

Strategic Implementation Areas

2019 – 2021 Implementation Process

Partner Overview (V.2.2 February 2020)

Oregon Department of Agriculture in coordination with the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board, Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, and the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife through a Statewide Partnership (Coordinated Streamside Management).

This document provides an overview of the Oregon Department of Agriculture's (ODA) Strategic Implementation Areas (SIA) and the implementation process for the local SIA Project Lead, which currently are local Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs).

Introduction

The SIA initiative concentrates technical and financial resources into specific geographic areas to address agricultural water quality concerns and includes four key components:

1. Compliance with Oregon's agricultural water quality regulations.
2. Voluntary, incentive-based conservation.
3. Monitoring to track water quality and landscape conditions.
4. Collaborative partnerships.

ODA coordinates with the SWCDs, Watershed Councils (WC), Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB), Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (ODEQ), Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF), Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) and other local partners working toward similar water quality objectives. ODA engages landowners and stakeholders throughout the SIA process.

How is an SIA Selected?

ODA will overtime evaluate all agricultural lands in Oregon. In 2019 ODA completed the 2019 to 2023 SIA Implementation Schedule (Appendix A). Every year a number of Agricultural Water Quality Management Areas (AgWQMA) are scheduled for SIA implementation (see Figure 1 for ODA's AgWQMAs). ODA will conduct a Planning Meeting with local partners (SWCDs, watershed councils and local representatives from OWEB, ODEQ, and ODFW) in each of the annually scheduled Management Areas to discuss agricultural water quality concerns, partner priorities, and to identify available incentive-based conservation programs in the area.

Information from the Planning Meeting as well as ODA's statewide prioritization of watersheds (12-digit Hydrologic Unit Codes - HUC) will aid in selecting where to locate a SIA.

ODAs' prioritization criteria include:

- Water quality parameters: temperature, bacteria, nutrients, and sediment (data from ODEQ).
- ODFW identified priorities for native fish recovery.
- Input from stakeholders.

SIA Process Overview (See Appendix B for a suggested timeline to complete SIA activities)

1. ODA conducts a local **Planning** meeting with the project lead and local partners.
2. ODA conducts a **Remote and Field Evaluation** of agricultural lands.
3. Project Lead applies for **OWEB funding** to support SIA activities.
4. ODA conducts a **Partner Meeting** to engage and inform local partners.
5. Project Lead convenes a **Monitoring Team**.

6. ODA conducts an **Open House** to engage and inform landowners.
7. ODA ensures compliance through **Phase I** and **Phase II**.

1. Local SIA Pre-Project Planning Meeting

ODA works with the Project Lead to conduct a Planning meeting. The objective of the meeting is to recommend where to locate a SIA and to discuss agricultural water quality concerns, partner priorities, and to identify available voluntary conservation programs in the areas. ODA will work with the Project Lead to schedule and coordinate.

2. Remote and Field Evaluations

The Remote Evaluation uses remote imagery such as ArcGIS and Google Earth to identify manure piles, bare ground, or potential impacts to riparian areas from farming operations. ODA considers the presence of an agricultural activity (such as livestock or cropping) and its proximity to waterbodies. Field slope, stream type (seasonal or year-round), and other factors are considered when identifying potential water quality concerns. ODA then classifies each property into one of four concern levels (Table1).

The Field Evaluation evaluates the accuracy of the Remote Evaluation by examining properties from public view points. ODA does not go on to or enter private property without permission and does not determine compliance without a site inspection.

