





Ron Cowin	Roza-Sunnyside Joint Board of Control (alternate)		✓
Laurie Crowe	South Yakima Conservation District	✓	
Jim Newhouse	South Yakima Conservation District (alternate)		✓
Robert Farrell	Port of Sunnyside	✓	
John Van Wingerden	Port of Sunnyside (alternate)	✓	
Rand Elliott	Yakima County Board of Commissioners	✓	
Vern Redifer	Yakima County Board of Commissioners (alternate)	✓	
Gordon Kelly	Yakima County Health District	✓	
Dr. Troy Peters	WSU Irrigated Agriculture Research and Extension Center	✓	
Tom Eaton	U.S. EPA	✓	
Marie Jennings	U.S. EPA (alternate)		✓
Elizabeth Sanchez	Yakama Nation	✓	
Tom Ring	Yakama Nation (alternate)		✓
Kirk Cook	WA Department of Agriculture	✓	
Virginia "Ginny" Prest	WA Department of Agriculture (alternate)		✓
Andy Cervantes	WA Department of Health		✓
Ginny Stern	WA Department of Health (alternate)	✓	
Charlie McKinney	WA Department of Ecology	✓	
Tom Tebb	WA Department of Ecology (alternate)		✓
Lino Guerra	Hispanic Community Representative		✓
Rick Perez	Hispanic Community Representative (alternate)		✓

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14 **II. Welcome & Meeting Overview**

15 Moment of Silence

16 Introductions

17 **III. Committee Business: Penny Mabie**

18 The October 16, 2014 meeting summary was approved as presented.

19 Jean Mendoza noted she disagreed with an opinion expressed in the October 16, 2014  
 20 meeting that Yakima County has the experience necessary to effectively manage contracts.  
 21 The GWAC approved Jean’s request to distribute information to the committee supporting  
 22 her concerns and note her concerns in the meeting record.

23 **Facilitation Support for 2015 – Vern Redifer**

24 Vern announced that the contract with EnviroIssues expires at the end of December. Penny  
25 excused herself so the GWAC could discuss EnviroIssues' contract and facilitation services.  
26 Members felt that it was critical to have a facilitator at the outset and Penny was very  
27 instrumental in getting the group where it is today; however, members felt that the group  
28 is now established and no longer needs an outside facilitator. The money could be better  
29 spent on GWMA program efforts. Vern noted that he and Penny had discussed the  
30 contract and she feels that she is no longer needed on a day-by-day basis.

31 A member suggested that Jim Davenport act as the facilitator as he was already facilitating  
32 several of the working groups. Vern agreed, noting that Jim had volunteered to serve in  
33 this capacity. The group affirmed the decision to have Jim serve as the GWAC facilitator. It  
34 was further noted that the contract with EnviroIssues will not be renewed.

35 **Actions:** Yakima County will not renew EnviroIssues's contract. Jim Davenport will serve as  
36 the GWAC meeting facilitator.

37 **IV. Nutrient Loading Assessment Scope of Work (SOW) Version 1.2a dated December 3, 2014**  
38 **– Kirk Cook**

39 Kirk reviewed a Scope of Work that had been distributed to the committee. The intent of  
40 the assessment is to better understand the sources of nitrogen in the GWMA and provide a  
41 foundation on which the GWAC can make future recommendations about Best  
42 Management Practices and other actions to address groundwater contamination. He said  
43 the data working group discussed the SOW, he received many comments and made  
44 adjustments to the proposed SOW and there is still one dissenting opinion on the work  
45 group. Kirk noted that the Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) had  
46 acquired additional information to supplement the data. He suggested that the assessment  
47 may have to utilize peer-reviewed published reports. He reminded the group that the SOW  
48 is a living document and can be modified. There will be a lot more work done on the  
49 nutrient loading assessment this spring.

50  
51 A member asked if agricultural growers could be surveyed to get additional data for the  
52 assessment. Kirk noted that he assumed those who were sent the announcement about  
53 the Deep Soil Sampling (DSS) received the accompanying survey, which may yield  
54 information for the Nutrient Loading Assessment, but that it appeared few surveys had  
55 been submitted. Kirk suggested that perhaps it was not clear that participating in the  
56 survey did not obligate residents to participate in the sampling. Jim Trull pointed out that  
57 only those who agreed to participate in deep soil sampling were provided the survey; it did  
58 not go out with the letters inviting farmers to participate.

59  
60 A member noted there was probably concern that with the multitude of data being used  
61 and some incomplete data, it might end up with skewed results from either under-

62 estimating or over-estimating by one industry or another. This assessment is not easy to do  
63 since there isn't direct data; it will have to use other sources of data.

64

65 Kirk explained that this is only an approach; there will not be a lot of Deep Soil Sampling  
66 data; and the data needs to be as transparent as possible. He noted the SOW is iterative  
67 and discusses the kinds of data that can be used for the assessment. The data exists and  
68 just needs to be carefully collected and used. Kirk said the GWAC should expect an update  
69 at each meeting from Data Collection.

