

Data Collection, Characterization, Monitoring Work Group

Charge from Groundwater Management Area Advisory Committee

A discussion of timelines and detail regarding the Nitrate Assessment

Working Group Members

Kirk Cook (Chair); Andres Cervantes; Jan Whitefoot; Jim Trull; Kevin Lindsey; Laurie Crowe; Steve Swope; Stuart Turner; Thomas Tebb; Melanie Redding

Meetings/Calls Dates

Conference Call: 10:00 a.m. to 11:15 a.m., Wednesday, February 25, 2015

Call Number: 509.574.2353 pin: 2353#

Participants

Present: Jim Davenport, Lee Murdock and Vern Redifer

Via Phone: Kirk Cook, Melanie Redding, Jean Mendoza and Andres Cervantes

Other Attendees: Kelly Rae (Yakima County support staff)

Key Discussion Points

Welcome & Meeting Overview

Jim Davenport welcomed the working group. Kirk added an agenda item to the meeting regarding the Timeline that Vern presented to the GWAC and the level of specificity that is required.

There was a discussion on the timeline that Vern provided. A concern was raised that the timeline did not provide much time for groundwater testing and other tasks. Vern clarified that the draft sent out prior to the meeting only showed a portion of the tasks relevant to today's meeting. Vern stated that he would send out the fully expanded project to the committee for their review. He also clarified that the timeline was being sent to all the working groups to provide feedback.

Analysis of CAFO data: Kirk acknowledged that data that the EPA had intended to obtain from dairies (lagoon specific regarding liner leakage, etc.) would be available as producers have agreed to install new lagoon liners. He stated he would like to get lagoon leakage quantification, size, head, soil, veracity, types of soils and utilize Darcy's Law. He explained they would need to discover information from lagoons/CAFOs in similar areas with similar weather. The specific tasks in the timeline related to this included Develop N loading estimate for Livestock properties which includes Corrals and Pens, Storage Areas and Compost Yards, and Lagoons. Kirk suggested that the timelines for these tasks could be

reduced as they will be rechecking dairy logs for existing lagoons to determine the leakage rate. The estimated time was a month and a half as staff would need to go out and verify information provided by the dairy logs and be ready to cite the methodology for GWAC approval. He should have a draft ready by the end of May. Once completed he will forward to Vern and Jim for review.

Vern noted that he needed to add a couple of other tasks to the timeline so that those can also be considered by the other work groups to ensure accountability, transparency, and assurance to the GWAC members that input will be considered prior to crunching numbers.

Grower Survey and Data Synthesis: Kirk spoke about the grower's survey and next steps; stating that they are doing refinements to timelines to look at parcel information and expects progress on where the targets will be. It would be about a month and a half before he would send people in the field to collect data and it should take about a month to two months to complete. His target is to obtain information from owners of at least 33% of each commodity based on acreage. Vern will add this activity to the timeline and stated that while we want to get it done quickly, accuracy is the most important factor.

A member questioned if a problem grower would partake in the survey and the response was that even if we don't get that information, we can still establish a baseline depending on the commodity. This may result in requirements, maybe even County ordinances which would eventually affect the problem grower. Additional benefits of conducting the survey were also supported by information from Laurie Crowe, who told Vern that many of the growers had followed up with her and some were very surprised at the level of nitrates in their soil and wanted to know what to do. The educational piece could have an additional effect on current practices.

Timeline and level specificity: Kirk raised the question whether the N Loading Study should decrease its level of specificity in order to shorten the timeline. Vern said no.

Jean asked about the USGS project that was to be done for the data working group. Kirk suggested that the group consider this as we get closer to the end of the nitrogen assessment. It was made clear that the USGS project would take a couple of years past the point the Deep Soil Sampling would be done. Jean asked if anyone would object to her approaching USGS to see what services are available now. Jean is free to proceed, and is concerned that USGS would need time for preparation. Jean proposed to compose a letter for committee consideration.

Meeting adjourned at 11:15am.

Resources Requested

None at this time.

Recommendations for GWAC

None at this time

Deliverables/Products Status

None at this time

Proposed Next Steps
