**Shared Database Committee Call**

**Oct. 11, 2018**

**In attendance:** Ed (Abq), Ryan (AZ), Tina Suarez-Murias (CA), Shawn (CIRA), Kristen & Brandon (MT), Roslyn & Cindy (NM), Pat Brewer (NPS), Frank (NV), Tom (WRAP).

**Oct. 5th progress report de-brief**

Cindy asked for comments from the group regarding the de-brief. Pat said “well done.” The group had no suggestions regarding what should be done for the next de-brief.

Shawn reported that 45 people have registered for the TSS as of the date of the call. The number was only 16 as of a week or so before the October 5 progress report and demo.

Tom said he would get the audio recording of the call up on the web site by the end of the day on October 11 *(the audio is now available at* [*http://www.wrapair2.org/RHPWG.aspx*](http://www.wrapair2.org/RHPWG.aspx)).

Cindy asked if the subcommittee should contact states that don’t have people registered on TSS.

**Action Item:** after subsequent discussion, the group agreed that Tina should send a message to the membership list of the Regional Haze workgroup, pointing readers to the posted recording of Oct. 5 TSS briefing, the accompanying Power Point presentation, and the materials for the Ramboll Regional Haze readiness assessment survey. This message would also include registration info for the TSS.

Pat complimented the well-organized structure of the October 5 presentation, built around a traditional three step pedagogical method: tell us what you’re going to tell us (the big picture); then tell us (the details); then tell us what you just told us (the big picture again, emphasizing “why do we care”).

The discussion noted the need for close cooperation between the Shared Database Subcommittee and the Consultation and Coordination Subcommittee, which may well need to be part of the next demo/progress report on the TSS. The Consultation and Coordination Subcommittee’s activities will be closely related to those of the Shared Database Subcommittee – there’s a lot of overlap between the work of the two groups. In the discussion of this subject there was agreement that emissions inventory data won’t be ready for inclusion in the TSS until January or February 2019.

**Action Item:** Cindy will work with the Consultation and Coordination Subcommittee to determine appropriate timelines for various work products.

Tom suggested that an item worth discussing at the December WRAP Technical Planning meeting would be how to handle overlapping work products of all the different Regional Haze subcommittees and WRAP Work Groups (not just between Shared Database and Monitoring Subcommittees). We can try to figure out how to help people not hear things that they’ve heard several times already. Possible solutions might be holding meetings in different formats, or holding less meetings – but these are only speculation and would need to be discussed. “We need to be respectful of the fact that people have day jobs.”

Further discussion of overlap among work of subcommittees is summarized below.

**Develop FAQs and review glossary – other support “metadata” needs at this point?**

*Overview*

Tom presented ideas for development of a “Frequently Asked Questions” (FAQ) document and a glossary. He noted that an FAQ could help orient new TSS users or aid experienced users in getting to know a less familiar portion of the TSS website. Shawn has developed a draft of a “fairly extensive” glossary of technical terms and “terms of art.” This document was adapted from a CIRA air quality database. Existing terms in it may need to be modified or new terms added. The subcommittee may want to consider taking on this task.

Tom asked whether there might be additional supporting “metadata” documents that the Subcommittee should consider developing, beyond the FAQ and glossary. Perhaps the Subcommittee could put out a survey in early 2019 to gauge how users are putting the TSS to use, what their needs are, and how new documents might support those needs.

*Discussion of glossary*

Cindy noted that the Shared Database Subcommittee has a draft glossary that Pat and Tina worked on, apart from the glossary to which Tom was referring. The glossary covers both technical terms and “plain language” terminology. Do we want to add to that or should we merge the two glossaries? The discussion agreed that the Subcommittee should gradually add to Pat and Tina’s glossary as necessary. Pat and Tina’s glossary was based on the one developed for the old TSS used during the first planning period – but the new one adds additional definitions or modifies definitions to make it relevant to the new planning period under the updated Regional Haze rule.

**Decision:** The discussion agreed that the Subcommittee should gradually add to Pat and Tina’s glossary as necessary.

*Discussion of FAQ*

Discussing ideas for an FAQ, Tom cited the work of Edward Tufte, a Yale University specialist in data visualization, who emphasized the importance of presenting data and information in as simple a format as possible. See <https://www.edwardtufte.com/tufte/>. An FAQ is difficult because to some extent it entails reading the minds of potential users to anticipate what they want and need and thus what questions they will ask. To get around this difficulty, maybe we can find a website similar to the TSS and use its FAQ as a model. CIRA may have ideas on where to look for this.

