

Utah Water Quality Task Force Meeting Minutes

October 10th, 2012 9:30am-11:30am
Utah Division of Water Quality
195 N. 1950 W.
Salt Lake City, Utah

Attendance

Name	Representing
Jim Bowcutt	DEQ/DWQ
Gordon Younker	UACD
John Whitehead	DEQ/DWQ
Thayne Mickelson	UDAF
Niels Hansen	NRCS
Jan Andersen	Utah Farm Bureau
Amy Dickey	DWQ
Bill Goodman	US Forest Service
Geoff Mcnaughton	UFFSL
Carl Adams	DWQ
Rhonda Miller	USU Extension
Ray Loveless	UACD
Walt Baker	DWQ
Jason Roper	NRCS
Marian Hubbard	Salt Lake County
Jay Olsen	UDAF
Jerry Chaney	UDOT
Jeremy Jarnecke	BLM
Gertrudys Adkins	UDNR
Telephone	
Gary Kleeman	Region 8 EPA
Rebecca Wessinger	USNPS

Walt Baker- Welcome and Introductions

| Carl Adams- [Nonpoint Source Subcommittee to the](#) Nutrient Work Group

- Currently there is a core nutrient work group composed of representatives from various agencies working to develop nutrient criteria ([nitrogen and phosphorus](#)) for the State of Utah.
- The core work group has decided that there is a need to develop 3 additional sub-workgroups to address technical issues. These work groups will represent storm water, nonpoint source, and point source pollution.

- Individuals that are currently members of the Water Quality Task Force that are interested in serving on one of these work groups are welcome to participate on these sub-workgroups.
- Issues discussed by sub-work groups will include: Potential funding mechanisms, how various agencies should be involved, how to keep current programs functional, and help address all comments received during the nutrient standard setting process.

When the criterion is put in place it will become a standard.

- The objective of the Nutrient work group is to start looking at the headwaters to establish background levels and progressively work to establish criteria their way down further down into the watersheds.
- There will be an “off-ramp” for some waterbodies which are developing TMDLs. Nutrient Standards for the Great Salt Lake will also come at a later date, and possibly need to be addressed in different areas of the lake as separate times. Also, waters that do not have much data available will take a back seat to those that do.
- Standards need to be waterbody specific due to possible different levels of natural background loading that occurs in various areas around the state.
- DWQ has indicated that they will not set standards that are not reachableattainable. In many some instances they will look at broader eco-regions and will develop indicator values.
- DWQ feels as though they are at least a year away from bringing any recommendations to the State Water Quality Board.
- Currently there have been chairmen selected for each work group. Leiland Meyers will head up the point source group, Cameron Diel and Christiene Pohlmeieroy will be heading up the stormwater group, and Niels Hansen-Hansen will be heading up the NPS group
- DWQ has been encouraged by EPA to move ahead with nutrient criteria due to the large amount of nutrient issues being experience throughout the U.S.
- It was noted that nutrients should not always be viewed as a pollutant, and should be listed as an impairment only if there is an excess of those nutrients.
- It was noted that the state needs to make sure that the beneficial uses of a specific waterbody are correct. Beneficial uses will change and as this happens they will be managed for the most recent beneficial uses identified, within reason.

- Wald-Walt Baker will entertain any additional comments and concerns about beneficial use classifications.

Jim Bowcutt-Update to the Statewide NPS Management Plan.

- The main body of the Utah NPS Management Plan is 99.9% of the way done. It is currently being reviewed internally at the Division of Water Quality, and it is anticipated that the Task Force will have the opportunity to review it within a few weeks.
- There is still work that needs to be done with the documents ~~that will be~~ included in the appendices. Jim will be in contact with the work groups assigned to these documents.
- The Abandoned Mine Plan was approved by EPA and will be included in the appendices of this document.
- There was discussion on the current goals and objectives, and various recommendations were given to be integrated into the plan:
 - o The plan should ~~be changed to express~~ that chemical elements are bad ~~for water quality~~ only when in excess. Currently the plan does not indicate this.
 - o TMDLs will be developed within 12 years of listing because this is the requirement from EPA.
 - o Project effectiveness will not be apparent 90 days after the project is complete. The plan should be modified to indicate this.
 - o All NPS projects should have sampling analysis plans developed for them not just 319 funded projects.
 - o UPCD will be removed from the plan and “other agencies as interest is expressed” will replace it.
- What to do in emergency situations should be looked at more closely. An example would be the forest fires and erosion that ~~ensued occurred~~ this year. A summary of these events should be included in the annual report every year.
- When the plan is available for the Task Force to review they should pay special attention to the Objectives and Tasks of the plan.

Ray Loveless- Utah Certification of Environmental Stewardship Update

- Progress continues to be made on the Certification of Environmental Stewardship program.
- The program was based off of the State of Michigan's program ~~that is~~ currently in existence ~~in the State of Michigan~~ where 1,000 farms were certified last year.

- Ray has produced a workbook that will be filled out by the producer to determine if the operation adheres to all the requirements of the program.
- UDAF has also developed a website where producers can access all the program materials
- The paperwork will require a three party verification that includes the certified planner that worked with the producer, the landowner, and possibly a representative from the ~~conservation~~ Conservation Commission.
- It was noted that Utah's program seems to be more vague ~~than~~ than the Michigan requirements, which is very prescriptive. It could be more specific in specific elements.
- UCC is looking at starting the program fairly quickly.
- It was noted that all relevant stakeholders should be involved in the development of this program.
- Funding for this program still needs to be identified.

Amy Dickey- *E. coli* issues on the North Fork of the Virgin River

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- *E. coli* issues have been identified in the North Fork of the Virgin River approximately 3.4 miles ~~North-northE~~ east of Zion National Park.
- Every year thousands of people start at the trail head to hike down ~~through~~ the North Fork and through the Narrows.
- This land is currently owned by the BLM, but the irrigation system is managed by the grazing permittee~~private landowners~~.
- The National Park Service had been conducting monitoring and approached DEQ and informed them that there were high *E. coli* counts in this area. UDWQ then developed an intensive monitoring plan and gathered more than 800 samples to date.
- Based on sampling during and after flood irrigation ~~It would appear as though~~ the main source of ~~The~~ *E. coli* loading pollution is coming from associated with irrigation return flows from pastures ~~that is being irrigated using wild flood irrigation~~.
- There has been substantial stakeholder involvement to this point to remedy the situation, and currently the local Conservation Districts are working with the

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| [private permittee and adjacent](#) landowners to develop BMPs to remedy the problem.

Next Task Force Meeting will be held on February 13 at 9:30 at the Division of Water Quality.