

WQPMT Committee Meeting Notes

DATE	LOCATION	START TIME	END TIME
12/7/2023	Virtual meeting	9:00 AM	12:00 PM

FACILITATOR	CONTACT EMAIL	CONTACT PHONE
Kathryn Rifenburg	kathryn.rifenburg@oda.oregon.gov	971.600.5073

WQPMT Members and Guests Present

Kathryn Rifenburg- Oregon Department of Agriculture
Gilbert Uribe Valdez- Oregon Department of Agriculture
Warren Hanson- Oregon Department of Agriculture
Kaci Buhl- Oregon State University
Todd Hudson- Oregon Health Authority
Colin Donald- Oregon Department of Environmental Quality
Steve Mrazik – Oregon Department of Environmental Quality
David Gruen – Oregon Department of Environmental Quality
Wade Peerman- Oregon Department of Environmental
Becky Anthony – Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
Paul Measles- Oregon Department of Agriculture
Serhan Mermer – Oregon Statue University (joined late)

Introduction

Meeting is called to order by Kathryn Rifenburg.

Agenda Items:

- Approve the advisory group Charter and the strategic plan or vote to continue working into next year.
- Comments on Wasco strategic plan
- Letter from Oregonians for Food and Shelter

Action Items:

- David Gruen and Kaci Buhl to draft a few sentences about their agencies (DEQ & OSU) for background in the strategic plan.
- Kathryn Rifenburg adjusted the language in the last paragraph from “ODA” to “Water Quality Pesticide Management Team”. Will look into changing the word “objective” and send out to members to vote on approval of document.

Team Ideas:

- David Gruen mentions the background of the strategic plan only addresses the FIFRA aspect of the program.

- Would like to see language/description of DEQ's role in the program and how it intersects with alternatives to regulation under the Clean Water Act.
- Comments on Charter
 - David Gruen says advisory group providing objective opinions is misnomer and should be communicated in a more constructive manner – maybe striking the word “objective.”
 - David Gruen also has questions about language and reporting. What does that look like to ODA and how would it be implemented?
 - Gilbert Uribe Valdez suggests using judgement to determine if the advisory and water quality group should be looped in so individuals don't bypass others/groups. As these things come up, more guidance should be developed and be put into practice.
 - David Gruen feels DEQ should be added to the Charter so ODA is not the only point of contact for the charter
- Comments on Wasco Strategic plan
 - David Gruen mentions there is language that should be improved to interpret the data analysis to be clearer. David to send comments for review.
 - Paul Measeles comments on outreach activities and metrics discussion - good to see the report on the improvements (calls them testimonials). Paul would like them to talk to growers and have the growers' detail what practice was ceased/alterd in order to reach their outcome/improvement; positive feedback from growers.
 - Kaci Buhl points out that these would only be contributing factors and not necessarily causal events and that should be specified when reporting those things. Kaci also mentions inventory for best practices that can be hosted online with a collection of narrative descriptions of problems and steps that helped. Has concerns about who's labor would it be (to collect stories, community outreach, and engagement) and concerned about over-interpretation of anecdotes in data. Kaci suggest putting something in the next RFA in the education and outreach section that asks grantees to measure behavior change and to collect stories of behavior change as a result of outreach. But Kaci has concerns about implementing a change midstream.
 - Gilbert Uribe Valdez comments that maybe we can do a survey with a few questions to determine what information would be useful to the growers. Information such as “how likely are you to implement these practices” would be useful in telling the story to applicators in other areas. It can help to motivate others. Asking straightforward questions such as “what would be feasible for you to do?” or “what did you implement that helped make changes?” shouldn't be too difficult.
 - Steve Mrazik agrees it's worth asking growers, but notes there isn't a huge, consistent pattern with imidacloprid in Wasco; there were low detection frequencies and concentrations to begin with. Steve supports the incorporation of narratives that spotlights behavior changes that come out of the PSP outreach. He wants to focus on the malathion concentrations in Wasco, and setting it up in the future is a good idea.
 - Kathryn Rifenburg says one of the parts missing is education and outreach; not enough time is being taken to understand what local growers want or need, or what the barriers

are for implementing best practices. She says outreach is a better fit with Wasco than with other PSPs.

PSP Letter Submitted by Oregonians for Food and Shelter

- **Gilbert** letter brought up points of concern about the data and analysis, and he started looking into the issues that were brought up. Gilbert says they have a document where each of the points is broken out, and DEQ and ODA are working on developing a response to each.
- Steve Mrazik would like feedback from others who heard from people with concerns.
- The team discusses other aspects of the letter:
 - The letter also gave the impression that some of our practices are new, and they are not; they were reflected in the 2014 strategic plan.
 - one of the biggest issues with the letter is that it asserts the data was presented as novel analyses, but DEQ has not made fundamental changes to how data is visualized or analyzed from past practices.
 - it's important to talk about data; how we visualize, interpret and analyze data for the PSP program.
 - Not all the points in the letter are unfounded. We welcome constructive and good faith conversations. We can make the data more digestible in some ways. DEQ stands by the analysis that was presented in the use of aquatic life benchmarks and ratios.
 - As part of the response to the letter, graphs will be shared with the median, instead of the mean.
 - We should continue to consider different ways to explore data and work on finding different ways to share the data.
- Wade Peerman asks about a timeline for providing a response.
 - David Gruen says 2024. We've got a fair amount of a draft; happy to expedite the process to the extent possible.
 - Gilbert Uribe Valdez says as soon as possible but some response details will take longer to hash out. There needs to be a continued discussion to come up with a date.
 - Kathryn Rifenburg says she supports getting it done sooner rather than later, ahead of data presentations to partners.
 - Steve Mrazik says there is some level of urgency to provide a response. Steve says he, Gilbert, Kathryn and David should discuss a target date, and scale and scope of a response.
- Wade Peerman says he received feedback about the letter from lab analysts. The organic team wants to provide feedback where appropriate.
- Decision matrix for surface water data
 - the letter called for revising or reevaluating the decision matrix for surface water data as it does pertain to the draft response and our position. How do we determine what is a pesticide of high, medium or low concern in a PSP basin and at the statewide level? David provides an example of the South Yamhill report, which looked at water quality data collected between 2010-16. That document provided the decision matrix that was used at that time for the benefit of the readers. It was different than the matrix that was also published in 2019.

- Gilbert Uribe Valdez shows the table that is referenced in the OFS letter as well as other matrices. He says meeting minutes from 2019 discuss how Region 10 was going to update and adopt the new matrix. His understanding is Oregon isn't the only one using this new decision matrix. Kathryn Rifenburg will assist in finding examples of its use by other states.
- David Gruen wants to know whether ODA has had conversations with the Region 10 pesticide team?
 - Kathryn Rifenburg says the letter was forwarded to our representative in Region 10, and she forwarded it to Washington, because they also have a PSP.

Key Questions:

- Kathryn Rifenburg asks if any agencies would like their background or investment in pesticide and water quality spelled out.
- Kathryn Rifenburg asks if David Gruen would like to see the language about reporting written into the document, or simply clarified to the WQ team.
- Kathryn Rifenburg asked for feedback on the background process of the strategic plan. How was the pace for everyone? Did everyone feel heard in the drafting of the document?

Main Decisions:

- Gilbert Uribe Valdez says any side conversations with others/advisory group members should be brought back to the group to loop everyone in – the Charter should address that.