

Agricultural Working Group and Action Plan Updates



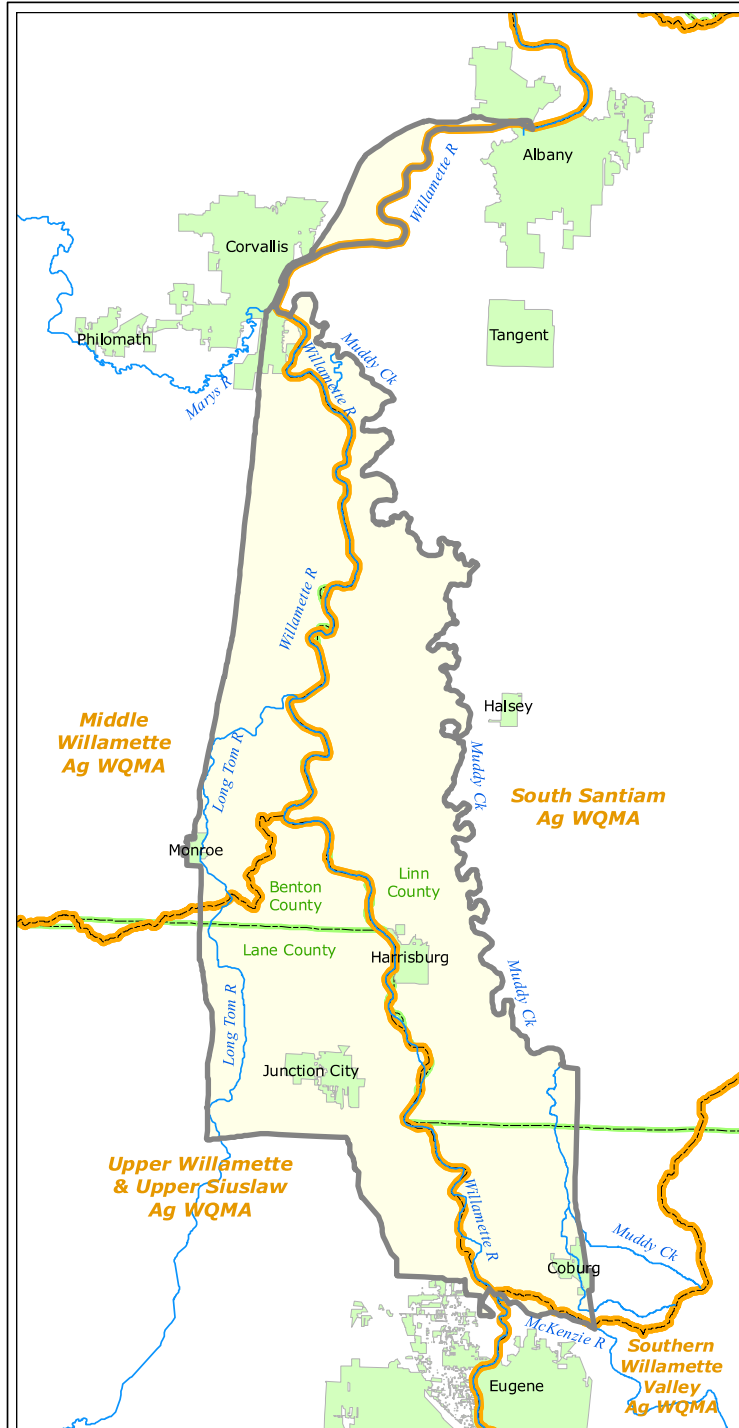
GWMA Committee Meeting

May 10, 2012

Kevin Fenn, RWQS

Key outcomes of Ag subcommittee Meeting

- * Meeting: October 26, 2011 (18 attendees including 9 GWMA staff and 9 ag representatives)
- * Meeting included background information, updates on partner accomplishments, review of the Action Plan updates, and discussion of research needs.
- * Bulk of the input from the subcommittee was not on the Action Plan, but on research needs. Research needs identified include:
 - BMP effectiveness
 - Better understanding of what is leaching below the root zone on main crops that are grown.
 - Better information on individual wells



Includes three Agricultural Water Quality Management Areas:

- * Middle Willamette
- * South Santiam
- * Upper Willamette/
Upper Siuslaw

Action Plan Update

- * Overview Section
- * Update information, take out repetition, emphasize relationship with Agricultural Water Quality Plans and regulatory component of Agricultural Water Quality Program.
- * Update Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Actions

Action Plan Update

- * Review of Statutes and Rules for the Ag Water Quality Program, the Groundwater Management Area Program, and the Goals in the Ag Water Quality Management Area Plans.
- * Goal of the Area Plans—To prevent and control water pollution from agricultural activities and soil erosion and to achieve applicable water quality standards.

