

Draft Notes

- LYV-GWMA Implementation Committee

Thursday, August 8, 2024

1:00 PM to 3:00 PM

Teams Meeting

- All – EPA Quarterly Meeting update- Takeaways-
 - Follow up with a comprehensive plan – GWMA, Safe Water work, Nitrate mitigation plan. We had asked for EPA to recognize the GWMA plan as it is. Maybe we should ask the EPA what is missing from our existing EPA plan.
 - Want to recognize and show gratitude for us as a GWMA team.
 - We're making substantial progress. There's strength in this group and it's important that we recognize that.
 - The EPA as well as their attorneys are looking at this through a legal risk lens. They're doing what they can and the agency is doing what they can to reduce their risk. Because of that, . It's unfortunate, and it's moving against the progress we've made as a collaborative team.
 - Things have seemed to have gotten more legislator and governor attention which is good. That will help with future funding. We can express our concerns when we need to with the EPA and continue working on our plan and keep moving forward. It's locally driven and this partnership is critical. We do not want to jeopardize that partnership. Bottom line, if we don't agree with what they are proposing, let's say so.
 - Thought it was helpful to invite Blithe and Elizabeth from the Tribe to the meeting.
 - GWMA's not the only thing we need these partnerships for. This is something we can talk about.
- **Holly – EPR Coordinator and COEES hires and start dates** – Anchee Durben is our new Community Env Ed Outreach Specialist, EP4 Coordinator is hired awaiting final paperwork approval.
- Bright idea – Tour of GWMA and partners with Ricardi Duvil (EPA NO3 Coordinator) what are we doing, what does the area look like, how are we getting this work done, how can EPA help? And – what does one comprehensive plan look like?
 - What I am hoping is to tell the story. Tell me what you think would be important to include in a day with the EPA down in the lower Yakima Valley:
 - Kyrre - Inviting them to see what we're doing. For their awareness primarily and not their participation. We cannot sacrifice those partnerships and trust with the landowners. We are working closely with South Yakima Conservation District –

showcase or demonstrate the deep sample monitoring or use of irrigation moisture sensors. Ricardi should be interested in this considering he's an engineer. Of course dairy farms and dairy compliance – show off their proactive nature of their farms and what they are doing. We have a lot of data we collect, performance measures, so perhaps a presentation.

- Rodney/Savannah – Deep soil sampling equipment demonstration.
- Damon – Community engagement keeps coming up so it would be nice to have something tied to that as part of the tour. Eli might have some ideas. On a field tour, show some of the different things that we have done. Eli and communication leads can put something together.
- Melanie – Talk about the monitoring pilot project. The ~~re~~ outreach portion is very important. Talk about what we've done from the very beginning until now. I don't want the first 14 years of forming the GWMA to get lost or glossed over.
- Holly - We can show charts, data, tour in the van, use the time to tell our story and show what we're all about and the community that we're serving. Everything we do is something to talk about and to share. Whatever that would look like.
- David – While out and about highlight things that EPA doesn't really have a full scope of, such as the size of the GWMA.

- 2:00– 2:55: Group Roundtable - Agency share on activities they are working on.
- Washington State Department of Agriculture
 - Obadiah – WSDA is continuing to do our work out in the field, inspections of permitted CAFO facilities, licensed dairies and technical assistance for other irrigated ag producers. No documented discharges recently.
 - Continue meeting and doing outreach – build strong relationships so we can have honest conversations with the growers.
 - While doing these meetings with farmers, the larger farmers have the means and resources to do better farming. The small farms are the ones who don't have a lot of education or resources to do better farming. Been making a point to visit those farmers.
- Washington State Department of Ecology
 - Ambient groundwater monitoring network – we finished annual sampling, just got our last data packet back and get data into EIM as soon as possible. Noticed we are short staffed on this. We will be able to hire an HG3 to help us out with this.
 - Land use and groundwater, getting the QWAP together – will be sending draft out to several people on this call for their review. Trying to get this moving in the right direction.

- Non-point staff started this week at Ecology's Central Regional office, getting them up and going. Will be reaching out to Kyrre and Obadiah and perhaps Rodney so we can look at how to approach things in the lower Yakima Valley.
 - Damon and Eli Went down to lower valley to record podcast with a news station on how to get their water tested and a couple other things – we will share that with the group, not sure of the ETA on that yet.
 - Heather – Two new CAFO applications in. Still anticipating 2 more.
- Washington State Department of Health
 - Hiring staff, moving contracts through, requesting Decision Package for next leg session to continue safe water work.
- South Yakima Conservation District
 - Working on outreach program again. Now simplifying the brochure and working on a trifold flyer to mail out.
 - Phase 2 & 3 the cultural monitoring resource plans completed. Phase 1 hiccup with funding the plan but we are getting that corrected.
 - Updated our call before you dig number so we can streamline that process.
 - Started an irrigation water management training in the office to facilitate the two new staff members – the various different ways to monitor soil moisture and which type of tools in the field work best to collect instantaneous data.
- Yakima County Public Services
 - Things are continuing to do well. RO contracts signed 138. Systems installed 9. Door to door visits 763. Not much more to add, it's going good.
- Yakima Health District
 - Still working on the drinking water initiative. Valley Environmental is getting out there a bit. Completed 318 surveys and site evaluations, results back for 309 of those. 146 houses still waiting for site visits. Lots of people requesting the evaluation.
 - Still on schedule to meet the deliverable for the contract by end of 2024. Will engage with Yakima County on next steps with what's in the contract and target areas.
 - Asked/Told that we need to build out “the group B water system universe” within the lower Yakima Valley GWMA – directive given by Ricardi. Start working on getting those sampled and what a plan could look like for working on those systems. Kate and I working on a list.
 - No update yet on the EPA grant, still working on contract stuff. Getting closer to having agreements in place so we can begin the outreach work and engagement.