**Decision:** the group agreed to consult later with the Ramboll readiness survey team, after survey responses are available, to use those responses, as the starting point for a Shared Database FAQ.

*Discussing additional documents: background on history of rule and basic science concepts*

On the subject of additional “metadata” documents, beyond the FAQ and glossary, the group agreed that there should be a section of the TSS to display, or link to, documents on two subjects. The first is the history of the Regional Haze rule – why it was implemented, how it has changed over time. Examples of such documents include a presentation from last December’s WRAP Regional Haze meeting on the historical development of the rule, examining how we got to where we are now and lessons learned in previous planning. The IMPROVE web site also has a collection of links to documents on the history of the rule.

The second subject to be covered in an additional portion of the TSS would be documents on the basic science of Regional Haze. A good example of such a document is the publication *Introduction to Visibility*, by William C. Malm.

*Discussion of overlapping work products among subcommittees*

The discussion noted that the content of the glossary being developed by the Shared Database Subcommittee appears to overlap to a considerable degree with similar content that the Monitoring Data and Glidepath Subcommittee is working on. This observation led to a more general conversation about how to deal with the larger issue of overlapping work (and work products) among the various Regional Haze subcommittees. A number of ideas were put forward, including:

* distribute drafts of works in progress to all the subcommittee leads;
* post draft documents to the web pages of each subcommittee, with instructions on how to access and edit each;
* post draft documents to the main Regional Haze Planning Workgroup page, with instructions on how to access and edit each;
* post draft documents to the TSS – this idea led to observations that the TSS might best be reserved for final versions rather than drafts, since the TSS is still greatly in flux.

The discussion distinguished between drafts in progress and final versions of work products, which Tom related will be placed in a “docket” of work products called for in the WRAP work plan.

The discussion also came to a consensus that it’s too early in the life cycle of the TSS to make final decisions on how the TSS will contain, point to, or otherwise provide WRAP work product documents. Making those decisions will entail other, earlier decisions about the fundamental navigation, format, layout, and organizing principles of the TSS, and Shawn pointed out that such choices are best made later in a process like this one, when the nature of content being displayed, and needs of users in relation to that content, have become clearer. Making those decisions at this early stage risks locking in an organizational/site navigation framework that could prove to be less than appropriate later, as circumstances evolve and realities take shape.

**Decision**: the group agreed that the navigation structure of the TSS would be an ongoing issue of discussion at future meetings.

In regard to draft documents in progress, the group agreed that a discussion among subcommittee leads, plus Jay and Tina, seemed the best way to share information about work in progress and ways to avoid too much overlap.

**Action Item**: Tina agreed to contact the leads of the Regional Haze subcommittees and try to organize a check-in call that will occur just prior to the monthly meetings of the Technical Steering Committee.

**How to communicate scale of data displayed in tools and charts?**

Tom summarized his thoughts on this topic. His thought was that bringing it up could get a brainstorming process started that can lead over time to decisions about TSS content. In essence, he suggested thinking about ways to add information to the TSS interface that would provide context to users about data or information they were finding. For example, contextual information might:

* show whether or not the “Most Impaired Days” metric agreed to by WRAP applies to a particular Class 1 Area (C1A) displayed on a map;
* display on map the extent to which a C1A in a non-WRAP state is affected by transport of visibility impairing pollutants from the WRAP region;
* show information about which regulatory entity has jurisdiction over a particular C1A;
* show whether a site is not counted as a C1A but still reports data useful for Regional Haze planning, such as data regarding long distance transport of pollutants.

**Disseminating IMPROVE Impairment Metric documentation?**

This item was not addressed in the call due to lack of time.

Note taking schedule:

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| **Date of Meeting** | **Notes (Agency)** |
| 10.25.2018 | AZ DEQ |
| 11.8.2018 | NV DEP |
| (11.22.2018) | *No meeting* |
| 12.13.2018 | CARB |
| (12.27.2018) | *No meeting* |
| 1.10.2019 | NMED |
| 1.24.2019 | CABQ |
| 2.14.2019 | MT DEQ |
| 2.28.2019 | AZ DEQ |