



*Groundwater Management Area (GWMA):
The purpose of the GWMA is to reduce nitrate contamination concentrations in groundwater below state drinking water standards*

LOWER YAKIMA VALLEY GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT AREA ADVISORY COMMITTEE (GWAC)

MEETING SUMMARY

Thursday, December 19, 2013

*Radio KDNA
121 Sunnyside Ave, Granger WA 98932*

I. Call to Order:

Roll Call: The meeting was called to order at 5:04 p.m. by Penny Mabie, Facilitator.

Member	Seat	Present	Absent
Stuart Turner	Agronomist, Turner and Co.	✓	
Chelsey Durfey	Agronomist, Turner and Co. (alternate)	✓	
Helen Reddout	Community Association for Restoration of the Environment	✓	
Wendell Hannigan	Community Association for Restoration of the Environment (alternate)		✓
Jan Whitefoot	Concerned Citizens of the Yakama Reservation		✓
Jim Dyjak	Concerned Citizens of the Yakama Reservation (alternate)	✓	
Jean Mendoza	Friends of Toppenish Creek	✓	
Eric Anderson	Friends of Toppenish Creek (alternate)		✓
Larry Fendell	Friends of Toppenish Creek (Stand in)		✓
Lino Guerra	Hispanic Community Representative		✓
Rick Perez	Hispanic Community Representative (alternate)		✓
Robert Farrell	Port of Sunnyside		✓
John Van Wingerden	Port of Sunnyside (alternate)		✓
Jim Trull	Roza-Sunnyside Joint Board of Control	✓	
Ron Cowin	Roza-Sunnyside Joint Board of Control (alternate)		✓
Laurie Crowe	South Yakima Conservation District		✓
Jim Newhouse	South Yakima Conservation District (alternate)		✓
Tom Eaton	U.S. EPA		✓
Marie Jennings	U.S. EPA (alternate)	✓	

Lonna Frans	USGS Washington Water Science Center		✓
Matt Bachmann	USGS Washington Water Science Center (alternate)	✓	
Kirk Cook	WA Department of Agriculture		✓
Ginny Prest	WA Department of Agriculture (alternate)		✓
Charlie McKinney	WA Department of Ecology	✓	
Tom Tebb	WA Department of Ecology (alternate)	✓	
Andy Cervantes	WA Department of Health		✓
Ginny Stern	WA Department of Health (alternate)	✓	
Dr. Kefy Desta	WSU Irrigated Agriculture Research and Extension Center		✓
Dr. Troy Peters	WSU Irrigated Agriculture Research and Extension Center (alternate)	✓	
Elizabeth Sanchez	Yakama Nation		✓
Tom Ring	Yakama Nation (alternate)	✓	
Rand Elliott	Yakima County Board of Commissioners	✓	
Vern Redifer	Yakima County Board of Commissioners (alternate)	✓	
Steve George	Yakima County Farm Bureau	✓	
Justin Waddington	Yakima County Farm Bureau (alternate)		✓
Gordon Kelly	Yakima County Health District	✓	
Jason Sheehan	Yakima Dairy Federation	✓	
Dan DeGroot	Yakima Dairy Federation (alternate)	✓	
Kathleen Rogers	Lower Valley Community Representative Position 1	✓	
Bud Rogers	Lower Valley Community Representative Position 1 (alternate)	✓	
Patricia Newhouse	Lower Valley Community Representative Position 2	✓	
Sue Wedam	Lower Valley Community Representative Position 2 (alternate)	✓	
Doug Simpson	Irrigated Crop Producer	✓	

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II. Welcome and Meeting Overview

Moment of Silence

III. Committee Business:

21 November 2013 Meeting Summary will be up for approval in January 2014.

22

23 January meeting date is confirmed for Thursday, January 16th, 2014.

24

25 **Committee Self-Evaluation Survey Results**

26 Penny Mabie explained that as some members of the committee didn't receive
27 the survey results until today she would briefly review the results for the
28 committee.

29

30 The Self Assessment Survey is a tool that helps determine how well the advisory
31 committee is doing. It can be used as an opportunity to reflect, to think about
32 what work the GWAC wants to do, and if the group wants to make any changes
33 to the way they work together and talk together.

34

35 Discussion followed with comments mostly concerned with the lack of trust the
36 survey revealed. Penny noted that there are some polarized opinions and the
37 philosophies are varied but that the members of the committee are not enemies.
38 She pointed out that the group is here to engage and contribute. She noted that
39 if the current process isn't working, the committee should figure out another way.

