

PBT Drafting Team Conference Call Summary **March 30, 2005, 1:30 pm – 3:00 pm Central Time**

Participants: Peter Landrum, Matt Hudson, Jon Dettling, Ted Smith, Rob Pepin, Melissa Hulting, Dale Bryson, Dale Phenicie, Dwain Winters, Carri Lohse-Hanson, Jennifer Zewatsky, Seth Dibblee, Deb Jacobson, Joy Schnackenberg, Liz LaPlante, Brian Hughes, Paul Koval

Introduction and Meeting Agenda

Ted Smith began the meeting by inviting participants to introduce themselves. After a brief roll call, Ted reviewed the teleconference agenda, which included: reviewing updates to the PBT action item matrix; reviewing the first rough draft of the strategy; discussing objectives for the April 21 draft; and discussing the team's next steps.

PBT Action Item Matrix

The PBT Action Item Matrix has been updated with several additional categories. The drafting team attempted to identify the party in charge of implementing each action item and establish a time frame for each. Also, a new category was added to indicate whether or not an existing program is in place for each action. The following time frames were established: "short-term" (0-3 years), "mid-term" (3-7 years), and "long-term" (over 7 years).

Dale Phenicie proposed to consolidate the ten action categories into six categories. He preferred to shift the focus from a long list of action items to specific program elements that the team can recommend in its final report. To help accomplish this task, Dale recommended shortening the list of action categories to the following six items:

1. Chemical Screening
2. Education, Outreach, and Reporting
3. Monitoring, Surveillance, and Data Management
4. Pollution Prevention (P2)/Voluntary
5. Research, Modeling, Forecasting, and Risk Assessment
6. Regulatory Standards and Treatment Technology

Several team members, including Dale Bryson and Carri Lohse-Hanson, expressed support for Dale's suggestion to abbreviate the list of action categories. Carri also created an alternative set of categories, with an emphasis on program support: 1) In-basin program support, 2) Great Lakes and beyond (program support), 3) Personal responsibility, 4) Decision-making ability/knowledge, and 5) Accountability. Ted proposed including Carri's categories in a separate column and working them into the draft, if people are interested in doing so. Melissa Hulting responded that the group should put more effort into determining which actions are most important. Ted emphasized the importance of producing an understandable document. The team will work on consolidating the action item list over the next few weeks.

A comment was made that the original blueprint for the Virtual Elimination Strategy was well-received by Congress. This document divided issues into four general categories and then provided a brief synopsis of the actions included in each category. Ted proposed

that this document be posted on the PBT Team website and that the team discuss it further during the next call.

Ted summarized the comments received on the action items list. The drafting team will work to consolidate items, reduce the number of action categories, and arrange the list so that it is less overwhelming and easier to read.

Draft PBT Strategy Chapter

Ted Smith opened a discussion on the draft, five-page strategy document posted on the PBT Team's website. He invited Carri Lohse-Hanson to share the comments she provided on the document. Carri pointed out that the action items focused heavily on technical and research issues and less on reduction or elimination activities. She is attempting to consolidate specific action items set forth in the Lake Superior Lakewide Management Plan (LaMP) of 2000 into actions that would be applicable throughout the Great Lakes Basin. Alexis Cain has reviewed these actions and provided comments. Carri also proposed that the Great Lakes Region provide leadership in the area of PBT reduction. Ted informed the group that a Federal advisory committee is investigating how pollution prevention programs are being implemented in the United States. Tim Brown, a member of both the PBT Team and the advisory committee, recommended to the committee that the Great Lakes act as a pilot community for testing the committee's ideas. Ted will see if he can share some of the draft work that the advisory committee has developed.

The group began a brief discussion of how the LaMPs and the Great Lakes Binational Toxics Strategy (GLBTS) can be incorporated into the strategy document. Many of the concepts embedded in these historical documents are applicable to the work of the PBT Team. A suggestion was made to explicitly refer to the LaMPs and GLBTS in the strategy document. Dale Bryson suggested adding a few sentences that convey the key message of the strategy document ("Reduce toxics to the Great Lakes") to the reader.

Paul Koval asked if comments were still being accepted on the documents discussed during the teleconference. Ted responded that comments should be submitted through the PBT website. He asked Jon Dettling to send out a reminder on how to do that.

