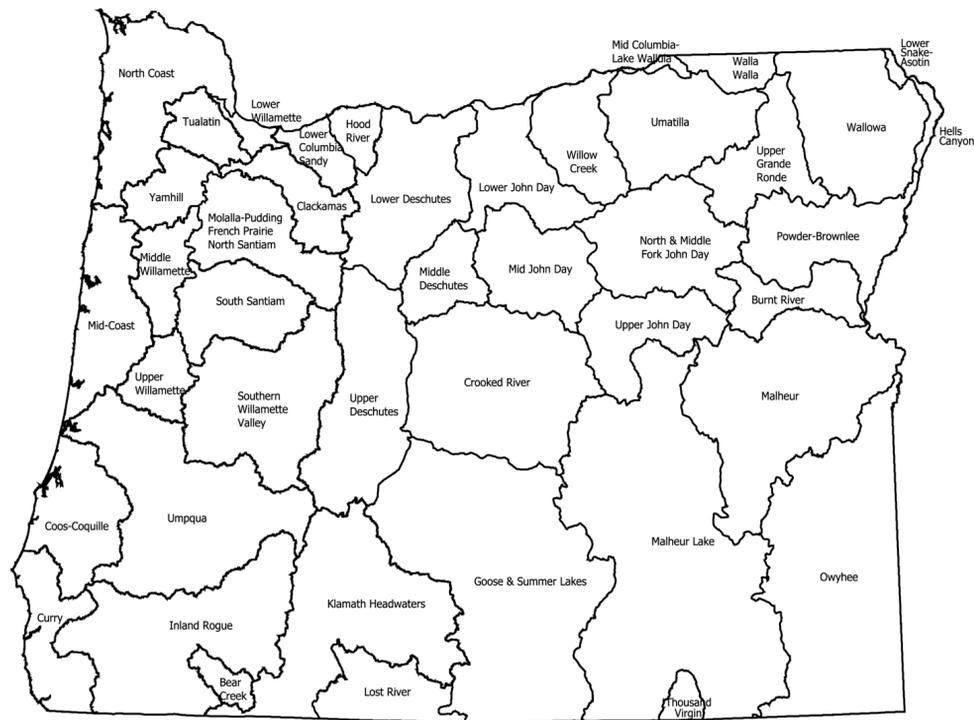


OREGON WATER QUALITY STEWARDSHIP



State of Oregon
Agricultural Water Quality Management Planning Areas

As one of the original stewards of the land and water, agriculture in Oregon has a key role to play in protecting the state's natural resources for future generations of farmers, ranchers, and all Oregonians.

Senate Bill 1010, which was crafted with the input and support of the agriculture industry and the State Board of Agriculture, will help the industry address water quality issues.

The Agricultural Water Quality Management Program, administered by the Oregon Department of Agriculture's (ODA) Natural Resources Division, is responsible for addressing water pollution associated with the activities on agricultural and rural lands.

HISTORY

The 1972 Federal Clean Water Act was developed to clean up water pollution from human activities. Water quality can be affected by a variety of human activities including forestry, wastewater treatment plants, storm water runoff, and runoff from agriculture.

In 1993 the Oregon Legislature passed the Agricultural Water Quality Management Act, also known as **Senate Bill 1010 (SB 1010)**. **SB 1010** requires the **Oregon Department of Agriculture** to help reduce water pollution from agricultural sources, thus improving water conditions in the watersheds throughout the state.



IS WATER QUALITY A PROBLEM IN OREGON?

Yes! The Federal Clean Water Act requires the testing and listing of waterways that do not meet water quality standards. The Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) does this work in Oregon, and has developed standards designed to protect beneficial uses of water such as agriculture, recreation, fisheries, and drinking water supplies. DEQ has identified many streams throughout Oregon that do not meet water quality standards.

Potential Sources of pollution include:

- ◆ Erosion and runoff from roadsides and urban development
- ◆ Contaminated runoff from both agricultural operations and established urban areas
- ◆ Sediment from eroding agricultural and forest lands and streambanks

