

**Summary of Notes from the Communications Project Focus Team (PFT)**  
**06/09/08 Meeting**

**Notes taken by:** Carrie E. Holtan, Environmental Specialist, Coeur d’Alene Tribe  
(with assistance from Tina Elayer, IDEQ)

**Meeting Info:** 8:00 AM – 12:00 PM, Idaho Transportation Dept.  
(1st floor conference room), 600 W. Prairie, Coeur d’Alene, ID

**Meeting Attendees:**

Jeri DeLange, Chairperson, Communications PFT (BEIPC)  
Jamie Davis, Idaho Association of Soil Conservation Districts (IASCD)  
Tina Elayer, Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (IDEQ)  
Andrea Lindsay, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)  
Toni Hardy, Citizens Advocating Responsible Treatment (CART)  
Rog Hardy, Benewah County TLG Rep. Member  
Bonnie Douglas, Member, Citizens Coordinating Council (CCC)  
Brian Walker, Lands Council  
Carrie Holtan, Coeur d’Alene Tribe

**Meeting Notes:**

Chairperson Jeri DeLange welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 8:15 a.m., beginning with attendee introductions. She reported the presentation she made at the May 14 BEIPC meeting on the progress of the new Communications PFT was well-received. The BEIPC Chair, Jon Cantamessa, and other Commissioners were pleased with the group’s progress.

**Discussion of Web Page Review Update**

Brian Walker and Bonnie Douglas provided a handout and discussed the following ideas and suggestions for the web site:

- Homepage should primarily have information at the top.
- Search feature would be useful.
- Main web page should have two columns that clearly provide contact information and links, since most of the readers will not spend more than a minute or two searching for information.
- Organizational structure of the BEIPC should be at front.
- Calendar section should present more than just a month’s worth of information. Check into the possibility to have a “notes” link on the calendar page, which could also contain TLG meeting updates, helpful web sites, notes from meetings.
- “News” tab has nothing on it presently. Check into the possibility to link to the newspaper media, such as the Shoshone Press, Coeur d’Alene Press, Basin Bulletin, etc.
- CCC link on web page – 1) Bonnie Douglas brought up the need for the web page to guide citizens on how they can participate. The emphasis of this link/section should be public involvement and how citizens can get involved; and 2) BEIPC “Protocols” still need to be on the page, but perhaps as a link rather than the main focus.

- Project List Link – Is it possible to break the lengthy project list down into sections, or topics, such as: repository link; yard remediation link (what is being done this year, contact names and numbers); recreation link. Rog and Toni Hardy suggested a link to the CDA Trail and status, perhaps a rail yard clean-up link.
- Clean Water Act (CWA) projects – “Clickable” list that may bring up an executive summary and/or a full report depending on the particular project. Toni Hardy suggested an email contact for access to reports.
- Contact List Tab – State of Idaho, CDA Tribe, three counties (Kootenai, Shoshone, Benewah), EPA, Terry Harwood (name, mailing address, telephone, email), State of Washington, TLG Officers, PFT Chairs, CCC Officers and staff. It would be helpful to have the tabs and links more specific; and when tabs lead to other sites (non-profits, for example), a message should appear that the researcher is being directed to another site. Andrea Lindsay mentioned the Basin Commission staff list is also available in the EPA’s Basin Bulletin.
- Technical Leadership Group's tab – list PFTs in columns and then break out, so PFTs are more obvious.
- Action Page for Basin Commission - Field trip information should be posted here; and also what is going on right now that the public could become involved in, i.e., “Take Action Now” tab. Toni Hardy suggested links to other major area projects (i.e. Kootenai County Comprehensive Plan revisions) to form an interrelated and bigger picture as suggested by NAS.

### **Discussion of Training Opportunities**

Jeri DeLange asked PFT members if they had reviewed the EPA’s community involvement training information and whether they would be interested in the training opportunity if it was possible. She indicated the EPA offered this idea at the last Communications PFT meeting.

Bonnie Douglas brought up the value of expressing differences in a respectful and appropriate way, and said the training session on “Building Trust and Resolving Differences” interested her, as professional standards are critical in working together on the Basin clean-up.

Brian Walker asked whether other PFT Chairs, DEQ reps, etc. have had this kind of training. Rog Hardy also echoed this question asking whether EPA staff had taken it. Andrea Lindsay responded this training is generally offered to EPA staff internally and she was not certain whether any EPA Region 10 staff had taken it before. She believes it could be a good platform for building more constructive relationships.

