

**YAMHILL**  
**Agricultural Water Quality Management Area**  
**Biennial Review Report to the Board of Agriculture & ODA Director**  
*Submitted by the Local Advisory Committee (LAC)*



<b>Meeting Date(s):</b> January 27, 2022
<b>LAC Members Present:</b> Sam Sweeney (Chair), Allen Holstein, Catie Anderson, Ernie Strahm, Lucien Gunderman, Matt Crawford, Rich Blaha, Steve Jones
<b>Reporting Time Frame:</b> Calendar years 2020-2021

**PROGRESS MEASUREMENT**

*This was a Light Review; progress toward Measurable Objectives will be reported at the next Full Review.*

Activities (Polk and Yamhill SWCDs)	No.	Discussion
Events That Actively Engage Landowners	12	Salt Creek Collaborative, NRCS Conservation Implementation Strategy: Soil Health in Orchards, Ag Drainage Channel Maintenance, plant sale, land management workshops
Landowners Participating in Active Events	487	33 landowners indicated actions they would take in Salt Creek Focus Area, 400 at plant sale, 50 at workshops
Landowners Provided Technical Assistance	207	Soil Health in orchards, water, ag drainage channel maintenance, cover crops, irrigation, erosion, riparian vegetation, composting, manure, etc.
Site Visits	64	See above
Conservation Plans Written	10	Soil Health in orchards, carbon farming, vineyard, dairy, grazing, hedgerows
Funding Applications Submitted	3	Soil Health in orchards
Funding Applications Awarded	1	2 landowners backed out after learning they couldn't sell the remains of the cover crop

**LAC DISCUSSION**

**Summary of Progress**

- SWCDs have good relationship with landowners
- SWCDs have program to reduce erosion: no-till drill, incentives for cover crops, straw mulching
- County roadside ditch survey is a good program and needs to continue; it inventoried and prioritized 1,400 miles of ditches for sediment issues from agricultural field erosion
- Roadside seeding is helping reduce erosion
- Yamhill SWCD's Native Plant Sale is a good way to connect with landowners
- State, county, and SWCDs are working together with common goal
- "Middle management" agency staff are committed to working on erosion issues
- Drainage ditches are better managed than in the past
- Polk SWCD is gathering data to figure out why Salt Creek floods
- Landowners are starting to talk about reducing erosion in hazelnut orchards
- Local partners are doing a good job treating invasive weeds

**Impediments**

- Lack of baseline data on Total Suspended Solids (TSS)
- Many landowners don't know about the AgWQ Area Plan
- Scale of erosion issues is huge
- Many landowners don't think there is a consequence to allowing soil erosion on their properties
- Nurseries need people on staff who embrace conservation
- Conservation partners need more staff and funding for addressing erosion issues
- "Top leadership" at state and federal agencies is not enforcing existing laws to keep soil out of waters of the state
- Lack of cover crops in Christmas trees and hazelnuts leads to soil erosion
- Landowners who need a 'clean grass seed' certification interpret 'clean grass seed' as spraying out everything along the fields, whereas a smaller sprayed area is sufficient

**Recommended Modifications and Adaptive Management**

- Develop a monitoring program to determine baseline TSS
- ODA help SWCDs with messages to motivate landowners to reduce erosion and mercury (make it relevant to them); ODA work with SWCDs and watershed councils to develop an outreach plan
- Provide more Technical Assistance to landowners
- Enforce existing laws to protect streams from erosion
- Encourage commodity groups to mandate conservation practices, such as cover crops; consumers want products that are grown in a way that protects the environment (marketing tools)
- Need to highlight positive activities and benefits of conservation to landowners; need to show landowners and other interested parties what landowners are doing right
- Need to show that buffers are keeping soil out of streams
- Promote the good things that landowners are doing
- Need field days that show that grass seed growers don't need to spray out all the surrounding vegetation
- Outreach to the following growers: grass seed, vineyards, Christmas trees, and especially hazelnuts

**ODA COMPLIANCE ACTIVITIES**

Location	Cases		Site Visits	Agency Actions				
	New	Closed		Letter of Compliance		Pre-Enforcement Notification	Notice of Noncompliance	Civil Penalty
				Already in compliance	Brought into compliance			
Outside SIA	4	5	12	1	3	4	0	0
Within SIA	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0