

1 **YAKIMA VALLEY GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT AREA ADVISORY COMMITTEE**
 2 **(GWAC)**

3 **MEETING SUMMARY**

4 **Thursday, October 15, 2015 – 5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.**

5 *Denny Blaine Boardroom*
 6 *810 East Custer Ave., Sunnyside, WA*
 7

8 *Note: This document is only a summary of issues and actions of this meeting. It is not intended to be*
 9 *a transcription of the meeting, but an overview of points raised and responses from Yakima County*
 10 *and Groundwater Advisory Committee members. It may not fully represent the ideas discussed or*
 11 *opinions given. Examination of this document cannot equal or replace attendance.*

12 **I. Call to Order**

13 **Roll Call:** The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Jim Davenport, Facilitator.

Member	Seat	Present	Absent
Stuart Turner	Agronomist, Turner and Co.,	✓	
Chelsea Durfey			✓
Bud Rogers	Lower Valley Community Representative Position 1	✓	
Kathleen Rogers	Lower Valley Community Representative Position 1 (alternate)	✓	
Patricia Newhouse	Lower Valley Community Representative Position 2	✓	
Sue Wedam	Lower Valley Community Representative Position 2 (alternate)	✓	
Doug Simpson	Irrigated Crop Producer	✓	
Jean Mendoza	Friends of Toppenish Creek	✓	
Eric Anderson	Friends of Toppenish Creek (alternate)		✓
Jan Whitefoot	Concerned Citizens of the Yakama Reservation		✓
Jim Dyjak	Concerned Citizens of the Yakama Reservation (alternate)		✓
Steve George	Yakima County Farm Bureau	✓	
Frank Lyall	Yakima County Farm Bureau (alternate)		✓
Jason Sheehan	Yakima Dairy Federation	✓	
Dan DeGroot	Yakima Dairy Federation (alternate)	✓	

Jim Trull	Roza-Sunnyside Joint Board of Control	✓	
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)	✓	
Ryan Ibach	Yakima Health District		✓
Dr. Troy Peters	WSU Irrigated Agriculture Research and Extension Center		✓
Lucy Edmondson	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	✓	
Marie Jennings	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (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	✓	
Sage Park	WA Department of Ecology		✓
Lino Guerra	Hispanic Community Representative	✓	
Rick Perez	Hispanic Community Representative (alternate)		✓
Jessica Black	Heritage University		✓

*via phone

14 **II. Welcome & Meeting Overview**

15 Facilitator Jim Davenport called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm.

16 Moment of Silence.

17 Charlie McKinney introduced new member Lucy Edmondson, Director of EPA Region 10. She is replacing Tom Eaton, who retired. He also stated that Kirk Cook has accepted a position in Bend Oregon and will be replaced by Ginny Prest as the Department of Agriculture primary representative. Jaclyn Hancock will serve as alternate. General introductions followed.

18

24 **III. Working Group Reports:**

25

26 **Data Collection Working Group – Melanie Redding, Chair**

27

28 Melanie stated that Data Collection shares the GWAC's goal to reduce nitrates concentrations
29 in the groundwater below the state drinking water standards. Their objective is to collect data
30 and monitor, identify problems, conclude measures to reduce groundwater contamination,
31 and educate. She explained the Nitrogen Loading Assessment, describing the relative sources
32 and where it is taking place.

33

34 **Ambient Monitoring Program.** The group is working with Steve Swope of Pacific
35 Groundwater Group (PGG) on the initial scope of work (design and selection) for the
36 installation of monitoring wells. The draft of the scope should be available for comment in
37 the next few weeks.

38

39 PGG is designing a separate study focusing on hot spots, trends and how they can support
40 other Ambient Groundwater Monitoring Programs; this work is still in the early stages.

41

42 Melanie continued that Kirk Cook, the Department of AG former lead, has accepted another
43 position. Others from AG and Yakima County have stepped up to assist in his absence. She
44 introduced Perry Beale, Department of AG, who is working on this project. Perry explained
45 that he is trying to set the “typical use rate” and apply that standard number for each crop
46 type.

47

48 The draft report Nitrogen Loading Assessment is due on October 16. It will be sent to the Data
49 Collection group for review before being forwarded to the GWAC. A final product is
50 anticipated in April 2016.

51

52 **Livestock/CAFO Working Group – Charlie McKinney**

53

54 No Report

55

56 **Irrigated Ag Working Group – Jim Trull**

57

58 The third round of deep soil sampling is underway at approximately 60 different fields. The
59 group has spent time reviewing data. They have had good discussions but not a lot of

60 conclusions can be drawn due to limited number of sample sites and in some cases
61 incomplete data from those sample sites. Samples can only be gained from those farmers
62 willing to participate.