Toni Hardy said she feels citizen and government agency trust have been lacking since the beginning. She mentioned the Red Lodge Clearinghouse as a good example of people who have established a communication process that began from the bottom up and emphasizes citizen input as well as the importance of communications skills. Rog Hardy suggested it would be good for professional, governmental and agency staff to have this training.

Bonnie Douglas emphasized that citizens should not be excluded from the PFTs. Toni and Rog Hardy said they feel the public is closed out of the BEIPC system. They also feel the EPA does not always share information and makes decisions with little required citizen participation. They brought up the repository siting as an example and believe that when a willing seller appeared the EMF was a done deal. They commented that Ed Moreen told them EPA was not required to include the public in certain decision making since the ROD and BEIPC mandated

repositories. Jeri DeLange pointed out the EPA’s Inspector General is currently evaluating the issue and will release a report after the investigative process has been completed.

Andrea Lindsay discussed specifics of the potential training; and she and Deb Sherbina will prepare a proposal request to submit to EPA headquarters. Eight of the Communications PFT members expressed interest and commitment to take the course. Tina Elayer suggested everyone needs to participate. Jeri DeLange proposed that offering the training to key TLG and PFT staff, along with the public, will be a good public education/outreach opportunity. Bonnie Douglas believes that providing the EPA training leaders a list of problems to be discussed is important.

The group decided to combine creating a list of issues with the “Revitalizing Coordinating Citizens Council (CCC) Interest” item on the agenda. A few ideas were “brainstormed” for background:

- Public Trust:
  - Too few opportunities to speak up;
  - BEIPC was originally opposed by the public;
  - ROD created repositories the public now opposes;
  - Citizens Advisory Council (CAC) was dissolved and the CCC controlled by BEIPC protocols;
  - Perception that tourist/economic interests rule over public interests;
  - Public representatives are not easily accessible;
  - Some people feel threatened personally for voicing their opinions;
  - False perceptions perpetuated (such as Lake Coeur d’Alene is not in the Superfund);
  - Repository design specifications for the EMF were changed; and
  - BEIPC minutes do not represent everything said during a meeting.
- Community Involvement:
  - Public comment at meetings minimal, need more public comment time at BEIPC (morning and afternoon);
  - Vary meeting locations (i.e. to include Harrison, St. Maries, Rose Lake) as well as meeting times (i.e. evenings, lunch); and
  - More short communications other than just the Basin Bulletin.

Andrea Lindsay suggested that class size and material for the training can be tailored to a particular group. The discussion turned next to providing Andrea with feedback on tailoring the training request:

- Building Trust and Resolving Differences was recognized as the most valuable training program by the group. The group agreed this course should be tailored to the specific issues occurring in the Coeur d’Alene Basin;
- Commonalities should be shared among regulators and the public;
- Public participation may or may not play a role in the local agency staff attendance; and
- Trainer should be flexible, if possible, to cover the real issues and be able to “stray” from the agenda.

Andrea pointed out the training session is being offered as an educational opportunity for training in community involvement and will not be a conference or mediation session. Jeri DeLange emphasized the training will be a good tool, but explained that it is not to be used as a forum for other issues.

**Discussion of Ideas for Improving Public Education /Outreach**

1) Possible column in EPA's Basin Bulletin:

- Andrea Lindsay indicated that EPA does maintain editorial control over articles. She provided a sample of the Basin Bulletin for the group.
- Rog and Toni Hardy reiterated citizen right to dissent, and expressed frustration at the lack of opportunities for citizens to express freely. They think area media, as well as EPA "Fact Sheets," are controlled and the facts are not readily available for the public to review.
- In response, Bonnie Douglas suggested website access for independent interest groups, such as the Silver Valley Community Resource Center.
- Brian Walker suggested adding contact information and email for the Lands Council in the Basin Bulletin.
- Jeri DeLange suggested a short Communications PFT article in the Basin Bulletin. Group agreed that such an article would be useful, and Bonnie Douglas suggested providing "tools for getting involved." Andrea Lindsay suggested the first article introduce the Communications PFT and its general mission.
- Jeri volunteered to prepare a first draft after getting input from the PFT. She asked PFT members to send suggestions to her by the end of June.

