

OCTOBER 2002 SOUTHERN WILLAMETTE SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

Review of Accomplishments

Reports

There has been significant progress in generating ArcView diagrams. Our ability to master this program will be very useful when creating maps and slides for public presentations.

Sampling

We have completed the 3 sampling events, all which involved major coordination with volunteers, OSU, City of Coburg, DEQ WR staff and DEQ Lab. Work completed in allotted time with only minor difficulties arising. 92 Homes were sampled, 6 residents dropped out and we could not reach 2 residents. We also could not resample 2 wells; one due to the death of the former owner and the other because the house was demolished. While conducting this study we made a great contact with Jack Harris (Coburg – Public Works) and agreed to help his City gather adequate data on the aquifer nitrate contamination. This would help the City of Coburg in their application for an additional grant toward the costs of the new wastewater treatment system. Jack Harris (and ultimately the City of Coburg) will most likely be a strong UWGW advocate.

Sample results for the inorganic analyses (all but the pesticide and bacteria tests) were sent to us on September 25, 2002. This batch of results was for the samples collected in May.

ODA Coordination

All the pesticide samples have been extracted and are in different stages of analysis. ODA expressed their wish that they were further along in the process. Currently, the extract has a DL around 100-200 ppb. The sample DL should be considerably less, but may not be in the sub ppb range.

Bacterial Reports

Of the 92 wells sampled, 30 were reported to have Total Coliform; 4 with e Coli. Gail Glick Andrews has sent letters to all which identified the results and informed homeowners how they could get more information if they need to treat their well.

Fact Sheets

The revised Nitrate Fact Sheet and the Southern Willamette Groundwater Fact Sheets have been prepared and have been posted on the Groundwater Quality Program webpage. These will be included in our response to the homeowners

Good Start on Webpage

There will be a project webpage on the WR server. Some version of the Southern Willamette GW Fact Sheet, plus photos and work summaries will be included on this page. There will also be links to GW Program and OSU Willamette GW websites. Mike Downs had helped develop the Groundwater Program website. As Mike is leaving, and as Bob Barrows can assist the WR with our project page, we decided to keep most of the UW information on the WR webpage. The Groundwater Program webpage will have a UWGW link to this site.

Analytical Database

Mary Camarata and Mindi English have been building a database to support all of our mailings and ArcView activities. There is a need for lots of cleanup of the data from last year. To complicate matters, many of the 2001 Well & Site ID Sheets are missing.

Outreach/Coordination

I gave a presentation to Long Tom Grange on Thursday, September 19. There were about 20 residents of the Junction City area present, and they appeared to really absorb the data and asked good questions. They did appreciate the Dept. coming to their meeting.

I also participated in a WRD sponsored Workshop on the Willamette Basin Groundwater. Although this workshop focused on land use decisions and groundwater quantity, we did manage to get some time to include discussions on groundwater quality. In addition, many of the folks that were present at this Workshop would be great participants in the future Southern Willamette Groundwater Quality Workshop. Excellent networking opportunity.

In order to keep all on the same page, I lead a meeting of the HQ Groundwater staff & Manager to discuss the actions completed on the UWGW, and to get a better focus on the future of this study. In addition, I try to keep the Groundwater Coordinator involved in any pertinent issue, generally by phone or email.

1010 Plans

I attended a public hearing on the 1010 South Santiam rules, and was quite disappointed with the lack of any mention of groundwater protection. Stephanie Page (ODA) said that if there is a GWMA declaration, then this would be added to the rules.

Report - Conclusions & Maps

Once Jack gets ArcView 3.2 on his computer (will be happening very shortly), he will finalize Geologic Map. When the sampling results are

entered into database, new concentration maps can be prepared. The basic conclusions for this report should include: nitrate was present at >7 ppm in 20% of wells sampled; sources of nitrate need to be defined; some areas are more affected than others. We will need to list possible nitrate sources, and the need to get community support for any future decisions we make on the UWGW management.

Mark Charles and Karla have researched the statutes and history of the GWP Act, and have determined that it is DEQ's authority to declare a GWMA. Based on the discussions at the September 12, 2002 meeting (and subsequent discussions with Keith Andersen) we all agree that it is important to hold meetings with the community to gather their input before we make a declaration. Through this outreach process, we can let the community know upfront that it is the responsibility of DEQ to determine when a GWMA is necessary, and this decision should be based upon all available data. Although DEQ is charged with making the final decision regarding a GWMA, we would still like to have an opportunity to learn from the community members and improve our knowledge base so that any declaration we ultimately make is balanced.

