

Data Collection, Characterization, Monitoring Work Group

Charge from Groundwater Management Area Advisory Committee

Compile and Manage Data

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

Meeting: Thursday, November 20, 2014 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Conference Call: 509-574-2353 PIN 2353#

Participants

Present: Kirk Cook (Chair); Steve Swope; Charlie McKinney; Jaclyn Hancock; Jean Mendoza; Yakima County staff support – Vern Redifer; Jim Davenport; Lee Murdock and Kelly Rae

Present via Conference call: Stuart Turner; Melanie Redding; Ginny Stern; Laurie Crowe; Ralph Fischer

Agenda

1. Review changes to Nitrogen Loading Assessment Scope of Work and approval from Data Committee to submit to GWAC (previously sent out via email)
2. Presentation by the South Yakima Conservation District on Deep Soil Sampling progress and discuss moving out of the survey portion of the project
3. Review of recently released USGS soil ranking methodology and how it may or may not factor into the GWMA process
4. Presentation by the Livestock/CAFO workgroup on the progress of developing a data collection plan within animal operation boundaries
5. Presentation of alternative data sets (together with quality assurance protocols) proposed to be presented at the December 2014 GWAC meeting

Jim Davenport facilitated the meeting and reviewed the key discussion points to be accomplished.

Scope of Work Changes. Kirk Cook presented the latest version of the Nitrogen Loading Assessment Scope of Work looking for final approval to submit the Scope of Work to the GWAC so the Washington State Department of Agriculture and Yakima County could

commence with the needed work as many additional tasks are dependent on the completion of the Nitrogen Loading Assessment. The Scope of Work was modified in response to comments received by the Data Committee. Jean Mendoza listed a variety of concerns related to the previous version. Jim Davenport polled the group regarding if they were ready to approve the draft that was sent out. All but one indicated approval. Jean asked for responses to her earlier submitted comments. Kirk agreed to provide those. The next Data Working Group meeting will be held on December 3, 2014, 10:00 a.m.

ACTION: Kirk will respond to Jean's earlier-submitted comments

ACTION: Tentative Data Working Group meeting on Wednesday, December 3, 2014 at 10 a.m. to further discuss plan to be submitted to GWMA two weeks prior to December GWAC meeting.

South Yakima Conservation District (SYCD) Presentation on Deep Soil Sampling Progress. Laurie Crowe sent out a spreadsheet to the group prior to the meeting and commented that the process went smoothly. The sampling started on October 23, 2014 and was finished on November 7, 2014. A staff member was on hand at each sample site and each site was staked prior to the sampling. The barcode worked well and the landowners all received a copy of their barcode. Laurie said they are still waiting for the last two questionnaires from growers. Once they receive the questionnaires and the sampling logs, Laurie will send the information to Yakima County so that it can be put into a database. She says there will be more sampling in the spring via the same process and she's hopeful that once the landowners see how confidential it is, they'll get more samples.

ACTION: Laurie will send survey and soil results to Vern who will then enter into the database he has developed. Next steps will include developing a method to put the results online so the growers can see their results.

Laurie then discussed the recently released USGS soil ranking methodology and how it may or may not factor into the GWMA process. She stated that SYCD is performing a soil ranking similar to the USGS but they don't have a numerical system and instead the NCRS leaching index is being utilized. Kirk said that he will forward the vulnerability/soil analysis to everyone in the group in PDF form. It was noted that that would be something the farmers could also use for future planning.

ACTION: Laurie will distribute the website address for the NRCS to the group.

Presentation by the Livestock/CAFO Workshop. Charlie McKinney informed the group that there is a need to get to a protocol. He would like help from a consultant. Vern reminded the group that the contract was complete with the past consultant, PGG. Group discussed approaching PGG to develop three plans as one of the products they will want is scalability. Vern noted that there was already a placeholder and the need to implement

a groundwater monitoring plan. Group recommended getting PGG back on board to ensure continuity.

ACTION: Vern will consider contracting with consultant.

Presentation of Alternative Data Sets. Stuart Turner provided an update on the groundwater study he is doing from a Dairy Wastewater Storage Basin. While a sample Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) was submitted, the group had many questions regarding whether there would be access to the specific data and the actual QAPP. Stuart stated that there was still some work that needed to be done to ensure the confidentiality of the participants. Jim asked whether the alternate data sets needed to be presented at the December 2014 GWAC Meeting. It was decided that alternate data sets could be presented at any time and that it would be better to wait until the Turner presentation was ready.

Groundwater Monitoring Plan. Vern stated that the group needs to implement a groundwater monitoring plan so there is a need to hire a consultant to do that. The group recommended that Vern get PGG back on board and Vern concurred. He will approach PGG to develop a scope of work and budget proposal and present to the Data Group and then decide.

Deep soil samplings are indicators but the water should be tested too. A member added that this needs to be refined and synthesized for the characterization. There is a need to have a detailed assessment prior to putting in holes.

Vern noted that Jim and Lee are working on bringing all the information together in the area characterization report component of the draft GWM Program. Jim and Vern will discuss how the group can share this report.

Jim added that WAC has a requirement to identify/define the program recommended by the GWAC is getting accomplished. Vern stated that if there is funding available, there is need to create a long term monitoring plan. Jim replied that the Program should identify the funding source. Vern reminded everyone that there is a need to identify how the Program will be passed off as the program will still be costly (frequency, etc.). A member commented that a monitoring plan is important as well as a follow up on the deep soil sampling in 5 to 10 years. A member added that the deep soil monitoring is complimentary but the water monitoring should be a stand-alone.

Jim asked Ecology if they were working on a statewide monitoring plan for nitrates and if that would impact the GWAC. Charlie answered that the work is for doing more groundwater monitoring and that he'd double check but he didn't think this would impact the group. Kirk added that the Governor's office has requested the Department of Agriculture and other agencies to develop a manure applicators bill for consideration by

the state legislature next year. It was recommended that this issue in its entirety be moved to the Regulatory Work group for consideration.

ACTION: Ginny Prest will present the manure legislation to the Regulatory Work Group meeting on December 16, 2014.

Resources Requested

- None at this time

Recommendations for GWAC

- None at this time

Deliverables/Products Status

- None at this time

Proposed Next Steps

- None at this time

Next meeting: December 3, 2014, 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.