

WATER QUALITY TEAM

January 21, 2003

Facilitator Summary Notes

Facilitator: Robin Harkless

The following are summary notes of the discussion from the last Water Quality Team meeting. They are meant to serve only as a reminder of issues discussed and actions to be taken prior to the next meeting. They are NOT meant to serve as a formal record of the conversation. Questions concerning these notes may be raised at the next meeting or via email.

Introduction:

Mark Schneider shared a brief history of the WQT and noted that the group is in another transition period as a result of the development of TMDL's and other water quality plans in the region along with the Biological Opinion. He presented a flow chart of the Regional Forum and pointed out the role of the WQT in the regional forum process. A suggestion was made to include the WQP Policy Work Group in the flow chart and show the group's relationship to the regional forum and the WQT. The WQP is a policy group that was convened in 2002 to develop the Water Quality Plan. It was suggested that the WQP work group was earlier mis-characterized as a NMFS forum group, as it was formed as a result of RPA 5 to address ESA and CWA issues.

The facilitator suggested that as the WQT begins to think about its role and plan its meetings, it might assign individual members to serve as liaisons to the other technical groups, the SCT and TMT; and policy groups, the WQP work group and IT. The following liaisons were identified at today's meeting:

- WQP Work Group – Dick Cassidy, COE
- TMT – Dave Wills, USFWS
- SCT – Mark Schneider, NOAA
- IT – Mark Schneider, NOAA

It was noted that EPA is not currently a member of the WQT; several members expressed the need to engage EPA in the WQT process.

WQT Guidelines:

The WQT guidelines were distributed and the group was asked to skim the sections and provide general comments. Some members felt that the mission statement of the WQT was not entirely true that the team provides guidance on water quality issues to the Forum Committees and subcommittees and other regional entities for decisions that may impact aquatic resources. Members felt that the WQT should serve as a resource to the TMDL implementation process. While individuals have commented on the TMDL's, the WQT as a body has not yet commented. Other members felt that the mission statement should remain as it is written, broad enough so that the group could provide guidance on future water quality issues. A suggestion was made that the group examine the 1998 guidelines if this group plans to change or add to the WQT guidelines.

One member suggested that the Scope section of the guidelines could be updated as an

addendum to the guidelines.

ACTION: WQT members should look over the WQT guidelines and send comments (suggestions for changes, acceptance, or process suggestions) to Robin Harkless: robin76@cnnw.net. The group will revisit the guidelines at the next meeting and, if there are suggestions for substantive changes, try to reach consensus on those issues.

Technical Issues:

Mark Schneider added a list of technical topics for the WQT to consider for 2003. The group commented on the list:

- F: The group agreed that the WQT should play a role in the implementation of the TMDL's. The group will need to further discuss how they will offer guidance. Feedback from the states on this issue is encouraged.
- L: Mike Herold, Washington, noted that the state standards do not need to be commented on, but felt that the WQT should remain informed on this issue. A public forum on Washington's statewide standards will be held in Vancouver on Feb. 6. Mark Schneider will email details on this meeting to the WQT. The public comment period ends on Feb. 7.
- N: This issue will be framed by the SCT as a technical question to the group
- P: It was noted that site specific standards are not part of the TMDL process, but this issue could be saved as a placeholder for the WQT.
- S: The RPA 143 subgroup will ask for WQT consensus on a recommendation before it is taken to the IT.

Other topics:

- Fish tissue contaminants – Jamie Davis, Nez Perce, reported that a CRITFC/EPA report on this issue was completed last year. The WQT could take the lead on the “next steps” for this information.
- Transboundary Gas Group – the WQT could be more closely involved with TGG discussions and actions. A liaison could
- Temperature matrix of WQP – the WQT could review the temperature chapter of the WQP. Jamie Davis will lead this discussion if the WQP work group requests that the WQT review and comment on the matrix.
- Basin wide sampling protocols – Paul Pickett suggested that the WQT could form a similar subgroup to the RPA 143 group to look at monitoring coordination for the Mid- and Upper Columbia.

Scheduling of the 2003 WQT Work Efforts:

Dick Cassidy, COE, reported that the 2004 TDG Physical Monitoring Plan, Spill Management Plan, and TMT Water Management Plan will be ready for review by the WQT in *August 2003*. The WQT can also provide comment to Oregon and Washington on the TDG Biological Monitoring Plan, and can review the TDG fixed monitoring station performance in *November 2003*. The WQT will be asked to comment on the water quality appendix to the Fish Passage Plan in *December 2003*. Rudd Turner, COE, will be the contact person for the Fish Passage Plan. This information will be used to help develop the WQT schedule for 2003.

Next Meeting, February 11:

The group did not have time in today's meeting to set a long-term schedule . It was suggested that the group keep the second Tuesday of every month open for now as a place holder for WQT meetings.

Agenda:

- 2003 Schedule – Technical Topics
- Guidelines – Update, finalize
- WQP Temperature Matrix – Jamie Davis
- Basin-wide Temperature Modeling
- Role of Team Liaison – Robin Harkless