

LYV-GWMA Implementation Committee

Thursday, March 13, 2025

1:00 PM to 3:00 PM

Teams Meeting

Attendees: Robert Eastman (DOH), Kyrre Flegge (AGR), Eli Cruz-Brito (ECY), Damon Roberts (ECY), Holly Myers (DOH), Jocelyn Castillo (YHD), David Haws (YCPS), David Taylor (Dairy Federation), Melanie Redding (ECY), Shawn Magee (YHD), Commissioner LaDon Linde, Heather Pat (ECY), Lisa Freund (YCPS), Rodney Heit (SYCD), Bailey Draper (SYCD), Savannah Crnick (SYCD)

- 1:05 – 1:50: Group Roundtable - Agency Share on Current Activities
 - Washington State Department of Agriculture
 - Working on gathering the rest of our agency's feedback on our Nitrate Source Control from the Agriculture Action Plan - As we put this together, we will bring this back to the group for review.
 - Washington State Department of Ecology
 - Melanie Redding -
 - Getting geared up to do our annual sampling for the 170 wells for the ambient groundwater monitoring network – April – June
 - Continuing our work out at WSU for the land use and groundwater project. Will be deep soil sampling.
 - Eli Cruz-Brito – Community Engagement Updates
 - A resource fair event in Sunnyside this week and another event in Granger at KDNA.
 - A few more health fair events are coming up at the end of the month in Wapato, Sunnyside, and Grandview.
 - Participated in a conference in Yakima with various students from multiple schools talking to them about what we do at Ecology and about wells.
 - The Abandoned Wells Project is slowly going, but we are moving forward and will share more information as it comes in.

- Heather

- I just placed a [link](#) (in chat) to one of the stories that came out yesterday about one of the cluster dairies so you can read it.
- I did receive annual reports from all the permittees – there are several that have nutrient budgets that need to be approved.
- Getting ready to send out warning letters and notice of violations to pretty much all the permittees to update their records.
- We received the summary judgement for the permittees appeal. We were remanded so we must go back and redo parts of the permit.

- South Yakima Conservation District

- Savannah -

- Our new deep soil sampling drill arrived today. Tomorrow Rodney or Bailey will be picking up the new trailer for the sampling rig. We do not foresee using the new drill for the full campaign this spring since we need to get used to operating it, but we are planning to use it this fall along with the Giddings deep soil sampling machine.
- We have 27 fields right now that are set to be sampled in the next couple of weeks.
- We submitted our data from the last 16 fields we did in the fall to WSDA. We will be discussing this data coming up, but we are in the beginning stages of working through it.
- Working with our consultants Landau Associates – Apparently Northwest Agricultural Consultants, the lab we use in Kennewick, has difficulty running the Quality Assurance / Quality Control duplicate samples, so we will be switching to Soiltest Labs (Soiltest Farm Consultants, Inc.) in Moses Lake.
- WSDA's WaSHI (Washington Soil Health Initiative) has a webinar series called Making Soils Data Actionable that I will be giving a short 10 min presentation for on March 25. The webinar will be recorded.
- There is an irrigation project that we are starting and NRCS is funding the major portion of it. It's a conversion from a furrow-irrigated field to a pivot sprinkler system. The field is about 47.5 acres. NRCS was able to provide cost share for the pivot portion of the field. We were able to provide cost share for the solid set sprinkler corners for the field. This will be taking place this spring and will be done by June 30th.

