



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY

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October 21, 2021

Friends of Toppenish Creek
3142 Signal Peak Road
White Swan, WA 98952

Dear Jean Mendoza,

Thank you for sharing your thoughts on Department of Ecology's (Ecology) *Quality Assurance Project Plan(QAPP); Lower Yakima Valley Groundwater Management Area (GWMA) Ambient Groundwater Monitoring Network*. While this QAPP was finalized in June 2021, we appreciate your feedback.

This is the largest long-term ambient groundwater monitoring network established in Washington State, covering approximately 175,160 acres in the Lower Yakima Valley. The information gathered will help paint a picture of the health of the aquifer and add to the knowledge needed to achieve the goals of the GWMA Program.

It is customary for our scientists to prepare and publish a QAPP for our research prior to beginning work. This QAPP provides a roadmap for the study, identifying fieldwork procedures, laboratory protocols, quality assurance and control measures, and data management and analysis. Such plans are crucial to assure we are capturing credible data to meet project objectives.

As you know, this monitoring project was developed as a top priority of the Lower Yakima Valley GWMA Plan. Our new monitoring network builds on the already existing 30 monitoring wells and monitoring plan implemented by the Lower Yakima Valley Groundwater Advisory Committee.

In 2020, Ecology received funds to expand the GWMA groundwater network to 170 wells and implement this long-term monitoring program in the Lower Yakima Valley GWMA. The additional 140 wells are primarily private domestic wells. Criteria are established in the QAPP to assure that the data from these wells are representative of aquifer conditions. These criteria include proper well construction, driller's well log, and homeowner permission.

Friends of Toppenish Creek/Jean Mendoza
RE: Ecology's LYV-GWMA QAPP
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The goal of this study is to assess the nitrate concentrations in groundwater over time. Wells will be sampled quarterly for the first two years of the study to get a sense of seasonal variability. After that, we will sample annually. This will allow us to identify statistically significant trends for both the aquifer and individual wells.

This study will add to the knowledge needed to implement the plan that was certified and recently upheld by the Pollution Control Hearings Board.

Thank you for your interest in this work, and thank you for pointing out the broken links on our website. We will make sure they are fixed. Ecology continues our support of the goals established by the Ground Water Advisory Committee to reduce nitrates in groundwater to protect residents in the Lower Yakima Valley.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Sage Park", with a long, sweeping underline.

Sage Park
Regional Director
Central Regional Office

e-cc: Representative Bruce Chandler
Arati Kaza, Ecology
George Onwumere, Ecology
Melanie Redding, Ecology
Damon Roberts, Ecology
Alan Rue, Ecology
Eiko Urmos-Berry, Ecology

SMP:MM (211021)