

MWPAAC Engineering & Planning Subcommittee

March 7, 2024 Meeting Summary

Agenda:

Ending Rates & Finance Subcommittee, 5-minute break for transition. 9:38 (5 min)

1. Welcome & Introductions, Jaclyn Knoth, Engineering & Planning Subcommittee Chair 9:43 (5 min)

2. Nutrients Update, Jacque Klug, Nutrient Management Coordinator, WTD 9:45 (20 min)

Jacque Klug presented Nutrient Update on behalf of WTD. A slide presentation accompanied her presentation. This pdf presentation was sent to MWPAAC attendees on March 6.

The presentation included a review of the Puget Sound Nutrient General Permit, highlighting a review of the permit itself and the permits focus on nitrogen nutrient reduction.

Some highlights from the permit compliance portion of the presentation:

- In 2022 and 2023 WTD was fully compliant with the action level.
- A review of site-specific optimization strategies was presented.
- Briefing on the Nutrient Reduction Evaluation Plan, which is required as part of the permit.

Ms. Klug provided a legal and regulatory update as part of the presentation, citing some impactful legal processes that will have impacts on future regulatory outcomes. These proceedings included:

- Tacoma vs. Ecology case, accepted by the Supreme Court.
- PSNGP Appeal at the Pollution Control Hearings Board, awaiting Tacoma vs. Ecology ruling.
- Anticipated Federal litigation regarding Puget Sound dissolved oxygen TMDL
- Ecology is updating its water quality standards, although EPA approval could take a several years.

Lastly a policy update was provided, noting King County's participation in an AWC led effort to secure funding for an independent science review of marine dissolved oxygen.

Comments and Questions:

John McClellan – Is WTD doing any nutrient monitoring in stormwater, and if not is there a plan to do so?

Jacque Klug – WTD is not performing this monitoring in stormwater but is partnering with other resources.

In addition, this is part of WQ benefits evaluation process, and this effort will review what BMP's are most effective in reducing nitrogen

John McClellan – Is WTD looking at the relative loading of nutrients, and the spread of the sources from wastewater/stormwater/natural loading from the ocean?

Jacque Klug – 91% of loading comes from ocean and natural watershed sources, 9% is from human sources of nitrogen of which 2% is from watersheds, 7% is from wastewater.

We are reviewing and working with Fresh Water Trust to identify what are some potential actions in the wastewater and watersheds processes and costs for nitrogen removal.

It has been identified that some AG BMP's have proven to be effective, so this is promising.

John McClellan – The work being coordinated with AWC on dissolved oxygen – is that a review of existing work or processes, or development of new processes?

Jacque Klug – Primarily a literature review, with some best practices and future recommendations.

John McClellan – do you foresee any significant new findings from this study?

Jacque Klug – One of the predicted benefits is this will help identify what species are most vulnerable to dissolved oxygen, will help prioritize and sequence our actions.

3. Biosolids Update, Erika Kinno, Policy & Research Unit Supervisor, WTD

10:05 (10 min)

Erika Kinno presented Biosolids Update on behalf of WTD. A slide presentation accompanied her presentation. This pdf presentation was sent to MWPAAC attendees on March 6.

Ms. Kinno covered metrics and compliance for the current King County Loop Biosolids program. The program is in compliance. New land application permits were submitted.

In Ms. Kinno's presentation she covered the Pollution Control Hearings Board ruling, RE: an appeal made by Ed Kenney & Nisqually Delta Association. The ruling found Ecology failed to address PFAS, PBDEs, and microplastics during SEPA review of the 2022 general permit.

The expressed impacts to WTD presented included:

- Operations may continue, without major impact.
- Capacity at existing permitted land application sites to take all biosolids.
- New facilities, such as those proposed by WTD, under the now-void permit will be evaluated for "agreed orders" on a case-by-case basis.

Finally, a status report was provided on the Compost Pilot. This was not permitted under the now-void 2022 permit. Additional options are being pursued for access orders.

Comments and Questions:

Susan Saffery – Is WTD required to test for PFAS?

Erika Kinno – We are currently not required to test for PFAS under any state or federal laws. There was post legislation in this year's legislative session that would have required Ecology to set up requirements for PFAS testing the out years, somewhere around 2026. That piece of legislation did not go forward. We are undertaking a voluntary sampling effort, sampling the biosolids from all three of our plants right now, once a month for a year. We are in the middle of that sampling now.

John McClellan – Following up on Susan's question, a lot of treatment plants in the Puget Sound were approached by Ecology Biosolids Program to allow them to do testing of our biosolids. Many of us have agreed to participate in that request. Was WTD approached by Ecology and determined to proceed with and perform your own sampling as opposed to having Ecology do sampling?

Erika Kinno – We started our sampling program before Ecology put out this call to utilities. We were approached by Ecology to participate in the sampling. We offered for Ecology to use the results of our sampling or to come and perform their own sampling, and that's what they have elected to do. We have not set a date for them to come, but we will be also participating in that as well.

John McClellan - Are your sampling methods or analytical methods the same as what Ecology will be using?

Erika Kinno – It's slightly different. There is a standard EPA method called 1633 that both Ecology and our sampling efforts are using. In addition to method 1633, [Ecology] will be using a non-targeted analysis developed by EPA and possibly TOF (total organic fluoride). WTD will be using TOP (total oxidized precursors). It's another method that tries to get at what is the total PFAS content in the biosolids, because method 1633 only tests for certain PFAS congeners, and as we know there are thousands of them. We hope to sample at the same time and on the same day with Ecology to hopefully get good comparisons.

4. Engineering & Planning Adjournment

10:15

No additional comments, E&P Chair Knoth called for adjournment.

The Meeting adjourned at 10:15 a.m.