



Oregon
Department
of Agriculture

Dear Pesticide Stewardship Partnership Stakeholders:

The Pesticide Stewardship Partnership (PSP) program began as a pilot project in Hood River in 2000 after current use pesticides were found to exceed water quality standards. The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality could have taken a regulatory approach under the Clean Water Act to address this problem. Instead, DEQ partnered with local growers and watershed groups on a voluntary and collaborative new approach. This voluntary approach was successful in reducing pollution from current use pesticides, producing measureable environmental results. It worked because of the tools, resources and expertise in Oregon available for helping landowners and applicators to improve pesticide application and pest management practices.

The 2013 Oregon Legislature noticed the program's accomplishments and -- with the Governor's support -- provided resources to continue the program and expand it to new areas. Now that the program is established in locations throughout the state, we would like to provide a clear statement of our commitment to the PSP program in addressing current use pesticides. We also want to stress that the voluntary approach is central to achieving the goals outlined in Oregon's Water Quality Pesticide Management Plan, a plan involving the Oregon Department of Agriculture, DEQ, the Department of Forestry and Oregon Health Authority.

We continue to be committed to working with pesticide users and watershed groups in a voluntary way to address water quality exceedances in PSP watersheds. The program works, mainly because it relies on the collaboration, communication and cooperation of our PSP partners.

Historically, pesticide monitoring data in some PSP basins has resulted in streams being included on the state's list of impaired waters, referred to as the 303(d) list. Identifying waters as impaired is not an indication that DEQ is pursuing a regulatory approach. Rather, the PSP program remains our chosen path to pesticide reduction. In fact, DEQ has even used the impaired water listing as a source of information to identify basins for future PSP projects. DEQ remains committed to the program, and inclusion of a stream on the 303(d) list in no way contradicts or undermines that commitment.

While development of an estimated pollutant load a water body can receive (called a Total Maximum Daily Load, or TMDL) is one way to achieve water quality standards, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) allows and supports alternative approaches, such as the PSP program. In cases where alternative approaches are expected to attain standards, a body of water can be removed from the list of impaired waters and into a separate category, known as a Category 4B. This designation acknowledges that an

approach other than a TMDL will be used. EPA has suggested that the program basins included in the PSP program are good candidates to include in the 4B Category. DEQ will be working with EPA to determine the information needed to re-categorize the waters.

I hope this memo clarifies our support of the PSPs and our intention to continue using it as an appropriate course of action in selected watersheds in Oregon.

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Dick Pedersen
Director
Department of Environmental Quality

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Doug Decker". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Doug Decker
Oregon State Forester
Department of Forestry

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Katy Coba". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Katy Coba
Director
Department of Agriculture