

## LOWER YAKIMA VALLEY GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT AREA ADVISORY COMMITTEE (GWAC)

### MEETING SUMMARY

**Thursday, May 16, 2013**

Radio KDNA  
 121 Sunnyside Ave, Granger, WA 98932

#### I. Call to Order

**Roll Call:** The meeting was called to order at 5:02 pm by Penny Mabie, Facilitator.

Member	Seat	Present	Absent
Stuart Turner	Agronomist, Turner and Co.		P
Chelsey Durfey	Agronomist, Turner and Co. (alternate)		P
Mark Nielson	Benton Conservation District	P	
Heather Wendt	Benton Conservation District (alternate)	P	
VACANT	Benton County Board of Commissioners		
Rick Dawson	Benton Franklin Health District		P
Helen Reddout	Community Association for Restoration of the Environment	P	
Wendell Hannigan	Community Association for Restoration of the Environment (alternate)		P
Jan Whitefoot	Concerned Citizens of the Yakama Reservation		P
Jim Djyak	Concerned Citizens of the Yakama Reservation (alternate)	P	
Jean Mendoza	Friends of Toppenish Creek	P	
Eric Anderson	Friends of Toppenish Creek (alternate)		P
Lino Guerra	Hispanic Community Representative		P
Rick Perez	Hispanic Community Representative (alternate)		P
VACANT	Lower Yakima Community Representative		
Robert Farrell	Port of Sunnyside	P	
John Van Wingerden	Port of Sunnyside (alternate)	P	
Jim Trull	Roza-Sunnyside Joint Board of Control		P
Ron Cowin	Roza-Sunnyside Joint Board of Control (alternate)	P	
Laurie Crowe	South Yakima Conservation District	P	
Jim Newhouse	South Yakima Conservation District (alternate)		P

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Tom Eaton	U.S. EPA	P	
Marie Jennings	U.S. EPA (alternate)		P
Lonna Frans	USGS Washington Water Science Center		P
Matt Bachmann	USGS Washington Water Science Center (alternate)	P	
Kirk Cook	WA Department of Agriculture	P	
Jaclyn Ford	WA Department of Agriculture (alternate)		P
Charlie McKinney	WA Department of Ecology	P	
Tom Tebb	WA Department of Ecology (alternate)	P	
Andy Cervantes	WA Department of Health	P	
Ginny Stern	WA Department of Health (alternate)		P
Dr. Kefy Desta	WSU Irrigated Agriculture Research and Extension Center		P
Dr. Troy Peters	WSU Irrigated Agriculture Research and Extension Center (alternate)		P
Elizabeth Sanchez	Yakama Nation		P
Tom Ring	Yakama Nation (alternate)	P	
Rand Elliott	Yakima County Board of Commissioners	P	
Vern Redifer	Yakima County Board of Commissioners (alternate)	P	
Steve George	Yakima County Farm Bureau	P	
Justin Waddington	Yakima County Farm Bureau (alternate)		P
Gordon Kelly	Yakima County Health District	P	
Jason Sheehan	Yakima Dairy Federation	P	
Dan DeGroot	Yakima Dairy Federation (alternate)	P	

**Members' seats not represented:** Lower Valley Community Representative

**II. Committee Business:**

Reminders:

- Please speak up so everyone can hear.
- Please place all cell phones on silent. If you must take a call, please step outside of the room so as to not disrupt the meeting.
- Before leaving please check the room to make sure you have all your belongings.
- Please keep all side conversations outside of the room so members and observers can hear conversations.

Introductions.

Moment of silence.

April 18, 2013 meeting summary has been approved by the committee with no changes. Reminder: The committee agreed that in future meeting summaries names of who said what will be omitted.

John Fannin's Sunnyside Daily Sun May 20 article, "An Open Letter to Senator Honeyford," was on display for the committee to view.

**III. Benton County Request :**

Tom Tebb, Washington Department of Ecology, advised that Benton County filed a letter to withdraw from the Lower Yakima Valley Groundwater Advisory Committee. The issue is being taken seriously. Commissioner Elliott and the Director of EPA have been requested to comment on Benton County's request to withdraw. The Benton County Commission seat has not been represented since the GWAC's inception. A decision will be made within the next ten days; however, this advisory committee cannot force anyone to remain a member.

Members discussed that Benton County is an important part of this process, as Benton County is a main part of the aquifer. Members stated that if Benton County is allowed to withdraw and start its own GWMA it would be difficult for agency members on this committee as they would surely be asked to work on the Benton County GWMA. It would be difficult to make time to work on two separate committees. Ecology will make a note of this in their discussions with Benton County.

The Benton County Planning Manager spoke up from the public audience and advised that Benton County is requesting to withdraw as they want to look at the issues on a County-wide basis. They want to have more members of Benton County involved. There are no residents of Benton County on this committee. Additionally, Benton County is different in that they do not have any dairies, so their sources of nitrate are different.

**IV. Review of GWAC Operating Guidelines :**

The committee reviewed the Operating Guidelines by each section. Under membership, a question was asked about expanding community representation. Department of Ecology noted they are struggling with determining who should fill the vacant Lower Valley Community Representative seat. This led to a discussion about the quorum requirement (currently 17 of 23 seats) and challenges with achieving quorums. It was noted that a quorum was only met with late arrivals to the committee meeting. The committee discussed getting RSVPs to make sure members are going to attend the meeting. It was also discussed whether or not there is a tracking system of who is showing up for the meetings. Attendance is tracked through the meeting summary every month. The issue of membership and quorum was flagged to be revisited after the committee chair and Ecology representatives have a discussion about these issues.

