

Irrigated Agriculture Working Group

Charge from Groundwater Management Area Advisory Committee

Working Group Members

Mark Nielson (Chair) - Benton Conservation District
Kirk Cook - Department of Agriculture
Dr. Kefy Desta - Washington State University
Dr. Troy Peters - Washington State University
Elizabeth Sanchez - Yakama Nation
Jean Mendoza - Friends of Toppenish Creek
Jim Trull - Roza-Sunnyside Joint Board of Control
John Van Wingerden - Port of Sunnyside
Lonna Frans - U.S. Geological Survey
Ralph Fisher - U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Ron Cowin - SVID
Stuart Turner - Turner & Co
Thomas Tebb - WA Department of Ecology
Scott Stephen
Mike Shuttleworth
Chelsea Durfey
Laurie Crowe
Lino Guerra
Robert Farrell
Terry Keenhan - Yakima County
Ali Sedighi - Yakima County

Meetings/Calls Dates

Meeting: Thursday, April 11, 2013, 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM

Location: Fire District #3, Prosser, WA

Participants

Key Discussion Points

- The group discussed the Workgroup protocols and the structure of the workgroup members. It was suggested that 11 core committee members (four Irrigators from Yakima County, two Irrigators from Benton County, one cropping system expert, and representatives from Irrigation District, WSU, Conservation District, WSDA) will be voting members who would represent stakeholders and would potentially implement the activities identified by the Irrigation Workgroup and approved by the GWAC. The group would be rigid in numbers and would have the ultimate vote on whether an activity, idea, or request is forwarded to the GWAC.

- Non voting members of the group will consist of Technical Advisory Members and they could vary in number and expertise depending on the needs of the Core Committee and the interest of the technical expert.
- The group agreed that they will incorporate additional public comments and ideas into the process. Also, the protocols that will be developed by the GWAC for the workgroup meeting will be in effect for the Irrigated Agriculture meeting (e.g. meeting operations, public's comments, etc).
- The group decided to propose Irrigation Water Management and Deep Soil Sampling as two early implementation activities to the GWAC. For both items, the experience and studies related to the Columbia Basin GWMA can be used as a starting point.
- The group supports the idea of having periodic joint meetings with the CAFO/Livestock and RCIMD Workgroups in the future. Dr. Robert Stevens, retired soil scientist from Washington State University's Prosser Irrigated Agriculture Research and Extension Center, will be invited as the guest speaker to the next CAFO/Livestock meeting (May 2, 2013) to discuss findings from his long experience with groundwater nitrate contamination. Charlie McKinney, Chair of the CAFO/Livestock Workgroup invited the group to attend this meeting.
- The Scope of Work for nitrate related BMPs that was developed by the CAFO/Livestock Workgroup was discussed and comments regarding this Scope of Work were provided to Yakima County for consideration. Yakima County will prepare a draft Scope of Work and will send it to the Livestock/CAFO and Irrigated Agriculture Workgroup members for approval. Based on this Scope of Work, a funding request will be submitted to the GWAC during the April 18th meeting for consideration.

Resources Requested

Recommendations for GWAC

- Develop a protocol for Workgroup meetings. It can be less formal than the GWAC meeting protocol but need some procedure on how to address public participation

Deliverables/Products Status

- Propose Irrigation Water Management and Deep Soil Sampling as two early implementation activities to the GWAC.

Proposed Next Steps

- Schedule the next meeting after the April 18th GWAC meeting and based on the feedback from that meeting.
- Discuss what kind of education and outreach from this group can be proposed to the EPO group for consideration.