- Yakima County Public Services

- Lisa Freund

- Update on Safe Drinking Water Initiative – We are almost to the last quarter, funding expires June 30th. We have not applied for continued funding. Meanwhile, David Haws may have mentioned this at a prior meeting, we have reached every household in the GWMA to offer the minimum of free well testing, and alternative of bottled water until an RO system could be installed. Working with the Health District, we have collectively agreed that April 22 will be bottled water cut off, because the point of the program is to get them on RO systems, not relying on bottled water.
 - Next three and a half months, we will do a last chance mailing of post cards. Should hit 4500 of the 5600 households at least.
 - Our staff are taking phone calls and contacting non-responsive households.
 - We have also reached out to the Clean Drinking Water Project but have not heard back.
 - Will be having a meeting with the attorneys with Cow Palace regarding updates on where we are at on the Safe Drinking Water Initiative. In talking with one of their attorneys the other day, he had been in conversation with the DOJ, and according to him, the DOJ told him that our program was deficient relative to the standards they expected. EPA has been in lockstep with us and knew what the program was and has never called out deficiencies. They also said that the county was unwilling to work with DOJ or EPA, which is not true.
 - Commissioner LaDon Linde – In my conversation with what I have seen, I know there are people that are cheering the fact that the Cow Palace is closing their doors. They have, in their opinion, done everything that the EPA has asked them to do, they have that documentation and it's not enough. We have service industries that rely on them so there will be a ripple effect.

- Yakima Health District

- Jocelyn Castillo -

- In addition to what Lisa shared regarding the bottled water delivery, we are working to transition households out of bottled water and to get an RO system. With the process we have established with Yakima County, we have been able to get more applications in and households signed up for installations.
 - EJ Grant – Right now we have continued to train 4 outreach specialists on a well water safety curriculum that we have developed so that they can increase their

knowledge of water safety topics. They will be going out into the field to shadow one of our environmental health specialists where they will learn how to collect water samples and do visual inspections of the well. It will better prepare them for educating households on how to assess their own wells and water quality as well as well maintenance. We want to make sure we give households the tools so they can be part of protecting their water as well.

- I've been working more closely with Heritage University to see how we can do more community engagement with households on the reservation. Considering doing some focus groups in that area to better understand community concerns and priorities around well water safety. Nothing has been scheduled at this time, but we will continue to work on that and aiming for something to be scheduled in April.
- Shawn Magee – As we get towards the end of the safe drinking water initiative timeline, we are focusing in on the households that had high nitrates as well as positive for coliform. Following up with them on disinfection procedures and whether they need assistance. Mostly encouraging them to get this done and get a re-sample done as the deadline for the end of bottled water delivery is fast approaching. We are supporting them in getting their applications for RO systems in sooner vs later.
- Washington State Department of Health
 - Robert Eastman -
 - Thanks for all the partner updates to the 1st Quarter EPA report and just reminding everyone that we're just reporting on the first two months of January and February because of the due date of when EPA wanted this report. Hopefully we will have a slightly longer span for this next report.
 - Holly Myers has recently met with Ricardi (EPA) to discuss a new meeting schedule to develop the LYV comprehensive nitrate plan. It sounds like we will be following the Oregon plan.
 - In December we sent out a letter/notice to same farm exemption farms and after the legislative session is over in April, we will be working with the Dairy Federation to tweak the wording in that letter/notice and re-sending that out.
 - Anchee – Just wanted to update the group that we were able to get the contract in place for the city of Sunnyside to do bottled water pick up. That started March 4th and is available every Tuesday. Unfortunately, no one showed up. Yakima County and Yakima Health District were doing great at informing people of this bottled water pick up but as of right now, it does not look like people are utilizing this.
- Dairy Federation – *Not present at meeting*

- 1:50 – 2:10: Partner Usage of Logos for Communications
Will discuss at next month's meeting
- 2:10 – 2:30: Feedback on LYV Sustainability Plan – I have attached David Haws' sustainability plan for your reference.

Q: Kyrre – How do you envision the Sustainability Plan?

A: Lisa – The Sustainability Plan is part of our contract with DOH, so it is part of the Safe Drinking Water Initiative funding package. It is just related to the safe drinking water, well testing, outreach and so forth. The Sustainability Plan focuses on ongoing sustainable funding and then a lead to the effort of the Safe Drinking Water Initiative.

- 2:30 – 2:40: Set Meeting Date for Implementation Committee Subgroup to meet – will doodle poll and figure out best time for group
- Next meeting: Thursday, April 10, 1:00-3:00 pm