

# Public Notice: Request for Comments

## Action Plan for the Southern Willamette Valley Groundwater Management Area Ready for Public Comment



State of Oregon  
Department of  
Environmental  
Quality

**Notice issued:** September 1, 2006

**Written comments due:** 5 p.m., November 7, 2006

### Where can I get more information and send comments?

DEQ accepts comments by mail, fax and e-mail. You can also contact the below DEQ staff for further information, or go the SWV GWMA Website:

<http://groundwater.oregonstate.edu/willamette/>

**Name:** Audrey Eldridge

**Phone:** 541-776-6010 ext. 223 or toll free in Oregon (877) 823-3216 ext. 223

**Mailing address:** 221 Stewart Ave, Suite 201, Medford, OR 97501

**Fax:** 541-776-6262

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### How can I review the document?

You can review the draft Southern Willamette Valley Groundwater Action Plan at:

DEQ's Eugene Office  
1102 Lincoln Street, Suite 210  
Eugene, OR 97401

Harrisburg, Junction City and Monroe Public Libraries

Coburg City Hall

Or you can review this document on the following websites:

<http://groundwater.oregonstate.edu/willamette/>  
or  
<http://www.deq.state.or.us/wq/groundwa/UpperWillBasin.htm>

### What are DEQ's responsibilities?

The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), as the regulatory agency that helps protect and preserve Oregon's environment, designated a portion of the Southern Willamette Valley as a "Groundwater Management Area" or *GWMA* for short. This designation was determined to be necessary due to the everyday sources of nitrate groundwater pollution that have eventually moved into the subsurface by precipitation, overloading or irrigation. Possible sources of this nitrate pollution include fertilizers, animal wastes and septic systems.

Once a GWMA is declared, a citizen's advisory group known as the GWMA Committee is formed to develop an Action Plan. This plan contains a description of the voluntary actions that, when implemented, could reduce the amount of nitrate leaching into the groundwater. DEQ also acted as the designated lead agency to facilitate the drafting of this plan.

The Action Plan has been drafted and is ready for review. The purpose of this notice is to invite you to submit written comments and/or attend a public meeting and provide your oral or written comments on the proposed Action Plan for the Southern Willamette Valley GWMA.

### Where is the proposed Groundwater Management Area located?

The Southern Willamette Valley GWMA is located in portions of the lowlands between Albany and Eugene. The boundaries include Highway 99 W to the west, Muddy Creek to the East, and include the communities of Coburg, Junction City and Harrisburg.

### What is proposed?

The GWMA Committee has prepared a draft Action Plan, which, after incorporating public comment, will be submitted to DEQ for final acceptance.

### Western Region Regional Environmental Solutions

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Suite 201

Medford, OR 97501

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Contact:

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This Action Plan identifies those actions that can be taken by different segments of the community to reduce the amount of nitrate that discharges to the groundwater. The plan focuses on voluntary actions, and identifies the potential entities that could implement various actions.

## Why was a GWMA declared?

DEQ has completed two groundwater studies examining the levels of nitrate present due to non-point sources. These studies document widespread nitrate contamination at levels greater than 7 mg/L in some areas of the Southern Willamette Valley. High levels of nitrate have potential adverse health effects when ingested.

## Who is affected?

Property owners, farmers, business owners, local governments and residents in and near the proposed Groundwater Management Area.

## Are any DEQ permits required?

No

## What legal requirements apply?

DEQ, as the designated 'Lead Agency' was required to work with other state agencies and local stakeholders to develop this Action Plan. The Action Plan that is out for public comment includes a menu of management practices that, when implemented, will help to restore the groundwater quality and protect the groundwater resource for future uses.

## What happens next?

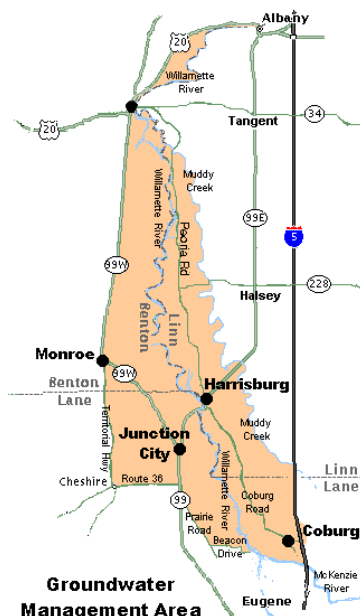
DEQ, as the Lead Agency, will review and summarize all comments received during the comment period, and present this information to the GWMA Committee. Following this Committee's review and response, a final Action Plan will be forwarded to DEQ for final acceptance.

In addition, DEQ and other groups will be hosting several town hall meetings, where the public can come and learn about the GWMA Action Plan, have their well water screened for nitrate, and can submit written or oral comments for the record.

The location for the October town hall meetings will be announced soon.

## Accessibility information

DEQ is committed to accommodating people with disabilities at our hearings. Please notify DEQ of any special physical or language accommodations or if you need information in large print, Braille or another format. To make these arrangements, contact DEQ Public Affairs at (503) 229-5696 or toll free in Oregon at (800) 452-4011. People with hearing impairments may call DEQ's TTY number, 541-776-6105.



The above shaded area is the location of the Southern Willamette Valley Groundwater Management Area



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