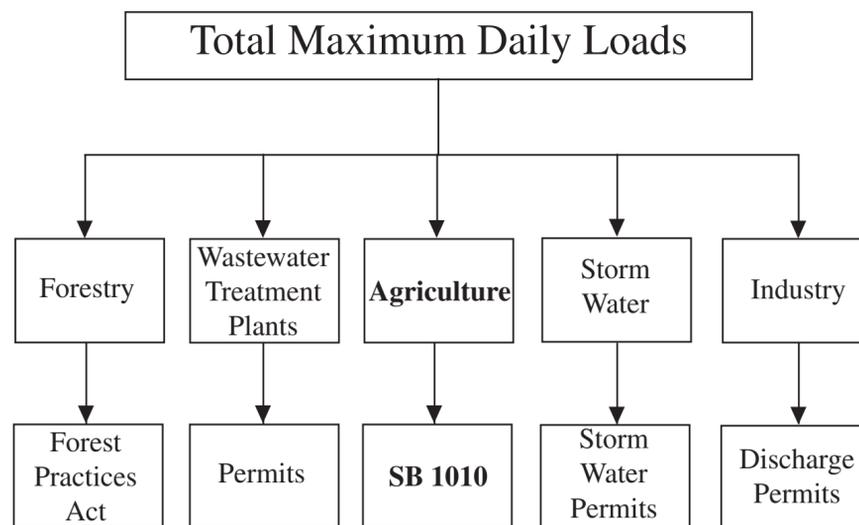
The DEQ is developing Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs). TMDLs are defined as the amount of pollution a body of water can absorb, from a variety of sources, and still meet water quality standards.

WHO IS INVOLVED WITH SB 1010?

The ODA and county Soil and Water Conservation Districts have identified 39 watershed based **Agricultural Water Quality Management Planning Areas** across the state (see Agricultural Water Quality Management Planning Area map). With the help of professional ODA Water Quality Planners, each of the 39 planning areas identify local farmers, ranchers, and community leaders to serve as **Local Advisory Committee (LAC)** members. Each LAC identifies local water quality problems and opportunities for improvement.

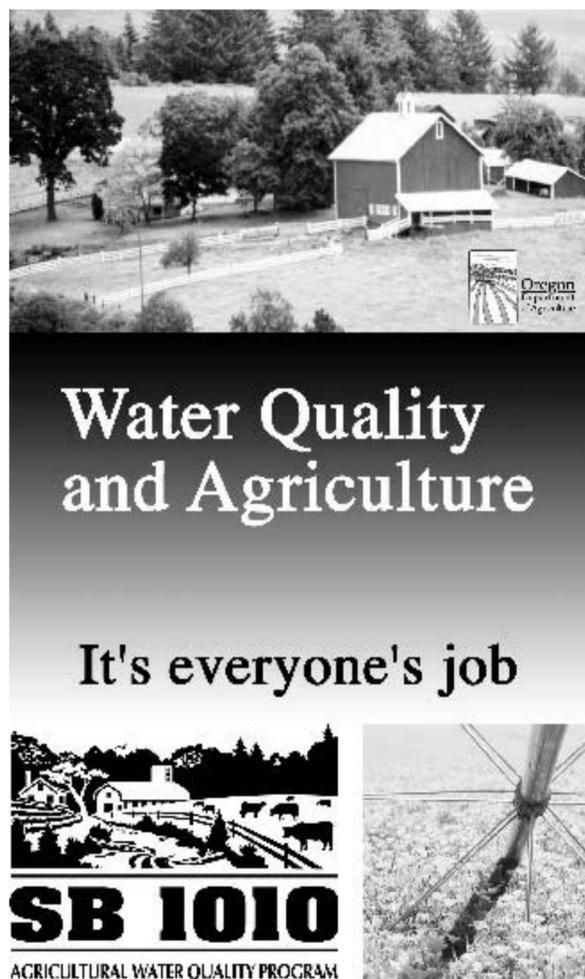
The resulting **Agricultural Water Quality Management Plan**, once approved by Oregon's Board of Agriculture, becomes the guide by which agricultural water quality issues are addressed.

Water Quality Stakeholders



The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality tests the state's waterways and determines the Total Maximum Daily Loads of sediment and pollutants that a waterway can carry.

Agriculture is doing its part to ensure water quality.



Oregon Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Division
635 Capitol Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97301-2532



HOW DOES AGRICULTURE HELP KEEP WATER CLEAN?

Every farmer, rancher, grower, and hobbyist is asked to do his/her part to help solve water pollution problems.

Potential pollution sources from agriculture include:

- ◆ Bacteria and nutrient runoff from animal waste
- ◆ Soil erosion from crop and pasture lands
- ◆ Irrigation runoff
- ◆ Commercial fertilizer and sediment finding its way into waterways
- ◆ Removal or reduction of streamside (riparian) vegetation
- ◆ Improper pesticide use

WHAT ARE THE RULES?

As the Local Advisory Committee is creating the **Agricultural Water Quality Management Area Plans**, they are also developing the Administrative Rules. Once adopted, the rules provide an enforceable backstop to ensure all landowners do their part to resolve water quality problems.