3. SIA Available Funding

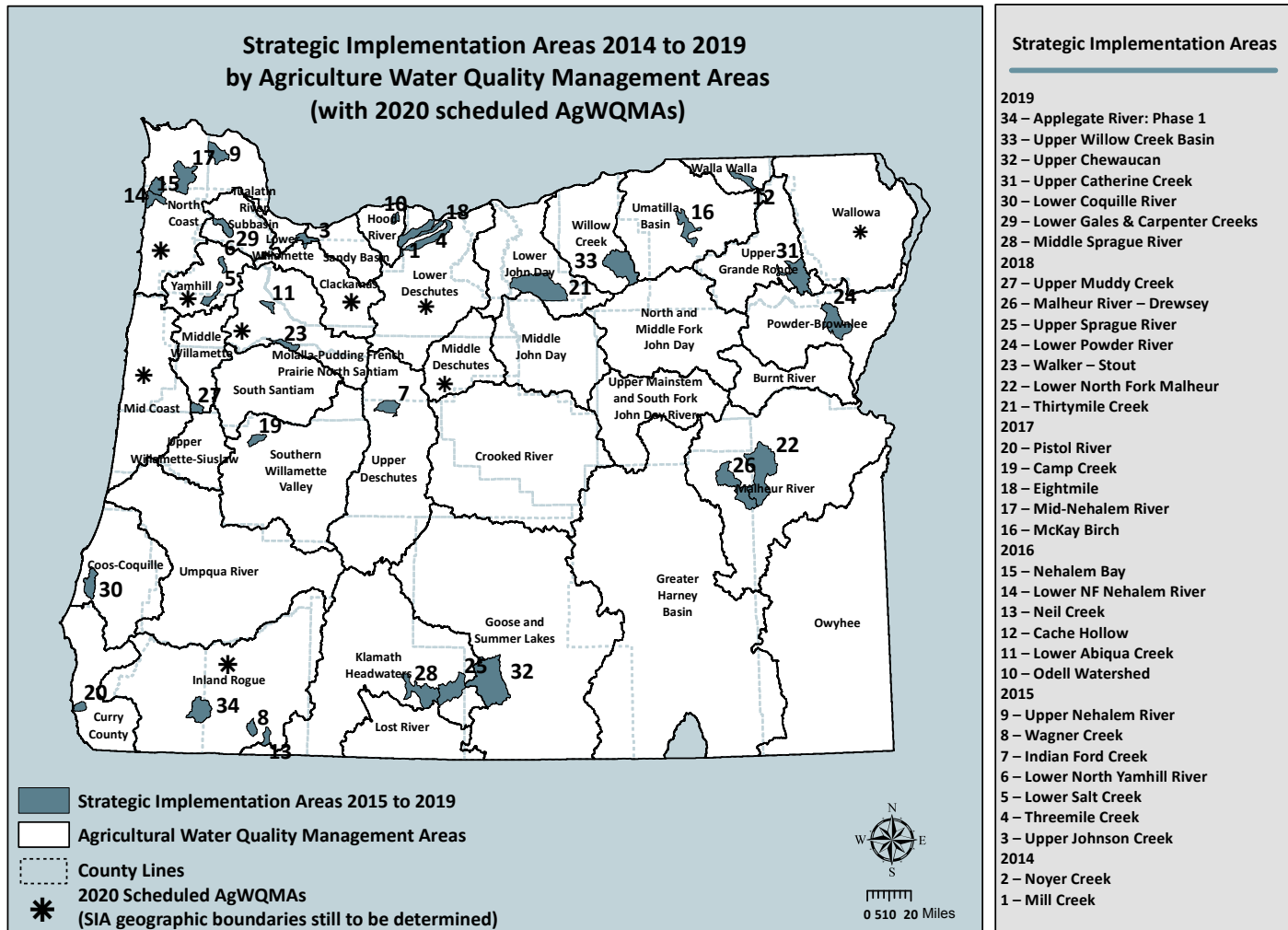
For the 2019-2021 biennium, OWEB has approved \$1.6 million (\$100,000 per SIA) of grant funds. These funds can be used for landowner engagement and technical assistance activities such as on-site assessments, conservation and project planning, and assistance in applying for project funding within the boundaries of the SIA. OWEB also authorized an additional \$400,000 (\$25,000 for each SIA) to support monitoring activities. Annual due date for OWEB proposal submission is on or around September 15. The Application will be provided to Project Leads approximately one month prior to submission date.

4. Partner Meeting

Once the Remote and Field Evaluations are completed, ODA meets with the Project Lead, WCs, OWEB, ODEQ, ODF, ODFW and other key partners to engage in the SIA process. The partner meeting provides an excellent opportunity to communicate water quality concerns, discuss potential solutions, share current information about conservation activities, establish mutual objectives, and discuss next steps. ODA’s local SIA Lead in collaboration with the Project Lead coordinates and schedules the Partner Meeting.

Table 1: Concern Levels
Limited Opportunity for Improvement: ODA identified that there are likely no regulatory concerns.
Low Opportunity for Improvement ODA identified that there are likely no agricultural water quality regulatory concerns, but there may be an opportunity for voluntary conservation to reach the goals of the Agricultural Water Quality Management Area Plan.
Opportunity for Improvement: Agricultural activities may impair water quality or remote and field evaluations were inconclusive.
Potential Violation: The field evaluation from publicly accessible locations indicates a potential violation of the Agricultural Water Quality Management Area Rules.