2) Creation of a BEIPC brochure with map:

- Jeri DeLange suggested a trifold brochure with a map of the Box and Basin and other information.
- Bonnie Douglas indicated that it would be good to have the brochure printed in time for the BEIPC field trip on August 13, 2008.
- Rog Hardy suggested a parallel product of a poster map in local libraries or other information centers.

Brian Walker designed a brief tri-fold layout for the brochure. After the final draft of the brochure is completed and approved by the Communications PFT, it will go to the CCC and TLG for their review. Carrie Holtan will get a draft out the door to the Communication PFT members as soon as possible. A lengthy discussion of possible ideas for the brochure ensued such as: "Do you live or recreate in the Coeur d'Alene or Spokane Watershed?" or "Do you know you live in a Superfund Site?" Andrea Lindsay emphasized that presenting the facts as they are versus being alarmist is also a balance to be struck.

Rog Hardy discussed the concept of Superfund. He indicated the group's communication effort could concentrate on explaining why the area is so big. Andrea Lindsay pointed out that many factors complicate this particular Superfund Site. For example, the lead risk was seen by some local residents to be blown out of proportion in the past, and general perceptions over time have changed.

Jeri DeLange discussed the possibility of using "before" and "after" photographs of some of the clean-up. Toni Hardy and Andrea Lindsay discussed that it's important to demonstrate progress, but also important to show there is still a lot of contamination out there. (This particular point needs further discussion in the future when more time can be dedicated to the issue). Discussion moved to an immediate plan for the brochure. The purpose will be to introduce the Basin Commission (BEIPC) and provide contact information along with some

basic information about the Superfund site. Bonnie Douglas mentioned that Panhandle Health District may have additional information for distribution.

3) Funding issues:

- Where will funding for brochures and/or other communication pieces come from?

4) Fact sheets (“FAQs”):

- Bonnie Douglas would like to work on a FAQ for the web site – simple questions with simple answers (i.e., Why was my yard remediated, or not remediated? What does ICP mean?) Brian Walker stated many of the FAQ sheets already exist, but are not readily accessible on the internet.

5) Other Publications or Communications Opportunities:

- Coeur d’Alene Tribe - Carrie Holtan indicated the Coeur d’Alene Tribe publishes a newsletter called the *Watershed Wrap*. She could look into providing a regular column on Basin Commission work/events, etc, if the group thought it would be valuable. The group agreed that an article for the Watershed Wrap would be valuable. Carrie will take lead responsibility for drafting the article following PFT member recommendations on topics and would submit the draft article to the group for review prior to final publication.
  - Carrie Holtan will look into making the Tribe’s existing Basin Commission web site link more visible within Tribe’s web page.
  - Carrie also shared a variety of locations available for information dispersal, such as the Tribe’s Coeur d’Alene Hazardous Waste Program Office, the Tribe’s Fish & Wildlife building on the Reservation, the Benewah Medical Center and Benewah Market (both on the Reservation).
- Bonnie Douglas, Tina Elayer, and Jeri DeLange discussed possible opportunities for children’s literature, color book pages, crossword puzzles, etc.
- EPA Carrier Route Mailing – Andrea Lindsay indicated that EPA is working on a mass mailing for general information about the site, what citizens can do to protect the family, etc.

**Mission Statement Discussion**

The mission statement discussion was revisited. No further changes are to be made at this time.

**Discussion of Ideas to Revitalize CCC Interest**

Rog Hardy discussed his view of successful CCC meetings - people want to feel like they have ownership and autonomy at the meeting and are not just going to a “lecture and listen.” Things that occur in their “backyard” and that affect people are the subject matter pulls.

Toni Hardy suggested exploring the possibility to include information in the monthly Harrison calendar as a public service message to be delivered to all area citizens. She also suggested that CCC meetings should take place in varied locations. The Rose Lake schoolhouse is more central and perhaps holding CCC or BEIPC meetings in Harrison may encourage more people to attend.

Jeri DeLange and Bonnie Douglas also thought it may be good idea to suggest to the CCC (i.e. for their consideration) to hold a meeting this summer in Rose Lake as it may be useful

when the 60% design plan presentation for the East Mission Flats Repository is released. Carrie Holtan asked about the possibility of public access television or internet web casts for some of the meetings. Brian Walker suggested there should be information repositories with recorded meetings. Carrie Holtan proposed that perhaps a web link with meetings could be provided. Carrie will look into the CDA Tribe filming “hot topic” meetings and getting copies of the tape to Jeri DeLange for possible web page uploading if this idea is approved (i.e. it will be presented to the CCC, TLG and BEIPC for further discussion).

