

Southern Willamette GWMA Committee
April 27, 2006
Meeting Minutes
Harrisburg City Hall

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Annabelle Jaramillo (Benton County Commissioner), George Pugh (Linn County Farmer), Lanny Zoeller (Realtor), Roger Haffner (Wilbur-Ellis Farm Supplements), Tim Bunnell (City Public Water Supply Operator), Jerry Marguth (Farmer), Sue Lurie (Natural Resources Representative), Faye Stewart (Lane County Commissioner), Pat Straube (Citizen and CAFO Representative), Karen Strohmeier (Cascade Pacific RC&D), Rich Margerum (Long Tom Watershed Council)

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT: Mike Warner (Marathon Coach), Mayor Judy Volta (Coburg), Frank Wright (Citizen and Small Business Representative), Cliff Wooten (Linn County Commissioner), Dennis Boeger (Poage Engineering)

STAFF AND GUESTS: Gail Andrews, Denise Kalakay, Scott Shine, Kathi Wiederhold, Audrey Eldridge, Dennis Nelson, Jacqueline Fern, Jack Arendt, Laila Parker, Laura Moscovitz

Meeting started at 8:00 AM

Introductions, Announcements, Adjustments to Agenda

Denise Kalakay shared a story about her flight over the GWMA with Lanny, Gail, and Glenn.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Public Water Supply Working Group Report – Final Consideration

Chair and Working Group member, Tim Bunnell, explained how the report has been modified to incorporate the Committee's concerns. Denise Kalakay supported Tim's explanation. She stated that there have not been a lot of changes, but the major ones include the removal of the reference to hazardous materials in the strategy that suggests implementing overlay zones in the 5-year drinking water protection areas. The plan was also supplemented with the addition of time elements for each strategy.

Mr. Bunnell opened the floor to public comments. There was no public comment. Mr. Bunnell then opened the floor to Committee comment. There was no Committee comment.

Kathi Wiederhold asked that the Committee vote on approving the report. There was a consensus to approve the recommendations included in the Public Water Supply Working Group Report.

Final Draft Residential Working Group Report

Gail Andrews introduced the report to the Committee. The presentation gave an overview of the elements in the report. There are three main categories of concern from residential land

uses, lawn and garden, wells, and septic systems (with a focus on new development, repairs, or expansions).

Ms. Andrews discussed the options for rules regarding onsite septic systems, including the Geographic Rule option. Commissioner Faye Stewart asked about the benefits of having many lots serviced by a central system. Ms. Andrews did not know if that setup would contribute less nitrate to the groundwater. Audrey Eldridge stated that a lagoon system would have less of a nitrate impact. Denise Kalakay added that a household septic system employing Alternative Treatment Technology would also have less of an impact.

Ms. Andrews proceeded to explain the structure of the working group's recommendations. Rich Margerum, Committee and working group member, introduced the working group's five goals.

Kathi Wiederhold facilitated a discussion about the working group report. Lanny Zoeller stated that the time that a property is sold may be the key point of action to address well and septic issues. He thought that a one-to-one educational effort would be most effective. Pat Straube expressed concerns about the costs of hooking up to a municipal wastewater system and getting annexed. She said that many people cannot afford those expenses. She was also concerned about the Committee mandating actions. Ms. Andrews stated that the working group was sensitive to the financial implications and reviewed financial incentive options to help this process.

Roger Haffner asked about the process of compiling all the recommended strategies into one Action Plan. He said that there is a lot of overlap and the recommendations involve a lot of resources and time. Jerry Marguth stated that the process of amending rules is complicated and he is worried that if they suggest that action, the end product may not meet the original intent of the Committee. Commissioner Faye Stewart expressed support for the report. He mentioned the outreach efforts and volunteer components as especially good. He is hopeful that funding can come to support and implement the Plan.

