

## GWMA Implementation Committee Meeting Notes

Meeting Date: April 14, 2022

**Attendees:** Caitlin McConkey, Andrey Cervantes via Phone, Holly Myers, Dave Taylor - Dairy Federation via Phone, Melanie Redding, David Haws, Damon Roberts, Sheryl Howe, Gary Bahr, Shawn Magee, Ladon Linde, Ron Cowin

### ROUNDTABLE UPDATES

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- **South Yakima Conservation District** \*Damon provided update to group on Rodney's behalf:

1) SYCD Soil Sampling Pilot Project for Dairy Producers on their Ag Application acres and Facility HQ's starts next week. (weather permitting)

2) SYCD participated in the Yakima County Groundwater Safety Outreach Discussion Group. Malanie did a great job discussing and explaining short and long term GMWA team efforts.

3) SYCD meets with Renewable Natural Gas next week and again with WSDA Eastern Washington Air Quality Inspector and WSU to Discuss RNG Options for lower valley Dairies. Twenty-one Dairies have expressed interest thus far, if this project is implemented it would benefit not only the community and producers but protect surface and ground water resources within our Valley.

4) South Yakima has 3 Rill Irrigation to Pivot projects underway, A fish Habitat Enhancement project on the Yakima River, and a Fuel Break Planting on 33 acres North of Sunnyside, along with many other ongoing projects.

5) SYCD continues to provide Technical assistance to our producers and the community and to advance GWMA recommendations.

*Rodney asked via email -- Has the team reviewed the SOW or the QA/QC for DSS? If so, can they provide me with their comments and or request for changes? And If anyone has any information on the "Recommendations" updates etc. you're going through please send them to me when you can.*

- **Yakima County - David Haws** – mentioned several of the implementation items that the county was going to focus on.
- **Yakima Health District - Shawn Magee** – conducting outreach to the folks who have signed up for the potable water delivery. Narrow down how much water we think they will need to figure out how often and how much they will receive as a starting point. They will be able to adjust their quantity as we go. The DOH director is working with us on focus groups within the GWMA to know what they would like to see happen. We're going to be running those focus groups here in the next few weeks and we'll have more of an update coming up here soon.
- **Washington State Department of Health - Sheryl Howe & Holly Myers** – The RFQ is expected to go out next week, and soon will be able to provide the contractor information to the group. Mallory updated us on her assessment using the private well data from the summer and fall events. Once ready it will be shared with the group. Holly – Looking to see what are the water systems that the dairies are using, are they individual serving multiple or more than what a private well can be serving – starting to ask more questions. Doing outreach trying to gather this information. Stemmed from questions that began with the EPA questionnaire.

- **Washington State Department of Agriculture - Gary Bahr** – Going over this list of action items and match it up with potential requests that we would create and send through the internal system for budget proposals and to the gov. office for related asks. No real findings quite yet. Working to match up the needs of the dairies. Support the dept. of ag as they create these BMP guides and manuals. Soil health program moving along with creating new applications to the USDA's climate ag commodity program they announced last winter. Supplied them with pub comments last Oct. With the Soil Health program and Washington State conservation program working together to try to capitalize on grant money – hoping to see some pretty good packages. These kinds of programs are very complimentary and a very big focus on our commodity groups and supportive of the soil health initiative up and running.
- **Washington State Department of Ecology Groundwater Sampling – Melanie Redding**  
Groundwater monitoring continues, working hard to keep everyone in the study. Starting the 4<sup>th</sup> qtr of sampling, should have the results soon. Getting postcards back regarding the bottled water program. Reaching out to those who have not responded to the postcards yet but may be interested in being in the program. Right now 37 homes are participating. Will be presenting at the hydrogeology symposium May 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Holly added: Continuing work to find funding for ongoing supply of potable drinking water.

- **General – Damon/Sage Damon** Sitting in NRCS meeting in Yakima – Plan to attend STAC committee meeting regarding designation of source water protection areas in LYV-GWMA.
  - Discussion Topic – Providing test strips to community members and collaborating with YHD and GWMA partners To be discusse at the May meeting.

### Implementation Plan Recommended Actions – Updates

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*\*group wanted to touch base on all action items vs just a few priority ones*

16. Done

17. Ongoing – Focus this year for Yakima Co. Yak Co just opened up ARPA applications – work with local gov and municipalities on funding. Right at the beginning stages of planning, have had a couple of meetings.

18. Ongoing – there has been work done by WSU, the dept. of ag has put money into this over time, but have to go back to ask the staff for history on that. A lot of work done by the conservation district in supporting the dairy industry. Damon – Should we be asking a rep from WSU to sit in on this group because of this involvement? Gary – if they could assign someone to be on the group that would be great. Otherwise we would have to institute a process to go to them for updates on their activities in order to update the committee. Makes sense to engage with WSU more on their involvement.