Action Plan Update

- * Goal of the people of the State of Oregon—prevent contamination of Oregon’s groundwater resources while striving to conserve and restore this resource and to maintain the high quality of Oregon’s groundwater resource for present and future uses.
- * Statutes related to GWMA’s state—The agencies shall develop a plan to reduce existing contamination and to prevent further contamination of the affected groundwater. The Action Plan should include:
 - * identification of practices that may be contributing to the contamination in the area
 - * consideration of all reasonable alternatives to reduce groundwater contamination
 - * Recommended actions and a proposed timeline

Updates to Goals, Objectives, Strategies, and Actions

- * New goals based on review of program statutes and rules
- * Objectives based on previous goals
- * Strategies and actions updated to emphasize education, outreach, and implementation of projects

Goals

- * Previously had five goals. More like objective or Strategy statements.
- * Updated Goals to Ag Subcommittee:
 - 1) Prevent and control pollution of groundwater from agricultural activities and achieve applicable water quality standards and that protect beneficial uses.
 - 2) Reduce existing concentrations of nitrate and prevent further contamination from agricultural sources of groundwater in the GWMA. Identify: practices contributing to contamination, best management practices to prevent nitrogen inputs to groundwater, and a schedule for implementation of actions.
 - 3) Achieve concentrations of nitrate in groundwater below 7 mg/L through implementation of voluntary management actions by agricultural producers.

Updated Goals

- 1) Prevent and control pollution of groundwater from agricultural activities and achieve applicable water quality standards and that protect beneficial uses **through voluntary management actions.**
- 1) Reduce existing concentrations of nitrate and prevent further contamination from agricultural sources of groundwater in the GWMA. Identify: practices contributing to contamination, best management practices to prevent nitrogen inputs to groundwater, and a schedule for implementation of actions.
- ~~1) Achieve concentrations of nitrate in groundwater below 7 mg/L through implementation of voluntary management actions by agricultural producers.~~

Updated Objectives

- 1) Education and Outreach—Organize education and outreach efforts to increase the agricultural community's awareness of groundwater vulnerability and best management practices.
- 2) Resource Management—Implement best management practices in the GWMA to improve groundwater quality.
- 3) Monitoring and Research—Monitor groundwater quality in agricultural areas to evaluate the impacts of agricultural management practices. Research best management practice effectiveness, adoption of best management practices, and priority research needs.

Education and Outreach

- * Coordination among various agriculture related organizations and plans in the GWMA.
- * Workshops and demonstration projects for producers with a goal of increasing BMP implementation.
- * Write and publish articles to increase the agricultural community's awareness of groundwater quality issues.
- * Share information with agribusinesses, producers, and producer groups.

Resource Management

- * Focus on implementation of practices to improve groundwater quality.
- * Obtain sufficient financial assistance to provide technical assistance and for implementation of practices.
- * Develop and target a priority area. Within the overall GWMA where are the priorities. Factors include monitoring data, individual site characteristics, and landowner willingness.
- * Obtain adequate funding for implementation of desired practices in the priority area.

Monitoring and Research

- * Evaluate current monitoring to determine adequacy and needs in agricultural areas
- * Measure success of BMP implementation
- * Document violations of AgWQ Rules and CAFO permit conditions
- * Research, document, and coordinate BMP effectiveness research
- * Obtain sufficient funding to support priority research needs



Prioritization

Why Prioritize

- * Is implementation of the Action Plan and associated BMPs effective
- * Targeting appropriate areas
- * Measure Progress
- * Best use of limited resources

Questions?

Kevin Fenn
Water Quality Specialist
(503) 986-6486
kfenn@oda.state.or.us