Figure 1: Strategic Implementation Areas by Management Areas 2014 through 2019 with 2020 Scheduled AgWQMAs



Prepared By: B. Sanchez
 Date Saved: 2/7/2020
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 Scale: 1:3,548,602
 Projection: NAD 1983 Oregon Statewide Lambert Feet Intl
 Path: V:\NRP\WaterQuality\BrendaSanchez\Other Regions\SIA Location Map MAs & Cty.mxd

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5. Monitoring

SIA monitoring is a partnership between state natural resource agencies and local partners. ODA, OWEB, ODEQ, and ODFW collaborate through a statewide Monitoring and Assessment Group (MAG) to provide guidance, templates, and training related to SIA monitoring.

The focus of SIA monitoring is to assess watershed-scale status and trends in response to land management actions. SIA monitoring may include stream temperature, sediment, bacteria, nutrients, or other water quality and landscape conditions as appropriate to evaluate the results of conservation actions.

The SIA Project Lead convenes a local monitoring team, including representatives identified by ODA, OWEB, ODEQ, ODFW, as well as other local partners. Refer to the Coordinated Streamside Management - Strategic Implementation Areas (SIAs) Monitoring and Assessment Proposal Guidance V 2.0 (November 2018) for detailed guidance on SIA monitoring.

6. Open House and Landowner Engagement

Key to achieving the goals of the SIA Initiative is to engage the agricultural community. After the Partner Meeting, ODA hosts an Open House in the SIA. The Open House engages landowners in an informative event that describes the SIA process, answers landowner questions, and shares the Compliance Evaluation results with landowners whose property has been evaluated.

The Open House allows ODA to communicate local Area Rules and connect landowners to local partners for technical assistance related to water quality management. The Project Lead and local partners attending the Open House are encouraged to present available opportunities for landowners to participate in incentive-based voluntary conservation.

7. Phase I

Potential Violations: After the Open House, ODA contacts the landowner and or operator of property identified as Potential Violations to identify the extent of the potential problem. If a potential violation exist, ODA works with the landowner or operator to achieve compliance with Area Rules through ODA's compliance process. Partners may work with the landowner to provide technical support and/ or financial assistance (where available). Note, if any observed Potential Violation is significant such as active discharge or active removal of streamside vegetation, ODA will contact promptly after the Remote Evaluation.

Opportunities for Improvement: After the Open House, the Project Lead will work to engage in the SIA process those landowners whose properties were evaluated as Opportunities for Improvement (OPP). Project Leads are encouraged to provide one-on-one technical assistance and consultation to OPP landowners regarding the prevention and control of water pollution from agricultural activities as well as how they can participate in voluntary conservation. The Project Lead will work to achieve the goals, objectives, and success indicators that they lined out in their landowner engagement and technical assistance OWEB funding proposal regarding contact with OPPs. The Project Lead will work closely with their ODA SIA Lead throughout Phase 1.

8. Phase II

Opportunities for Improvement: One year after the Open House ODA contacts any landowners identified as Opportunities for Improvement who have not been in contact with the Project Lead. ODA works with the landowner to identify any potential water quality concerns.

Post SIA Evaluation

Once the SIA process concludes, ODA will complete a post evaluation that identifies the success of the compliance, conservation, and restoration work conducted on agricultural lands.

Producer Responsibilities

In Oregon, agricultural operations are not permitted to pollute water. Generally, operators have done well through voluntary efforts. The SIA process helps to ensure both compliance and watershed improvement. Thank you for working with ODA, your local producers, and other partners to help us all “Tell Agriculture’s Story.”

Box 1: How are SIAs complementing other stakeholder engagement, technical assistance, restoration and monitoring efforts?

Local conservation organizations engage in a variety of efforts to help landowners enhance water quality and fish and wildlife habitat, and to monitor the results. As they begin to lead SIA work, local conservation organizations are encouraged to leverage efforts to fill priority gaps, and foster strong partnerships. SIA monitoring may complement or fill a niche identified through these other efforts. Examples include the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP); Farm Service Agency’s Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP, administered by OWEB on behalf of the state of Oregon); and OWEB’s Focused Investment Partnership (FIP), in addition to OWEB’s Open Solicitation grants programs.