40

41 Some members were concerned that the discussion at November's GWAC
42 meeting about the seeming stalemate in the issue of confidentiality for deep soil
43 sampling indicated a larger problem. Some questioned if the GWAC could go
44 any further with the apparent deep lack of trust. Penny agreed that it was a very
45 legitimate concern. She suggested that committee members attempt to put
46 differences aside and reminded the group that one of the ground rules is to
47 speak from interests not positions. She noted that only when members are
48 talking at the interest/values level can trust can begin to be built. Penny says she
49 can work harder to ensure that members are talking about interests and have
50 people make clearer interest or value statements so that more common ground
51 could be found.

52

53 Penny recommended that the group do the evaluation annually and asked if
54 anyone had any suggestions, to please send them her way.

55

56 **2014 GWAC Meeting Schedule**

57 The group agreed that the third Thursday of each month was good. It was
58 suggested that GWAC skip the December meeting as it's a very hard time to
59 meet and to find a meeting facility with holiday parties having booked already.
60 Penny noted the Sunnyside School District location is always a consideration
61 however there is no telephone or internet.

62

63 Penny made a couple of process reminders for the committee. She noted that
64 alternates should not use the public comment period to make comments to the
65 committee. They should work through their primary member at the table to have
66 them communicate their issue, or ask their member to give them a time at the
67 table, replacing their primary member, if they wanted to address the committee.
68 The public comment period is provided for the public's opportunity.

69
70 She had a second reminder that for formal discussions with the media regarding
71 the work or the opinions of the GWAC, the spokesperson for the group is Rand or
72 his alternate, Vern. It was noted that Lisa Freund had spoken to the media about
73 a Yakima County issue concerning groundwater. Was that not allowed? Penny
74 said the distinction is regarding whether a person is speaking with the media as a
75 member of the GWAC or is speaking with the media about their own business,
76 organization, etc. For example, if Jason Sheehan is asked by the media about
77 issues with groundwater quality at his farm, that is not conflict with the GWMA
78 committee's work.

79
80 The committee was updated on the issue of confidentiality regarding private
81 property owners participating in soil sampling. Jim Trull, Vern Redifer and three
82 attorneys met for a very productive meeting. While progress was made, Jim
83 noted the need to slow down a bit and postpone deep soil sampling until fall so
84 that the confidentiality issue is spelled out so that everyone clearly understands it.
85 There is still a lot of work that needs to go into this but Vern was very optimistic
86 that they've found a way that is legal, simple, and gets the GWAC everything
87 that is needed and will not put any farmers at risk.

88
89 A brief discussion followed about a suggestion made by a committee member
90 for a legislative fix through a bill that could be written that states the data
91 gathered for this program may not be released to any other entity as it is only for
92 GWMA. After some committee members expressed concern with this approach,
93 Jim noted that was simply a suggestion made at a previous meeting that had
94 not been vetted by the committee and it should be tabled for a future time if
95 needed.

96
97 A suggestion was made that since the Deep Soil Sampling will likely be delayed
98 at least to Fall 2014, the committee should take time to address the highest
99 nitrates wells (wells with over 50 ppm) that are already known about, do a
100 thorough examination of them and see if any actions can be taken to improve
101 water quality in the short term. This could make sure they are not a point source
102 that could skew program actions in the future. This could also give the GWMA
103 some progress to point to and may increase public awareness of the GWAC's
104 work.

105
106 Penny asked for clarification on why the Deep Soil Sampling needed to be
107 delayed. The reason given was that if the testing needs to take place in
108 February/early March, there were too many details to work out before that, with
109 the most difficult being the confidentiality issue. That then means the sampling
110 would not be able to take place until in the fall after the next growing season.

111
112 Penny tasked the working groups, in January, to go through their work plans and
113 lay out what other work can be done ahead of the soil sampling to present in
114 January. Then in February, the working groups could identify what work needs to
115 be done and move on to implementing that work.