19. Ongoing

20. Ongoing

21. Ongoing – Ecology is working on this
22. Ongoing – Deep soil sampling. Working hard to implement soil health initiative. Doing full assessments in the first two feet. If you want to read about that program, Gary would be happy to present the info.
23. No update at this time. Look back and re-familiarize. Let us loop back to this when Rodney is available.
24. Ongoing
25. Damon will get more context on this from the Ecology side.
26. Ongoing
27. Take a closer look at appendix B to get a better understanding of what they were getting at. Another item for us to reach out to WSU about. When WSU is doing their research, do they have agreements with the landowners? Gary said yes, they do have these agreements in order to maintain confidentiality. A lot of historical information is collected.
28. Discuss when the appropriate representative is here.
29. Discuss when the appropriate representative is here.
30. Damon will be reaching out to the Water Resources group to see what we need to do and try to get something put in place for the 2023 budget cycle. Also not sure on whose budget this will need to go through, WQ or WR. Will find out.
31. Need to explore this more – ongoing. Linde – knows of one Dairy Farm in the lower valley they developed a digester and working on getting that powered. Pipe has been laid to put it into a commercial system. Gary thinks that's what the workshop next week is partly about – to discuss these concepts further. Gary shared the following link for reference:  
<https://www.energy.wsu.edu/GreenTransportationProgram/EducationAndWebinars.aspx>
32. David Haws – ongoing and something we will need to discuss further during our meetings. When this was put together, it was before we had this committee formed. It was also when Yakima County was called out for being the lead in this. It's essentially what we are doing now, figuring out what works and what doesn't work. It calls out Yakima County, but it should be ALL of the implementation committee. Damon agreed. Will put it on the list further down the road. This is something that will really tie in down the road. It's getting everything together and putting it in a format that is consolidated, comprehensive and clear. Documenting what we are doing and how we are adapting as we go. \*\*Put on future meeting for review and figuring out how it serves our needs as a whole.
33. Damon will look into this more – ongoing.
34. Sheryl – confirm that the # of employees hasn't outgrown the system. She will reach out to find out the employee count details. Primarily looking to confirm if the system needs to be resized or not. Will work on summarizing this and will update the group.
35. Add to list of WSU items for follow up.
36. Built in to process and new system permits. Will look into if the current process covers all parameters.
37. Will check in with Rodney on this.
38. Will need to reference appendix on this.
39. Rodney may have info on this, will check in with him.
40. Ecology looking into grant funding and allocation in the area. More outreach in GWMA.
41. Damon, Gary and Rodney will follow up to get action items together.
42. Follow up with Melanie and Lauren
43. Early stages of planning – ongoing.
44. Need staff for this and having trouble getting applicants.

- 45. Damon will follow up – may be a different section of Ecology
- 46. Check into this with SW Program HB 1799
- 47.
- 48. Ongoing?
- 49. Ongoing?
- 50. Damon will look into this one as well

### Notes & Comments at Meeting Wrap Up

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- Next meeting – let's try to tie the rest of these (action items) up as well as the project manager position.
- *From Chat* - [3:08 PM] Myers, Holly R (DOH) Can we ask folks to come to the meeting with ideas of whether or not they can employ/supervise the GWMA program manager...might help with decision
- Melanie will set up meeting with Rodney and Gary to go over logistics regarding the QAPP for the deep soil sampling. Gary B said they have their own QAPP for Dept of Ag.  
<https://fortress.wa.gov/ecy/ezshare/wq/groundwater/deep-soil-sampling-qapp.pdf>
- Gary B shared the following links in chat:

<https://agr.wa.gov/departments/land-and-water/natural-resources/soil-health>

<https://soilhealth.wsu.edu/soil-health-initiative/>

<https://s3.wp.wsu.edu/uploads/sites/2464/2022/02/WSU-Soil-Health-Roadmap-Feb2022-v1.pdf>

<https://agr.wa.gov/departments/land-and-water/natural-resources/soil-health/get-involved-en>

#### David Haws added the following updates after meeting concluded –

County items:

#### **46. Provide funding for municipalities to replace aging sewer system infrastructure and ensure proper system maintenance to reduce nitrate leaching. (11 – Municipalities)**

For Yakima County we do have the Buena Wastewater Treatment plant within the GWMA area. It is currently undergoing repairs.

**47. Develop an urban and hobby agriculturalist education and outreach campaign. (10 – Yakima County) Admin? – Outside hire? Literature research?**

This is another priority item for the County this year. We plan to reach out to some local farmers who might be able to provide some comment or outreach ideas/materials. We also plan to reach out to Washington Conservation Commission about existing material.

**48. Contract with USGS to do particle tracking model study to indicate where groundwater moves faster (permeability). (9 – Yakima County)**

**Question:** Was there any talk with the implementation committee on this item? Currently this is not one of the items the County plans to tackle this year.