

The Lands Council

Please see the attached file for The Lands Council comments.

Thank you,

Mike Petersen



July 11, 2019

Susan Braley
Washington State Department of Ecology
Olympia, WA 98504-7600
<http://ws.ecology.commentinput.com/?id=KTMcA>

Dear Ms. Braley,

The Lands Council would like to comment on the scoping for a variance process for PCB's being discharged into the Spokane River. The Lands Council believes the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is the first variance process to be undertaken by Ecology, so we ask that this process be thoroughly explained in the EIS, including whether variances for PCB's or other chemical contaminants have been done in other states.

Ecology must analyze how a variance will impact the ability to meet the Spokane Tribe's Water Quality Standards for PCB's. Ecology cannot take action that will cause or contribute to a violation of the Tribe's standards. The EIS should explain how the current EPA and Tribal standards were derived and what the impacts of a variance will be on those who eat fish from the Spokane River. The EIS should explain how the variance could disproportionately impact Native Americans or other minority communities.

The current EPA standard is 7 parts per quadrillion, yet several dischargers have requested a variance up to nearly 1000 parts per quadrillion. The EIS should explain the rationale for this request. The EIS must address what the current discharge levels of PCB's are to the Spokane River, and what is obtainable with current and advanced treatment technology.

Ecology must assess impacts of allowing higher levels of PCBs in the discharges will impact the entire aquatic food web.

Ecology must fully assess how issuing discharge permits with compliance schedules will meet the EPA/WA water quality standard and whether the variance process will delay meeting those water quality standards.

Ecology must discuss the impacts of undergoing the variance process on the viability of the Spokane River Regional Toxics Task Force, who has their own plan to reduce PCB's entering the Spokane River.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.



Mike Petersen
Executive Director