

Data Collection, Characterization, Monitoring Working Group

Charge from Groundwater Management Area Advisory Committee

Working Group Members

Kirk Cook - Chair (Dept of Ag), Andres Cervantes (Dept of Health), Dr. Kefy Desta (WSU), Jan Whitefoot (CCYR), Jim Trull (SVID), Kevin Lindsey (GSI - Consultant), Laurie Crowe (South Yakima Conservation District), Lonna Frans (USGS), Matt Bachmann (USGS), Lorraine Edmond (Citizen), Mark Nielson (Benton County Conservation District), Steve Swope (PGG - Consultant), Stuart Turner (Turner & Co.), Thomas Tebb (Dept of Ecology)

Meetings/Calls Dates

Conference Call: 1:30 PM – 3:00 PM, Thursday, September 5, 2013

Participants

Kirk Cook, Matt Bachmann, Jim Trull, Kenny Jansen, Ginny Stern, Charlie McKinney, Steve Swope, Lisa Freund, and Troy Ross-Havens

Key Discussion Points

Agenda:

- Modification of PGG Work Plan Sequencing
- Draft Deep Soil Sampling Plan
- Basin Wide Nitrogen Loading Assessment
- Technical Review discussion on submitted consultant materials
- Other topics

Modification of PGG Work Plan Sequenced

PGG presented a proposal on reordering tasks, including the locations for long term nitrate monitoring for bmp effectiveness. Plan originally called for field verification of each location, to confirm proper conditions for sampling. Field verification of 1000 locations would be a large task that would impart a large financial and time burden.

PGG proposed the selection of optimal locations with alternates. Sub-bins containing approximately 2-4 wells would be created and then field verified until an ideal sampling location was identified. This approach would reduce the number of locations to field verify for well data characterization, consequently decreasing budget and time. Downside of this approach would be the potential degradation in data quality – furthest points between adjacent sub areas if those are the only ones available. PGG is to contact the County to contractually define what needs are required to address this reordering of two tasks. WG members are to provide a short description of opinions supporting or not supporting the proposed data collection change. PGG will provide a scope description to the Data committee for review within a few days. This will include taking the

current scope as written to reorder and add additional text to describe what is proposed and provide to DATA for comment. After comment from data, PGG will present to the County.

Deep Soil Sampling Plan

The Working Group discussed the deep soil sampling plan's target selection method, and suggested that it may need to consider land use in its formulation, information such as land use changes and land use patterns may need to be addressed.

Basin wide nitrogen loading assessment

The Working Group had an open discussion on merits of the basin wide nitrogen loading assessment. Discussed early on at GWMA meeting, the group identified the need for a baseline. The goal of this assessment is to correlate loading amount with activity type.

A preliminary map already exists from USGS for EPA. The map will be shown during next GWMA meeting, along with a simplified presentation from USGS regarding past efforts.

Technical Review discussion on submitted consultant materials

Issues to be discussed before next meeting include:

Consult with NRCS and SYCD to identify how much education has been provided to growers on nutrient management, and any possible gaps in education. What education is available, and what is being offered to the public.

Other topics

- Chairmen's meeting review on August 26: The three chairpersons of the Irrigated Ag, Data, and Livestock/CAFO held a meeting to confirm understanding of current and future scopes of work. Topics discussed include the following:
 - Jurisdiction between Livestock/CAFO and Irrigated Ag. Proposal was that Livestock/CAFO take jurisdiction over feedlots, milking parlors, lagoons and other operations specific to animal feeding operations. Irrigated Ag would focus on areas where nutrient material is applied for the purpose of growing a crop or other areas of the GWMA. An agreement was reached between the three parties.
 - The Deep Soil Sampling Plan prior to getting the report. Agreement on initial round of deep soil sampling to get a matrix of the different variables. Cropping patterns, application methods, soil types, etc. to identify how many different loading situations the GWMA has. This will provide an initial snapshot of the Deep Soil Sampling Plan and how it might save time and money. This would provide initial assessment of BMPs to move forward with other recommendations and facilitate the launch into technically based education program for growers and general public for nutrient management.
 - The members clarified that as the initial sampling takes place, it may not be sufficient to address all potential future technical questions. The goal is to reach an initial GWMA

characterization to allow for the GWAC to begin implementing procedures to reduce groundwater nitrate contamination, as it is a pilot program.

- **Data/EPO discussion:** The first public survey under EPO's direction was to gather public data and inquire about future well sampling. Second survey is for property owners/occupiers who responded positively to the first survey. EPO requests to coordinate with data to determine next survey sites. A possibility would be to obtain additional potential well sample locations in each sub-bin for EPO to begin requesting access to for long term sampling purposes. PGG will have an additional population of well sites to supplement the large amount of sites that were denied permission to access.

Resources Requested

None at this time

Recommendations for GWAC

None at this time

Deliverables/Products Status

None at this time

Proposed Next Steps

- Next chairpersons meeting not confirmed. Jim Trull will follow up and set next chairperson meeting by phone before next GWAC meeting (within next 10 days).
- Next EPO/Data goal is to extend Department of Health contract to a date when PGG has created sub-bins and is ready for the next survey (approximately mid-October). Educate the Department of Health on how important it is to increase the number of site access permissions.
- Data and EPO to coordinate on where to send the Department of Health to survey the next batch of prospects. The survey should be initiated early to mid-October.
- Consult with NRCS and SYCD to identify how much education has been provided to growers on nutrient management, and any possible gaps in education.