

**Communications PFT Meeting**  
**February 20, 2009: Idaho Transportation Department, Basement Conference Room**  
**600 W. Prairie Avenue, Coeur d'Alene, ID**

**Meeting Attendees**

Jeri DeLange, BEIPC, PFT Chair

Tina Elayer, IDEQ

Andrea Lindsay, US EPA

Cathy Cochrane, WA Dept. of Ecology

Deb Sherbina, US EPA

Julie Van Middlesworth, CCC Member

Carrie Holtan, Coeur d'Alene Tribe

**Call to Order**

Jeri DeLange called the meeting to order at 8:15 am.

**Meeting Topics**

**Discussion of 2<sup>nd</sup> Session of EPA Training**

Andrea Lindsay provided a brief update on the “*Building Trust and Resolving Differences*” free training opportunity moving forward on **March 26, 2009, from 9:30 am to 4:30 pm, at the Coeur d'Alene Inn (Best Western), 414 W. Appleway, Coeur d'Alene**. The training is being provided by the EPA through its Community Involvement University. The Communications PFT is also helping to sponsor it again. So far, 26 people have enrolled and the cap this time is 38. Citizens, state agency staff, attorneys, congressional office staff, and engineers are among the range of enrollees. The BEIPC is going to sponsor the morning refreshments, and Tina Elayer is going to check with IDEQ about sponsoring the afternoon refreshments. It was also noted that the evaluations from the first training were very positive. Jeri DeLange suggested contacting the press about possibly doing a news article on the training. The group agreed that a story about the training, its content, and purpose would be a useful avenue for positive publicity for the Communication PFT.

**Discussion of Ideas for Other Training Opportunities/Workshops**

- (1) Carrie Holtan asked if there is the possibility of additional EPA training available through the Community Involvement University. Andrea Lindsay responded that budget constraints and timing are the main factors in determining future training. In April 2009, EPA staff will know whether additional training opportunities may be available. Deb Sherbina will also calculate the number of attendees in each category for the first training. She mentioned that many agency and tribal staff generously indicated they did not want to take a slot if it meant a citizen/member of the public could not attend.
- (2) **Risk Communications Training**. Cathy Cochrane will be available to conduct risk communications training in April 2009. The group discussed possible locations and legislative/budgetary constraints that may dictate necessary locations. The training will be for Communications PFT members only and will take approximately 3-4 hours in an interactive workshop format. Cathy Cochrane will look into scheduling the training at the Public Utilities conference room in Liberty Lake, Washington, based upon availability for the week of April 13<sup>th</sup> or April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2009. The Communications PFT also discussed holding a brief meeting after the training.
- (3) **Public Outreach Workshops**. Tina Elayer suggested possibly inviting and/or working with citizen groups to get feedback from the public. Julie Van Middlesworth commented that having a PFT representative attend a particular group's meeting may likely be received warmly.

## Discussion of Ideas to Increase Participation for ROD Amendment Meetings/Workshops

Jeri DeLange said that EPA had requested assistance from the Communications PFT to help come up with ideas to increase participation in the ROD Amendment process. The discussion of Public Outreach Workshops tied over to this topic with Tina Elayer beginning the discussion. Andrea Lindsay mentioned that EPA was going to make a presentation about the ROD Amendment to the Shoshone Natural Resources Coalition (SNRC). She indicated inclusive involvement for all groups is vital, and that a major challenge is educating the public on why involvement with the ROD Amendment process is important. PFT members then discussed the ROD Amendment and what it means. Cathy Cochrane explained that re-characterizing the process in terms of the content would likely draw more public interest and attention. Deb Sherbina also expressed concern about accurately characterizing what the public's input will be used for.

Cathy Cochrane started a list of important characteristics for a "roadmap" in terms that the public would be more receptive to:

- We have new information that tells us more about the contamination;
- We need to decide what gets cleaned up first;
- We're holding a meeting so you can tell us;
  - a) How this affects you.
  - b) What this means to your community.
- Why now?
  - a) Objectives for the ROD amendment; and
  - b) We have learned from the past there are better ways to ask for involvement.

