

Southern Willamette Valley Groundwater Management Area

Committee Meeting Minutes

January 14, 2016

Junction City Community Center

175 W. 7th St. Junction City, OR. 97448

In Attendance: *GWMA Committee members

**Pat Straub (CAFO, resident, business owner), *Rich Margerum (Univ. of Oregon, and Long Tom Watershed Council), *Samantha Murray (OEC), *Jerry Marguth (farmer), *Mindi Thorton (small business, resident), *George Pugh (farmer), *Mike Kesling (Surecrop), *Bill Emmiger (Benton County Environmental Health), *Dennis Boeger (Business);*

Priscilla Woolverton (DEQ), Denise Kalakay (LCOG); Jacqueline Fern(DEQ), Jo Morgan (ODA), Kevin Siefert (Linn SWCD), Greg Aitken (DEQ), Susanna Pearlstein (EPA/Benton SWCD), Pamela Wright (DEQ), Zach Loboy (DEQ), Wym Mathews (ODA), Alan Henning (EPA), Donna Schmidt (Benton SWCD), Chrissy Lucas (OSU Extension); Tom Snyder (NRCS), Paul Measles (ODA), Wym Mathews, (ODA), Brittany May (Linn County), Liz Vanheeuwen (Linn County SWCD)

8:00 Announcements, Introductions (late start; introductions commenced 8:05)
Jerry Marguth, Chair

8:10 Approval of Last Meeting Minutes
Jerry Marguth, Chair

- Minutes approved

8:15 What's Happening in the GWMA: Short Updates
Wym Matthews, ODA
Wym Matthews, ODA

- Fertilizer updates; pricing and contents
 - 2015 HB passed, which increases registration fee on soil amendments, fertilizers, compost and lime and an inspection fee for lime.
 - ODA registered 10,000 products in 2015, which represents a continued increasing trend compared to previous years
 - New rule implementing HB 2443
 - New product evaluation fee of up to \$500 for emerging products with new and/or unique components
 - New lime inspection fee of \$0.05/ton
 - Product registration fee increased from \$25/yr to \$35/yr
 - New minimum inspection fee of \$15/reporting period
 - Mindi Thornton: Who bears the cost of supportive data when applying for product approval?

- Wym: typically cost burden is shared by applicant and ODA; if product is not similar to those already approved, applicant may incur additional cost
 - Nutrient Management (Nitrogen Fertilizer) Workshop January 26, includes lysimeter site visit
 - CAFOS; WPCF versus Federal Permit
 - CAFO program started in 1985
 - Approx. 520 statewide; 8 (beef, chicken) in SW GWMA
 - Facility must apply for federal permit if discharging to waters of the State; if not, than can apply for WPCF permit
 - Primary differences between permits:1) WPCF permit process does not require public notice and 2) WPCF does not require annual report and 3) WPCF does not provide for 3rd party lawsuit assistance/protection
 - Dennis: What is the primary difference in permits? Wym: Primary difference between permits:1) WPCF permit process does not require public notice and 2) WPCF does not provide for 3rd party lawsuit assistance/protection.
 - Mindi: When submitting a product, who does the testing? Wym: Both the state and the applicant.

Open Floor to Committee and Attendees

- No other updates

8:25 DEQ Program Update

GWMA Coordinator Position and Priorities

Zach Loboy, DEQ

- Audrey Eldridge's position will not be filled as previously intended due to budget constraints.
 - Constraints stem from underestimating costs associated with developing electronic data management system and moving NW region office in Portland
- DEQ and others interested in being involved plan to discuss monitoring approach in GWMA with budget constraints in mind.
 - Paul Measeles: Concerned that DEQ is not filling Hydrogeologist positions, such as those previously held by Jack Arndt and Audrey Eldridge, as these are important for providing support not just to GWMA work, but work around the state. Paul stated that some of the GWMA Hydrogeologist work for the GWMA is now on his shoulders putting stress on his position. Paul would like to be included in any discussions around re-vamping GWMA monitoring approach.
 - Zach Loboy: Current understanding from Solid Waste Program Manager is that Jack Arndt's position will be filled.
 - Zach noted that at the last meeting the Committee supported a reduced monitoring plan already.

- Alan Henning: Intent is for EPA and DEQ to find a way to work together to support GWMA at previous level. Looking at monitoring in both the long-term monitoring and the PINE project support and looking at potential gaps and if some other entity (like EPA) can pick up.
- New position coming on board soon in TMDL program, Basin Specialist, that will have 25% time specifically allocated to supporting work in the GWMA. The future GWMA work will also be technically supported by about 15% of a Hydrogeologist's time.
 - In the interim, Priscilla Woolverton and Greg Aitken will be working with the GWMA; Priscilla dedicating 25% of time to GWMA work.
 - Dennis: Where is the decrease in funding from, the legislature, the Director?
 - Zach: The GWMA program is funded through TMDL program, which receives federal funding as well as General State funds. Federal funding to TMDL program has been reduced.
 - February monitoring work will continue as planned
 - Zach: Zach will continue to provide updates on budget concerns/staffing at future meetings
 - **Bill Emminger: Would like to see a side by side comparison so that gaps can be identified.**

