

LAKE MEAD WATER QUALITY FORUM
January 26, 2010
Meeting Summary

I. Introductions – Forum members and participating audience members introduced themselves.

II. Status Reports:

1. Perchlorate Update - (NDEP – Las Vegas)

Mr. Tom Porta asked Ms. Peggy Roefer of SNWA to give a brief update. Ms. Roefer announced that the perchlorate concentration in the drinking water was currently at 1.6 mg/pl. Mr. Porta then discussed Tronox which is currently in bankruptcy status. Tronox has insured the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection (NDEP) that the bio-treatment plant will remain in operation. A separate account was set aside in order to keep the facility operating. NDEP is monitoring that situation very closely. A law firm (not through the Attorney General's Office) was hired to handle the Tronox bankruptcy specifically in order to keep NDEP apprised of anything that might affect the treatment system. If something were to happen, NDEP has funds available to help keep Tronox running. Mr. Porta concluded that at this time there are no problems or reasons to be concerned.

The following perchlorate update was discussed by Shannon Harbour, NDEP, Las Vegas.

LV Wash:

The perchlorate mass loading passing Northshore Road for over the last two years has been shown to range between ~55 to ~90 lbs/day (October 2007 – October 2009). The perchlorate loading for last quarter (October 2009) was ~60 lbs/day. This is approximately 90 % reduction from pre-remediation values.

The Southern Nevada Water Authority (SNWA) is preparing to construct additional erosion control structures (Weirs) within the LV Wash. The NDEP has prepared a draft NPDES permit to manage discharges from construction dewatering for the Lower Narrows and Homestead Weirs. The BWPC and SNWA are addressing comments received during the public comment period which closed on January 20, 2010. Construction dewatering will be limited to the winter season (~December through May) when Lake Mead is fully mixed. Monitoring is planned within the LV Wash, Lake Mead, and below Hoover Dam to help adjust the dewatering amount and season so the additional perchlorate load can be mixed with the least observable increase in perchlorate concentrations within Lake Mead and the Lower Colorado River.

In response to a question asked by Mr. Tom Porta regarding modeling conducted by the SNWA to support the permit, Mr. Croft indicated that:

1. the modeling established that downstream (Whitsett) concentrations of perchlorate should not increase by more than one ppb if the discharge is kept to less than 80 lbs/day and the discharge is kept to a winter season when the lake is fully mixed (destratified); and

2. The resultant perchlorate concentration in Lower Colorado River water is projected to be lower than applicable State standards.

Willow Beach:

The perchlorate concentrations measured at Willow Beach in the Colorado River system continue to remain at or less than 2 ppb since December 2008 and have been measured at < 4 parts per billion (ppb) since June 2004. The perchlorate concentration at Willow Beach last quarter (December 2009) was 2 ppb.

Colorado River:

MWD has reported perchlorate concentrations < 2.0 ppb for all samples collected between July 2008 and October 2009. The perchlorate concentration at Whitsett sampling point last quarter (October 2009) was 1.1 ppb.

Tronox LLC (formerly Kerr-McGee):

The Fluidized Bed Reactor (FBR) perchlorate treatment system continues to operate. Temporary shut-downs of the Athens Road (Galleria Road) Well Field continue to occur due to the construction activities by the COH for the Wastewater Reclamation Facility.

Perchlorate removal rates for the Tronox remediation system now are typically reported between approximately 1,500 and 2,000 lbs per day. Tronox reported ~ 1,556 lbs/day removal rate for December 2009.

Cumulative removal of perchlorate from the environment through December 31, 2009 totals approximately 3,016 tons. This is divided as follows:

- 408 tons from the seep area;
- 974 tons from Athens Road; and
- 1,634 tons from the on-site system.

AMPAC:

AMPAC has completed the installation of a groundwater injection trench at the re-injection well field near Las Vegas Wash. The injection trench is to augment AMPAC's re-injection well field because of repeated fouling of the re-injection wells. Additional groundwater monitoring wells have been installed and tracer testing will be conducted, in part, to evaluate the possible need for additional monitoring wells.

The ISB perchlorate treatment system is currently operating at approximately 225 gpm with a mass loading of approximately 45 – 50 pounds per day.

AMPAC is continuing modeling efforts in the area south of Warm Springs. The model will be used to help determine remediation options closer to the source area.

Nationally:

There is no new information regarding the National discussion on perchlorate. In September 2009, NDEP along with other entities, provided EPA with supplemental comments at their request. There are no new developments to report on this topic.

2. Quagga Mussels (NDOW)

An NDOW speaker was not available for discussion on quagga mussels.

3. Selenium Subcommittee

Kathy Sertic stated that she did not have an update to discuss. She mentioned that the current Subcommittee meeting was scheduled to be held after the Forum.

4. Las Vegas Wash Coordination Committee (SNWA)

Mr. Seth Shanahan reported the following updates. At the last Las Vegas Valley Water meeting they adopted the Regional Water Quality Plan which he encouraged everyone to get a copy of. He also informed everyone that the Plan is also posted on their website. SNWA accepted a Regional Water Recycling study which contains policy directions that they plan to begin working on within the next few years. Mr. Porta congratulated the Committee on the adoption of the Regional Water Quality Plan. Mr. Shanahan continued to mention the completion of 12 weirs on the wash with two that are still under construction. Reclamation funding has been approved to continue projects for the next fiscal year for water quality programs. Bird species monitoring has continued and no new species have been found. Endangered bird surveys will be completed in 2010. There was an amazing discovery of an old milk house that had been excavated down the Wash. This milk house is going to be reconstructed at the Clark County Museum. The next meeting will be on April 27, 2010 after the Forum and afterward there will be a tour of the Wash and Lake Mead.

5. SCOP Update (CWC)

Ms. Lynn Orphan stated that the Selenium Management Plan was completed on time. The Plan was adopted as a draft by the Boulder Basin Adaptive Management Plan's Core Management Team. It was a great group effort by all the agencies in the Las Vegas Valley and statewide who were involved. Ms. Orphan stated that the Plan was going to be presented to the Selenium Subcommittee after the Forum. She informed Mr. Porta that the draft of the Plan could be posted on the Forum's website as it is now a public document. The CWC continues to do monitoring and modeling on a continual basis in Lake Mead. The CWC is also participating in the Regional Water Quality Plan with SNWA and is working on an annual operations plan. Regarding the SCOP project itself, there have been changes in conditions as growth has slowed down in the Las Vegas Valley and the economy has put stress on projects. The CWC board has asked staff to pause and re-evaluate projects.

SCOP Update continued:

There will be a technical review team for this evaluation. The evaluation will also look at all conditions such as regulatory and financial conditions, lake levels, water shortage, difference in treatments, etc. Ms. Orphan informed the Forum of her moving the staff of CWC to Southern California and she mentioned that while they will be working there at times she would be attending meetings in Nevada.

III. Presentations

1. “1956 - 2009 Data Summary, Las Vegas Wash, Las Vegas Bay and Lake Mead”
Douglas D. Drury, Ph.D.
Director of Water Quality, Research and Technical Services
Clark County Water Reclamation District

Presentations are available on the NDEP website at ndep.nv.gov/forum

IV. Other Items

V. Next Forum Meeting

The next Lake Mead Water Quality Forum meeting is scheduled for April 27, 2010.

VI. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 12:12 pm