Julie Van Middlesworth brought up the intermediary group, "Clark Fork River Technical Assistance Committee" at the Butte, Montana Superfund site which is funded by a Technical Assistance Group (TAG) grant. She inquired about TAG grants for the CDA Basin. It was noted that in the past one group did receive a TAG grant within the CDA Basin. (TAG grants are supposed to represent a number of interests and emphasize diversity). Currently, the EPA funds the Citizens Coordinating Council (CCC) specifically for this purpose

Two additional meeting topics arose from this discussion: (1) work on CCC revitalization; and (2) lead exposure issues in the CDA Basin. To that end, the group decided that the CCC revitalization topic would be tabled for further discussion at a future meeting.

Andrea Lindsay summarized her "take-away" messages for the ROD amendment, including: the public needs to be informed about what input they will provide; how it will be used by agency staff; and why it is important to get involved early. Andrea Lindsay and Deb Sherbina are working on another FAQ sheet for distribution.

## Review and Discussion of Outreach Avenues

Tina Elayer began by drawing the group's attention to the Grassroots Organization section in the handout of the draft list of Outreach Avenues:

- (1) Cathy Cochrane suggested adding the Spokane River Forum to the list, and Jeri DeLange will provide other information later.

- (2) The group will provide Tina Elayer with additional feedback after the updated draft list is sent out. All PFT members are invited to comment and make recommendations for additions to the list. EPA will then cross-check Tina's list with the EPA's "Basin Bulletin" list.
- (3) Other types of avenues for communications: PFT members discussed internet blogs and the possibility of a Basin "Blog." Group members shared experiences such as blogs may provide an opportunity to relay a response to miscommunications and provide correct information. Some members feel that taking advantage of the technology available is crucial, especially with the definition of community evolving to include cyberspace resources and venues. It was noted that the way people are getting information now is changing, and a suggestion for the possibility of a "Facebook" page was also discussed.

#### Discussion on How to Deal with Miscommunications

Jeri DeLange brought up an example of miscommunications that she recently addressed about the Lake not being part of the Superfund site; and that she had the opportunity to clarify that it is. She then provided copies of recent Opinion Editorials for discussion purposes. She posed the question: what role should the PFT play if there is misinformation presented. In the course of this discussion, the conversation returned to the important need for additional web site revisions. Julie Van Middlesworth discussed specific examples of web site features that she finds valuable; and Jeri DeLange will look into this further. It was suggested that as instances of miscommunications arise in the future, each case will be dealt with by the PFT independently. The discussion continued with the agency staff sharing that an effective way of dealing with misinformation or inaccurate information is to take a more proactive approach through education and outreach, rather than reacting to isolated incidents that may not have wide circulation or impact. The group also discussed adding interactive features to the existing web site.

#### Discussion of EPA CARE Grant and Other Funding Opportunities

Other opportunities for funding sources would be better options than a CARE Grant. A general discussion of funding opportunities ensued.

#### Discussion of Ideas for Other Communications Pieces/Informational Materials

- ✓ *Audience Analysis Subcommittee:* The first meeting will be today at 12 noon, and the current members are Cathy Cochrane (Subcommittee Chair), Carrie Holtan, Deb Sherbina, Tina Elayer, and Jeri DeLange. Other PFT members who are interested are invited to join.
- ✓ *Map on the Internet:* PFT members inquired why the map on the internet does not contain the CDA Basin boundary. Jeri DeLange explained the reason is because the boundary only relates to where contamination has come to lie within the designated area. She will check with Terry Harwood about further language for clarification on the web site.

#### Next Meeting Scheduling

The next Communications PFT meeting will include Risk Communications training by Cathy Cochrane (i.e. for PFT members only). It will be held in Liberty Lake and Cathy Cochrane will be firming up the date and location. The date will likely be during the week of April 13<sup>th</sup> or April 20<sup>th</sup>. Jeri DeLange will send an email out with the details once the arrangements have been made.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:09 p.m. Jeri DeLange will send an updated PFT roster to the Communications PFT as well as a copy of the updated draft list of "Avenues for Outreach in the CDA Basin" prepared by Tina Elayer.