Ground rules were reviewed again with the committee and confirmed to remain the same:

- Come to committee meetings prepared
- Treat one another with civility
- Respect each other's perspectives
- Listen actively
- Participate actively
- Honor time frames
- Silence electronic devices during meetings

- Speak from interests, not positions.

Alternates were reminded if they want to make a comment they should notify their primary member they would like to address the committee and replace their primary member at the table. This is instead of a committee member or alternate making comments to the committee during the public comment period.

In general, the committee agreed the Operating Guidelines are working well. The meeting location will be updated to reflect committee meetings are now in Granger, and the membership and quorum issue will be revisited at a later date.

**V. Complaint Process:**

A member of the committee has requested that there be a formal complaint process in place for the advisory committee. There needs to be a way to show that individual members in the committee are being treated fairly and document if that does not appear to be so. This will help with ensuring, in the future when the committee processes might be scrutinized, that no undocumented complaints are aired that could undermine the validity of the committee process. The committee agreed on a process that requires any formal complaints to be made in writing and submitted to the facilitator for placement in a permanent complaint file. The complaints will be provided to Yakima County for placement in a digital file on the GWAC website for all committee members to be able to access.

**VI. EPA Dairy Agreement Data:**

Tom Eaton, US EPA, provided a presentation entitled "Data collected pursuant to EPA-Dairy Agreement". Pursuant to the agreement data will be collected in three ways:

- Residential Well Sampling
- Monitoring well establishment and sampling
- Sampling associated with source control

Wells will be tested within the boundaries of the 'Dairy Cluster' and one mile down-gradient of dairies. There are 178 private wells. Those residences will be sent a post card along with test strips. Any test strip coming back showing 5 parts per million or more nitrates will be consulted.

In the agreement, there are early source-control actions to reduce nitrate loading to the aquifer:

- Soil sampling of application fields and manure testing
- Testing lagoons
- Irrigation water management
- Assessment of area up gradient of a monitoring well with 190 ppm nitrate.

Testing will be done by a consultant hired by the dairies.

The agreement includes the monitoring of wells:

- 16 wells in addition to EPA's 7 wells, equaling a total of 23 wells
- 3 year review
- 8 years of quarterly monitoring

- Additional source control and monitoring may be required

In summary, there will be well samples from 178 homes. New monitoring wells will provide soil boring information. There will be quarterly groundwater monitoring data. There will be some pressure transducer data from some of the wells being monitored. There will be manure samples taken twice a year. Pre-planting and post-harvesting samples will be taken as well. Data will be collected for seepage rates on some lagoons.

The data will be available in monthly, annual and other technical reports prepared by the dairy consultants. The reports will be posted online at <http://yosemite.epa.gov/r10/water.nsf/gwpu/lyakimagw> and on the GWAC website.

There is still some information from the agreement that will not be released due to confidentiality.

Through the education and outreach work group an additional 250 homes will be tested outside of the EPA/Dairy Agreement.

## **VII. Working Group reports:**

### **Education and Outreach: (Orange documents)**

The education and outreach work group is working on finalizing an interlocal agreement with the Yakima Health District to perform work for the High Risk Well User Survey. A minimum of 250 wells will be surveyed. The \$50,000 budget will include administering the surveys, collecting well samples and obtaining certified lab testing.

A matrix is being created to support dissemination of the public information questionnaire. The matrix will identify potential groups, who could make contact with them and when. The education and outreach working group has been in contact with Yakima Valley Community College and Heritage University inviting student assistance with administering the public questionnaire. Heritage University has expressed interest in submitting a proposal for the project.

Surveys will be translated into Spanish.

The education and outreach work group will need the committee's assistance in putting together the complete matrix of community groups and professional organizations that could assist with providing outreach. Penny will send a message out to committee members requesting them to list community groups they belong to or believe would be good venues to pursue outreach. The EPO is also requesting that the GWAC members make the initial contact with the organizations.

### **Data Collection: (Purple documents)**

Yakima County has submitted requests for proposals to consulting firms to provide an initial characterization assessment. Interviews will be held the last week of May. A gap analysis is being discussed to see if it will fit the group's

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needs. Data collection provided comments to the education and outreach group on the Water Well Risk Assessment Survey, as the information will be helpful to the group.

**Irrigated Agriculture:**

Has not met and the working group chair indicated the group will not meet until its working structure is approved. Additionally, the group is at a standstill until Quality Assurance Plans are developed for deep soil testing. This led to a discussion of working group operations. It was noted that the committee has agreed to purpose, membership and meeting operations for working groups. Still unresolved is the issue of whether to have "core members" and how those would be defined. This issue will be placed on the June agenda. During the discussion, the interim chair of the working group noted his willingness to resign.

**Other groups:**

Chairs are still needed for Residential, Commercial, Industrial and Municipal; Regulatory Framework; and Funding working groups.

**VIII. Side note:**

Dr. Robert Stevens, a retired soil scientist from Washington State University's Prosser Irrigated Agriculture Research and Extension Center, will be presenting at the next CAFO/Livestock meeting on Thursday, May 23, 2013 from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. here at KDNA in Granger. Dr. Stevens will discuss the findings from his long experience with groundwater nitrate contamination. Other work groups are welcome to attend. There will be a phone connection.

GWAC website now has a meeting calendar: <http://www.yakimacounty.us/gwma>

**IX. Public Comment :**

No comments.

**X. Next Steps:**

- Penny will meet with Rand Elliott, Charlie McKinney and Vern Redifer to discuss committee representation and the Irrigated Agriculture working group.

**XI. 2013 Meeting Calendar:**

- June 20
- July 18
- August 15
- September 19
- October 17
- November 21
- December 19

Meeting calendar will be reassessed at the end of the year.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:50 pm.

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Meeting summary approved by the LYV Groundwater Advisory Committee on June 20, 2013.