Ted informed the group that Alexis Cain has provided comments on mercury-related recommendations. He encouraged everyone to read Alexis' comments and be prepared to discuss them during the next call. Comments have also been received from Laura Rauwerda and Mike Murray, but they were not able to participate in the teleconference.

Dwain Winters was asked to share his thoughts on the draft strategy chapter. Dwain discussed the balance between action items and information gathering, pointing out that more information is needed to move forward to the next generation of reduction efforts. While there are action items that can be taken immediately, there are also significant gaps in our basic understanding of contaminant-related issues in the Great Lakes. Regarding the goals, Dwain is concerned that the team is not clearly communicating what it wants. For example, the second goal states: "Allow unrestricted consumption of fish from the Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem." In reality, the team wants to see a reduction of pollutant levels in fish such that fish consumption advisories are no longer necessary. Dwain also thinks that the next goal, "Clean up all sediments and other reservoir sources

contaminated with persistent toxic substances in the Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem,” should be reworded, as it is currently not restrictive enough. Regarding the wildlife goal, Dwain suggested clarifying that it refers to wildlife populations, not individual animals. Dale Bryson agreed with Dwain that the goals need to be rewritten to convey their intended message.

Other comments on the strategy chapter were discussed. A suggestion was made to reword the first goal, but that language was taken directly from the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement and will not be changed. Regarding the fourth goal, there was some confusion over the phrase “including consistently protective fish consumption advice.” Ted responded that it is intended to convey that everyone in the Great Lakes Basin should be protected. However, this issue is politically sensitive because fish advisories are based on the notion that states may adopt different levels of protection. A suggestion was made to put the emphasis on providing “consistent information” instead of calling for a consistent level of protection. Ted proposed the following alternative language: “Protect the general public from toxic substances through effective outreach and education, including protective fish consumption advice throughout the Great Lakes Basin ecosystem.” The word “consistent” will remain in the action item related to this goal. Regarding the third goal, Dwain proposed that the team address exposure to reservoir sources. Dwain agreed to rewrite the second and third goals. Ted and several others will rewrite the fourth and fifth goals. Additional comments should be submitted via the PBT Team’s website.

Liz LaPlante asked the group for comments on the problem statement. Ted addressed the comments that Liz has made thus far. Dwain asked if the team was focusing solely on the fish pathway of exposure to PBTs. Ted responded that the team is not limited to that pathway (e.g., a fifth goal has been added to address wildlife health). Some members of the group expressed concern that the problem statement, as currently written, focuses too narrowly on fish-related issues.

Ted asked Peter Landrum to summarize his comments on the recommended actions. Peter directed the group to read his comments on the website, since they are very specific in nature. Peter also praised the work that has been done thus far and expressed interest in seeing how the “recommended actions” piece will be refocused.

Ted shared Laura Rauwerda’s comments with the group, since Laura was unable to join the teleconference. Melissa Hulting suggested that Laura’s comments might be incorporated. Jon Dettling supported many of Laura’s comments but wondered where they would fit into the current draft. Ted agreed that it is difficult to express action items related to pollution prevention in a concrete way.

The group discussed how to make the list of recommended actions less overwhelming. Dale Phenicie suggested describing each category of action items and attaching the bulleted lists under each category as a reference. Text would be written to describe each action category, and the individual action items would be included in an addendum. Dwain Winters proposed a multi-layered document and emphasized that bullets should not be discarded at this point. The group briefly debated various options. Ted summarized the outcome of the debate by stating that the format of the action items will be changed. Instead of a list, paragraphs will be used to describe main ideas related to

each category of actions. These paragraphs will then direct the reader to the individual action items, which will be attached in an appendix.

Matt Hudson pointed out that the group must keep in mind the overarching issues that the team needs to address. Gary Gulezian is currently preparing guidance on how strategy teams should address cross-cutting issues.

Brian Hughes suggested adding a column to the matrix that relates each action to a specific goal. Brian agreed to review the goals and action items and make the initial effort to develop this reference column.

Dwain Winters suggested the addition of a goal related to information gathering: "Pursue the critical information needed to be able to effectively achieve the other goals." The group discussed whether such a statement would qualify as a goal or an action. Dwain offered to draft the goal statement for further review.

Next Steps

Ted briefly discussed the cost-benefit analysis that needs to be conducted for the recommended action items. A contractor will provide substantial support in developing this analysis once draft strategy chapters are submitted on April 21.

The next drafting team call is scheduled for Thursday, April 7.