

LYV-GWMA Implementation Committee

Thursday, November 13, 2025

1:00 PM to 3:00 PM

Attendees: Damon Roberts (ECY), David Haws (YCPHS), Anchee Durben (DOH), Holly Myers (DOH), Obadiah Sheriff (AGR), Rodney Heit (SYCD), Savannah Crnick (SYCD), Scott Tarbutton (ECY), Heather Patt (ECY), Commissioner LaDon Linde (Yakima County), Shawn Magee (YHD), Rob Eastman (DOH), Kyrre Flege (AGR), Steven Huckett (ECY), Kait Wolterstorff (YHD), David Taylor (Dairy Federation)

Notetaker: Katie Groeneveld (DOH)

- 1:00-1:05: Introductions
- 1:05 – 1:50: Group Roundtable Discussion - Agencies Share on Current Activities
 - Washington State Department of Agriculture
 - Kyrre – Not a lot of updates. Document writing and planning. Working on updating our inspection processes for various on-farm infrastructure: waste storage ponds and compost areas. Prioritizing dairy infrastructure where nutrients are concentrated and stored, as identified as potential sources of nitrate in our previous nitrogen loading assessment.
 - Link from Kyrre in chat: [Nitrogen Loading Assessment | Washington State Department of Agriculture](#)
 - Obadiah – Have a few inspections to complete by the end of this year.
 - Washington State Department of Ecology
 - Damon - Not much to update. Working on parts of the nitrate reduction plan and nonpoint sources.
 - Steve – Working on irrigated ag stuff related to the Nitrate Reduction Plan. Focusing on protocols and strategies for conducting field assessments in the Granger/Outlook SIA.
 - Scott – Completed 2025 annual groundwater monitoring and sent out the provisional result letters to well owners and hasn't gotten any responses yet. Completed the soil sampling for the land use study at the WSU IAREC.

- Heather – Sent Rob her updates. “I’m still trying to get groundwater plans submitted, and I’ve held 2 meetings so far to work on the groundwater monitoring conditions of the CAFO permit. The folks involved include WSU, DOH, ECY, & WSDA. We are looking for additional methods/tools to be able to monitor groundwater at all permitted CAFOs.”
- South Yakima Conservation District
 - Rodney and Savannah – Both sampling drills were used this last week to sample 13 fields. We sampled several pastures, alfalfa, wheat, fallow ground, cherries, and grapes. We also sampled a rangeland field that has never been farmed. We had three vineyards planned, but one of them had too small of rows for the machine to fit in. Very successful week, and we were able to avoid the rain. We had to reschedule with the consultant last week and still got everything done that needed to be done. We are also planning 4-5 small irrigation projects for this biennial grant cycle.
- Yakima County Public Services
 - David – Not much to update. GIS did help share some mapping stuff. He has an employee who is starting to do more with groundwater. Hoping that will help them out.
- Yakima Health District
 - Shawn – Continuing to work on the onsite sewage program and getting their license.
- Washington State Department of Health
 - Rob - Hope to have our SDWI program going by December 1. Will also extend the contract for the bottled water pickup at Sunnyside until June 30, 2026. Finally got the hotline number from Yakima up and running on our side now. The number goes directly to Rob.
 - Anchee – Nothing to add right now.
 - Holly – We are in good shape, and thank you, Rob, for getting the hotline number switched over to us.
- EPA – *Not present at meeting*
- Roza/Sunnyside Valley Irrigation District – *Not present at meeting*
- Dairy Federation

