

## Funding Work Group

### Charge from Groundwater Management Area Advisory Committee

#### Working Group Members

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Vern Redifer (Chair); Bud Rogers; Dan DeGroot; David Bowen; Ginny Prest; Jason Sheehan; Jim Davenport; Laurie Crowe; Matt Bachmann; Rand Elliott; Rick Dinicola; Steve George; Stuart Turner.

#### Meetings/Calls Dates

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Meeting: Wednesday, June 14, 2017, 10:00 AM to Noon

Call Number: 509-574-2353 pin: 2353#

#### Participants

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Present: Vern Redifer (Chair); Dan DeGroot; David Bowen; Ginny Prest; Jim Davenport; Laurie Crowe\*; Matt Bachmann; Rand Elliott; Rick Dinicola; Steve George; and Bobbie Brady (Yakima County Support Services). \*via phone

#### Key Discussion Points

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The meeting began at 10:07 AM. Vern explained the working group was meeting to discuss future funding sources. Everyone introduced themselves and reviewed the draft agenda. Matt Bachman introduced Rick Dinicola (USGS) who was attending the meeting because of his familiarity with funding sources that may be available through USGS. The group agreed that Vern should continue on as the chair.

**Funding Sources and Alternatives/Projects to be Funded:** Vern passed out an excerpt from the GWAC Work Plan which outlined the duties of the group as: determining and developing short and long-term funding strategies to sustain programs and recommended alternatives from federal, state and county sources. Vern stated that the most obvious need was to fund the monitoring efforts beyond 2017. However, he added that each working group had made a list of alternative recommendations which the GWAC will begin to review. Jim confirmed that he hoped to present the list of alternatives at the next GWAC meeting for the members review. Then, two weeks later (at its next meeting) the GWAC will decide whether to accept or reject each alternative. Jim estimated that the revised list of alternatives would be back to the Funding Group in about five or six weeks. At that time the group could begin to have serious conversations regarding funding sources.

A member expressed concern that the GWAC would have a huge multi-meeting discussion on individual pet projects and wondered if there could be a plan to derive general information from the monitoring efforts before moving on to smaller projects. Others agreed, but felt that ongoing education and outreach should be a part of the initial efforts to monitor. Jim stated that Livestock/CAFO had recommended an adaptive management process which seemed to be in line with this suggestion. Rand agreed that the group would not be able to fund every small project, but felt that until the Funding Group actually had a chance to see the list of recommended

alternatives no decisions should be made. He felt that obviously the monitoring efforts would need to continue and some smaller items would begin immediately, but it was his recommendation that the group wait to see the list of alternatives before it committed itself to a specific path. Another member saw continuing efforts in monitoring, education and outreach, technical assistance and reporting to be a priority.

The group discussed the leadership of the GWMA in 2018. One member wondered if the GWAC would continue or if the lead entity would take over. As clarification Vern reminded everyone that the WAC required the GWAC to present a program by the end of 2017. Once the program is complete the requirements of the WAC are met and the GWAC work is done. At that time it would be optimal for a lead agency to take over.

The group also discussed whether Yakima County or the Yakima Health District would be the lead entity. Rand stated that Yakima County would probably be the lead entity (Jim confirmed that Livestock/CAFO had also made this recommendation). However, Rand thought that the Yakima Health District may have a role in monitoring, but that role had yet to be defined. Members agreed that Yakima County had done a good job in their role as lead agency thus far by representing well the diversity of interests and other members expressed their support.

A member wondered if perhaps there would be a group that met quarterly to review data and formulate policy. Vern stated that this kind of arrangement would lend itself to adaptive management. Another member wanted to see an oversight board managing the lead entity in order to make sure the job was done correctly. In addition, he believed that the oversight board should consist only of GWMA stakeholders (those people who actually live in the GWMA) and no federal, state or governmental agencies. Some members disagreed and others believed that such an oversight board might want government assistance. Rand wondered if a lead agency needed an oversight committee or an advisory committee. Another member said that an advisory committee could work hand-in-hand with the lead agency and help with funding endeavors. He didn't see it as a governing board but a group to help make policy, review and suggest how to deal with data and education and outreach. Others wondered if governmental agencies needed to be a part of the voting authority. David stated that there is no problem with a governmental agency being a non-voting member. At present the Department of Ecology receives a quarterly report from the lead agency which they review to ensure the lead agency is meeting the requirements of the contract thus providing a system of checks and balances.

A member asked if the group could first find funding for the lead agency; the lead agency could then look for funding for other activities. Vern stated that once Yakima County understood the tasks he would be able to put together a cost estimate for the ongoing management of the GWMA. A member asked how much Vern thought the lead agency would need to get started. Vern estimated \$100,000 per year in lead agency administration (at least a full time person and staff support). Rand indicated that the Commissioners would be presenting funding requests to the State and they could determine personnel requirements and funding needs.

A member thought the list of alternatives would include recommendations that required funding and some that didn't. He felt it was important for the group to prioritize which alternatives should be funded first in order to help create and secure specific asks. He also thought that the more entities supporting the ask, the more likelihood funding would be provided. Vern agreed

that it would make an impact if the diversity in the GWAC was behind a funding request (state and local agencies, the Farm Bureau, Dairy Federation and private citizens and citizen groups). Jim stated that the list of alternatives would be presented to the group with the WAC requirements which included cost and source of funding. He thought it would be very helpful for the group to help with this process. A member stated that they thought funding sources and a priority list of alternatives were tasks that needed to be done simultaneously. Jim agreed and said that as the group moves from a general knowledge to more specific knowledge it will become easier for the group to make decisions. Vern thought the group would also be able to characterize some of the alternatives as program or project oriented. He said that in the County Roads Department a list of roads and bridges requiring work is created on a priority basis. However they don't wait for Project No. 1 to get funded if funding becomes available for Project No. 7. Thus the list is both priority based and funding based. Vern reminded that group that most funding requirements will require the program recommendations.

Vern added that the group could talk about an Aquifer Protection Area which would provide a funding mechanism through a GWMA area tax. The Commissioners could not approve this but could put it to the voters for their vote. Jim suggested that the group get the recommendations in place first.

Jim then reminded everyone that the monitoring efforts have already been approved by GWAC and the group could discuss their funding today. After some discussion USGS agreed to work out a one year plan and a two year plan which would be in sync with the legislative funding schedule. They will include an estimate for the analysis portion of the work which may be eligible for matching funding from USGS. Matt will have this information available at the next meeting of the Funding Working Group.

**Next Meeting Date:** Vern said that a GWAC member wanted to participate in the Funding Working Group but was only available in the evening after work. The group agreed to meet again on Wednesday, July 12, 5:00-7:00 PM at the Department of Ecology.

The meeting adjourned at 11:55 AM.

### **Resources Requested**

### **Recommendations for GWAC**

### **Deliverables/Products Status**

### **Proposed Next Steps**

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