

Education and Public Outreach Working Group

Charge from Groundwater Management Area Advisory Committee

Working Group Members

Andres Cervantes (GWAC-DOH), Jean Mendoza (GWAC-Friends of Toppenish Creek), Tom Tebb (GWAC-Ecology), Elizabeth Torres (Citizen), Gretchen Stewart (EPA), Nieves Negrete (Citizen), Patricia Newhouse (GWAC-Citizen Rep Position #2), Tom Eaton (GWAC-EPA), Dean Effler (Citizen), Joye Redfield-Wilder (Ecology), Wendell Hannigan (GWAC-Alternate), Stuart Turner (GWAC-Turner & Co), Ignacio Marquez (AGR)

Meetings/Calls Dates

Meeting: Wednesday, November 5, 2014

1:30 PM – 3:45 PM

Participants

Lisa Freund (EPO Chair -Yakima County), Gretchen Stewart (EPA), Nieves Negrete (Citizen), Dan DeGroot (Yakima Dairy Federation), Jim Davenport (Yakima County), Lee Murdock (Yakima County), Elizabeth Torres (Citizen), Jim Dyjak (GWAC Alternate), Larry Fendell (Citizen), Jean Mendoza (GWAC-Friends of Toppenish Creek), Karri Espinoza (Yakima County staff) *Andres Cervantes (GWAC-DOH, *Joye Redfield-Wilder (Ecology)

*via phone

Key Discussion Points

Welcome & Meeting Overview: Lisa Freund welcomed the group and reviewed the meeting agenda: Discuss and develop a two-year EPO project timeline, hear from the RCIM on the Abandoned Well Scope of Work, and hear from Gretchen Stewart on the PEHSU clinician training. She noted that the GWAC had approved a \$267,000 budget for five EPO projects. Today's meeting would focus primarily on developing a timeline for the projects.

RCIM Abandoned Well Scope of Work and Septic System Outreach (Dan DeGroot, RCIM) -

Dan DeGroot, representing the Residential, Commercial, Industrial Municipal Working Group (RCIM), spoke to the group about the education and outreach the RCIM wants the EPO to provide:

- Outreach and education to property owners regarding the importance of locating and testing abandon wells on their property.
- Conduct a property records search to locate abandon wells.

Joye Redfield-Wilder suggested that Avery Richardson from Department of Ecology attend the next RCIM meeting to provide relevant Ecology information on abandoned wells. She noted that Ecology has issued news releases on abandoned wells to help inform people of what to look for on their property. Ecology has also developed outreach materials. She will work with her office to identify outreach materials that could be tailored to this campaign.

A participant asked for clarification regarding the EPO's role in the project. Given the EPO's mission, she noted, the EPO's role would be to produce and distribute the messages regarding how and what the community should do relative to abandon wells.

Jim Davenport noted that the \$76,000 the GWAC approved for the project was predicated on the assumption that EPO would conduct (or contract out) the work needed to identify abandoned wells in the GWMA. He added that the group should first identify how much of the budget should be dedicated to outreach materials and distribution. That number should then be subtracted from the \$76,000 to determine the available budget for locating abandoned wells in the GWMA.

A member summarized what he believed the EPO's role and actions should be: identify the campaign messages (why there are abandoned wells, why they are a threat); create a simple survey to identify what each site looks like; collect anecdotal information via the Web; clearly state that the purpose of the campaign is to collect information, not to enforce compliance. Discussion followed regarding what a "simple survey" is.

ACTION: Lisa F. will forward Joye the next RCIM meeting announcement so she can pass it along to Avery Richardson.

ACTION: Joye will speak to Avery Richardson about attending the next RCIM meeting.

ACTION: Joye will contact the Water Resources office in Olympia to ask what methods they use to reach people who may have abandoned wells on their properties.

New Mom's Brochure: PEHSU clinicians, led by Dr. Catherine Karr, have held five clinical trainings recently in the Yakima Valley. The training sessions are two hours; all Yakima Valley Farmworkers Clinic branches have been included.

- Gretchen is working on producing seven sound-bites to post on the EPA website, the GWMA website and the PEHSU website.

These will be short video clips that give information about nitrates in the drinking water and the health risks.

- Gretchen is working with PEHSU to simplify the fact sheet that is given to new moms at the hospitals. She noted that the clinics had observed that their clients would need simpler text and more graphics.
- Dean Effler has delivered the fact sheet to a number of local hospitals.

EPO Project Timeline: The group discussed the five approved projects and began assigning team leads and members and milestones to each project. The group agreed that there are not enough EPO members carry out all the projects. It was observed that the EPO needs to look at ways to recruit additional members.

- Redesign and maintain GWMA website
- Lead: Lisa Freund - Team Members: Andy Cervantes & Gretchen Stewart
- Abandoned Wells & Septic Systems Maintenance Education and Outreach
Lead for UW Common Book Communications and Proposal: Nieves Negrete - Team Members: Elizabeth Torres, Jim Davenport & Andy Cervantes
- Educational Outreach Campaign
Lead: Gretchen Stewart - Team Members: Lisa Freund, Lee Murdock

ACTION: The teams will communicate and plan the next steps for each of the projects.

DOH Grant Funding for Water Treatment Systems - Next Steps

Vern Redifer stopped in to ask the group if they had any suggestions regarding offering the additional, free Treatment Systems in light of recent press that suggested that the 2011 treatment program was “a failure.” He observed that there is not much point in offering additional treatment systems if the ones in use have not been maintained. He asked the group to send their suggestions for the current program.

A member suggested that the 2011 program outcomes be viewed as lessons learned, and to modify the upcoming program accordingly.

ACTION: The members will send their ideas to Vern.

Proposed Next Steps - December Meeting Topics

- Complete the project timeline (assignments, milestones)

Next meeting: Wednesday, December 3, 2014 at 1:30 PM, Yakima County Courthouse Room 419 (phone: 509-574-2353 [PIN# 2353#])