

HOOD RIVER

Agricultural Water Quality Management Area

Biennial Review Report to the Board of Agriculture and ODA Director

Submitted by the Local Advisory Committee (LAC)



OREGON
DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURE

Meeting Date: June 27, 2025

LAC Members Present: Steve Pappas, Alex Johnson, Brian Nakamura, Ashley Thompson, and Megan Saunders

Reporting Timeframe: 2023–2024

| PROGRESS MEASUREMENT | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>This was a Light Review; progress toward Measurable Objectives will be reported at the next Full Review.</i> | | |
| Activities: Hood River SWCD | # | Description |
| Events That Actively Engage Landowners | 35 | 21/23 Q7: Airblast Training; Cherry Days; Horticulture meeting; three orchard meetings. 21/23 Q8: Plant Sale; Gardeners Fair; HRWG (Hood River Watershed Group) presentation. 23/25 Q2: Orchard pest and diseases workshop. 23/25 Q3: Pesticide handler training; G.S. Long grower meeting; winter hort meeting and Cherry Days; Pesticide Control Officials annual conference; private pesticide license exam prep; local seed share event; Master Gardener tree fruit care class. 23/25 Q4: Gardener's Fair; prelicense exam preparation class for pesticide handlers; prelicense review training; presentations with Oregon Board of Agriculture, SWCC, and Legislative Orchard tour. 23/25 Q5: Display at the county fair, OSU Field Days. 23/25 Q6: Presentation on water conservation at a Watershed Group meeting, Columbia Gorge Fruit Growers annual meeting, Oregon Interagency Noxious Weed Symposium, two pesticide pre-license training workshops, Oregon Pesticide Rules and Laws class, Supervisory Skills for farmworkers class. |
| Landowners Participating in Active Events | 1,800 | Some people may be counted twice as sign-up lists are not crosschecked. |
| Landowners Provided Technical Assistance* | 12,480 | This number represents phone, email, and walk-in clients at the SWCD who were provided with information, handouts, contacts, and brochures. Many people contact us after receiving a quarterly eNews or our annual report. These visits often led to developing a small grant project. |
| Site Visits | 34 | This number includes some repeat visits to landowners while developing small grant projects, plus anyone with a natural resource issue they'd like to discuss and get feedback on. |
| Conservation Plans Written | N/A | HRSWCD does not write conservation plans. |
| Funding Applications Submitted | 12 | These include: 9 OWEB small grants, OWEB Focused Investment Partnership for irrigation improvement, NACD (National Association of Conservation Districts) Urban Ag TA grant, OSWB noxious weed remediation grant, and Oregon State Fire Marshal Investment grant. |
| Funding Applications Awarded | 11(12) | All the above applications were funded. However, one award fell into the next reporting period. |

* Number reported likely double counts some landowners due to tracking methods.

LAC DISCUSSION

Summary of Progress

- Kathryn Rifenburg with the Pesticide Stewardship Program (PSP) has been very accessible and good to work with.
- ODA personnel in general are a good resource.
- Irrigation upgrade mapping is almost complete. In the future the map should help SWCD build a prioritization schedule. Data will help inform more long-range plan.
- SWCD programs interlock with each other well so that grant funding from ODA, for example, has compounding results to other funding sources.
- ODA grants in the Hood River Management Area complement each other well and should be modeled this way where PSP exists.
- There are good partnerships in the Hood River Management Area.

Impediments

- SIA Implementation; the funding is attractive, but SWCD did not like how the past one felt.
- Capacity at SWCD is limited.
- Lack of current data; groups want more up-to-date information to track progress more effectively.
- There is pesticide and herbicide input from non-agricultural applicators. How to target those other user types like home users, railroad, and golf course. If they are not reachable by the SWCD, then how can those inputs be isolated from agricultural inputs?
- Sometimes smaller ag users are harder to reach as it is difficult to identify them. The programs don't usually fit those smaller properties well. Once "low hanging fruit" work is done, these folks might get more attention. (Capacity is too limited to work with them right now.)

Recommended Modifications and Adaptive Management

- Plan discussion outside of this meeting to brainstorm SIA program improvements.
- PSP/AgWQ could collaborate/integrate more, starting with PSP attending LAC meetings where PSP is present.
- SWCD feels it could expand riparian planting and livestock facility improvement project work.
- It is usually successful to pair irrigation piping projects with irrigation upgrade work.
- Ensure that NRCS funding is coordinated and not overlapping, complementary instead of redundant.
- How does SWCD measure success of Spanish language outreach that results in water quality improvements. Is there a way to enumerate that work to water quality improvements?
- Make sure full review is in winter.

ODA COMPLIANCE ACTIVITIES

| Location | Cases | | Site Visits | Agency Actions | | | | |
|-------------|-------|--------|-------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------|
| | | | | Letter of Compliance | | Pre-Enforcement Notification | Notice of Noncompliance | Civil Penalty |
| | New | Closed | | Already in compliance | Brought into compliance | | | |
| Outside SIA | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Within SIA | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |