

**Southern Willamette Valley Groundwater Management Area (GWMA)
May 26, 2005 Committee Meeting – Harrisburg City Hall**

Present: Rich Margerum*, Tom Pattee, Mike Powers, Cliff Wooten*, Dan Mumford, Annabelle Jaramillo*, Dennis Boeger*, Tim Bunnell*, Audrey Eldridge, Denise Kalakay, George Pugh*, Scott Shine, Pat Straube*, Ken Vanderford, Gail Andrews, John McElvoy, Lanny Zoeller*, Karen Strohmeier*, Ross Penhallegon, Jacqueline Fern, Irene Rolston, Craig Costello, Faye Stewart*

Chair Tim Bunnell opened the meeting with announcements, committee and audience introductions, and a call for public comments. Lanny Zoeller thanked Denise Kalakay for her presentation to the Willamette Association of Realtors in April. Audrey Eldridge requested a change in the order of agenda items and Denise Kalakay invited committee members to an LCOG open house. There were no other public comments.

Ken Vanderford of the City of Eugene provided an informational presentation to the group on Eugene's wastewater treatment facility. The facility manages wastewater from Eugene, Springfield and nearby unincorporated areas. Ken discussed their biosolids management program, biocycle farm, and seasonal irrigation program. The facility uses a combination of air drying, mechanical dewatering, compression, and ultraviolet radiation to process their biosolids, which are then applied to volunteer farms. Monitoring wells are located on the premises to track groundwater impacts. The facility's 600 acre hybrid poplar Biocycle Farm is fertilized with treatment plant biosolids and irrigated with recycled water. In the future, poplars may also be harvested to supply hardwood logs. The facility's seasonal irrigation program consists of 250 acres of irrigated farmland and an aerated lagoon. Ken noted that in data collected from the on-site monitoring wells, some wells reflected an increase in nitrates over time. He believes this may be associated with gradient or influences from adjacent land uses. A brief discussion about nutrient movement ensued. Audrey Eldridge of Oregon Department of Environmental Quality commented that nitrate can move for miles in sandy soils. Ross Penhallegon (Lane County Extension Service) added that the winter months function as a "flush period" where leachate is greater.

Following Ken's presentation, Audrey Eldridge and Dennis Boeger summarized work completed by the Commercial/Industrial Working Group. Audrey described the group's effort to focus on major nitrate sources including large on-site facilities, biosolids, and fertilizers. Dennis discussed on-site system issues and specific treatments to reduce nitrate. Some on-site systems that target nitrate removal require a carbon source to mix with nitrate; this can be methanol, wood chips, or sugar. The process may also require additives to address pH issues. Dennis noted that subsurface disposal of effluent as opposed to surface spraying can reduce downstream nitrate by several ppm. Audrey then discussed a variety of committee recommendations including: encouraging cities, counties and all commercial/industrial facilities to review fertilizer practices; producing an educational piece to help inform commercial and industrial entities about the importance of nitrate reduction; assessing on-site systems; and emphasizing the voluntary nature of the nitrate reduction efforts. The next meeting of the Commercial/Industrial working group will be on June 23rd at Marathon Coach.

After a short break Mike Powers gave a brief synopsis from the Agricultural Working Group. The group met recently to review the document outline, and draft strategies and actions. Mike reported that the next step would be to make revisions, condensing text, and making actions more measurable. He noted that Karen Strohmeier would assist with the next draft and he would flush out the outline and seek input where needed this summer. The working group plans to meet again in early fall.

Gail Andrews of OSU Extension Service reported that the Residential Working group plans to schedule their first face-to-face meeting on June 28th at 9 am.

Tim Bunnell and Scott Shine reported on work performed by the Public Water Supply Group. Tim thanked LCOG for their contribution and noted that the group plans to meet again this summer. He reported that at their last meeting the group focused on: identifying and discussing contamination and risks in the GWMA; determining how best to use Source Water Assessments; developing a template; and establishing next steps. Scott Shine discussed progress made at the first Public Water Supply workshop and follow-up meeting. The group has prioritized ways to address contamination, reviewed Source Water Assessment information, and classified potential risks and time of travel zone data (based on a DHS model). Scott reported that the group would like to focus on 5-year travel zones and high and moderate risk categories. He said the group wants to coordinate with other working groups where overlap exists. Tom Pattee noted that the Public Water Supply group may also look at other contamination sources, since nitrate is often an indicator of the presence of other potential contaminants. The group has started to develop an outline and the next step is to review and refine.

Rich Margerum asked Scott to elaborate on distinctions between risk categories and travel zones. Scott explained that the group chose to focus on 5-year travel zones because it would be easier for the public to comprehend. 15 year timeframes would be too long and 2 year timeframes would already be incorporated within the 5-year period. He noted that risks were assessed based on a DEQ database and assumed worst case scenarios.

Denise Kalakay and Scott Shine ended the meeting with a discussion of important factors to consider in defining the form and content of the GWMA Committee Action Plan. Four areas of consideration were briefly presented including: overarching committee goals, level of detail/format in the plan, voluntary nature of recommended actions, and approaches for measuring effectiveness. In the time remaining, Denise, Audrey, and Scott facilitated a discussion on the first two of the four areas of consideration. The committee provided the following comments/input:

- Committee guidance of working groups should/could be loose in the beginning and as time moves on get tighter
- Committee should lay out a timeframe
- The Committee's role should be educational, not policing
- Gather a lot of information and make that available
- As far as overarching goals—the middle of the spectrum looks good
- Share information
- Make the information concise and simple, easy to understand the purpose
- Overall goals should be established by the Committee to guide working group progress
- Considerations 1 and 4 are closely related (overall goals and measuring effectiveness)
- The Action Plan/Report is not in and of itself an educational piece
- Committee should give working groups some recommendations with flexibility
- Recommendations are for the sake of consistency in compiling the Action Plan document
- These recommendations should be decided on by the Committee, but staff/others can develop examples for the Committee to react to during a meeting.
- Under the “Voluntary” consideration, the role of the Committee is to find ways to work with people
- Important to help find resources for these projects

- Committee thought it might be best to leave the content of the recommendations up to the working group and sort through them as they come.
- The Committee should have a focused discussion on overarching goals and detail/format of the Plan.

The next GWMA meeting will be held on June 23rd at Harrisburg City Hall from 8 am to 10 am. Barbara Rich from DEQ will attend the meeting to discuss the La Pine National Demonstration Project with the group. Tim Bunnell asked that committee members send recommendations for additional agenda topics to him, Audrey, Denise, or Scott.