



Missoula City-County Health Department

**WATER QUALITY ADVISORY COUNCIL**

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## WATER QUALITY ADVISORY COUNCIL

### Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, May 8, 2018 at 7:00 pm

Health Board Conference Room #210 (Second Floor)

Missoula City-County Health Department—301 West Alder

**Present:** Michelle Hutchins, Keith Large, Patrick Doyle, Lauren Sullivan, Ken Crisp, Casey Ryan, Jen Harrington, Don Latham, Bruce Simms, Andrea Stanley, Todd Seib, John DeArment, Travis Ross, Kelley Willett, Sydney Stewart, Vicki Watson, Peter Bierbach, Kali Becher, Shannon Therriault.

Notetaker: Todd Seib

### Agenda Items

1. Smurfit Stone site investigation - Keith Large, DEQ and Sara Sparks, EPA
2. Missoula County/Trout Unlimited grant support - Kali Becher, CAPS.
3. Upcoming agenda items/action items
4. Public comment on items not included on this agenda

### Meeting Notes

1. **EPA/DEQ – Keith Large:** Update on behalf of EPA was that they received a lot of comment letters on the HHRAs and BERA workplan. EPA will draft comments, then DEQ adds to it, not sure when we'll get responses. They are working with PRPs to develop a groundwater monitoring plan for 2018-19 and that will be out soon to review. He then took questions. Highlights of questions and answers:
  - i. LIDAR results? - Keith said they didn't get a chance to do LIDAR until end of April but the geotech and sampling data is complete. David (Newfields) should have something out by mid-June. He reminded us that the berms withstood 52,000 cfs in '72, and had photos of '97 when flow was 54K. He discussed how the berms prohibit floodplain from operating properly. Risk of dike failure was brought up too and whether or not FEMA use an uncertified berm to delineate a floodplain. Keith deferred to FEMA on that. Tour of site was cancelled due to safety concerns with the fast moving river, mud, and having people onsite. Newfields was supposed to be here (David) with pictures of the berms. It was brought up that the dikes weren't designed to hold river back, they were designed to hold ponds back. And being man-made, they berms will eventually fail. Even if what was behind the berms didn't enter the river, the berm failure in itself would be considered a discharge of sediment.

- ii. How will river testing results be affected by the current river flows? Is rising groundwater going to impact the river? - DEQ/EPA can't make the statement that the site is impacting the river but PRPs can't say site is not impacting river. Emphasized that if we (DEQ/EPA) are going to ask the PRPs to do more testing that it is going to yield valuable information. Basically Keith is asking us to consider if it is worth having DEQ/EPA to ask a judge to order it.
- iii. Source of PCBs? - Mainly from transformer storage area, HDPT area. For 4 years 6x they've sampled wells and found PCBs but were below DEQ7 standards. Talked about smear noticed from drilling core but that the well was sampled twice before there was a detection. Well is downgradient of the HDPT area. Keith also mentioned that the Bonner mill had a lot of PCBs. So one conclusion is Smurfit didn't use/generate PCBs but they came from Bonner.
- iv. Where's the dump with unknown barrels in it? - Landfill A was the general dump. Dumping barrels at some point wasn't illegal but leaching to groundwater should be seen by groundwater testing. No liners though of course. Talked about how solid waste rule changed in 1991 for pulp mill sludge to be under MPDES.
- v. Under present day regs you could not permit a landfill class II because of depth to groundwater, correct? - This question wasn't answered.
- vi. Company has land that doesn't have high groundwater right? - Keith said that potentially the dump contents could move to a location for a repository onsite, north end of OU2 or OU1. Complete removal would be expensive. Volumes removed at Milltown were 2.4 million cubic yards, plus another 450,000. Cost was \$145 million.
- vii. Bruce mentioned how washout from the mountains will continue to push river to the north. Keith recognizes that this kind of flooding we're seeing this year could become an annual event, but law only holds PRPs and DEQ/EPA to enforce restrictions for what is in the 100 yr floodplain.
- viii. Vicki asked if we could designate this site an emergency to go ahead with floodplain restoration? -- The berm removal is part of the 5 yr pre-disaster mitigation plan.

**2. Missoula County DNRC grant support request--Kali:** Ninemile Cr. has a history of gold placer mining and a number of mine reclamation sites. As a result the floodplain is destroyed. In 2004 the USFS, Trout Unlimited and Missoula County came together to address this and have completed 6 reclamation projects thus far through the DNRC reclamation program. Over 2 million dollars have been invested from DNRC, improving 2 miles of streams and 120 acres so far. Now they are working on Ninemile creek proper. They are applying for a grant to do phase 2 of this project, amounting to \$430,000 for another 3600 feet of reclamation. Grant application is due May 15<sup>th</sup>. Requesting a letter of support from us. Projects go to legislature. Letters of support affect the ranking when the project goes to the legislature for funding. Clark fork Kootenai basin advisory council will also want to support it. The council supports this project and Andrea Stanley volunteered to write the letter draft.

**3. Upcoming agenda items discussion:**

-Hydrogeology presentation by DEQ staff member

-Household haz waste update

-WQAC charge. The “charge” is supposed to be updated every 5 years – WQA board needs to re-adopt charge for the council

**4. Public comment on items not included on this agenda:**

-June 23 will be the grand opening of Blackfoot/Clark Fork confluence area

**Action Items**

1. Andrea will write letter of support for county for DNRC mine reclamation grant project on Ninemile Creek.