



Paul E. Helliker
Director

Department of Pesticide Regulation



Gray Davis
Governor
Winston H. Hickox
Secretary, California
Environmental
Protection Agency

Meeting Minutes
Yurok Environmental Monitoring Workgroup
Weitchpec Community Center
Friday, January 21, 2000

- Participants: Susan "Tweet" Burdick, Yurok Tribe
Ron Johnson, CSU Humboldt, Art Department
Bessie Lee, Environmental Program Manager, with Yurok Tribe
John Melvin, Env. Program Tech., Yurok Tribe
Holly Hensher, Karuk Tribe
Lori Harder, Yurok Tribe, CIBA
LaVerne Glaze, Karuk Tribe, CIBA
Renee Stauffer, Karuk Tribe
Marty Geslak, Env. Program Tech., Yurok Tribe
Pliny McCovey, Jr., Hoopa TEPA
Kevin McKernan, Hoopa TEPA
Jene McCovey, Yurok Tribe
Ken Childs Sr., Yurok Tribe
- Ex officio: Sharon Campleman, Public Health Institute/CCR (Guest Speaker)
Michael O'Malley, Consultant with DPR (Guest Speaker)
Kean Goh, Department of Pesticide Regulation
Pam Wofford, Department of Pesticide Regulation
Richard Currie, Department of Pesticide Regulation
Jeff Dolf, Humboldt County Agricultural Commissioners Office
David Cavyell, Del Norte County Agricultural Commissioners Office
Annie Yates, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

All participants introduced themselves. **Kean** discussed the budget status of the study. As of November 30, 1999, the balance was \$47,760 for samples (or 159 samples at \$300/sample).

Kean mentioned that DPR would need to conduct the surface water sampling training for the Hoopa Valley Tribe as per their U.S. EPA grant. **Susan** discussed the possibility of the Karuk Tribe also obtaining a grant for training.

Bessie explained that she had reported to the Tribal Council that future meetings will be announced and advertised to the entire tribe. Future meetings will be held at various sites to allow more people to attend.

Bessie has also sent out letters to two members (Marilyn Hosteler and Robley Schwenk) who have not attended a meeting for quite some time indicating that they will be replaced on the membership list if they do not attend (neither person was present at the meeting). **Susan**



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suggested talking to her and if she indicates she does not want to attend future meetings we should replace her with another Hupa basket weaver. **Lori** will talk to Robley.

Susan expressed her concern that the field trip with Simpson on the previous day was still held even though no tribal members were able to attend. **Kean** explained that as discussed with Susan and tribal staff earlier, since agency and the other DPR personnel were available at this time the field trip was held with the understanding that a future trip would be arranged when the tribal members are available. The purposes of the trip were to gather information to develop sampling methods and begin a botanical plant survey. The workgroup agreed on April 15th for the next field trip. The purpose of the field trip will be for tribal members to select and prioritize plants of interest for monitoring. The plans for the aerial spray program should be available to the public by that date. **Bessie** will put a notice of the field trip in the Yurok Tribal newsletter.

It was agreed that DPR will again monitor the atrazine ground applications this winter to spring. **Susan** noted that we should prioritize application areas and sample sites by 1) waterways leading into areas where people live and obtain drinking water, and 2) by environmental concerns. **Bessie** agreed to send DPR a list of populated areas and the watersheds leading to them.

Mike O'Malley talked about the gaps in the state illness registry concerning the handlers and applicators of herbicides. He said that citizens' concerns need to be presented to health providers. He talked about the questionnaire that may be presented to Tribal members to help document those concerns. **Bessie** agreed that the questionnaire may be a way to help document the tribes concern about the high incidence of cancer on the reservation. **Mike** explained that the registry usually gets only direct acute exposure data and that environmental exposures are more difficult to recognize. **Susan** noted that the Tribe had been keeping a map of all the incidences of cancer on the reservation.

Jene expressed concern that Mike may not have enough experience and knowledge about the forestry herbicides and their effects to supply the tribal members with what they would want. **Bessie** replied that Mike was here to provide information to the workgroup. **Jene** said she was worried about the effects of 2,4-D and the effects on people sprayed in the past. She felt we should do a literature search so the health providers will know the symptoms. She questioned the course and plan of the workgroup and the need to look more at alternatives to chemicals. **Kean** explained that this study is a monitoring study that can only tell us if the chemicals are present in the water and plants, etc. **Kean** noted that the first step is to determine what is present so that data can be used for the next step to assess exposure.

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Mike said he may be able to present a summary of data from human exposure and reports. He pointed out that the group usually studied for exposure and effects is the pesticide applicator. The registry does not capture rural and non-occupational exposure very well. Doctors must recognize the pesticide connection. **Susan** asked if they have looked at people poisoned in the past and how they are doing now. **Mike** replied that there are some studies but they are all on insecticides not herbicides.

Bessie said the Tribe is going for a grant to do a reservation wide health study, and she has prepared a draft questionnaire from comments by the culture committee. The workgroup must decide if we want to continue in this direction or not. **Susan** felt it was an important direction to take.

The group discussed sampling fish and animal tissue and **Kean** stated that we could do the sampling but that it would be of low probability to find residues because of the relatively high water solubility of the herbicides and hence readily eliminated from the body. **Susan** mentioned that we have talked about testing deer livers brought in by hunters but nothing has been brought in so far, but it has not been widely announced. **Bessie** noted that a consortium of tribes has formed a lab to test for pesticides but they basically will do water and soil.

Sharan noted the UC Davis Toxicology Dept. collects feral animals to test for superfund studies and that maybe we should look into it.

A discussion ensued about the testing required for registration of pesticides. **Mike** explained that new studies are being required for the old chemicals that are lacking studies or have inadequate data. **Susan** asked about the test dosages used on subjects, and **Mike** replied that they often use high doses to ensure effects. He also discussed the concept of testing for a chemical, e.g. dioxin, in someone's blood to compare against a known expected level in the whole population. A level high in comparison to the population would indicate exposure. Dioxin can come from natural sources such as burning wood.

Jene noted that someone in the past had done a Ph.D. dissertation on the genealogy and health of 18 families in the area.

After lunch **Sharan** presented her background and work with the Public Health Institute. Her work covers the northern 16 counties. The registry has been in existence since 1988 and looks for new cases (1st diagnosis) of cancer. All information comes from records, not personal information. There is no follow-up for survival. The registry includes all malignant and

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invasive cancers, and some in-situ cancers. She explained that she looks for unusual cancers, younger age of onset of cancer, and childhood cancers as an alert to problems.

She explained that the registry is used to compare estimated rates of cancer versus expected rates of cancer for age, gender and race populations. **Sharan** said that if the registry was given the names for everyone in the Tribe they maybe able to check the known cases to be sure that the cancers have been documented in the registry properly. **Bessie** replied that the Tribe was sensitive about the release of names and confidentiality. **Sharan** explained that the registry was completely confidential and was legally not allowed to give out names, etc. **Sharan** agreed to do a search for local zip codes, including historic death certificates.

The next field trip is scheduled for April 15, 2000. We will meet at the Simpson Timber Company Arcata Redwood office in Orick at 10:00 A.M.