

PUBLIC MEETING
WATER QUALITY STANDARDS
BONNERS FERRY, IDAHO

SEPTEMBER 26, 1979



AL MURREY: So to begin with as I do call on you to come up and speak which we would appreciate it if you would give your name and if you are associated with an interest group or whatever, you might state that. So to begin with I call on Mr. Don Howell.

DON HOWELL: Jim, we just had that sheet that, where is that part, point source, I'm going to speak on the point source, and if I'm right well, before I start out. This is the new suggestions, is it not?

AL MURREY: Yes, they are.

DON HOWELL: I'm Don Howell. I'm president of Kootenai Valley Reclamation Association. I represent 16 organized drainage districts and 2 privately owned districts. These drainage districts, each have at least one point source, existing point source area or point, I don't know how to put it. I want to say point source, what they are, are either pumping stations or gravity drains. For your information a drainage district, of course, has a dike all the way around it and the water that falls in it or comes in from the side or falls naturally from the form of snow has to get out and it gets out much the way it used to through the old drainage channels which go out through a gravity drain or pipe through the dike is the way it used to go. But when the river is higher, it is necessary than to pump the water out of the drainage district rather than the gravity drain. Now as I understand it from our primary concern, of course, is the keeping open of these point sources and according to this, I don't see any problems. I don't know, what are you shaking your head about.

DENNIS GRAY: Well, it's not technically a point source and it.

DON HOWELL: Oh, it isn't. Well, according to you it wasn't, but I don't know why it wouldn't be.

DENNIS GRAY: It would not be because the actual source of the pollutant is not a point source.

DON HOWELL: I know it didn't fit your description, but it sure sounds like one, doesn't it? I'm glad to know it isn't a point source. If it doesn't have a point source, I don't have too much concern with the exception. What if a new pumping station were to be wanted to be put in? My point being, I doubt if any new ones will be done any more. But since Libby Dam was constructed some new problems have arisen or changes, let me put it that way, have arisen and we're not sure what will happen when we have a series of wet years. So far we've had dry years, and it

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the points of discharge or new points of discharge, if a new industry came into the area and proposed to discharge at a point, would enforcement take place prior to construction as far as whatever industry or entity wanted to discharge, submitting plans to show that they will meet these new requirements prior to construction, or would the measurement be made after construction after the discharge began to see if they were within compliance. Nobody spoke to enforcement, how does that work?

AL MURREY: Well, that would take place before, and through another provision of the Department in the law, all municipal and industrial treatment facilities must be reviewed, plans must be reviewed for those, before they are actually constructed. So that we would enter into discussions, negotiations, whatever with an industry or whatever, prior to the time of it actually, you know, before construction actually began.

PAUL PAPAK: Is that the same with any new point discharge on a river classified such as this?

AL MURREY: Yes sir, that's right. Yes sir.

JOHN KANEES: My name is John Kanees. I was wondering if those discharges were based on industry itself, or was it estimated by EPA?

AL MURREY: In other words, the improved level of discharge?

JOHN KANEES: If they say there is going to be a certain amount of discharge, EPA would take their figure for granted or would they use their own facts?

AL MURREY: Basically in the State of Idaho, what we would do is we would have to take what they say they are going to discharge in pollutants, whether it is bio-chemical oxygen demand, or whatever, you know, dissolved oxygen levels, whatever is going to impact the river, and we would have to do an analysis to determine whether or not that was going to have a measurable impact instream outside of a mixing zone. But they would tell us how much they want to discharge and then we use that to see what impact it would have. Under this provision if it is measurable outside the mixing zone, then we could not approve that discharge at those levels.

JOHN KANEES: What do you mean by mixing zone?

AL MURREY: Okay, in some cases for the large stream, we do allow some distance in some. Actually it is a volume of water. We might say one, give one third of the stream volume for that discharge permit and in certain distance, maybe 1,000 feet or 2,000. Okay, when it gets down to that distance, then it has to, it has to meet the quality basically of the river water.

JOHN KANEES: Okay, what would happen if say there was a, they said there would be some kind of discharge, you know, what are the decisions to be made on that? And if it was built and those discharges were different than what they were supposed to be?

AL MURREY: Okay, then we would have to precipitate some enforcement actions against that industry or whatever.

JOHN KANEES: Would it be closed down or would it be...

AL MURREY: Well, probably not closed down. What we would probably do is go to the Board of Health, we could file a complaint and there would be an order, there could be an order issued which would require them to be of compliance with those levels that they, you know, that will meet the standards, by a certain time. And normally a year and a half or a couple of years is given for them to meet the standards when somebody is out of compliance.

JOHN KANEES: That's a long time.

AL MURREY: Well, we do have to give them time to construct their facilities, if they need to construct new facilities to treat down to that level. It does take time to do that especially with the, you know, the winters we have in Idaho. I believe this hand was the first.

ELLEN DIETEL: I was going to ask, what determines the practical mixing zone? Is it the volume coming into the water? Is it the size of the receiving body? Is it a combination of those factors?

AL MURREY: Dennis, could probably better explain that. It is in our regulations.

DENNIS GRAY: All of the above? No, the size of, you know, really it is. It is determined possibly even as to where it is in regards to a crook or a bend in the river, the size of it. The mixing zone and the point of discharge would be designed such that it would have the least impact on the communities that you are trying to protect and, of course, you would avoid getting it in any areas which are known for either their food production, aquatic food production, or spawning characteristics and all of these have to be taken into consideration. With these regulations, it is possible, or these proposed regulations, it is also possible that we could have a multiple mixing zones for a single discharge. So that perhaps for one parameter which might be a metal or a pollutant of high toxic, high toxicity, it might have a very, very short mixing zone while perhaps one such as dissolved oxygen or BOD which the water itself, we'll go ahead and, we talk about this self-cleansing properties of water, might be one of greater expanse.

ELLEN DIETEL: I have a question. Is the Department likely to give a permit to a new industry that they are immediately going to have to turn