

Data Collection, Characterization, Monitoring Working Group

Charge from Groundwater Management Area Advisory Committee

Working Group Members

Kirk Cook (Chair); Ali Sedighi; Andres Cervantes; Dr. Kefy Desta; Jan Whitetfoot; Jim Trull; Kevin Lindsey; Laurie Crowe; Lonna Frans, Matt Buchman; Lorraine Edmond; Mark Nielson; Steve Swope; Stuart Turner; Thomas Tebb

Meetings/Calls Dates

Meeting: Thursday, April 12, 2013

Participants

Kirk Cook; Ali Sedighi; Andres Cervantes; Kevin Lindsey; Matt Buchman; Charles Ellingson for Steve Swope; Don Gatchalian; Jan Whitefoot; Jean Mendoza; Dr. Kefy Desta

Key Discussion Points

The meeting was opened by Kirk who wanted a discussion regarding the letter submitted to Ecology by Benton County asking to be withdrawn from the Lower Yakima Groundwater Management Area. From a data collection and monitoring standpoint, the group discussed the ramifications of this action. The workgroup decided to ask for a discussion of this topic at the GWMA meeting on Thursday.

Status of data collection from different sources

Yakima has not yet received the database “dump” from the State Department of Health. This is currently being worked by Ginny Stern and should be ready within the next week. Other data sources were presented by Charles Ellingson discussed for potential consideration. These are:

- Upgradient/background wells at environmental monitoring sites. The background data from such sites should reflect regional conditions. Downgradient samples may not be appropriate unless the site is being evaluated as a point-N-source or sink. The downgradient samples could be affected by extreme and site-specific environmental conditions. Specific sites include landfills and Ecology cleanup sites. Only the N data would be included, although related redox data is pertinent. Data should be available through the State EIM, or through project managers.
- Upgradient and background wells at State Waste Discharge permit facilities. Examples are food processing wastewater sprayfields. In this case both upgrad and downgrad data may be appropriate assuming these facilities are to be evaluated as sources. Caution is warranted in interpreting data from such sites since we could have big changes in conditions over short distances which complicates application of such data as part of a regional assessment.

- USGS agricultural drain water quality study data (establishes that drain water quality reflects shallow groundwater quality during the non-irrigation season). .
- CAFO groundwater monitoring data. Have decisions been made regarding the availability and inclusion of such data in the County's dbase? Or is that data being considered by other means?

Development of a draft scope of work (must be submitted to the GWAC on April 18th)

A draft scope was submitted to the work group for discussion. This draft could be used by the County as a basis for outside proposals to address initial needs of the GWMA. Suggestions were made and submitted to the Chair and as a result a modified draft has been submitted to the County for presentation and review by the GWMA committee on Thursday, April 18, 2013.

Scope of Work for "Nitrate Regulatory and BMP Assessment" developed by Yakima County

The workgroup reviewed the initial draft scope of work presented by the CAFO workgroup. Discussions centered on the BMP aspects were held. There is disagreement as to the role of BMP's and their effectiveness. As a result it was decided that the workgroup would not submit comments as a group to the CAFO committee but rather individual comments could be submitted.

The need for closer coordination between the Irrigated Ag, and CAFO workgroups was highlighted as a need.

Future meeting schedules and the possibility of joint meetings with the other Workgroups

The need to establish a schedule for meetings of the workgroup was discussed and as a result a schedule has been completed and sent to GWMA committee members through the end of the year. A majority of the meetings will be conducted via conference call; however when deemed necessary the group will hold joint meeting with other workgroups in a face to face setting.

Other Issues

The need to conduct a comprehensive nitrogen loading assessment was voiced. The workgroup agreed that this is a need and options to conduct that type of assessment should be discussed with the other workgroups as soon as possible.

Resources Requested

None at this time however, the workgroup sees a continued demand for development of preliminary documents ahead of contract work that may be conducted. Time constraints on members are becoming more and more of an issue.

Recommendations for GWAC

There is *at least* \$60,000 that can be used by the Data Workgroup before June 30th and the group has developed a draft Scope of Work for Yakima County with deliverables. Estimates for budget need development.

Deliverables/Products Status

Draft Scope of Work completed

Review by GWMA needed

Proposed Next Steps

The group will meet every month two weeks before the GWAC meetings. They can be in the form of conference calls or in-person meetings, based on the needs.

Approval of draft Scope of Work and development of budget