

Ron Cowin	Roza-Sunnyside Joint Board of Control (alternate)		✓
Laurie Crowe	South Yakima Conservation District	✓	
Jim Newhouse	South Yakima Conservation District (alternate)		✓
Robert Farrell	Port of Sunnyside		✓
John Van Wingerden	Port of Sunnyside (alternate)	✓	
Rand Elliott	Yakima County Board of Commissioners	✓	
Vern Redifer	Yakima County Board of Commissioners (alternate)	✓	
Gordon Kelly	Yakima County Health District	✓	
Dr. Troy Peters	WSU Irrigated Agriculture Research and Extension Center	✓	
Tom Eaton	U.S. EPA	✓	
Marie Jennings	U.S. EPA (alternate)		✓
Elizabeth Sanchez	Yakama Nation	✓	
Tom Ring	Yakama Nation (alternate)		✓
Kirk Cook	WA Department of Agriculture	✓	
Virginia "Ginny" Prest	WA Department of Agriculture (alternate)		✓
Andy Cervantes	WA Department of Health	✓	
Ginny Stern	WA Department of Health (alternate)	✓	
Charlie McKinney	WA Department of Ecology	✓	
Tom Tebb	WA Department of Ecology (alternate)	✓	
Lino Guerra	Hispanic Community Representative	✓	
Rick Perez	Hispanic Community Representative (alternate)		✓

13

14 **II. Welcome & Meeting Overview**

15

16 Moment of Silence

17

18 Jim Davenport inquired from the members if they had any suggestions for the Agenda.
 19 While there were no suggestions from the members Jim mentioned that there would be a
 20 change in the order of topics.

21

22 **III. Committee Business:**

23

24 The December 18, 2014 meeting summary was approved as amended.

25

26 **IV. Working Group Reports:**

27

28

29

30 **Livestock/CAFO Working Group – Charlie McKinney**

31

32 Charlie McKinney reported the group met on February 5, 2015. They revisited the work
33 plan and are looking to find more information on possible nitrate sources from manure
34 lagoons, corrals, pens and manure storage. This will help better define the approach and
35 potential needs. They will follow up on lagoon information from the last five years.

36

37 **Irrigated Ag Working Group – Jim Trull**

38

39 Jim Trull reported the group met on February 5, 2015 and reviewed the results from the
40 first round of Deep Soil Sampling (DSS). The group determined that there is not enough
41 data at this point to come to a conclusion and more sampling will need to be done. They
42 discussed how to get more useful data and make it more streamlined. He noted they will
43 start working with Kirk Cook to coordinate the DSS survey/sampling with the nitrogen
44 loading assessment and are hoping to reach more people that way. Kirk mentioned that 30
45 percent of the area will be needed for statistical purposes. Pesticide credits may be given to
46 entice participation in the survey.

47

48 **Regulatory Framework Working Group – Tom Eaton**

49

50 Tom Eaton reported that the group has not yet met in 2015. They will be holding a
51 conference call on Thursday, February 26th at 3:00 pm to debrief on the first study session
52 and to get feedback and ideas for the upcoming sessions.

53

54 **RCIM Working Group – Robert Farrell**

55 Has not met in 2015.

56

57 **Data Working Group – Kirk Cook**

58

59 The group has not met in 2015. They will be meeting soon to discuss the Nitrogen Loading
60 Assessment. Kirk did attend the Livestock and Irrigated/Ag meetings. He will be working on
61 protocols to conduct the Nitrogen Loading Assessment.

62

63 **Funding Working Group – Vern Redifer**

64 Has not met.

65

66 **Education and Public Outreach (EPO) Working Group – Lisa Freund**

67

68 Lisa Freund announced that the GWMA web site update has been initiated. She reviewed
69 the EPO's findings relative to the Abandoned Well and Septic System campaign, noting that
70 the EPO is remanding the campaign back to the RCIM for more work.

71

72 **V. Filling Open Committee Positions: Charlie McKinney**

73

74 Charlie announced that GWAC member Gordon Kelly is retiring from the Yakima Health
75 District and his replacement, Ryan Ibach, will serve as Gordon's successor on the GWAC.

76

77 Charlie added that there is a membership vacancy with the resignation of CARE. He asked
78 the group to consider Dr. Jessica Black, an environmental sciences professor at Heritage
79 University, to fill the vacancy. Dr. Black has expressed interest in the past and she also
80 volunteered her class to assist with the 2013 door-to-door GWMA survey. A member
81 mentioned that there may be a conflict of interest if the GWAC were to contract with
82 Heritage University in the future. Another member noted that Dr. Black would need to
83 respect the boundaries of the Yakama Nation. Jim Davenport asked who determines the
84 GWAC membership. Charlie noted it is the Department of Ecology, but he appreciates the
85 input from members. He will consider tonight's input before making a decision.

86

87 Action: Charlie McKinney will review the comments received tonight regarding the
88 environmental membership position.

89

90 **VI. GWMA PLAN TIMELINE 1/29/15: Vern Redifer**

91

92 Vern introduced a GWMA Plan timeline, observing that it encompasses everything the
93 GWAC is supposed to do under WAC 173-100. The timeline is organized by the six major
94 WAC guidelines (i.e., area characterization, problem definition, goals and objectives, etc.)
95 and contains over 190 tasks needed to complete the plan. As it appears now, the plan will
96 not be completed until December 2017. Vern requested that the working group chairs
97 review the timeline and provide feedback for the April meeting.

