



PSP Advisory Committee Minutes

DATE	LOCATION	START TIME	END TIME
06/07/2021	Virtual	1:00 PM	2:00 PM

FACILITATOR	CONTACT EMAIL	CONTACT PHONE
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Monday, June 7, 2021

Abbreviations

- ODA = Oregon Department of Agriculture
- OEC = Oregon Environmental Council
- OFB = Oregon Farm Bureau
- OFIC = Oregon Forest and Industries Council
- OFS = Oregonians for Food and Shelter
- OSU = Oregon State University
- DEQ = Oregon Department of Environmental Quality
- SIA = Strategic Implementation Area
- SWCD = Soil and Water Conservation District
- WWBWC = Walla Walla Basin Watershed Council
- WQPMT = Water Quality Pesticide Management Team

Attendees (Affiliation):

Lisa Arkin (Beyond Toxics), Troy Baker (WWBWC), Seth Barnes (OFIC), Matthew Bucy (ODA), Kirk Cook (ODA), Mary Anne Cooper (OFB), Bryan Harper (State Board of Agriculture), Kate Jackson (DEQ), Jeff Jenkins (OSU), Rose Kachadoorian (ODA), Karen Lewotsky (OEC), Kevin Masterson (DEQ), Katie Murray (OFS), Stephanie Page (ODA), Brenda Sanchez (ODA), Steve Stewart (City of Newport), Jeff Stone (OAN), Jennifer Wigal (DEQ)

Call to Order

Stephanie called the meeting to order shortly after 1 PM.

PSP Budget & Staffing Updates

No work session scheduled yet on ODA’s budget, but the PSP program is in the Governor’s Budget. Kirk Cook and Kevin Masterson will both retire by the end of July. Both are currently working on ensuring a smooth transition.

Biennial PSP Spending Recommendations & Advisory Committee Feedback

The WQPMT has the following recommendations:

Addition of PSP Areas: Given the retirement of Kirk and Kevin, WQPMT recommends against adding any new PSP areas. Adding new areas is a complex process. It is important to not overwhelm anyone during the transition period. There were discussions of adding a PSP area in the Tualatin area. The current recommendation is to hold off on doing this, and to instead focus on establishing and implementing the strategic plans for the existing PSPs.

Yamhill: Have not seen water quality improvements in the Yamhill area over the past two biennia. This is the PSP with the highest number of detections and concentrations above aquatic life benchmarks. Stakeholder involvement has declined. WQPMT recommends shifting focus from sampling to reinvigorating local interest and involvement. The recommendation is NOT to pull out of the area, it is just to refocus our efforts to ensure the program is successful.

Karen Lewotsky asked why involvement in the Yamhill area has been low. Kirk and Kevin explained that there were some early champions that have decreased their involvement (e.g., due to increased workload or having multiple engagements). For example, the extension agent in the area now covers multiple counties. Agricultural activities in this area are very diverse, and it has been difficult to get everyone on the same page. We need to figure out an avenue to get involved with stakeholder groups. Hopeful that funding to OSU Extension (see below) will boost engagement. Potential opportunities exist for partnership with ODA agricultural water quality program in the Yamhill area.

Grants: WQPMT recommends establishing a permanent grant to OSU extension to facilitate involvement in PSP activities (likely at least \$50,000). Katie Murray was curious how this would operate. The current vision is that funding would be given to OSU, who would then distribute it to the various extension agents in the PSP areas. Extension agents have a lot on their plates, and the grant will hopefully provide a financial incentive to get involved.

WQPMT recommends that grant money be allocated to current PSP areas to implement their strategic plans (if developed) or to develop their strategic plans. Looking at between \$25,000-30,000 to each of our partners to implement or develop their plans. Some grant applications have already come in and were not asking for that much.

Kirk confirmed that there is a strategic plan template that PSP areas can use. He also recommended that PSP areas use the plans developed by other PSP areas as a further resource.

Waste Collection: WQPMT recommends holding six waste collection events. There will not be as many as there have been in previous biennia, because the cost of our hazardous waste contractor has increased. At least one will be in the Willamette Valley and at least one will be in eastern Oregon.

There was an event scheduled earlier this year in Ontario that was cancelled due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. The hazardous waste contractor was able to collect directly from the customers instead.

Earlier this year, waste was also picked up directly from a farming family in the Alsea area, who acquired a property with pesticide waste in need of disposal.

Stream Flow: We began monitoring stream flow for our partners a couple of biennia ago. Recommendation is to continue monitoring this. Stream flow will be critical moving forward, particularly in drought conditions. Pesticide concentrations

may increase while pesticide loading has decreased, but we won't know this without stream flow data. We don't want to penalize growers because of higher concentrations when loading might actually be lower. Loading can also be an easier measurement to communicate than concentration (pounds per day vs. parts per billion).

Lisa Arkin suggested that if drier conditions are here to stay, we should begin thinking through a drought lens (in terms of data collection, best management practices, etc.)

Preparing for Retirement: Kirk is writing a PSP manual. He will be hosting four webinars for our partners on PSP operations and data analysis. The webinars will be recorded. Kirk hopes that our partners can take on the data analysis role in the future. A PSP web-based application is close to going live. Hoping to conduct a demo with directors and assistant directors sometime in August. The developer will remain involved in this project after Kirk and Kevin have retired. Kirk is working to wrap up final grant documents.

Advisory committee comments on overall recommendations: Mary Anne Cooper expressed concern that the recommendations felt like a slowdown on the part of ODA. She emphasized that this program has been successful and would like to see continued momentum from ODA.

Rose Kachadoorian clarified that ODA did not want to spread itself too thin during the staff transition period. ODA also wanted to ensure existing PSPs were in good shape before adding additional PSP areas. ODA will ramp up its activities again once Kirk's replacement is hired and trained. Kirk's position is one in a long list of recruitments that ODA is posting.

Stephanie Page asked if there were any specific activities the advisory committee would like to see ODA involved in. Interest was expressed in identifying the future of the program (e.g., where do we want to go next), working towards that future, and incorporating that work into the budget.

Future:

Additional conversation about Yamhill may be necessary: Temporarily suspend monitoring? Continue monitoring while also focusing on building relationships and making connections?

WQPMT will meet in July. Kirk invited advisory committee members to attend. Stephanie and Rose will also be there to echo what was expressed in today's meeting.

Next advisory committee meeting will be in August or September. Potential topics include:

- How can the PSP partner with ODA agricultural water quality program's strategic implementation areas?
- Case study of a PSP area where they are co-located with strategic implementation areas (i.e. Middle Deschutes)
- If we were to expand, where would we go next?

Adjourn: Meeting concluded just before 2 PM