

## Agricultural Water Quality Program Implementation

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The Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA), Agricultural Water Quality Program works with Oregon agriculture to achieve water quality goals through both regulatory and voluntary strategies. ODA and the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) are partners in these efforts.

ODA's regulatory work ensures compliance with local water quality rules. ODA also relies on partnerships with agencies and organizations who collaborate with farmers and ranchers to implement voluntary conservation measures. These voluntary efforts, in addition to regulatory compliance, are needed to achieve Oregon's water quality goals.

There are 38 Agricultural Water Quality Management Area Plans (Area Plans) in Oregon. These Area Plans are based primarily on watershed boundaries. Each Area Plan has a Local Advisory Committee (LAC) made up of local agricultural producers and other interests. These Area Plans provide the basis for the voluntary and regulatory expectations to prevent water pollution from agricultural activities. ODA works directly with Oregon's Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs), DEQ, other state and federal agencies, and LAC to review and update the Area Plans every two years.

ODA and DEQ work together closely to implement the program. Below are key roles for each agency as well as some ways that we work together.

- a. ODA is the lead agency to implement the program in Oregon and conducts all on-the-ground regulatory work.
- b. DEQ provides scientific analysis of water quality and other data to support adaptive management in the program. DEQ participates in LAC meetings and biennial reviews of Area Plans, and provides water quality Status and Trends analysis for all Area Plan updates.
- c. ODA and DEQ work collaboratively through a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), intended to assist each agency in meeting their legal responsibilities relating to agricultural non-point source pollution, including DEQ mandated Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) achievement.
- d. The ODA/DEQ management and staff work closely on related agricultural water quality efforts such as water quality monitoring consultation and other technical and scientific analysis for identification of opportunities to improve water quality.
- e. ODA and DEQ work together in each Strategic Implementation Area as part of an interagency team that also collaborates with local partners and farmers. DEQ provides input on priorities for Strategic Implementation Areas, both at the statewide and watershed level.