

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

3 **MEETING SUMMARY**

4 **Thursday, November 17, 2016 – 5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.**

5 *Denny Blaine Boardroom*
 6 *810 East Custer Avenue, 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:** This meeting was called to order at 5:03 PM by Vern Redifer, 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)	✓	
Ron Cowin	Roza-Sunnyside Joint Board of Control	✓	
	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)	✓	
Dave Cole	Yakima Health District	✓	
Ryan Ibach	Yakima Health District (alternate)		✓
Dr. Troy Peters	WSU Irrigated Agriculture Research and Extension Center		✓
Lucy Edmondson	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	✓	
Peter Contreras	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (alternate)		✓
Elizabeth Sanchez	Yakama Nation		✓
Stuart Crane	Yakama Nation (alternate)	✓	
Virginia "Ginny" Prest	WA Department of Agriculture	✓	
Jaclyn Hancock	WA Department of Agriculture (alternate)		✓
Andy Cervantes	WA Department of Health	✓	
Ginny Stern	WA Department of Health (alternate)		✓
David Bowen	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		✓
Matt Bachmann	USGS	✓	

13 **II. Welcome, Meeting Overview and Introductions:** Vern Redifer welcomed everyone and
 14 reviewed the agenda. There were no additions. Everyone introduced themselves and
 15 spent a moment in silence preparing for the meeting.

16
 17 **III. Approval of the Ambient Groundwater Monitoring (AMN) Plan, Discussion of Other
 18 Monitoring Objectives and the Budget:** Vern explained that Melanie was unable to attend
 19 the GWAC meeting but had prepared a power point presentation that he would narrate.
 20 The presentation served as an overview of the recent Data Collections Working Group
 21 meeting which had allowed everyone to voice any concerns or questions they might have.
 22 In the presentation Melanie explained that the group would need to consider four different
 23 topics: the network itself, other monitoring initiatives (which the Data group had narrowed
 24 down to two additional priorities – common water supply and hot spot identification), the
 25 budget and the Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) which needs to be updated as it was

26 done in 2014. Melanie then outlined the concerns raised at the meeting and noted the
27 concessions and agreements that resulted. Further, she believed this group needed to
28 consider and talk about all four components collectively. Vern agreed. He believed
29 confusion had resulted because the topics hadn't been discussed simultaneously and
30 accordingly invited the members of the GWAC to begin their discussion. Vern also pointed
31 out several maps he had provided which were posted around the room as he felt these
32 maps would aid in the group's understanding and discussion.

33

34 Members voiced the following concerns:

- 35 1. There was no need to test drains and the cost of this testing could fund two or three
36 additional purpose built wells or the testing of domestic wells.
- 37 2. Other GWMA's utilized existing public and rural domestic wells for testing rather than
38 building purpose built wells; it was significantly less expensive and increased the number of
39 wells that could be tested.
- 40 3. The group should test common water supply aquifers.
- 41 4. The value of data increases when the number of test sites is greater.
- 42 5. Existing wells will give the group information on trends more quickly.
- 43 6. Only one well in the AMN was in a UGA while there were several UGAs in the GWMA.
- 44 7. They were not opposed to the AMN plan if a concurrent plan is ready to go.

45

46 Responses to the concerns raised were:

- 47 1. There would be full control of the wells which provided long-term certainty for testing.
- 48 2. There was value in having the data at first water as deeper wells won't reveal where the
49 contamination comes from.
- 50 3. Because of the previous work done to gather information through well head
51 assessments another 250 data points are available which were plotted on the maps that
52 Vern provided.
- 53 4. The AMN plan does not stand by itself but as a supplement to other monitoring
54 initiatives.
- 55 5. Other GWMA's didn't have the funds to consider purpose built wells.
- 56 6. Purpose built wells at shallow depths will reveal changes to the groundwater quickly.
- 57 7. Building consistency and location randomness of the wells is important.
- 58 8. The money has already been set aside for this plan.
- 59 9. Monitoring the drains would be a relatively inexpensive option.