Sue Lurie expressed support for the report and stated that the Committee should be maintained to support implementation. Karen Strohmeier asked about the implications of the Committee's recommendations. Are we presenting recommendations or suggesting regulatory action? Audrey Eldridge stated that the Committee is presenting options to local jurisdictions and the state. They can then choose to implement or not. Staff and GWMA Committee will assist in implementation if the jurisdictions choose to do so.

Mr. Margerum expressed concern that coordination will not exist for strategies that cross jurisdictions. He stated that the Committee can be used to seek funding and coordinate action. George Pugh mentioned the Agricultural Water Quality Management Plans and how they were required to be acknowledged by the state. He asked about the abilities and responsibilities of the lead agency for this project. For other comments, see the notes taken by the facilitator at the end of the minutes.

Ms. Wiederhold asked for Committee members to express support, neutrality, or rejection of the Goals and Strategies in the Residential Working Group Report. Some minor changes were made to the content of Goal 3, Strategy 2. Following changes, the Committee approved all the recommendations unanimously.

Indicators of Success

Audrey Eldridge, DEQ, presented on indicators to measure progress in the GWMA. After the short presentation, the Committee was asked for input on the design and integration of indicators into the overall Action Plan.

Jerry Marguth stated that the wells should not be considered the only factor of success due to variability and the long-term nature of groundwater monitoring. He raised questions about clearly determining the baseline and distinguishing when an actual trend is consistent. Rich Margerum noted that future meetings of the GWMA Committee could be used as assessment check-ins. He said that activity deadlines should be clearly stated in the Action Plan and the Committee can track progress that way. Commissioner Faye Stewart mentioned the importance of qualitative measures to supplement groundwater monitoring data. Jerry Marguth also suggested looking at the ways that other GWMA's monitored for success.

Attachment One:

Final Draft Residential Working Group Report

Comments Recorded on the Flip Chart

- Concern-how will all this be put together into the Action Plan-lots of overlap
- Concern-admin. Rule "tweaking" –nervous about this process-will end result be what GWMA intended?
- Pretty good-like voluntary and education parts. Concerns about getting funding to carry out
- At start-not setting rules or regulations-now suggesting rule changes. Financial implications are huge-don't want to get into mandates
 - We don't control the GWMA universe. Hope GWMA can help process if there are regulatory changes
 - Not enough info to know what ramifications would be to carry this out-e.g. land use. Are these recommendations? Who carries them out?
 - Issues that cross jurisdictions-issues about coordinating these because not clear who is the agency responsible. Funding issues-GWMA may play a role in this.
 - Concerned about money to continue the education, ensure the work doesn't go by the wayside
 - Example-agricultural water quality assigned to SWCDs so have broader recognition and assigned responsibility. Need a similar approach-a cohesive body to keep GWMA work going.
 - Goal 3, Strategy 2-soften language-"as requested", "by request"-make it clear that it is voluntary, not mandated
 - This group is willing to help a county, city who wants help
 - Do not take stuff to them, let them request
 - "Zoning" word is inflammatory
 - Change "supporting" to "regarding"

- “options” equals help identify ideas/options as an information resource

Attachment Two:

Measuring Success

Comments Recorded on the Flip Chart

- Need to establish baseline on new wells-this will take at least two years
- Wells may not be absolute answer to measuring success
- Problem extends back 50 years-there have been activity changes over this time to influence the trend
- GWMA needs to hear from lead agency on implementation-need to figure out lead agency-who will carry this?
- Seems arbitrary to pick a number now
- Rely on measures of success in working group reports-establish common check-in points
- OK with setting benchmarks
- Need to ask the questions ahead of time-objective numbers to talk about
- OSU would be good lead agency-grant writing, staff, education function
- Concerns-it will take years to see a reduction in Nitrate. Rather see examples such as Coburg sewer system as a measure of success; increase in the number of people doing well testing
- If we tie ourselves to numbers-what about weather patterns such as drought
- Look at what other GWMA's have used for measures of success