

**Southern Willamette Valley Groundwater Management Area (GWMA)
May 25, 2006 Committee Meeting – Harrisburg City Hall**

Present: Tim Bunnell*, Sue Lurie*, Rich Margerum*, George Pugh*, Faye Stewart*, Pat Straube*, Judy Volta*, Lanny Zoeller*, Dennis Boeger*, Audrey Eldridge, Denise Kalakay, Laura Moscovitz, Laila Parker, Mike Powers, Scott Shine, Gail Andrews, Kathi Wiederhold, Jacqueline Fern, Peter Jensen, Ross Penhallegon, Jerry Marguth

Committee Members Absent: Annabelle Jaramillo*, Linda Modrell*, Mike Warner*, Cliff Wooten*, Frank Wright*

Announcements, Introductions, Adjustments to Agenda

Chair Tim Bunnell opened the meeting with announcements and introductions. The agenda was changed to begin the meeting with Item 4: Review Draft of Southern Willamette Valley GWMA Action Plan.

Review Draft of SWV GWMA Action Plan

Denise Kalakay led the review of the Action Plan. She presented the key points addressed in each chapter and invited comments and discussion. Below are comments made on individual Action Plan chapters.

Chapter 1: Introduction and Background

Pat Straube asked whether the plan would be going out to the community for review. Kathi W. confirmed that it would. George Pugh noted that the report did a nice job balancing the need to increase awareness while addressing key concerns about the nitrate problem.

Chapter 2: Action Planning Process and Public Participation.

Denise Kalakay noted that the public participation piece would be developed more during the meeting. She asked that committee members consider whether the information presented was adequate, credible and fair. There were no comments on this chapter.

Chapter 3: Sources and Solutions

Denise raised some key questions to consider for comment: Are the overviews/inventories adequate? Is the information accurate? Where data have been refined, should approved working group reports be changed?

Regarding document changes, Mayor Volta suggested that a note/asterisk might be placed up front of each working group report stating that the report was based on the “latest information” available at the time. Pat Straube agreed. George Ehlers noted that any changes affecting action plan conclusions should be flagged.

Faye Stewart pointed out that Map 6 on crop types was not very readable. Denise suggested that the number of crop type categories could be decreased to improve readability.

The committee asked for clarification on the number of animals constituting a CAFO. Mike Powers explained that it depends on a number of factors including type of manure management and timeframe of confinement. A farmer in the audience added that in the past a farm had to have a wastewater handling system to be a CAFO. There was some discussion about the official number of CAFOs in the GWMA and about federal and state regulation of CAFOs. Mike Powers confirmed that there should be a total of nine CAFOs in the GWMA and that the state regulates all CAFOs that are regulated by the federal government. He also suggested that the report might distinguish between permitted and non-permitted CAFOs.

Denise noted that the goals in each of the focus areas of Chapter 3 had been slightly modified and that objectives were added to all goals. Some strategies and actions were removed from the Public Drinking Water Working Group to avoid duplication. Otherwise, this section remained mostly the same as the working group reports.

George Pugh noted that the actions included in the agricultural section looked ambitious and he was unsure if all objectives could be reasonably met. Denise clarified that it was not considered a failure if a measurable objective was not met. A discussion ensued emphasizing the need to integrate GWMA-related information/outreach into ongoing workshops for efficiency.

Chapter 4: Implementation

Rich Margerum noted that tables were helpful but he was concerned about listing out potential entities without mentioning the lead agency. Denise noted that by listing the lead agency, there might be a danger of losing participation by others. Rich M. suggested that the “wish list” be replaced by a greater commitment.

Tim Bunnell asked for clarification on whether DEQ would remain the lead agency. Denise and Audrey Eldridge confirmed that DEQ is currently the lead agency and has funding for the near-term, but the question about who would take on the role of lead agency could be pursued during the public comment period.

Kathi Wiederhold added that agencies/participating groups might have to choose what they are capable of implementing of all of the tasks listed.