63
64 The group is working on a spreadsheet containing a listing of crops in the GWMA by acreage;
65 crop yield; nitrogen removed in the harvested crop; nitrogen consumed in plant growth; and
66 nitrogen from all sources applied to grow the crop. The group is not sure of the use of the
67 project yet—it could be input to the Nitrogen Loading Assessment for Irrigated Agriculture
68 work or it could be used for validating the numbers in the Nitrogen Loading Assessment. For
69 now, the group is just collecting information.

70
71 **RCIM Working Group – Robert Farrell**

72
73 The best estimate of maximum nitrogen loading is 55 to 60 pounds per acre per year. The
74 group determined that Yakima County should provide the work group with an estimate of
75 the number of residential parcels in the GWMA with an area of between 2 and 10 acres that
76 may be hobby farms. This information is requested to help resolve if the use of a sliding
77 scale of nitrogen loading, based upon area of the hobby farm, is appropriate.

78
79 There are two large septic systems in Yakima County which are regulated by the
80 Department of Health, both are located in the GWMA. A septic system over 3,500 gallons is
81 considered to be a large septic system.

82
83 RCIM would like to take the information received from the well assessment surveying and
84 revisit each location with high nitrates looking at different uses of the property and/or
85 neighboring properties such as lawns, pastures, and drain fields on hobby farms.

86
87 **Regulatory Framework Working Group – Jean Mendoza**

88
89 Washington State has been operating without a CAFO General Permit. The State is trying to
90 find the best pathway to complete the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination Systems
91 (NPDES) permit update. The plan is to have a permit by June 2016.

92
93 The Yakima County Planning Division gave a presentation to the Regulatory group on the
94 SEPA and critical area's processes. There are exemptions and regulations to the Growth

95 Management Act through these processes. It will be several months of work before the
96 group is ready to present data to the GWAC.

97

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

99

100 **High Risk Well Assessment Survey Phase II.** The contract with the Yakima Health District to
101 conduct the well assessment surveying and sampling was approved by the County
102 Commissioners on September 8, 2015. A 900 piece direct mail campaign to households in
103 the GWMA was sent the same week inviting participation. The EPO has received 24
104 completed surveys and sampling results from the Yakima Health District. A total of 90
105 households in the GWMA have expressed interest in having their wells tested. EPO has
106 noticed a smoother process this time around: the survey instrument is cleaner and the
107 health district has a lot of experience conducting the surveys. The contract with the Health
108 District is for 200 completed surveys by February 2016. The group anticipates meeting that
109 goal.

110

111 Yakima County's website has a new look and in conjunction with that the GWMA website
112 has undergone several changes. The GWAC resource lists were evaluated and it was
113 determined many had no hits and others had dead links. EPO will be asking GWAC to scale
114 down the resource list.

115

116 Jim asked Lisa to clarify “a dead link,” and she explained it is a link that is no longer
117 connected to a site or document: when the user clicks on it, they receive an error notice
118 that the document or website cannot be reached.

119

120 Lisa provided instructions on how to access the new web page. She also explained that the
121 new program has options for users to receive automatic notifications to their smart phone or
122 email when a calendar, agenda or meeting summary has been posted. There is also an option
123 to unsubscribe at any time. The County will still be providing the GWAC with updates via e-
124 mail but plans to transition into the new system in early 2016.

125

126 **IV. Procedure for consideration of USGS proposal for presentation – Jim Davenport**

127

128 Jim Davenport distributed a letter from Dr. Matt Bachmann of USGS that he received recently.
129 The letter noted that USGS will issue a press release next week (week of October 19)
130 announcing its report on the particle tracking analysis model and explaining the results of this

131 work to the public. Matt offered to present the report to the GWAC and obtain its input on
132 how to determine the optimal locations for manure applications.

133
134 After discussion, a suggestion was made to table the conversation until the report came out
135 and was reviewed by the Data Collection working group. After Data Collection reviews the
136 report, it will be discussed by the GWAC. There were no objections to proceeding with the
137 suggestion.

138
139 Jim will respond to Matt with the GWAC's decision.
140

141 **V. Committee Business**

142 The committee approved the August 20, 2015 meeting summary as presented.

143
144 The group was asked if they wanted to keep the optional December 17 meeting on the
145 calendar. The group agreed to keep it on the calendar noting it can be cancelled if there are
146 insufficient agenda items for a meeting.

147
148 **VI. Public Comment**

149 A GWAC alternate pointed out that the Denny Blaine Board Room is a very convenient
150 location to hold the GWAC bi-monthly meetings. Lisa pointed out that the room has no phone
151 access. The group took a vote and decided they would like Lisa to check on the room's
152 availability in 2016 and book as many GWAC meeting dates as possible at the facility.

153
154 **VII. Next Meeting:**

- 155 • Thursday, December 17, 2015 5:00 PM
156 Location: Radio KDNA, 121 Sunnyside Ave, Granger, WA 98932

157
158
159 **VIII. Next Steps**

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161 The meeting was adjourned at 6:41 p.m.
162
163 Meeting summary approved by the GWAC on February 18, 2016.