

**EPA Lower Basin Community Meeting**  
**Hosted by the Citizens Coordinating Council**  
**June 13, 2018, 6:00 – 7:30 p.m.**  
**Medimont Grange**  
**31146 S. Hwy 3, Medimont, Idaho**

**Meeting Summary:**

On June 13, 2018, over thirty people attended a community meeting in Medimont, Idaho. EPA gave presentations and gathered community input at the meeting, which was hosted by the Citizens Coordinating Council of the Basin Environmental Improvement Project Commission. The meeting focused on EPA's planning process for doing cleanup in the Lower Basin, the area along the Coeur d'Alene River valley, stretching from Enaville to Harrison. Lead and other heavy metals are of concern in the area. EPA expects to ramp up cleanup projects in the Lower Basin over the next few years.

Meeting participants signed in, and each received an agenda, a handout showing the criteria EPA used to guide selection of proposed cleanup projects, and a handout listing potential Lower Basin cleanup projects. The cleanup projects are organized into three focus categories: human health, habitat remediation and restoration, and source control. The project handout was accompanied by a set of maps showing the location of each potential project.

**Lower Basin Cleanup**

The meeting opened with a presentation that summarized the current understanding of contaminated sediment in the Lower Basin, and the current approach for making decisions on selecting projects. Ed Moreen and Kim Prestbo of EPA gave the presentation. After the presentation, a question and answer session began. Comments on the presentation were recorded on flip charts: the topics discussed follow.

-Is lead the only worry? What about arsenic, zinc, and cadmium? Response: Lead and zinc are the primary metals of concern but zinc behaves differently. Lead is the metal that stays in the soil and sediment and the main concern for human health.

-"Letting nature take its course" probably not a good idea, won't be good in the long run because of erosion.

-Is lead oxidizing over time?

-Important to consider community and economic benefits.

**Community Input Session - Criteria**

Kim Prestbo introduced the draft criteria proposed for selecting projects. Meeting participants were asked to comment about the selection criteria with a focus on what the "community and economic benefit" criterion means to community members. During this discussion, EPA learned that human health continues to be a high priority for people, along with protecting waterfowl,

preventing recontamination, and controlling sources from the river. Participants also talked about areas to focus on. EPA received comments that supported riverbed and wetland capping, riverbed dredging, riverbank stabilization, creating clean waterfowl habitat, creating additional recreational opportunities on the river, remediating contaminated beaches along the river, disposing of contaminated sediments in a submerged disposal cell in a lake, and slowing the transport of contaminated sediment to Lake Coeur d'Alene.

Comments about criteria recorded on flip charts during this facilitated session follow.

- Would be great if ourselves, kids, and grandkids could feel safe while recreating on river banks.
- Let's get things done and make things better, not wait. Let's address "low-hanging fruit," and demonstrate to communities that action is being taken. Bank stabilization would prevent erosion, reduce sediment load, improve water quality, and benefit the landowners.
- 20 years of bank stabilization by NRCS is effective; would like EPA to evaluate the effectiveness.
- bank stabilization stops bank erosion (banks estimated to contribute 13% now, was likely more before NRCS started; lots more \$\$ is being spent to stop what's coming from Upper Basin).
- property values for Lake CDA. How could they change? Preserving land values important.
- Need to link boat access points with Trail of the CDAs: there is a way to create awareness of the natural beauty of the CDA River and surrounding areas.
- Are the agencies happy with the agricultural land to wetlands conversion? Obviously used to be lots more wetlands.
- Schlepp land conversion "very engineered." Less engineered solutions encouraged.
- New signage will emphasize mercury as well as lead ("less scary").
- Need healthier, more diverse aquatic systems/habitat.
- Need to reduce waterfowl deaths.
- CDA Tribe's perspective: healthy environment essential that allows/supports cultural subsistence practices like hunting, gathering.
- Need private sector/public sector project balance. Find opportunities.