The NRCS RCPP provides funding to help local conservation partners and agricultural producers work together towards voluntary and results-driven approaches to private lands conservation. Farmers enrolled in CREP are paid to rent their land along streams for conservation and restoration purposes, establishing riparian buffers. OWEB supports monitoring to understand the effectiveness of CREP buffers on stream quality across Oregon. In 2019, work continues to provide feedback to landowners and describe the outcomes of CREP, and many of the CREP technicians working on these monitoring efforts are also involved in SIA monitoring.

OWEB’s FIPs address ecological priorities of significance to the state of Oregon. Partnerships define geographic boundaries, build a strategic plan and take a results-driven approach to achieve clear and measurable conservation outcomes. The FIP grant program encourages local partners to develop a vision for restoration outcomes, and to collaborate, plan, prioritize, implement, and monitor projects working towards that vision.

Contact Information

Oregon Department of Agriculture

Natural Resource Programs

(503)-986-4700

Ag Water Quality Program

Marganne Allen – Program Manager

Office: (503)-986-4718

Brenda Sanchez – SIA Statewide Lead

Office: (503)-986-5141

Ellen Hammond – SIA Monitoring Lead

Office: (541)-617-0017

Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board

Business Operations

Courtney Shaff

Interim Business Operations Manager

Office: (503)-986-0046

Technical Services

Audrey Hatch

Conservation Outcomes Coordinator

Office: (503)-934-0605

ODA Link to Area Plans and Area Rules:

<https://www.oregon.gov/ODA/programs/NaturalResources/AgWQ/Pages/AgWQPlans.aspx>



Appendix A: Proposed 2019 to 2023 SIA Implementation Schedule by Agricultural Water Quality Management Areas (MAs)

The 2019 to 2023 SIA Implementation Schedule is open to changes and adaptations as needed. See Figure 1 for Management Areas.

2019	2020	2021
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coos-Coquille • Goose and Summer Lakes • Inland Rogue • Klamath Headwaters • Tualatin River • Upper Grande Ronde • Willow Creek 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clackamas Subbasin • Inland Rogue • Lower Deschutes • Mid-Coast • Middle Deschutes • Molalla/P/FP/North • North Coast • Wallowa • Yamhill River 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burnt River • Crooked River • John Day River-North & Middle Forks • South Santiam • Umatilla • Umpqua Basin • Upper Deschutes • Upper Willamette • Walla Walla
2022	2023	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater Harney Basin • Hood River • Lost River • Malheur • Middle John Day • Powder-Brownlee • Sandy Subbasin • Southern Willamette • Tualatin River 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curry • John Day-Upper Mainstem & South Fork • Klamath Headwaters • Lower John Day • Lower Willamette • Mid-Coast • Middle Willamette • Wallowa • Willow Creek 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owyhee was not scheduled in the 2019 – 2023 and will be considered for the 2024-2027 schedule. 		

Appendix B: Timeline 1 – Suggested SIA Cycle of Implementation Activities

This is the recommended timeframe to complete one cycle of SIA activities. Scheduling of activities should occur in the suggested timeline however, there is always flexibility and adaptation as needed per local SIA.

Timeline 1: SIA Annual Cycle of Implementation Activities												
SIA Year 1												
Activity	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Local SIA Planning Meeting												
Remote Evaluation												
OWEB Application: Prepare												
OWEB Application: Submit									2021 (15th)			
Field Evaluation												
Partner Meeting												
Open House												
Monitoring Team 1 st Meeting												
Phase I – ODA Contacts PVs												Starts After Open House
Phase I – Project Lead Contacts OPPs												Starts After Open House
SIA Year 2												
Activity	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Open House Continued...												
	Try Not to Schedule Weather Concerns			All OHs Completed								
Monitoring Team 1 st Meeting Cont.												
	1 st Meeting Completed											
Landowner Engagement & TA												
Phase II – Ensure Compliance												Starts 1 Year After Open House
SIA Year 3												
Activity	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Landowner Engagement TA Cont.nt												
♦ Monitoring												
Phase II – Ensure Compliance												100% Compliance
SIA Year 4												
Activity	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
*Landowner Engagement TA Cont....												
*OWEB Project End Date												Final Progress Reports
♦ Monitoring can continue for up to ten years based on the monitoring proposal’s implementation timeline and available funding												
* Could roll over into Year 5 depending on progress and signed grant agreement date.												