98

99 Jim Davenport asked what the Department of Ecology's expectations are regarding plan
100 completion. Charlie replied that there are expectations within the current funding contract
101 and they are considering a second contract towards the end of 2016. Kirk observed that it

102 took two and a half years for the Columbia Basin to complete their GWMA, so 2017 is not
103 an unreasonable completion date.

104
105 A member asked if it makes sense to wait for Deep Soil Sampling (DSS) to finish (i.e.,
106 complete the Problem Definition) before moving ahead. It has been determined that after
107 reviewing the first round of sampling, there was not enough information to make a
108 determination and the next sampling round will be needed to calibrate the results. Part of
109 the reason [the plan] is taking so long is because of DSS. Jim Trull counseled patience,
110 noting that possibly three rounds of DSS will suffice instead of four, and that would help
111 move the process along more quickly.

112
113 A member asked if Best Management Practices are still a part of the plan. Vern stated that
114 they are, under 4. Alternatives. The effectiveness still needs to be evaluated and the data
115 will need to be reviewed.

116 Kirk suggested that collaboration is needed between the working groups to complete
117 specific tasks, rather than assigning tasks to a specific working group.

118
119 A member suggested that the Best Management Practices (BMP) need to be updated. The
120 group can use existing National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) tools that can help
121 evaluate the BMPs.

122
123 Another member expressed confusion over the BMPs, requesting clarification regarding 1)
124 which ones are being used 2) which ones are the right ones for this data, and 3) are we to
125 comment on eliminating any of them.

126
127 Jim Davenport stated that the group needs to discuss BMPs, agree on sources and then
128 move on.

129
130 Vern stated that between June 1 and July 15th there is a lot of information to look at and it
131 will need to be narrowed down to the most appropriate for this area.

132
133 **Action:** Working Group Chairs and their respective working groups will review the timeline,
134 their specific subsections, and provide input for the April GWAC meeting.

135
136 **VII. Long-Term Monitoring Plan Objectives: Vern Redifer**

137

138 Vern stated that the group needs to come to a consensus of the definition of a monitoring
139 system. The group does not have to implement a monitoring system to complete its work.
140 The group does need to have a design to evaluate the effectiveness of the program and
141 start new design protocols by July. The group needs to come to an objective of what it is
142 designing.

143
144 A member asked what is the degree of specificity and how detailed will this monitoring
145 system be.

146
147 Vern stated that we need to have an idea of the scope of our objective: what types of wells
148 are most appropriate to meet the objective (i.e., existing wells versus purpose-built wells).
149 We need an idea of the level of detail that will be needed by the implementing agency. We
150 need to give an implementation plan to the jurisdiction/agency we hand it off to.

151
152 Melanie Redding, Department of Ecology, described Whatcom County's ambient monitoring
153 program: the process they used, the results and questions that need to be thought about
154 when data collecting. Whatcom County used a network of 35 private wells because it was
155 too expensive to build monitoring wells. They started in 2004 and 10 years later, they have
156 good data over time. They couldn't determine where the nitrate was coming from but were
157 able to determine the condition of the aquifer.

158
159 Melanie observed that it's important to identify what questions the group wants answered:
160 what are the objectives. Each strategy will answer different questions. No one study will
161 answer all questions.

162
163 A member stated that the backbone should be structured around the GWMA goal: reducing
164 nitrate in groundwater over time. The accepted BMPs, over time, should answer the
165 question: is it [nitrate levels] getting better?

166
167 Vern summarized the conversation, noting the following characteristics the group had
168 discussed:

- 169 • 35-40 purpose-built wells
- 170 • linear-flow patterns
- 171 • dispersed enough to look at different areas of the GWMA
- 172 • down to the water table/shallow aquifer

173 Vern stated that this is an introduction to this topic and he would like the group to discuss it
 174 with the monitoring plan potential objectives in April. The group needs to come to
 175 consensus on one strategy. They need to answer the question: *what do you want?*
 176

177 A member observed that based on the discussion, a decision could be made now on an
 178 ambient monitoring system.
 179

180 **Action:** Jim Davenport made a motion asking if an Ambient Monitoring Systems is needed.
 181 The group agreed.
 182

183 **VIII. Public Comment:**
 184

185 A member of the public stated that he is surprised by the [group’s] assumption that the
 186 upward nitrate trend will continue. His thoughts are that 1) farmers will become more
 187 efficient with water and nitrate use 2) while more production in valley can cause an
 188 increase in nitrogen levels, if prices decrease, production decreases and farmers can go out
 189 of business.
 190

191 **IX. Phase I - Well Assessment Survey Preliminary Data Results**
 192

193 Vern reviewed the data results and observed that it was difficult to correlate the data.
 194 Accordingly, the survey results are being sent back to the EPO to determine what they think
 195 the data means. He further requested that the EPO correlate the high/medium/low risk.
 196

197 **X. Next Steps:**
 198

199 Future agenda items: Discuss Groundwater testing and provide input on committee
 200 expectations for PGG
 201

202 EPO will review the high risk well assessment data and correlate high/medium/low risk
 203

204 Work groups will review the GWMA timeline and provide feedback at the April meeting
 205

206 **Next Meeting:**
 207

- 208 • April 16, 2015 5:00 PM
- 209 Location: Radio KDNA, 121 Sunnyside Ave, Granger, WA 98932

210

211 **2015 Meeting Calendar**

212

213 April 16, 2015

214 June 18, 2015

215 August 20, 2015

216 October 15, 2015

217 December 17, 2015 (tentative, if needed)

218

219 The meeting was adjourned at 6:59 p.m.

220

221 Meeting summary approved by the GWAC on April 16, 2015.