Following the presentation and group discussion, facilitator Dan Pitzler, from EPA's consultant Jacobs, invited community members to place sticky dots on large posters that listed EPA's Criteria for Selecting Cleanup Projects. Each person was given 3 dots and instructed to place the dots next to the criteria they thought most important. Participants could choose to place one dot

each on three different criteria they valued, or could choose to place more than one dot on a criterion they found particularly significant.

The poster is reproduced below, with the number of dots, or votes, next to each criterion:

Criteria for Selecting Cleanup Projects

-Protect Human Health.....	16 dots
-Prevent Recontamination (Keep Cleaned-Up Areas Clean).....	8 dots
-Ensure Protection of Wildlife and Local Ecology.....	9 dots
-Ensure Ease of Implementation (supportive property owner, technical feasibility, strong partnering potential).....	1 dot
-Provide Learning Opportunities to Evaluate Remediation and Cost-Effectiveness.....	2 dots
-Provide Likely Success and Observable Outcomes.....	3 dots
-Avoid Indirect, Adverse Impacts (flooding, resource loss, access restrictions, other...).....	0 dots
-Provide New or Improved Long-term Community or Economic Benefits.....	5 dots
-Minimize Long-term Costs.....	1 dot

*Summary of Results:*

The top 3 criteria community members chose were: (1) Protect Human Health: 16 dots; (2) Ensure Protection of Wildlife and Local Ecology: 9 dots; (3) Prevent Recontamination: 8 dots. A fourth criterion, Provide New and Long-Term Community or Economic Benefits, received 5 dots.

**Community Input Session – Projects**

Kim Prestbo gave a presentation that provided an overview of the short list of proposed projects that EPA has identified for further evaluation. After the presentation, Dan Pitzler asked participants about projects they support or that raise concerns, and asked if there were any other project ideas EPA should consider. A summary of the comments received during this session follows.

-Use taxpayer dollars wisely in cleanup projects; critical to prevent or reduce recontamination of cleanup work already completed.

- Are you doing a cost-benefit analysis?
- Would like same philosophy that was applied to Upper Basin cleanup to be applied to Lower Basin cleanup: address sources of contamination. Focus on upstream. Use the money in the Trust.
- The river is the problem! Need to address river first, then floodplains will clean up over time, in decades or centuries.
- Not enough to merely do dredging. Did you cost out dredging the river?
- Is deep tilling of the floodplains being considered as part of cleanup?
- Some remedies don't cost anything. Examples: institutional controls, preventing or managing river jet boat races.
- Look at protection from dust exposure at beaches.
- Can we overlap the LIDAR studies with other studies, mapping to figure out problem areas, hot spots?
- Too much focus on pilot projects. What are the interim actions to protect human health, the highest priority? Bank stabilization critical.
- Riprap the S-curves of the river, in erosion locations. Example of pilot project that could be quickly studied and monitored. What is the cost of riprap? Deposition vs. erosion – which is most effective for cleanup if addressed?
- There is bank erosion at Cataldo Mission area.
- EPA needs to analyze impacts of all proposed actions on Lake Coeur d'Alene.
- EPA is coordinating with Restoration Partnership.
- Canyon Marsh: if not highly contaminated, could convert from agricultural land to wetlands, to create more clean habitat. (Lane Marsh, Parker Slough, backside of boat ramp).
- O&M: does budget cover recontamination from the big floods that inevitably come?
- People are moving off the Trail of the CDAs to recreate.
- Evaluate impacts of every project on lake shoreline owners. Needs more evaluation than what has been done in the past.
- Start at Cataldo and work downstream. Do a lab scale study (bigger than a pilot). Dredging and capping, tests, both. Then monitor.

-Lead concentration or sorting may actually be happening instead of deposition: a theory that needs to be studied more.

-How will you keep communities informed?

### **Conclusion and Next Steps**

Before the meeting was adjourned, Kim Prestbo noted that as Lower Basin project selection moves forward, EPA will provide updates in its tri-annual Basin Bulletin newsletter, on its site web page, and report at Basin Commission and Citizens Coordinating Council meetings. EPA expects to select 2-3 projects this fall.