116

117 Vern added that at the last legislative session, Senator Honeyford acquired
118 \$1.6m for GWMA and \$150k for providing drinking water to those with
119 contaminated wells. The drinking water funding is separate from GWMA funding.
120 Vern noted that he is working with the Department of Health and the
121 Conservation Districts to develop the plan for how to use that funding. He also
122 noted it was prudent to wait until results from the ongoing well testing are
123 available so that the funding will be able to help as many people as possible. He
124 said the plan is in the works, not today, but coming right on the heels of the
125 water sampling.
126

127 **IV. Outstanding Committee Decisions**

128 **Proposed Changes and Finalize Provisional GWMA Program Goals and** 129 **Objectives**

130 Penny reminded the group that the Goals and Objectives are a living document
131 and that until the GWAC has received more information about the status of the
132 problems, proposed solutions, etc. it doesn't make sense to make the goals and
133 objectives final. Some in the group wanted to include deadlines in the
134 document. There was some concern that the latest draft didn't include any
135 concrete dates. It was suggested to assign a target date of achieving the goal
136 within five years. Others suggested 2017 would be more concrete.
137

138 The committee considered draft edits submitted by Jean Mendoza. Some
139 thought it was ambitious of the group to state that loads will be reduced since
140 measuring loads hasn't been completed. There was general agreement that the
141 GWAC is behind on the timeline and it was suggested that the committee start
142 with the completion of the analysis as the baseline point and compare to that. It
143 was suggested that with working on the nutrients, control simply equals bringing
144 drinking water to drinking water standards. Another member agreed that the
145 GWMA needs a measurable goal/objective, and said that it should be the goal
146 will not be achieved until the Lower Valley water meets state drinking water
147 standards.
148

149 Penny proposed that the committee retain this draft as their provisional goal and
150 then set objectives based on the stated goal. Another member noted a goal
151 should be high, lofty and challenging – to build a strategic success the GWAC
152 needs to figure out what to do to work towards that goal – those are the
153 objectives. For example, in five years there are some things that the GWAC
154 wants the people to know – from the health side, they want folks to know what
155 to do and by then producers would know what works. Penny noted that
156 objectives are where the specifics start to be stated and that objectives should
157 be SMART - Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Timely.
158

159 **Review and Finalize Revised Standardized Talking Points – Lisa Freund**

160 Lisa reviewed for the GWAC the changes that the Education and Public
161 Outreach working group (EPO) had made to the presentation template. These
162 were the only concerns voiced at the prior meeting. A suggestion was made to
163 change the word "Purpose" on the first and last slide to "Goal." That change

164 was approved. The GWAC reached consensus agreement to make the
165 presentation/talking points final.

166
167 **Additional Committee Requests:** Jean Mendoza requested the GWAC consider
168 re-testing wells that were tested in the 1992 *Groundwater Quality Assessment*
169 *Hornby Dairy Lagoon Study*, and the 1990 *Washington State Agricultural*
170 *Chemicals Pilot Study*.

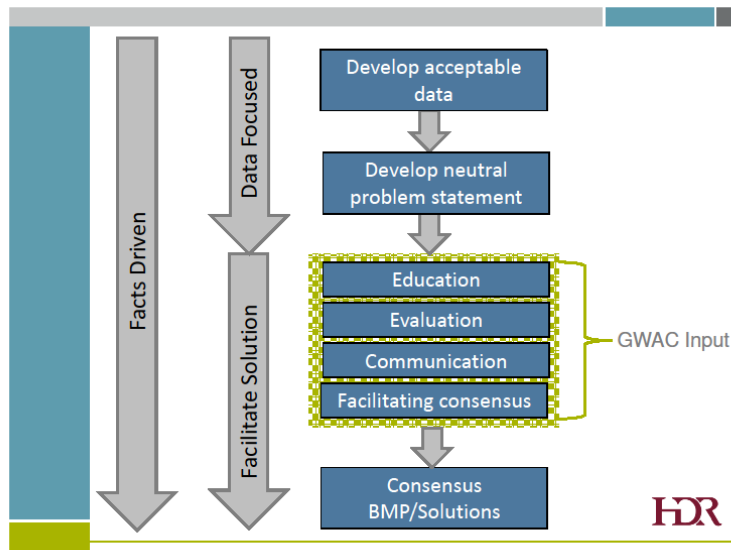
171
172 A suggestion was made that the GWAC get educated on how 10 ppm was set
173 as the threshold for safe drinking water, and what the health implications are for
174 drinking water that was higher than 10 ppm. This question has been asked of
175 committee members in the following manner: "Is it safe to drink water if it's
176 between 10 – 20 ppm? Or 20 – 30 ppm, etc." Marie Jennings, EPA and Ginny
177 Prest, Department of Health, both suggested they could provide informational
178 presentations on these topics. The committee generally agreed to add this topic
179 to a future meeting.