Mayor Volta stressed that the action plan information would need to be distilled down for the public. In addition, she noted potential conflicts in duties for agencies listed on multiple focus area actions.

The Committee asked if there was any public comment.

Ross Penhallegon commented that the action plan represented a great deal of work but needed a strong educational effort to keep it going otherwise it might not be implemented. He asked that the term "severe nitrate" in the document be changed to something less forceful. Ross also pointed out that the septic system issue, while a large portion of the problem, is something that the action plan can do little to address.

A formal letter was sent to the committee from Orenco expressing concern that the action plan could result in a nitrate standard being placed on septic effluent. Gail Andrews summarized the content of the letter for the committee. Audrey Eldridge stated that DEQ had no intentions of modifying septic effluent requirements in any way. Mayor Volta noted that this was the opinion of one company and asked if the committee should solicit input from others or wait for comments to come in. Kathi Wiederhold confirmed that all comments would first be summarized and then the committee would respond. Gail Andrews pointed out that Orenco currently does not meet the same nitrate reductions as other septic system companies and that the company's letter included selective citations. She has been in correspondence with the Orenco representative who wrote the letter.

Lanny Zoeller asked that Ross Penhallegon e-mail comments to Audrey.

All members voted in support of the draft action plan and its release for public comment.

Public Involvement Strategies

Scott Shine, Lane Council of Governments, presented on the public involvement methods that will be used to get feedback on and support for the Action Plan.

These methods include:

- Newsletters and Articles
- Press Releases
- Presentations
- Posters in Public Places
- Mass Mailings (Postcards or Letters)
- Inserts in local utility bills
- Information Distributed at Well Water Clinics and Other Classes
- Public meetings (Fall 2006)

The following comments were submitted by the Committee as ways to increase the effectiveness of the outreach efforts.

- Use continuing education credits to draw participation from industry groups and other organizations
- Materials should be distributed at nurseries to target residential landowners
- Potential newsletters to include articles in:
 - ✓ Linn County Extension Update
 - ✓ Capital Press
 - ✓ Watershed Councils
 - ✓ Chamber of Commerce
 - ✓ Homeowner Associations
- Staff could prepare an op-ed and run it in the Register-Guard and other papers signed by the GWMA Committee
- OSU Extension offered to help solicit media coverage for an event to showcase the GWMA and protection strategies
- Possible venues for presentations include:
 - ✓ Farm Bureau
 - ✓ Oregon Rye Grass Growers Annual Meeting
 - ✓ Grower meetings held by fertilizer companies
 - ✓ Extension "Twilight" Meetings
 - ✓ Chamber of Commerce
 - ✓ Health Organizations (doctors, nurses, etc.)
 - ✓ Local Bar Associations (Lawyers)
 - ✓ Watershed Councils
 - ✓ Oregon Onsite Wastewater Association
 - ✓ American Waterworks Association

- ✓ Water Suppliers
- ✓ Sierra Club and other environmental groups
- Utilize list-serves that already exist
- Posters could be displayed at:
 - ✓ Cafes
 - ✓ City Hall
 - ✓ Post offices
 - ✓ GWMA members can post in their offices
- Develop a single tri-fold that emphasizes that everyone is part of the problem and what they can do to minimize it
- Make sure to ask for feedback in writing
- Ask what information is needed to help you understand the problem
- Explain how this Action Plan may address their operations
- Develop the capability to receive comments over the website. Comments directed to GWMA Committee.

Determination of the Frequency of Future Meetings and Wrap-Up

The Committee agreed that the summer will be spent collecting public comment.

The Committee agreed to meet November 9th to review comments and public input. The Action Plan will then be revised to incorporate any changes before being submitted to the DEQ. Once submitted to the DEQ, the Committee will meet again in six months (approximately March/April 2007). The Committee decided to include the phrase that “periodic meetings will be held” with more details determined at the next meeting.