70

71 A member expressed concern that the assessment could be used to set an arbitrary  
72 standard based on averages of what soil needs are that might be inflexible.

73

74 Another concern was that the study was not being set up to be reliable if someone  
75 questions the data and the funding allocated to the effort was inadequate to produce  
76 more than superficial results.

77

78 Kirk noted that WSDA and Yakima County were putting more staff time into the project  
79 than what was called out in the GWAC budget. The budget for the proposed scope of work  
80 was designed to stay within the GWAC budget parameters; he agreed that a lot more  
81 investment will be needed and will be made outside of the GWAC budget.

82

83 Kirk discussed plans for peer review of the loading assessment. Kirk noted that Ginny Stern  
84 (DOH) would provide peer review assistance. Ecology offered Melanie Redding to assist  
85 with data collection and validity. Kirk noted he has also contacted the WSU Center for  
86 Sustainable Agriculture staff, and intends to have up to five peer reviewers from different  
87 agencies participate. He noted the Data Working Group could help be accountable to the  
88 GWAC for adaptive management of the scope; could help advise and inform the GWAC  
89 about how data gaps are filled; and act as a steering body for the assessment. Other  
90 working groups will also need to be involved as the assessment moves into different parts  
91 of data collection.

92

93 A member expressed concern with the GWAC relying on this effort, noting that no actual  
94 testing for groundwater data was being planned or discussed in the GWAC and that was a  
95 serious oversight in fully understanding the extent of the groundwater contamination  
96 issue. Kirk concurred with the need and added that the working group was beginning to  
97 discuss groundwater monitoring and needs to queue the issue up for the full committee to  
98 discuss, particularly regarding what a plan should include. This could inform discussions  
99 with Pacific Groundwater Group (PGG) on the Groundwater Monitoring Plan and how to  
100 direct their work.

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102 At the conclusion of the discussion, the GWAC agreed to approve the SOW in a consensus  
103 agreement.

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**Action:** Jim Davenport will schedule a meeting date with the Data Working group soon: probably after Christmas. PGG is onboard and he suggested that perhaps Pony could come to the next meeting.

**Recommendation:** The Data Working Group should act as the steering committee for the Nutrient Loading Assessment SOW and provide updates to the GWAC.

**Action:** Scope of Work approved.

**V. Working Groups - 2014 Status Reports**

Each working group chair reported on the progress their group has made on their task lists over 2014.

**Funding Working Group – Vern Redifer**

Nothing to report.

**Data Working Group – Kirk Cook**

Originally this working group was set up to be technical consultants to the other working groups; however, during the process, they met and dealt with topics such as the scope and need for a USGS proposal for a groundwater model. The Data Work Group met once after the USGS proposal. According to the meeting summary “the group was somewhat divided in the USGS proposal, as some supported it while others advised to proceed with caution if this approach was adopted.” The Data Working Group made a recommendation to the GWAC that the USGS effort would be revisited in the future.

The working group brought an interim final groundwater monitoring plan to the GWAC and it was approved. The group also worked with the Irrigated Agriculture working group (Irrigated AG) to develop a questionnaire with the Deep Soil Sampling. With Jim Davenport’s participation, the group now has productive meetings.

The group will be very active with the groundwater monitoring plan development in 2015 and will be working a lot on the Nutrient Loading Assessment into the spring.

**Education and Public Outreach (EPO) Working Group – Lisa Freund**

High Risk Well Assessment Surveys – Completed

EPO evaluations of the public questionnaire and high risk well assessment surveys were not completed as the working group could not come to agreement on an evaluation methodology.

- 138 Education Outreach Campaign – EPO/EPA New Mom campaign is ongoing with a flyer  
139 completed, printed and hand delivered by a working group member.
- 140 GWMA Educational Slides were approved and uploaded to the GWAC website to serve as a  
141 reference for GWAC members.
- 142 Abandoned Wells campaign – met with the Residential, Commercial, Industrial and  
143 Municipal (RCIM) working group to discuss the issue; GWAC approved the budget. It will be  
144 ongoing in 2015
- 145 GWMA Website update is in process.
- 146 No other requests received from the working groups.
- 147 **Irrigated Ag Working Group – Jim Trull**
- 148 Deep Soil Sampling is underway – The Scope of Work was completed in 2013; in the first  
149 half of 2014, the group resolved the confidentiality issue. 33 DSS surveys were completed  
150 in 2014.
- 151 Significant change was made due to concerns about data. It is generally agreed that 200 or  
152 more samples are desired. It was decided that these would be collected in four sampling  
153 periods. The first round of sampling is complete and the results have been sent to Vern  
154 Redifer. Vern will try to get the raw results out to the group.
- 155 They plan to encourage growers to fill out surveys even if they are not participating in the  
156 Deep Soil Sampling – Early 2015
- 157 **Livestock/CAFO Working Group – Charlie McKinney**
- 158 Their charge was to address all nitrogen sources related to dairies.
- 159 Manure field application – Irrigated Ag working group is addressing this issue through the  
160 deep soil sampling.
- 161 Corrals/Pens – Originally the working group thought to include this in the deep soil  
162 sampling; but since they have decided DSS is not the best place to do it because of the  
163 methodology being used. This effort is on hold as there is a need to develop a study design  
164 with PGG and the 2015 studies.
- 165 Plan and schedule presentation on Compost Regulations/Policy – An Ecology employee is  
166 currently working on this.