8:40 Partnership to Improve Nutrient Efficiency

~~PINE~~ Rare Project Updates

Susanna Pearlstein, ORISE

- Goal: provide tool to help farmers et al. quantify water quality benefits of practices being used and apply this info to help set priorities and inform water quality trading.
- GWMA established in 2004
 - Data support from 1990's lysimeter study (OSU) and DEQ groundwater, well testing
 - Data being collected/assessed includes present day lysimeter study and comparison to 1990's study
- Fertilizer and water management practices have changed since the 1990's
 - Expect to see difference based on lower fertilizer rates, crop breeding and different approach to timing and intensity of irrigation
- Current lysimeters installed at 1 meter depth in order to sample what is not captured by crop roots
 - Continue to sample through 2017 which will provide 4 year of data.
 - Compare to 1900's study; differences between studies in regards to equipment used (PCAPS versus Prenart lysimeters)
- Study sites in Benton, Lane and Linn counties include row crops, vegetable seed crops and grass seed
 - Seed crops tend to have less leaching due to more extensive root development (more time in ground)
- Results

- Wheat is a “dialed-in” crop
 - Similar nitrate concentrations current and past
- Mint
 - Showing improvement in nitrate concentrations
 - Irrigation practices may be factor
- Row crops
 - Showing current concentrations < past concentrations
- Blueberry and Hazelnut
 - Concentrations typically low
 - Showing current concentrations = past concentrations
- Grass seed
 - Current concentrations > past concentrations
 - Current concentrations higher than expected
- Project is result of many collaborators and thankful for growers who are participating in the study
- Nutrient workshop January 26
- Dennis: Is reference to leaching specifically below the root zone? Susanna: Yes.
- Mindi: Are farmers sharing what their practices are with you? Susanna: Yes at varying levels.
- Priscilla: Is the decreased nitrate in mint fields due to the age of the field? Susanna: Yes the 1 year old field has higher nitrate than the 4 year old field.
- Paul: Haven't mint application rates changed? Susanna: Yes we didn't even have guidelines in the 1990s and some farmers claim they were applying 500 lbs/acre.
- Rich: Do you take in to account soil types? Susanna: Yes using hydrogeologic units.
- George: Were the annual rye grass fields tilled? Susanna: Yes
- Dennis: Are you going to consider on-going monitoring wells? Susanna: Yes wells have been installed at 5 sites to double check results.
- Wym: Some soil sampling should be started to correlate with the lysimeter results.

9:10 OSU Extension

Outreach and Activities Updates

Chrissy Lucas , OSU Extension

- 319 grants and SWCD supported outreach and education work in the SW GWMA in the past; 319 funding no longer available
- Chrissy's role in Lane and Benton counties has been reduced due to funding levels; Marion County providing support to Chrissy to work in Marion county
- Extension newsletters are now combined going from reaching about 5,000 to now approximately 25,000 households getting Extension newsletter, each of which has dedicated a page to groundwater.
 - Content provided by Chrissy is not necessarily specific to the area, but covers groundwater issues in general

- Denise: Concern that message is becoming too broad; previous goal was to design outreach to be focused on groundwater issues specific to each audience
- Chrissy wants to continue to provide support across GWMA, but not able to do so. Needs volunteers to be the “boots on the ground,” but she can continue to help facilitate but cannot be lead.
 - Examples of upcoming events that could be staffed with volunteers include Daffodil Festival and Community Showcase
 - Jerry: Are there any volunteers to help Chrissy with the Daffodil festival?
 - Pat: It is very hard to attend the booth because you cannot answer the questions well unless you are trained.
- OSU dry farm research may be important to share in future; decreasing irrigation one method of decreasing nitrate leaching.
- Two private companies want to sponsor well water clinics but Chrissy wants to make sure it is not just a marketing ploy.
- Jacquie Fern: wants to follow-up with Chrissy about cities that have received OHA funding through the Drinking Water program
 - Grant recipients may be able to help support GWMA outreach if they can tie-in to Public Water Supply efforts too. Grant recipients need to be the public water system.

9:25 BREAK

9:35 319 Grant Funding Update (late start; 319 talk commenced 9:45)

Current status of 319 NPS program

Priscilla Woolverton, DEQ

- Federal funding for 319 program was significantly reduced last year, 2015
- Currently, no federal funding for 319 program for 2016
 - Committee: is the reduction in supporting the 319 program a DEQ decision?
 - Priscilla: No, the reduction in funding is a decision that occurred at the federal level.
 - Zach: DEQ receives 319 funding, which supports staffing the Nonpoint Source program (NPS) as well as pass-through funds for 319 grants. DEQ decided to keep current staffing levels and reduce the amount of money used for grants.
 - Denise: what will NPS staff be doing now that they will not be spending time on 319 grants?
 - Zach: 319 grants are only one part of the work that NPS staff are responsible for. Most staff already have a large workload, which will continue to include 319 grant work for a few years. Because grants are written to span a number of years, even up to 5 years, there are still a lot of grants out there that are currently being administered.
 - Priscilla: I also administer grants and I can tell you that this year’s reduction in 319 funding has not yet reduced my 319 workload.

9:40 Round Table Discussion, Suggestions and Wrap-up

Schedule next meeting, suggestions for future meeting times, recommendations for future meeting topics

- Priscilla: when scheduling this meeting there were a couple of requests for a later meeting time.
 - Discussion between Committee members and other attendees resulted in Committee agreeing to a later meeting time of 8:30 AM.
 - Alan: meeting time should be whatever time works best for Committee members
 - Jerry: feedback from group indicated that the meeting space in Junction City was better suited for meetings than the Old City Hall in Harrisburg
 - Better acoustics
 - More room
- Jerry: Moving forward, it should be a priority to engage and get better representation of local growers at Committee meetings
 - Jo Morgan: has a list of Advisory Group members that she can share; these groups represent growers and other stakeholders that may be interested in attending future GWMA meetings.
- Next meeting date tentatively set for April 21
 - Priscilla: will reserve Junction City Community Center for that date