

Meeting Notes
LYV-GWMA Implementation
Thursday, October 12, 2023
1:00 PM to 3:00 PM

- 1:00-1:10: Introductions
- 1:10 – 1:40: Shawn Magee – YHD Open House, Sunnyside WA, October 26th
 - The focus of the Open House is to share survey results and data collected from various focus groups.
 - Jocelyn will send out an invite to this group and respective agencies who would like to attend and have a meeting prior to the 26th to discuss what the Open House is going to look like.
 - Working on a contract with Yakima County Public Services. This contract will allow YHD to visit homes and sample their water in response to the mailers sent out by YCPS.
- 1:40- 2:00: Sheryl Howe –
 - FOTC request and options
 - The group agreed that a quarterly webinar/meeting open to the public would be our best option. We can focus quarterly meetings on a particular aspect of our work, provide questions ahead of the meeting, and have folks register to provide a written statement.
 - Implementation Activities – Update
 - The interagency agreement was signed to fund the Project Coordinator position for the GWMA through July 1, 2025. The responsibilities for this role include:
 - Plan and moderate the monthly Implementation Committee meetings.
 - Provide oversight of the groundwater management program.
 - Coordinate and leverage the efforts across all the various agencies involved.
 - Provide a quarterly report to the EPA regarding the activities of this group and the action items.
 - Work to maintain and establish relationships with the local and state contacts and partners.
 - Identify and pursue funding for the action items.
 - Assist with building a library on the website.
 - The Implementation Schedule submitted to Ecology stated that SYCD obtained some Mid-Columbia fisheries grants for habitat restoration. The schedule also stated that SYCD will be seeking some long-term funding through RCPP and SCC funding. Sheryl offered to help Rodney with this and will schedule time in the coming weeks to discuss.

- Damon Roberts (Ecology) Update on decommissioning abandoned wells within the LYV GWMA – Reaching out to our Water Resources group – Ecology is trying to team up with the DOH on this work. Funding is available through DOH, but Ecology does not have the staff capacity to do the work. Damon will look internally to see if they can manage the work and will speak with DOH too. Otherwise, will have to look at other funding alternatives.
- Melanie and Sheryl will begin working to develop metrics to evaluate source control efforts. The metrics will be presented to the group in January of 2025 – Example metric: “Over a 10-year period of time we see a 3% decrease in average nitrate concentrations in the area.”
- Sheryl – My former position as DOH hydrogeologist is open for recruitment.
- Communications Plan – Update
 - We have a communications sub-group. The group met and identified an individual they felt would be well suited as a point of contact for the LYV GWMA. If the person agrees, we will present this candidate at our November meeting for the full committee to decide.
 - The Communications Plan was shared with EPA last month. EPA responded that we are conflating the work of the GWMA with what EPA is calling “safe water” – they would like these separated. Sheryl will remove all references to the safe water work. This will make it a GWMA communications plan. The safe water communications plan is on hold. Sheryl will share the updated GWMA plan at the November meeting.
 - The communications sub-group discussed the products we want to create that showcase all the great work we are doing. We thought it would be a great opportunity at this Open House to get some feedback on this.
- 2:00 – 2:50: Group Roundtable - Agency share on activities they are working on.
 - South Yakima Conservation District – Rodney & Savanna
 - Wrapped up most all our projects from last time.
 - Working with the team at WSDA, we’ve had a plethora of inspections at dairy farms in our valley.
 - Secured a comprehensive nutrient management planner, who is certified in Washington state. She will be assisting the district and landowners in the area to update their plans so they can request and receive funding.
 - We are starting our pivot sprinkler conversion project just north of Sunnyside on 38 acres. Will be underway for the next 2-3 months. The landowner was a monocrop. Switching over to crop rotation.
 - We continue to work on the property in Granger that is the habitat restoration project we are working with Mid-Columbia fisheries.
 - There will be 7,000 cottonwood trees planted on approx. 86 acres of selective grazing area to protect habitat.

- Most likely sticking with Landau and Associates for some of the sampling.
- Looking for a full-time planner and will be posting that position here in the coming weeks. Someone familiar with nutrient loading/nitrates.
- Sustainable Farm and Fields Grant – working with a dairy producer who is switching from conventional tilling methods to strip-till and reduce till. He has about 1300 acres from conventional to strip-till/no till.
- Yakima County Public Services – Lisa Freund
 - Today I will be talking about the \$850K funding that we received from the legislature that is being channeled through the State Department of Health. It checks two boxes. Recommendation #8 and #15.
 - What we are doing with the \$850k:
 - We did reach out and go back to the folks that received reverse osmosis systems from us back in 2011 through another nitrate campaign. That was 161 households. We have been able to reach 39% (63 households out of 161)
 - With the RO system, we called, emailed, and mailed. Of that group, 63 responded perhaps because of our persistent procedures. 13 respondents opted out and requested not to be contacted by us again. We found that direct mail was okay as opposed to blind-cold calling right off the bat. Most of the responses were from follow-up phone calls after the mail was sent out. Concern was mostly about the RO systems and ongoing maintenance. Most liked the RO system and we have good data about all of it. Annual cost for maintenance for these units would be the cost of the filters for these RO units.
 - We are working on the contract now with the Yakima Health District – Shawn already mentioned this – to conduct the well sampling surveys and testing. I won't go into great detail other than we are keeping it consistent. We should get some pretty good information out of this and are thrilled YHD is taking this on throughout the duration of the grant (June 2025).
 - EPA asking us to refresh data. We now have households that are new since 2011, over 600 new homes.
 - Culligan water contract related to those RO systems, we wanted the ability to have Culligan perform maintenance checks on those systems from 2011 to see how well they are working. They will collect a sample and will get certified lab results.
 - There are 10 households that would like a technician to come out and service the RO units. There was a

misconception that the free maintenance service would be followed with some kind of expense to them in a way.

- Yakima Health District – Shawn Magee
 - Lisa and I have covered the majority of what we had to update the group with.
 - We are in the process, we have a draft Group B ordinance, and eventually that will go to the Board of Health for review and potential approval. What this will do is give us local authority to approve Group B systems to provide treatment. Hoping to have this completed by January. It will be led by our Drinking Water Program lead and our Public Health Program Manager will be heavily involved in it as well. Maybe in the future we will be able to expand our staff. The primary focus will be getting it in place so we can work with Group B systems that need treatment.
 - Washington State Department of Agriculture – *No update*
 - Washington State Department of Ecology
 - Setting up the transition to annual groundwater monitoring of the 170 wells
 - Moving forward on the planning for the deep soil sampling at the WSU Prosser Ag site
 - The latest CAFO permit requires a groundwater monitoring plan and implementation of this plan. Still receiving plans from our permittees.
 - Washington State Department of Health
- 2:50 – 3:00: Other
 - Next meeting: Thursday, November 9th, 1:00-3:00
 - Adjourn