167 Seepage from Lagoons – They are waiting on lagoon data from EPA. The data has been  
168 collected; they are now waiting on the data to be available. Once they have acquired the  
169 data they will begin evaluating it.

170 Develop CAFO/Livestock education through the EPO – This task is on hold until after the  
171 study is complete.

172 **RCIM Working Group – Robert Farrell**

173 Three of the RCIM working group’s four tasks were about gathering data about potential  
174 nitrate sources.

175 Residential Septic Systems – Information was received from Yakima County.  
176 NPDES point source permit holders – Department of Ecology supplied this information.  
177 Underground Injection Control Wells – List of UIC wells received from Ecology.

178

179 The fourth task was to develop an education strategy with EPO to address risks associated  
180 with abandoned/improperly decommissioned wells – That effort is ongoing.

181 There was also concern expressed about known nitrate plumes within the GWMA  
182 boundary – Ecology is compiling a list of major nitrogen clean up sites.

183 The working group is also discussing deep soil sampling on RCIM sites. This may result in an  
184 addendum to the DSS scope. The working group will develop a proposal and then bring to  
185 the GWAC

186 There is also concern regarding loading – Ecology knows who the permit holders are but  
187 don’t know what the loadings are. Department of Ecology staff are helping identify how to  
188 acquire this information and then RCIM will discuss with the Data Working Group.

189 **Regulatory Framework Working Group – Tom Eaton**

190 The group is about 90% done gathering information on statutes, rules and ordinances  
191 related to existing regulations. This information will be provided to agencies as a guide for  
192 upcoming study sessions. The working group developed a list of questions for regulatory  
193 agencies to use as a guide to help them develop presentations for the upcoming study  
194 sessions.

195 *Study Sessions:* The purpose of the study sessions is to learn more about regulatory  
196 agencies with existing authorities regarding nitrates. What they are authorized to do and



197 how effectively the existing regulations address potential sources of nitrates in  
198 groundwater: what is working, what is not working and how the regulations or  
199 implementation might be improved.

200 The working group originally scheduled two study sessions on Existing Regulatory  
201 Infrastructure within the GWMA. The first session, on January 14, 2015, will address  
202 regulations specific to the RCIM sources. A second session is scheduled for February 11,  
203 2015 and will address regulations specific to irrigated ag sources and those applicable to  
204 CAFO/livestock. It was determined that the proposed agenda was too ambitious for two  
205 sessions and a third study session will be scheduled, likely at the end of January.

206 The working group suggests a similar look at incentive programs such as section 319 of the  
207 Clean Water Act. The chairman of the working group suggested some other working  
208 group take on that work – finding agencies that are using incentive programs and explore  
209 how well they are working. The funding working group was suggested a good place for this  
210 activity.

211 **VI. Proposal presented to the EPO Working Group by Health Sciences Service Learning**  
212 **Group with the University of Washington – Health Sciences Schools**

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214 Lisa described a proposal, which would partner a UW graduate class with the EPO to  
215 develop messaging for the Abandoned Wells outreach campaign. Following discussion, the  
216 GWAC agreed not to pursue the partnership in part because there wasn't time enough to  
217 fully shape the proposal before the start of the project; the proposal was lacking in detail  
218 regarding the purpose of the proposed tour and its relationship to abandoned wells, and  
219 concerns about GWAC oversight of the products produced by the class. In addition the  
220 member who opposed the project did not approve of the text book for the class.

221  
222 **VII. Public Comment:**

223 Commentor expressed concerns with assigning an objective amount on nitrogen  
224 depending on the crop and using it as a basis for regulation or standards. Under or over  
225 application will impact the production of nitrates. The commentor believes the amount of  
226 nitrogen applied should be left up to the farmer.



227 **VIII.Next Steps:**

228 Future agenda items: Groundwater testing discussions and providing input on committee  
229 expectations for PGG

230 The Data Working Group will act as the steering committee for the Nitrogen Loading  
231 Assessment and report back to the GWAC

232 Work planning for the upcoming year:

- 233 • Vern and Jim will meet with the working groups and identify a date to report back
- 234 to the GWAC (February/March 2015)

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236 **Next Meeting**

237 Thursday, February 19, 2015

238 **2015 Meeting Calendar – The GWAC approved the 2015 bimonthly meeting calendar:**

- 239 • February 19, 2015
- 240 • April 16, 2015
- 241 • June 18, 2015
- 242 • August 20, 2015
- 243 • October 15, 2015
- 244 • December 17, 2015 (tentative, if needed)

245 The meeting was adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

246

247 Meeting summary approved by the GWAC on February 19, 2015.