DOES SB 1010 TELL ME HOW TO PREVENT POLLUTION?

No! SB 1010 is **non-prescriptive**. This means that several solutions and options could be available. Each landowner decides which solution best suits his/her operational needs. Each Agricultural Water Quality Management Area Plan describes flexible solutions to meet each planning area's unique water quality issues.



Artwork courtesy of USDA NRCS

HOW MIGHT MY FARM OR RANCH BE CONTRIBUTING TO WATER QUALITY PROBLEMS?

Bacteria and nutrients from animal waste and commercial fertilizer can degrade water used for drinking and recreation. Sediment from erosion can find its way into rivers and streams and impact water quality. In addition, removal of streamside vegetation can cause increased erosion, loss of wildlife habitat, and contribute to increases in water temperature that harms salmon, steelhead, and trout.

WHAT ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF HOW I MIGHT IMPROVE WATER QUALITY?

Animal Grazing

- Rotate pastures
- Use off-stream watering
- Allow grasses to recover before autumn frosts

Manure Management

- Ensure proper storage to avoid leaching
- Keep storage areas away from surface water
- Regularly clean confinement areas

Manure Use

- Apply evenly to pastures
- Apply only as much as your crops or pasture can use
- Do not apply to soils that are saturated or frozen

Lawn, Landscaping, and Garden

- Avoid planting lawn all the way down to the stream. Leave a vegetated buffer area between the lawn edge and the stream
- Use slow release fertilizer that provides a lower concentration of nutrients over time
- Sweep all fertilizer, soil, and vegetation off of paved surfaces to prevent them from being washed into creeks and streams

Erosion Control

- Maintain trees, shrubs, grasses, and legumes on steep slopes, drainage canals, ditches, and other bodies of water
- Use cover cropping, hay, or straw to help stabilize exposed areas
- Minimize hard surfaces to maximize water absorption

The solutions are up to the operator as long as the goals of the Water Quality Management Plan are met.

WILL MY PROPERTY BE INSPECTED?

Once a local **Agricultural Water Quality Management Area Plan** has been adopted, it is up to each individual landowner to ensure that his/her operation does not pollute the waters of the state. The department investigates complaints associated with pollution to waters of the state and, if violations are found, corrective actions must be taken.

IS SB 1010 ENFORCED?

Yes. The Oregon Department of Agriculture first works with producers on a voluntary basis to solve problems through education and technical assistance. Those who are asked to solve a problem but continually refuse to do so could be subject to enforcement action including civil penalties.

ISN'T AGRICULTURE ALREADY DOING ITS PART TO IMPROVE WATER QUALITY?

As the original land stewards, many farmers and ranchers are already practicing conservation to protect water quality. Livestock operators are using alternative grazing and watering sources and providing manure storage. Nurseries are recycling irrigation water. Row crop growers are using crop rotation strategies and are applying straw mulch and cover crops to control water runoff and reduce erosion and loss of nutrients. Many landowners, large and small, are planting stream-side buffers that strengthen banks, slow erosion, cool the water, and provide wildlife habitat.



WHAT ARE SOME OF THE BENEFITS OF SB 1010?

- ◆ Offers flexibility for operators to improve and maintain water quality
- ◆ Promotes coordinated watershed planning
- ◆ Compliance demonstrates agriculture's commitment to water quality stewardship
- ◆ By complying with local rules, operators may avoid more restrictive regulation

WHERE CAN I LEARN MORE?

Information about **SB 1010**, **Agricultural Water Quality Management Area Plans**, best management practices, and other water quality and agricultural issues are available on-line at the **ODA website: www.oda.state.or.us**.

ARE HELP AND MONEY AVAILABLE?

Help with a variety of solutions is available from many sources. Technical assistance from local Soil and Water Conservation Districts, Watershed Councils, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, Farm Service Agency, and ODA is **free**.

In some cases, funds are available through special grants and programs that deal specifically with water quality issues. **Plus**, technical expertise can show farmers and ranchers production alternatives that are not only helpful to the environment but can make operations more productive and profitable.

For information and technical assistance contact your:

- ◆ **Local Soil and Water Conservation District**
- ◆ **Local Watershed Council**
- ◆ **Natural Resources Conservation Service**
- ◆ **Farm Service Agency**

OREGON DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Natural Resources Division

635 Capitol Street NE
Salem, OR 97301-2532

(503) 986-4700

TTD (503) 986-4762

Website: www.oda.state.or.us

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