60

61 During the discussion the group looked at the budget document Vern had prepared. He
62 pointed out that while the group had spent \$1,207,957, there remained available
63 \$1,156,043 through the end of September; it was noted later that approximately \$10-
64 15,000 remained outstanding from September. Of that, \$332,000 was left in the
65 contingency budget. Also, of \$443,000 allocated to deep soil sampling only \$288,692 had
66 been spent. The group could decide if this was still a priority as only 34 fields were tested in
67 the spring of 2016. In addition, \$60,000 was set aside to do dairy pens and manure storage
68 sampling which the GWAC had not done and \$10,000 for a lagoon assessment based on EPA
69 data. The group could also decide if these items were still priorities. Vern did state that he
70 does need \$83,000 for administrative funding for Yakima County, but the group could
71 consider redoing its budget taking these other things into consideration. When questioned,
72 Vern added that grant money could not be paid in advance to contractors; the work must
73 be performed by December 2017.

74
75 The group also discussed testing the area downstream from the dairy cluster which is
76 currently not in the AMN plan as they are being tested per the Consent Order by the EPA on
77 County owned sites making testing information available to the County. Some members
78 were concerned about a bias while others noted that these purpose-built wells had been
79 examined and vetted by the EPA. Concern was also voiced about building purpose built
80 wells if the testing of these wells would end December 2017 when the GWMA's mandate
81 and funding ends. David Bowen stated that, in coordination with Yakima County as the lead
82 entity, the Department of Ecology would continue to monitor the wells as it is the first
83 priority in their business plan. A member inquired as to who would decide whether to
84 pursue active or passive monitors. Vern believed the recommendation had been for passive
85 testing and he would make the decision. Passive monitors cost less in the short term and
86 active monitors cost less in the long term. Neither is better than the other; the real cost is
87 the sampler. A member also wanted to know when the group would formulate a plan to
88 analyze the data acquired from these wells. Both the USGS and WSDA had volunteered to
89 do the analysis previously. David also noted that this could be included in his
90 Environmental Assessment Program. The group then wondered how quickly they could
91 move forward with common water supply testing. Vern indicated that the QAPP would
92 need to be refined first. A member pointed out that Benton County was just finishing its
93 QAPP which could be used as a reference. Vern said that once the plan was in place the
94 group would be able to vote on it at the following GWAC meeting and when approved
95 everything else would fall into place quickly.

96

97 Vern then asked the group if anyone didn't want to proceed with the AMN plan as
98 proposed. Two members weren't ready to proceed. Both felt that plans for purpose built
99 wells and existing wells should proceed simultaneously to fill in holes. Upon further
100 discussion, the group agreed to authorize Vern to contact contractors and develop a sample
101 plan to monitor common water supply and develop a sampling QAPP for the group to
102 consider at next month's meeting. The group could also consider who will analyze the data.
103 With that the group agreed to move ahead with the AMN plan.

104

105 **IV. Budget:** Although the group had already discussed the budget Vern did not feel the group
106 had enough information to make the decisions necessary to amend the budget. Vern
107 suggested the group address the budget again at the next meeting. In the interim he
108 encouraged everyone to review the budget handout and consider what funds could be
109 reallocated (as noted above) and what items needed to be funded. Specifically, was there a
110 need for deep soil sampling? A member was also concerned whether the group needed to
111 do more in terms of communicating with the public.

112

113 **V. Working Group Reports:** Vern gave the working group chairs an opportunity to report, but
114 given the lateness of the hour no one felt it was necessary. Vern stated that he had
115 attended most of the working group meetings and felt they were making progress.

116

117 **VI. Committee Business:** The group approved both the August 18 and October 20, 2016 GWAC
118 meeting summaries as presented. Jim Davenport commended the group for its courteous
119 interaction and suggested the group keep this model for discussion with Vern facilitating.

120

121 **VII. Public Comment:** The public expressed gratification for all the group had accomplished.
122 The meeting was adjourned at 6:52 PM.

123

124 **VIII. Next Steps:**
125 -Vern to contact contractors and develop a sampling QAPP for the group to consider.
126 -Move ahead with the Ambient Groundwater Monitoring Network plan.
127 -Move ahead to consider how the data from the AMN will be analyzed.
128 -Members to review the budget allocation worksheet giving consideration to what projects
129 need to be funded and what funds could be reallocated for discussion at next month's
130 meeting.

131

132 **IX. Next Meeting:** the group decided to convene the GWAC meeting scheduled for December
133 15, 2016, 5:00-7:00 PM. Location: *Radio KDNA, 121 Sunnyside Avenue, Granger, WA.*

Groundwater Management Area (GWMA):

The purpose of the GWMA is to reduce nitrate contamination concentrations in groundwater below state drinking water standards

134

135 **X. Meeting Summary:** approved by the GWAC on December 15, 2016.