The primary goal is to have appropriate GWMA(s) or Groundwater Areas of Concern declared by the end of this fiscal year, and to have the lead Agency determined within 90 days of the declaration. After there has been a GWMA declaration, a Groundwater Management Committee and/or Technical Committee will be established.

Results to be mailed to Homeowners

Lab released May data on September 25, 2002. The project goal is to send all data to residents within 30 days of my receipt of data. Mary Camarata and Mindi English have been working hard on getting the database ready for the upcoming mailings.

Outreach/Coordination

We decided that it maybe best to conduct the majority of the public presentations after the lab sends us the inorganic results. The last results should be delivered by or in November.

Gail's 319 Grant also has many opportunities for joint participation. These include: groundwater sampling & analysis training; well & septic care; etc. Most of these opportunities will happen in November.

There is a need to do a mailing to the potentially affected & interested parties, letting all know what we have been doing and where we may be going. This should be done soon. The 3 SWCDs and the Farm Bureaus need to be included in this mailing, as should the NRCS and the League of Woman Voters.

We are planning an Southern Willamette Groundwater Workshop, along the same lines as the Willamette Valley WRD Workshop. This workshop would happen in January 2003, and would be open to everyone. We would be targeting planners, Dept of Ag, Dept. of Human Services, LCOG, Farm Bureaus, Extension Services, the SWCD and the residents of the area. This would be a precursor to forming any future Groundwater Management Committee, and would serve as an educational tool for potential GWMC members and the general public.

Both Rodney Weick & Karla Urbanowicz have offered their assistance in “getting out the message.”

Other GW data

There was a discussion regarding some of the nitrate and groundwater data that has been developed, but has not yet been included in our study. Information sources include: health records from property transfers from 1997 to present; Ross Penhallogon’s lysimeter data – from farm where BMP were used and samples were collected for NO₃ and some pesticides; OSU’s tile drain & surface water studies; OSU’s Cover Crop study; and quarterly samples from 40 farm wells analyzed for nitrate by the Hach kit method. Ten of these wells are in the Shedd area, which has major nitrate problems. How this information can best be incorporated into the UWGW study has not been determined as of yet.

In addition to the groundwater studies, there is information regarding the 500 Home-a-Syst type visits that were made. Gail Glick Andrews should be revisiting these homes to see what changes have been made by residents that may have helped protect groundwater. This report will be very useful if there is a GWMC.

OSU Survey - Questions that could help any future GWMC

We have an opportunity to add questions to an OSU survey. The current format will not add much to our process, but we need to figure out questions that will give us the type of info we would like. Assistance in developing these questions was sought. Jennifer Boudin expressed some interest in helping us with this project.

OSU wants to use our original 500 sampling locations, and do a random mailing to a statistically significant number of these folks. To produce a viable mailing list will require lots of cleanup – possibly by both OSU & DEQ.

319 Opportunities

As Jack Arendt will be getting training on the pushprobe, it is possible by partnering with other Agencies and/or Schools that we could apply for a 319 grant to install wells of our own in the UW study area for specific purposes. Rodney Weick, Jack Arendt and I developed a draft proposal in

cooperation with OSU and Lane County Extension Service to fill in the data gaps for the UWGW. This will include isotopic analyses of the groundwater to help delineate agricultural-related impacts from septic impacts. We will be using the lysimeters installed by OSU and will evaluate the use of adjacent monitoring wells to track the leaching of contaminants to the groundwater. We will also be evaluating the installation of monitoring wells to confirm the stratigraphy of the study area.

Contracting with a Public Outreach Expert

It has been suggested that DEQ might consider hiring a contractor to help with OSU survey. We previously had used EnviroIssues on a similar, but extremely limited, venture. It is possible that we could get some information that the future GWAC may find practical and useful by creating applicable and enlightening questions for such a survey.

GW flow direction

We need to get a better handle on GW flow direction in our study area. I have suggested that we should work closer with WRD and USGS to understand their information on GW flow directions in the southern valley. We were only able to get DTW readings from a limited number of well (15-25%) in this summers sampling, and there is a very limited number of verified well logs for the wells sampled in our study.

Farm Bill

Gail Glick Andrews has reported that there may be money in the recently-passed Farm Bill for well & septic tank repairs/replacement. This type of potential funding could be very useful. We should see how we can use this to the Project's advantage. It may be that there is a way the State can help prioritize which wells and or septic system are in the most need of repairs/replacements. I will follow up on this issue.