Agricultural Water Quality Management Area plan and regulations

Oregon's Agricultural Water Quality Management Act requires landowners to prevent and control water pollution from agricultural activities and soil erosion. This mandate led to the adoption of Water Quality Management Area plans and regulations throughout Oregon.

Central Oregon has three Water Quality Management Areas: Middle Deschutes, Upper Deschutes, and the Crooked River.

These three area plans provide information on water quality issues and recommend management practices.

Area regulations outline requirements for agricultural landowners to protect water quality. Landowners must prevent water pollution by:

- Keeping excess manure, fertilizer and soil out of streams and irrigation water conveyances.
- Encouraging vegetation along streams for shade, bank stability, and filtering pollutants out of runoff.

These requirements are enforced by the Oregon Department of Agriculture.

Landowners are responsible for conditions under their control. They are not responsible for conditions that are natural or a result of other landowners' activities or unusual weather events.

You can contact your local soil and water conservation district for technical and financial assistance. Ask them for your copy of the area plan and regulations.

Where can I get help?

Soil and Water Conservation Districts

Crook County	541-447-3548
Deschutes County	541-923-2204
Jefferson County	541-923-4358, Ext. 101

Watershed Councils

Crooked River	541-447-8567
Middle Deschutes	541-923-4358, Ext. 113
Upper Deschutes	541-382-6103

Oregon State University Extension

Central Oregon Ag Research Center	541-475-7107
Crook County	541-447-6228
Deschutes County	541-548-6088
Jefferson County	541-475-3808
Warm Springs Reservation	541-553-3238

Oregon Department of Agriculture

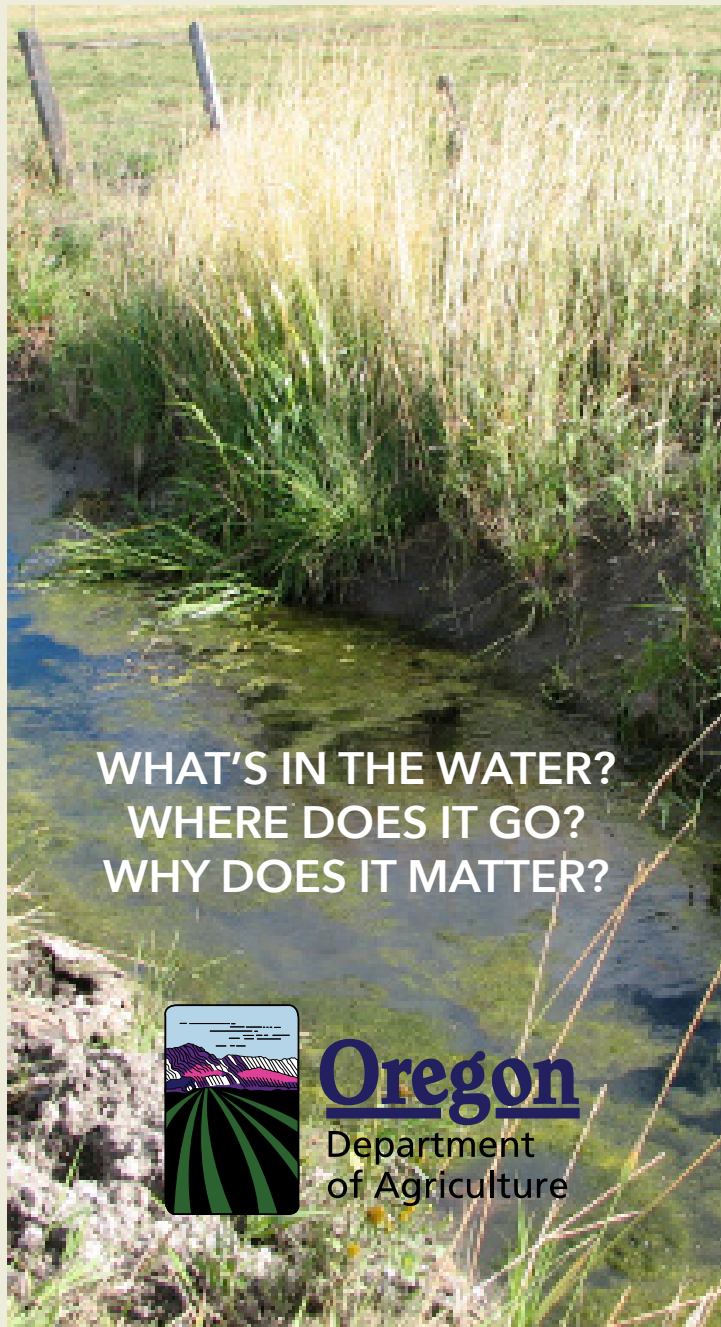
Theresa DeBardelaben 541-318-9088
tdebardelaben@oda.state.or.us
Ellen Hammond 541-617-0017
ehammond@oda.state.or.us

Your irrigation district

Arnold	541-382-7664
Central Oregon	541-548-6047
Lone Pine	541-548-2640
Ochoco	541-447-6449
North Unit	541-475-3625
Swalley	541-388-0658
Three Sisters	541-549-8815
Tumalo	541-382-3053

Agricultural Water Quality
635 Capitol St. NE, Salem, OR 97301
www.oregon.gov/ODA
Salem phone: 503-986-4700
Salem fax: 503-986-4730
6/2015

Water Quality Requirements:
Canals and Ditches



Oregon
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Where's the water going?

Water can have different effects depending on where it goes. Does the water:

- Stay on your property?
- Continue to a neighbor's property?
- Flow to a stream?

What's in it?

Material in the water can have unintended consequences for people and fish.

Excess soil

- Clogs irrigation equipment.
- Fills ponds and ditches.
- Silts in fish habitat.

Excess manure or fertilizer

- Creates algae in ponds and streams.
- Contaminates groundwater.

Excess bacteria or pesticides

- May harm people and animals.
- Contaminates groundwater.

Why does it matter?

Losing topsoil reduces productivity, and lost productivity costs money.

Excess bacteria or nitrates can harm people.

Livestock shouldn't drink water containing bacteria or algae.

Irrigation runoff entering rivers and streams may harm fish through warm water temperatures and excess soil and nutrients.

Keeping water from harming humans or fish is the law.

OREGON LAW (ORS 468B.025) STATES NO PERSON SHALL:

- Pollute any water, including wells, ditches, and streams.
- Place wastes such as excess soil or manure where they are likely to enter water.
- Violate water quality standards.

Management tips

- Keep soil on the land and nutrients on site.
- Keep manure out of irrigation water:
  * Provide alternative drinking water source.
  * Clean out manure from ditches before water is delivered.
  * Pile manure away from canals and ditches.
  * Fence livestock out of canals and ditches.
  * Pipe ditches running through pastures.
- Reduce runoff by scheduling water applications and using appropriate equipment for crop needs.
- Eliminate runoff from ponds and ditches to nearby streams and rivers.
- Reduce soil in irrigation water:
  * Maintain vegetation on ditch bank to stabilize the banks and filter soil and fertilizer out of irrigation runoff.
  * Fence livestock out of canals and ditches.
  * Pipe or line ditches.
- Reuse irrigation water by collecting in a pond and pumping out for irrigation.
- Apply fertilizer based on crop needs, soil tests, irrigation schedule, and weather.