

EcoRA Work Group Conference Call - March 2, 2000, 9 AM - 9:50 AM

Participants:

Steve Hughes, URS

Tom Dahl, Dahl Associates

Don Heinle, CH2M Hill

Dan Winstanley, CH2M Hill

Anne Dailey, EPA

Jeff Fromm, IDEQ

Bill Beckley, Ridolfi

Harry Ohlendorf, CH2M Hill

Joe Goulet, EPA

John Roland, Ecology

Merrill Coomes, Coomes Assoc.

Julie Campbell, USFWS

Fish Population Data

- Don Heinle noted that metrics that have been developed for assessing ecological condition also can be used for assessing ecorisk; the metrics include fish population and benthic invertebrates (among others)
- available fish population data come primarily from R2 sampling done for the Trustees but also have Idaho BURP raw data sheets for benthic invertebrate and fish data collected using electro shock
- R2 collected their sampling data using the multiple pass shocking technique but the Idaho BURP data was mostly collected using single pass electro shocking with some multiple pass shocking
- CH2M is using data from ID BURP stations where multiple pass shocking was conducted to generate estimates for BURP stations where single pass shocking was conducted so that the data is more comparable to the R2 data
- have had some difficulties locating some of the BURP stations on the maps as stations are not identified with coordinates or GIS references
- Don Heinle indicated that it should work satisfactorily to include the BURP data in this fashion

Receptor Table for the EcoRA

- Dailey noted that the receptor table has been the subject of extensive discussion and lots of input over numerous meetings and teleconferences. The receptor table provides a list of more than 70 plants and animals to be evaluated in the EcoRA. The discussion on this call will serve as the wrap-up discussion so that the table can be finalized and used in the EcoRA analysis and report.

>> As point of clarification not discussed during this EcoRA call but apparently an issue at the 3/1/00 CAC meeting in CDA ==> the water potato and wild rice aquatic plant receptors will be included in the EcoRA as population-level receptors, not individual-level receptors.

- Discussion largely focused on species recently suggested for inclusion as receptors:
 - muskrat - will be included as a population-level endpoint and as a receptor in palustrine (all CSMs) and riparian habitats (CSMs 1, 2, 3, & 5)
 - grasses - will be included as a component of the plant community as a community-level endpoint in riparian (CSM 1, 2, 3, & 5) and upland habitats

(CSM 1 & 2)

- Harlequin duck - will be handled via the EcoRA report text since the species will not be a driver in decisions and there is not a lot of information specific to the Harlequin (see notes from EcoRA call on 2/17/00 for more about the harlequin). Note - American Dipper (not the dipper duck as was stated in the 2/17/00 EcoRA call notes) is a good surrogate for the harlequin and there is a good study that will be used to evaluate the American Dipper in the EcoRA.

- Midnite mine species from Spokane Tribe:

- red-banded rainbow trout - cut throat trout and bull trout are already included as individual level endpoints and will serve as surrogates for red-banded rainbow trout

- Paiute sculpin - more likely to live in riverine headwater streams than lacustrine habitat of Spokane Arm so unlikely to exist in the EcoRA area of coverage since the habitat for the sculpin is different - Don Heinle will double-check this with Fred Kirschner and the Spokane Tribe's fisheries biologist

- walleye - northern pike results will be used as an indicator for this species

- white sturgeon - sucker is a good surrogate

- golden eagle - other raptors are include already (e.g., bald eagle, northern harrier, and American kestrel), bald eagle will be a better indicator for raptors because of their scavenging activities wide foraging range of golden eagle and inclusion of bald eagle will serve as surrogate

- pileated woodpecker - no direct exposure path since woodpeckers feed on insects in trees and do not feed on the ground where they might get incidental sediment ingestion

- elk - white tailed deer will be indicator species

- WA state species of concern raised by Matt Kadlec:

- Lewis woodpecker - exposure pathway to contaminated sediments does not exist so not to be included (see discussion above regarding the pileated woodpecker)

- golden eagle - see above regarding golden eagle

- porcupine sedge - a component of the plant community in CSM 5, will mention it specifically since it's a WA state species of concern

- prairie cordgrass - same as for porcupine sedge above

- Merrill Coomes commented that we had a lot of species identified as receptors. Merrill noted that lots of receptors can complicate the EcoRA and not necessarily make the analysis better. Dailey acknowledged that there are a lot of receptors but given the input from stakeholders and the size of the project area, it seemed best to be comprehensive.

==> The receptor table will be updated with the above information and then finalized and distributed electronically to the EcoRA workgroup.

Update on CSM 5 - Spokane River

- Don has procedural questions about recent cadis fly and fish data; Don will call Matt Kadlec directly regarding these questions.

Schedule

- EPA has heard community requests that the RI/FS schedule be slowed down and is presently exploring options. No final decisions regarding schedule changes have been made. The bottom-line is that the draft EcoRA report will be somewhat delayed.
- As a consequence the EcoRA workshop tentatively scheduled for the end of April will be delayed until the draft EcoRA report is out for review.

Next Teleconference

- Next EcoRA call will be on March 16, 2000 at 9 AM PST
- call-in number is 206-553-4557; no pass code required
- topics of discussion will include:

- report on progress of the EcoRA
- final receptor table will be distributed in the next week or so
- other EcoRA issues as appropriate