### **Identification and Discussion of Issues of Importance**

The group then shifted gears and began further work on developing a list of “Elevated Issues of Importance” which includes:

- Lake Management Plan;
- East Mission Flats Repository;
- Contaminant Management;
- Repositories;
- Trail of the Coeur d’Alenes,
- Recreation Areas;
- Land Use and Development;
- Identification of Timelines (Process/background work - possible update on public involvement for larger projects; and
- Implications of Changing Demographics - Andrea Lindsay brought up that newcomers to the area may not be aware of existing contamination, risk levels, or how to protect families from exposure. She pointed out the need to be educated about the facts of the clean-up in the area.

### **Discussion of Ideas for Communications PFT Strategy and Guidelines**

#### 1) Media Contacts:

- Jeri DeLange explained that Terry Harwood (as the BEIPC Executive Director) is the media contact for the Communications PFT. For resource purposes, Jeri will put together a binder with additional information on other media contacts.
- Bonnie Douglas suggested a possible “media spot” with KVNI (i.e. Bret Bowers)
- Brian Walker suggested information dispersal to grassroots or private/nonprofit organizations and formal media organizations.
- Bonnie Douglas suggested blogs as a possible source for information, such as Down to Earth (part of the *Spokesman Review*).

#### 2) Identifying Approval Process for media releases:

- For any Communications PFT media releases, the group agreed that no media contact or releases would be forwarded from the Communications PFT unless and until the PFT reviewed and approved, and the information was forwarded through the appropriate processes (i.e. Executive Director, TLG and CCC).

#### 3) Information Response Packet:

- Brian Walker suggested creating an information packet for new reporters – possibly a downloadable press information packet on the web page. It was also suggested the new brochure could be part of this effort as well as web site links and contacts. Carrie Holtan

mentioned that Marc Stewart (former *Spokesman Review* reporter) had recently joined the CDA Tribe as its spokesman.

4) Requests for Speakers and Presentations:

- Bonnie Douglas suggested having a “request a speaker” option. Jeri DeLange talked about presenting choices for different speakers depending upon the particular group or issue. Carrie Holtan mentioned mother’s groups, church groups, etc., that may also be other avenues for reaching more audiences with Basin Commission information.
- A general discussion ensued about preparing a standardized powerpoint presentation for groups. Toni Hardy discussed the importance of including a citizen’s voice in presentations.

5) Other Ideas for Public Involvement:

- Jeri DeLange brought up past Basin Information Forum sessions, and asked whether a BIF meeting would accommodate public participation. Other ideas included discussion on whether a public meeting format would work, or if the Basin Commission could host a community gathering. Andrea Lindsay inquired if a community gathering would allow people at an informal setting to ask questions and meet regulators. Carrie Holtan agreed that both ideas were good, and especially liked the public meeting format where the public could comment. Bonnie Douglas discussed an anonymous question submittal system. Jamie Davis suggested also having a panel discussion at an informal meeting/gathering. Bonnie Douglas suggested a “listening session” where the public is allowed to speak and opinions could be heard. Jeri DeLange indicated that she would need to check into whether the Communications PFT could host such a session. Toni Hardy expressed frustration at having the BEIPC protocols stifling public participation. Brian Walker discussed providing a Silver Valley Citizens Forum the same day or evening as the Basin Commission meetings. Andrea Lindsay discussed starting with just one such meeting or networking session, and going from there. Brian Walker suggested including inviting “stakeholders” to a meeting, similar to the meeting hosted by the Lands Council. Publicity and sponsorship could be generalized, instead of specifically hosted by the BEIPC.

**BEIPC Field Trip – Discussion of Ideas to Supplement Advertising**

- Format for the field trip was discussed. Jeri DeLange said she checked with Terry Harwood about the PFT’s idea to invite local legislators, and he agreed.
- School buses as an additional option for transportation were discussed, as well as altering the transportation arrangements into a circuit-type viewing to allow more people to attend.

The group agreed that a conference call will be held on Monday, June 30<sup>th</sup> at 9am – 10am. At that time, the need for a face-to-face meeting will be evaluated and scheduled, if necessary.

The meeting was adjourned at 12 noon.