REGION 10 OWW TOPIC BRIEFING

UPDATE FOR DESCHUTES TOTAL MAXIMUM DAILY LOAD (TMDL),
THURSTON & LEWIS COUNTIES, WASHINGTON

Meeting Purpose

Update Dave on the following:

- Dialogue with Ecology
- Discussion with NWEA
- Status of EPA TMDL Review & Next Steps

Quick Summary

Ex. 5 - Deliberative Process

✓ NWEA believes that the TMDL for temperature could move forward. DO/pH should wait for Budd Inlet to ensure protection of downstream uses.

Ex. 5 - Deliberative Process

Dialogue with Ecology

Ex. 5 - Deliberative Process

Ex. 5 - Deliberative Process

NWEA Discussion

Ecology (Andrew) scheduled a meeting with Nina Bell on August 2, 2016 in Portland, OR (at OR Ops office) to obtain NWEA feedback on the Deschutes TMDL. Laurie and Chris participated in the meeting at the request of Ecology. Overall, Nina expressed an unfavorable opinion of the TMDL and summarized that the TMDL will not change existing conditions. Nina did offer a potential 'carve-out' from the NCC remand for temperature segments of the Deschutes if buffer requirements were more detailed and were placed into the load capacity/allocation section of the TMDL. Nina explained the DO/pH parts of the TMDL were too problematic/flawed and should not move forward (no 'carve-out'). What follows is an itemized list of key statements expressed by Ecology, NWEA, and EPA. Notes in native, uncondensed form are available. It should be mentioned that NWEA appears to have crafted a bulleted list of TMDL issues that consists of about 30-50 comments on it. Maybe one-third of those comments were shared during the meeting.

NWEA	Ecology	EPA
(1) Unconvinced that TMDL will change existing water quality conditions. (2) Downstream waters not protected (self-stated). Failing to protect DS waters is a big deal. TMDLis kind of a shell because it does not deal with DS waters or tributaries. (3) Buffers show up in implementation rather than allocation section. (4) Need to convert shade values into real, implementable surrogates. How was 75 ft. buffer determined? Vertical and areal density is important. What is mature vegetation? (5) The entire TMDL seems to be a surrogate. Suite of shade surrogates may be needed. Why was channel width not allocated as it was part of NCC demonstration. (6) Compliance with permit seems to be compliance with TMDL as WLAs are mostly existing permit conditions or restated WQS. WLAs do not seem to add value. (7) Using shade as surrogate for parameters other than temperature creates holes. (8) TMDL does not assess if current landuse practices, such as forestry, contribute to sediment impairments. (9) Reasonable Assurance section is inconsistent. Should consider actions that are not already occurring. Deferring to Fish and Forest assurances is a problem. (10) TMDL cites nutrient hotspots and impacts but does not limit nutrients. TMDL advocates a 'we'll evaluate later' approach to septics and other nutrient sources.	(1) An approved TMDL may help in retiring water rights and obtaining grant funds. An approved TMDL may help bring government partners to the table such as Thurston County and get conservation districts to work together. (2) Acknowledged the TMDL has some deficiencies and is working with EPA on some issues. Benefits of TMDL are relatively minor. (3) TMDL was split because of the contentious nature of Capital Lake and Budd Inlet. Data would become outdated if Ecology waited to do all waters at once. Evidence is pointing primarily to shade and buffers for the Deschutes. (4) Any buffers that Ecology pays for would have to meet NMFS buffer rule (100 ft rather than 75 ft.).	We primarily listened and took notes. Chris asked Nina to elaborate on Columbia dioxin TMDL and checkpoint approach.

DRAFT

Better to wait until Budd Inlet and Capital Lake TMDL are complete. Maybe move forward with temperature segments only. (12) Lack of NCC is not an excuse to do nothing. Use the data we have and move forward. No good reason for putting things off. The TMDL should have addressed nutrients even if data were not perfect. (13) TMDL does not justify in-stream sediment fines target. How does in-stream fine targets align with WQS? (14) Ecology is hesitant to address Capitol Lake because of benefits as sediment trap, better than a muddy estuary, expensive infrastructure changes (Lake outlet works, MS4, LOTT facility). (15) Checkpoint approach used in Columbia dioxin TMDL is an appealing large watershed approach. (16) Ecology should not get credit for a TMDL when the allocations do not resolve the DO and nutrient issue. (17) Margin of safety and antidegradation section is confusing (18) Would be willing to consider temperature carve out of NCC remand. TMDLs for DO, pH should not move forward until Budd Inlet is completed. Opinion on sediment was limited.		

DRAFT

Following discussion with NWEA, Ecology mentioned to EPA at lunch that maybe the safest thing to do is move forward with temperature only segments that do not rely on NCC provisions. In addition, Laurie and Andrew agreed that the next step was for Ecology and EPA to each prepare a proposal to navigate our path forward. I understand that Ecology is interested in discussing proposals soon.

EPA TMDL Review Next Steps

To be determined with Laurie, Dave, Ben, JB, and then Dan.