided some information on new design ideas and a project is in the making at the outlet of the Coeur d'Alene River at Harrison utilizing the new design technique.
- Scott Fields- Coeur d'Alene Tribe suggested that Mark read the Bruce Stoker report on bank stabilization.

- NRCS assisted landowners in 2007 by stabilizing approximately 8,000 of linear feet of riverbank and they are proposing approximately 14,000 of linear feet to be stabilized in 08-09.
- Discussion followed better coordination among agencies so everyone is aware of ongoing projects within the lower basin that are being implemented outside of the ROD.

Coeur d'Alene Lake sampling update

- Glen Rothrock (DEQ) gave a brief update of ongoing lake sampling that the Tribe and DEQ have been collecting utilizing USGS techniques and following the EPA Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) that was submitted jointly.
- DEQ has 2 stations that they sample quarterly and generally samples during the same week that the Tribe samples. Glen mentioned that the first week of 2008 sampling was conducted on 3/18-3/19 and he plans to incorporate data onto the EPA's storet website.
- Scott mentioned that the Tribe also samples up the St. Joe River and is looking closely at internal cycling sites.
- Scott Fields and Dale Chess (CDA Tribe) followed up with a description of the ELCOM/CAEDYM modeling program that Dale will be working with. Training was made available to State and Tribal staff by USGS and the Centre for Water Research of Western Australia at the Tribe's computer lab.
- Dale reported that he has been working with the ELCOM portion of the model specifically and that it can take up to two days to run that portion.
- Lastly, Glen noted that December data was very critical and water composition was uniform.

Fish Response to Bank Stabilization

- Brian Spears (USFWS) gave a brief update on the CWA project that was conducted jointly with USFWS and a UofI I graduate student. Approximately 3,000 fish were sampled along the CDA River adjacent to bank stabilization projects utilizing netting and electro fishing techniques. More details regarding the findings of this project will be provided at the May BEIPC meeting.

CDA River Bank Stabilization

- Nick Zilka (DEQ) handed out designs and treatment locations of 5 different bank stabilization designs that were installed on the river. Along with the designs Nick had a handout of general observations and features. A more detailed presentation will be given at the May BEIPC meeting.

Lane Marsh Character Sampling

- Anne Dailey (EPA) stated that Lane Marsh was identified as an area to be remediated in the Interim ROD and EPA has applied for ASARCO trust fund dollars to collect baseline topographic information, baseline soil metals concentrations and to conduct a habitat and vegetation inventory. EPA will learn in June whether they will get the funding to do this sampling.

At this point in the meeting there was in depth discussion regarding the geographic boundary that the Lower Basin PFT will be looking at. Due to the lake not having a selected CERCLA remedy there were some thoughts as to whether this group should even be discussing ongoing and future lake management efforts. Overall, it appeared that different agencies would like to stay abreast to sampling efforts on the lake and participate in future lake management efforts.

Future tasks of the PFT

- The group agreed that there appears to be a lack of interagency coordination and that it would benefit the BEIPC as a whole to have past completed CWA reports posted on the website. The group decided to work with Terry on identifying Lower Basin (specifically CDA River from Cataldo downstream to Harrison) project reports should be posted on the BEIPC website. Rebecca offered to work with Terry on the list of those projects not posted and request that sponsoring agencies work with entities that wrote the final reports and request electronic copies of those reports to be posted.
- During the revision of these notes, a suggestion was made to not post all of the reports in their entirety but rather a short note or the executive summaries on the website. This issue will be discussed further with the PFT.

The group discussed a mission statement and Ed Moreen volunteered to compose a draft statement to be circulated for discussion. The following statement was sent to Rebecca via email for review.

Mission Statement (proposed)

The Lower Basin PFT is a team composed of highly trained agency representatives of varied expertise. The group will focus primarily on the lower Coeur d'Alene River Basin which is defined as the main stem river downstream of Cataldo to the outlet of the River at Coeur d'Alene Lake but will dedicate itself to collaborate and coordinate its efforts with the Lake Management Plan implementation and related monitoring, and other monitoring, studies and actions affecting the watershed with an eye towards a Comprehensive Watershed Approach in the implementation of projects in the Lower Basin.