Hinkson Creek – Stream Team monitoring report
Science Team clarification - Draft

Last month Ken Midkiff presented results from Hinkson Creek using data collected by Stream Teams. The science team members present thought that some explanation might help put that report into context and reduce some confusion that might have arisen.

1. First of all, Ken accurately presented the results. There was nothing incorrect in what he said.
2. The stream team tool is somewhat different from the method that you have heard Dave Michaelson report results from in the past. The science team thought some differences between these assessments may have not been clear.
3. The first important thing to note is that the stream team method is different from the method that Dave has discussed with us numerous times over the last three year. Each is a screening method that gives an indication of water quality, but neither provides really strong information as to cause. There are three differences that are worth noting.
4. The Stream Team method does not have all the detail that the department method uses. The Stream Team method might report: We saw 24 mayflies, while DNR would report: We saw 24 mayflies of 5 different species, 2 of which are species known to be sensitive to pollution. The reason for this is less about skill level than it is about the time that is needed to do the analysis.
5. The Stream Team method also has a bias toward lower scores in the middle of the range because Stream Team data are used to suggest whether the department should take a closer look at a stream assessed by the stream team, thus flagging a stream as possibly impaired is a better outcome than not noticing a stream that does need more attention. Think of the result if we had only Ken's stream team data on Hinkson. It would have suggested [with scores in the low teens in spots] that the department needed to take a closer look.
6. You may have noticed that the scores Ken reported went up to 22 while the DNR method has a top score of 20. There is a different scale for the two systems. This might not have been obvious at the time. However, as Ken noted, parts of Hinkson Creek scored quite well while others scored not so well; this is something we see in the DNR data as well.
7. The science team is discussing how we might be able to partner with the local stream teams to have them collect additional data that will supplement what is already being collected. Stream team members can be available resources, particularly if we can have them collect data that helps answer questions arising out of the conceptual model we have been using on Hinkson.