

# SOUTH SANTIAM

## 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

<b>Meeting Date:</b> September 20, 2023
<b>LAC Members Present:</b> Clint Bentz (Chair), Arlene Gourley
<b>Reporting Timeframe:</b> Calendar years 2020-2023

PROGRESS MEASUREMENT		
Management Area		
Measurable Objective: Newly developed. Establish Management Area-wide monitoring plan by the end of the 2023-2025 biennium.		
Focus Area: N/A		
Strategic Implementation Area (SIA): N/A		
Management Area-wide Activities: (Linn SWCD)	#	Discussion
Events That Actively Engage Landowners	42	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• COVID limited the number of in-person workshops and attendees.</li> <li>• The “Living on the Land” series was very successful, and Linn SWCD is hoping to replicate it in future years.</li> </ul>
Landowners Participating in Active Events	6,249	
Landowners Provided Technical Assistance*	287	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Varies between calls and walk ins; referrals from other agencies; concerns about education; production; compliance; lots of water resources concerns lately with the drought; manure management a big concern; flooding issues a big concern.</li> <li>• Some technical assistance is instigated by landowners reporting on their neighbors; some are compliance issues calls from ODA.</li> <li>• Some technical assistance requests come from farms that want education or assistance.</li> <li>• A lot of technical assistance time and resources are wasted performing “triage” of which organization or program to refer landowners to base on their varied concerns.</li> <li>• The SWCD would like to make it clear that many calls are coming from people being proactive, wanting to do the right thing.</li> </ul>
Site Visits	76	
Conservation Plans Written	3	
Funding Applications Submitted	2	
Funding Applications Awarded	0	

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

LAC DISCUSSION
Summary of Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No progress has been made toward measurable objectives because none are developed for this area. The LAC recommends that Linn SWCD and board develop measurable objectives for this Management Area specific to developing a monitoring plan, management area-wide, based on parameters of concern related to the TMDLs in the area.</li> <li>• Though ODA has regulatory authority, ODA allows landowners to approach the SWCD for help with fixing the issue. Other entities with such authority, such as Oregon Department of Forestry, resort to fines more quickly. This causes landowners to fix but not to seek additional helpful information such as the SWCD can provide. ODA working in this way has contributed to the success of landowner engagement in this area.</li> </ul>

- Farm tours help with outreach.

**Impediments**

- Landowners are afraid of sharing success stories with government agencies. This could be used as an incentive to work with the agencies, but landowners aren't inclined to share info about their land and practices.
- In cases where ODA's regulatory authority is used and a landowner faces investigation for water quality violations, that activity has a high level of visibility in the community. The neighbors of this landowner will feel wary of ODA in the future, which may extend to the SWCD. This may limit the SWCD and other entities from working in a community for years or generations to come.
- Larger farms have more time/resources to look for grants and resources whereas smaller farms don't have the time to even look for the resources available to them.
- Smaller farms don't know that they're doing something "wrong" or are out of compliance with rules and regulations.
- Newer small farm turnover causes barrier to knowing rules and regulations.
- Culturally, some landowners don't participate in any government programs in Linn County.
- Covid was an impediment to outreach and engagement.
- Some grants and programs "have an agenda," such as limiting access to streams, which provide grants that end up taking lands out of the hands of the landowner.
- High turnover rates among government employees are a barrier to legacy of information. It takes a long time for producers to establish trust with government agency members.

**Recommended Modifications and Adaptive Management**

- Additional use of social media to get information out.
- "Through-the-grapevine" communication about information and events mitigated by what? Outreach via pamphlets, farmers markets, 4-H.
- Tying in with realty groups to inform new/young farmers of SCWD services. Develop QR code to InstaLink SWCD website to new landowners so they can have the information on their phone.

**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	12	13	25	5	5	12	0	0
Within SIA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0