

Susan Lindsey

I am very concerned about this Scoping proposal. The Spokane River is important to our community and we need to maintain strict environmental standards to keep the river and the riparian area around it healthy.

How will this variance impact the ability to meet the Spokane Tribe's Water Quality Standards (for poly chlorinated biphenyls or PCBs)? Ecology cannot take action that will cause or contribute to a violation of the Tribe's standards.

How will a variance comply with the Federal Court order to develop a clean-up plan called a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) for PCBs?

Ecology must address issues of environmental justice -- who is eating fish and how will they be impacted by a decision to weaken the water quality standard for PCBs? Will the variance disproportionately impact Native Americans or other fishing and minority communities?

How will Ecology assess all technological options to address PCBs?

How will Ecology assess impacts of PCBs on the entire food web?

How will Ecology fully assess the effectiveness of issuing pollution permits with compliance schedules to meet the EPA/WA water quality standard?

Ecology must assess the social and economic costs of continued toxic pollution shouldered by the community in the form of lost and degraded uses. For example, who does not use the river any longer because of polluted fish and what is that costing us?