180
181 **V. GWMA Workplan, Technical and Working Groups – Kirk Cook, Charlie**
182 **McKinney, Vern Redifer, Jim Trull**

183
184 **Review GWMA Workplan and Set Context for Work Being Discussed**

185 Penny presented a slideshow depicting the GWAC's work plan, the work of
186 working groups and the relationship to the elements of the GWMA program. She
187 noted that at previous GWAC meetings, work items such as deep soil sampling,
188 monitoring programs, data modeling and other topics were being discussed, but
189 that it seemed there wasn't a clear understanding of how those items fit into the
190 GWMA program. She shared a figure from a previous meeting that showed the
191 GWAC developing their work plan in 2012, in 2013 and 2014 developing the
192 GWMA program, and moving into program implementation in 2015. She
193 suggested that the committee think about the elements of the GWMA program
194 that drives the work plan. Penny reviewed a slide from HDR (GWAC technical
195 consultants) that represents a model for how the GWAC gets to a GWMA
196 program.

197



198
 199
 200 Using this model and the elements of the GWMA program, she reviewed how the
 201 GWAC needs information to develop the GWMA program. The Introduction and
 202 Background elements will come from existing/known information. The Problem
 203 Statement will rely on results from Deep Soil Sampling, Groundwater Monitoring,
 204 the Nitrogen Budget and the Regulatory Review. This will all contribute to the
 205 "Acceptable data" shown in the HDR figure. Goals and objectives will be based
 206 on the Request for Identification document and will be refined based on the
 207 Problem Identification. The Outreach and Education element will be informed
 208 by data and knowledge gleaned from the community, and will support focus on
 209 specific areas and/or practices and specific segments of the community.
 210 Strategies will include best management practices and education and
 211 outreach, again informed by data and community assessment. Implementation
 212 will lay out how BMPs, education and other strategies will be used. And finally,
 213 evaluation will need to be tied to objectives, be data driven, rely on ground
 214 water monitoring, and support adaptive management. (Refer to the WorkPlan
 215 Context presentation on the GWMA website.)

216 **VI. Working Group Report Outs**

217 **Irrigated Agriculture:**

218 Already reported re: deep soil sampling

219 **CAFO/Livestock:**

220 Did not meet. Have meeting scheduled for January 2nd but will send out email to
 221 reschedule.

222 **Residential, Commercial, Industrial and Municipal:**

223 Did not meet. Meeting was scheduled for day after Christmas, but has been
 224 canceled.

229 **Education and Outreach:**
 230 Lisa Freund announced that the High Risk Well Assessment survey is launched.
 231 There were several press releases issued in addition to the 600 piece mailing. The
 232 Health District is conducting the surveys. They have done almost 30 surveys so far.
 233 Rand presented to the El Proyecto Bienestar (Project Well-being) Advisory Board
 234 and he put in a plug about the survey. Hopefully it will be covered on TV next
 235 week. Next month, there will be English/Spanish radio ads on Spanish stations
 236 that will be targeting the Lower Valley. EPO's goal is to get a minimum of 250
 237 surveys completed by the end of March. She urged GWAC members to help to
 238 spread the word, invitations to participate, etc.

239
 240 **Regulatory:**
 241 Did not meet as the chair is out of town.

242
 243 Vern requested that the next time the work group chairs get together, to please
 244 invite him as he has some ideas to share. He noted some confusion between the
 245 work groups and especially the consultants. He noted the County is the
 246 contracting entity for the consultants and needs to be sure they are used
 247 appropriately and given clear direction. He said he wanted to share some ideas
 248 for some protocols as to how the work groups interact with the consultants.

249
 250 **VII. Public Comment:**
 251 None

252
 253 **VIII. Next Steps:**
 254 • Penny will send out a reminder that the working groups are expected to
 255 come back in February with their task lists for 2014.
 256 • EPO will make the requested change to the talking points.

257
 258 **IX. Next Meeting:**
 259 • Matt Bachmann's proposal – Kirk Cook will speak to Troy Peters about a
 260 no modeling option.
 261 • Review action items and next steps.
 262 • Discuss 2014 Task list.
 263 • Review and approve November summary at January 2014 meeting.

264
 265 **X. 2014 Meeting Calendar**
 266 • January 16, 2014.

267
 268 The meeting was adjourned at 6:56 pm.

269
 270 Meeting summary approved by the Lower Yakima Valley Groundwater Advisory
 271 Committee on January 16, 2014