- Isn't seeing any hot topics coming up for the next Leg Session.
- 1:50 – 2:00: Nitrate Reduction Plan Updates
 - Damon – We need to include some time for the ECY executive team to review it before going to EPA. Needs to talk to Ricardi to see when he wants it. Figured there might be some extensions with the government shutdown.
 - Holly – We may need to build in more weeks, as this may need to go up to the Governor's Office too. Should send the final draft up to the Governor's Office after it goes to Ricardi for his review.
 - Damon – Should this be a publication? Yes.
 - Kyrre – His team is probably used to his short turnaround tasks, but he hopes Ricardi will give them a little longer. Agree that we should do it as a publication. Also wants it to go up to his executive management only once, so agrees that it should go to them after Ricardi reviews and gives his thoughts.
 - Damon – Also need to decide which agency's publication rules we will follow.
 - Holly – Whichever agency is followed for publications, we should make sure the other agencies' communications teams are involved or told about it.
 - Rob – Working on our parts of the draft plan. Have our headers done and are working on the rest. Did pull things out of the GWMA Plan and EJ grant paperwork, and would like to have someone else review those parts.
- 2:00 – 2:20: Continued Group Discussion on Recommendation 56 - **Make shallow (1, 2, 3 foot) soil testing reports prerequisites for funding, lending or building permits. (Washington State Legislature)**
 - Damon – This is the recommended action connected to building/construction. The implementation team needs to determine if this is feasible with the current budget or if more money is needed, and who is going to bring it to the Legislature. What is it doing for us? How is it addressing the nitrate issues?
 - Holly – What are we going to do with all of the recommendations yet to be started on the list? Some of them had no votes or one or two votes. Can we say whether this one is still on or now off the table?

- Damon - If we pull it, we should give the reason why. He talked to their AG but didn't tell them that there were zero votes for this one.
 - Rob – The reason why we have the Implementation Committee subcommittee is to be able to talk more about the recommendations yet to be started and justify in writing why they haven't been started or aren't practical or feasible.
 - David Haws – Showed us the recommendations, and this one falls under the Draft Recommendations with no votes.
 - Holly – After the December meeting, Rob should write up a summary of what this group looked at and what our recommendation is.

- 2:20 – 2:30: Beginning the New Structure of Future Implementation Committee Meetings = Field Staff, Managers, and Full IC Meetings
 - Rob – Starting in January, we will start doing the new meeting structure. The field staff will be one hour once a month, and the managers' meeting will be one hour once a month.
 - SYCD – Wouldn't it be better to do a full meeting instead of splitting them up?
 - Rob – Still would like to do the separate meetings. It feels like not everyone talks in the bigger group, so I want to give a chance for everyone to have a chance to talk. Will continue as it is. We do have a few other meetings that will stop once the new meeting structure begins.
 - This is from the October meeting, but repeating here to make sure we are still good to go:
 - Field Staff meet once per month, 1 hour earlier than managers.
 - Managers meet once per month (same date as field staff).
 - Full IC team meeting once every 3 months (quarterly).
 - Comms attend field staff meetings as needed.
 - Field staff – send to Rob via email to add members.
- 2:30 – 2:50: ELLA Documentary Discussion
 - Rob - The documentary was shown in Sunnyside last week. This one was updated from the draft that some saw recently.

- Kait and Jocelyn were both there. It was very full, and they had to have a waitlist for folks. Created a lot of public interest. There was a mention on the screen that Anchee works for DOH and a mention of DOH in the credits.
- Damon – The draft made the correlation between the City of Mabton water system and nitrate, but ECY monitoring confirmed that there was no correlation.
- Holly – Glad that they did remove our logo, which they were asked to do a while ago.
- Commissioner Linde – Have there been reductions in pesticides in several of these areas? Per Damon, yes, there have been significant decreases, and they can show a decrease. He noticed that there were a lot of comments about the way things were, but very few comments about how things have changed since then.
- Damon – This is why we have folks who are doing the work they are doing. We make sure to document things so that we can back up our work.
- Kyrre – Very disappointed that the documentary focused on only one source of nitrogen (dairies) and was not holistic and honest about all sources of nitrogen. We have work to do to help the communities understand.
- Link to the documentary: [Price of Plenty Final Draft on Vimeo](#)
- 2:50 – 3:00: Open Discussion
 - Holly – Can we share a draft timeline for the nitrate reduction plan with Ricardi? Damon says that we should wait until he reaches out to us when he returns. Heather said he declined a meeting with her tomorrow, so he's at least reviewing his e-mails.
- Next meeting: December 11, 2025