Hermiston Agricultural Research and Extension Center

Hermiston, OR, 97838

**List of Attendees**

Tom Straughan – ODA

Bill Dean – River Point Farms

Mike McNamee – Morrow SWCD

Sheree Smith – Morrow Co Public Health

Shelley Wight – Morrow Co Public Health

Aaron Madison – Madison Farms

Gerald Breazeale – City of Irrigon

Don Horneck – OSU (had to leave early)

Phil Richerson – DEQ

Maria Snodgrass – ODA

Gina Gray – IRZ

Carla McLane - Morrow County

Tom Demianew – Umatilla Co SWCD

**10:05 *Meeting Commencement Time***

***Introductions****-* A signup sheet was circulated and everyone introduced himself or herself. Tom Demianew introduced himself as the new District Manager for the Umatilla County SWCD. Maria Snodgrass introduced herself as the new CAFO inspector for ODA.

***Sub-Committee Reports –***

*Irrigated Agriculture* – The irrigated ag sub-committee has been active in pursuing money to fund outreach and research. However, their proposed legislation to tax themselves and use the money locally did not pass.

As an alternative, the ODA Fertilizer Research Committee has committed to spend $50,000 per year for the next three years on work in the LUBGWMA. There is an additional $20,000 per year that can be spend anywhere in the state (including the LUBGWMA). So there is the potential for $70,000 per year for the next three years. The Request for Proposals is expected to be out within a month.

The Sub-Committee told the Fertilizer Research Committee that their three priorities for research are:

1. An independent peer review of DEQ’s work in the LUBGWMA (i.e., a second opinion)
2. Evaluating data gaps in the groundwater monitoring network and understanding of the region’s hydrogeology, and
3. A re-evaluation of nutrient and water management best management practices (BMPs).

Phil then invited comments from the Committee regarding their ideas for research in the LUBGWMA. No additional research topics were identified.

The irrigated agriculture sub-committee requested, and DEQ approved, the replacement of Chester Prior with Aaron Madison as a co-chair of the sub-committee. Bill Dean and Aaron Madison are now the co-chairs of the Irrigated Agriculture sub-committee.

*Food Processors* – The food processors have decided to generate research funds through a self-taxation process. They are currently working out the details.

*CAFOs* – Maria is ODA’s new livestock water quality specialist for the area including the LUBGWMA. She explained what she does during CAFO inspections. The CAFO sub-committee will schedule a meeting within the next few months.

*Outreach/Communications* – The outreach sub-committee is finalizing a general information piece applicable to everybody. It has a cross section schematic and a few paragraphs describing how groundwater pollution occurs, and why people should care about it. The sub-committee will develop communication plans for the rural residential sub-groups of septic system owners and well owners.

***Documents*** - Phil gave an update on the status of the following documents:

The document called Analysis of Groundwater Nitrate Concentrations in the LUB GWMA has been finalized and has been added to the LUB GWMA webpage <http://www.deq.state.or.us/wq/groundwater/lubgwma.htm>

The document called Third Four-Year Evaluation of Action Plan Success for the LUB GWMA needs more input. Input from local governments and the Committee Chair is needed to finalize the document.

The Communications Plans are currently being prepared.

Phil then reminded the Committee that once the Third Four-Year Evaluation of Action Plan Success for the LUB GWMA is completed, the next Action Plan will be prepared.

***City of Irrigon’s Drinking Water Protection Efforts -*** Jerry discussed the history of the nitrate issue in Irrigon that lead to the City drilling two new wells west of town in an effort to find a source of acceptable quality drinking water. The two new wells currently have excellent quality (e.g., low nitrate, no detectable amounts of volatile and semi-volatile organic compounds) and the City wants to keep it that way.

The City applied for and received Safe Drinking Water Act funds to conduct Source Water Protection efforts. Part of those efforts will include groundwater sampling at wells located within the 1-year, 2-year, 5-year, and 10-year time of travel zones. The United States Geological Survey may be getting involved to do further work (e.g., isotopic or age dating). Currently, the City is identifying wells to sample. They are also working with DEQ to identify less toxic products for local residents to use.

The following information was added to the final minutes to address a comment on the draft minutes:

DEQ will do the background research to identify alternative product types that contain less toxic ingredients. This information will be given to the City who will work with locals (perhaps the High School) to identify specific products to recommend. DEQ and the City are exploring funding options to potentially offer these products locally at low or no cost to consumers.

***Round Table Discussion -*** No other topics were raised for discussion.

***Next Meeting:***

Thursday May 3, 2012 at OSU Experiment Station in Hermiston

9:00 to 10:00 am for Outreach Committee

10:00 am to noon for full LUB GWMA Committee

***12:00 Meeting Adjournment Time***