

CURRY COUNTY

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

Meeting Date: March 23, 2023	
LAC Members Present: Lee Riddle, Becky Crockett, Jim Kamph, Joe Pestana, Mary Wahl, Mike Roberts, Steve Mazur	
Reporting Time Frame: Calendar years 2019-2022	
PROGRESS MEASUREMENT	
Focus Area: Morton Creek	
Measurable Objective and Milestone: Increase trees and shrubs in the assessed riparian area by 2.5 acres through riparian planting projects.	
Current Conditions or Assessment Results: The Focus Area closed in June 2021. The measurable objective and milestone were not achieved at that time. However, a larger, more comprehensive project was developed and is in the final stages of engineering design. The project will include stream channel remeander, riparian restoration, riparian livestock exclusion fencing, and livestock offstream water systems. Implementation of this project is expected by 2024, and will surpass the measurable objective.	
Technical Assistance (TA)	
# landowners/operators provided with TA	7
# site visits	13
# conservation plans written	2
Ag Water Quality Practices Implemented in the Focus Area	
Livestock Offstream Watering Facilities	10

Strategic Implementation Area (SIA): Pistol River		
ODA Measurable Objective: As of January 23, 2023, all 5 tax lots identified as a Potential Violation or a Compliance Opportunity will be downgraded to Restoration Opportunity or Likely in Compliance.		
Current Conditions: All but one Compliance Opportunity was downgraded. The landowner was unresponsive. The SIA has closed.		
Progress Toward Measurable Objective: The Curry Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) contracted with River Design Group to produce a hydraulic model of the lower Pistol River watershed. The modeling showed how the river would behave at varying flows, with varying alterations, and revealed a suite of potential viable restoration actions on agricultural land in the SIA. The Curry SWCD worked with a landowner in the SIA to install 3,800 feet of livestock exclusion fence along an oxbow channel on grazing land in the lower watershed. Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board Small Grant Program funds were used for the project. The Curry SWCD continues to work in this area. The SIA process led to landowner contacts and project concepts and designs for which the SWCD continues to seek implementation funding.		
Management Area-wide Activities (Curry SWCD, Curry Watersheds Partnership, Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program, Natural Resources Conservation Service)	#	Discussion
Landowners Provided Technical Assistance*	107	Assistance with planning, project design, seeking grant funding, implementation, etc.
Site Visits	274	Site visits on agricultural land to provide technical assistance to landowners
Funding Applications Submitted	68	Grant applications submitted to fund agricultural water quality projects
Funding Applications Awarded	56	Grant applications funded for agricultural water quality projects

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

LAC DISCUSSION
Summary of Progress
The private agricultural landowners in Curry County continue to make significant progress to protect and improve water quality in partnership with the Curry SWCD, Curry Watersheds Partnership, CREP, and NRCS.

Impediments

- Illegal marijuana cartel activity is a water quality and quantity concern in Curry County.
- Concerns about conversion of forestland to agricultural land use ahead of the Private Forest Accord.
- Concerns that land may turn to invasive weeds, such as gorse, rather than be properly converted to productive agricultural pasture.

Recommended Modifications and Adaptive Management

- In current and future versions of the Plan reporting, be sure to include all applicable progress for agricultural water quality on private lands. Include implementation efforts such as the Sixes Focused Investment Partnership, Elk River Salmon Action Plan, and Langlois Drinking Water Protection. Also include a full list of implemented projects, not an oversimplified summary.
- Include information in the Plan regarding the benefits of beaver on ag water quality and aquatic habitat.
- Include updated fisheries information.

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	0	0	6	0	2	3	0	0
Within SIA	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0