

# The Agricultural Water Quality Program and Streamside Landowners

**The Agricultural Water Quality Management Act** (Senate Bill 1010) was passed by the Oregon Legislature in 1993. This bill requires the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) to help reduce water pollution from agricultural and rural sources, which addresses a portion of the federal Clean Water Act. Senate Bill 1010 applies to rural agricultural lands (outside of the urban growth boundary) which are not covered under the Forest Practices Act.

## Is water quality a problem in Oregon?

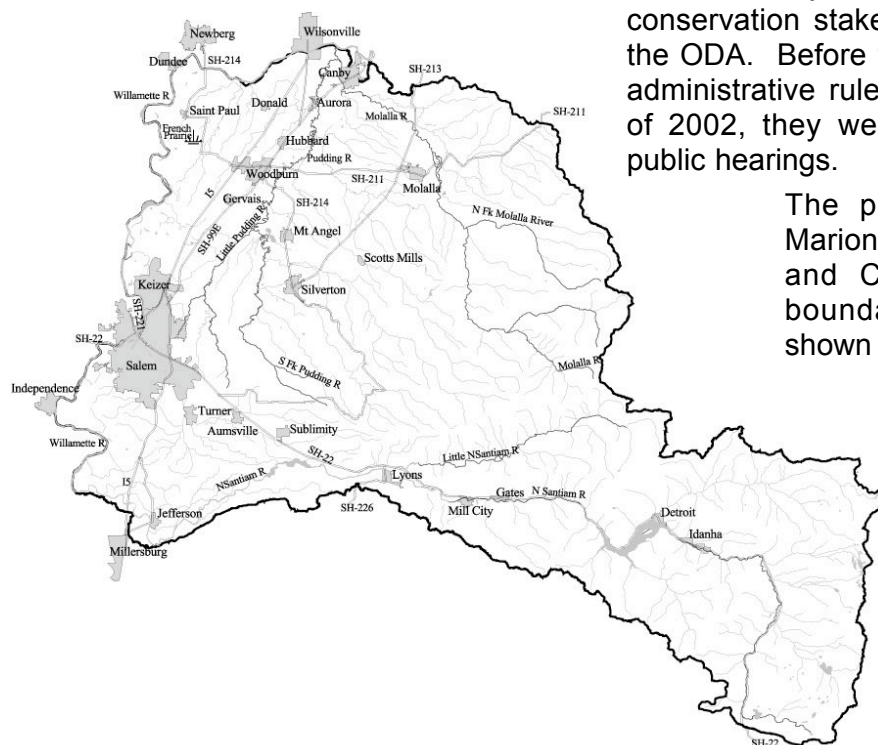
We have many streams and rivers designated as “water quality limited” by the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). Water quality limited means they do not meet federal and state standards for beneficial use. Examples of beneficial uses include recreation, fisheries, and irrigation. These streams have been identified by cooperative water quality monitoring efforts, and they are continuing to be monitored for changes.

## The Agricultural Water Quality Program

The ODA has worked with local groups across the state to create subbasin agricultural water quality plans. The plans identify strategies to reduce water pollution from rural and agricultural lands through education, suggested land treatments, management activities, and monitoring. The plans incorporate local concerns and outline ways to correct water quality problems.

## Our local plan is known as the Molalla-Pudding-French Prairie-North Santiam Subbasins Plan.

The Molalla-Pudding-French Prairie-North Santiam Subbasins Plan was written by seventeen local agricultural and conservation stakeholders with guidance from the ODA. Before the plan, and the associated administrative rules, were adopted in January of 2002, they went through a series of four public hearings.



The plan area includes most of Marion county and portions of Linn and Clackamas counties. The boundary for the subbasins is shown on the map on the left.

In the plan, landowners are encouraged to complete voluntary farm plans and implement conservation practices. The plan also promotes a variety of practices that allow landowners the flexibility to address specific concerns on their property.

## Local water quality concerns for streamside landowners

- Erosion and runoff from rural roads
- Sediment eroding from streambanks and ditches
- Degraded and non-vegetated streamside (riparian) areas
- Improper use of irrigation water, nutrients, and pesticides
- Improper maintenance or use of field or irrigation ditches
- Damaged riparian areas due to overgrazing and livestock access



This streambank is eroding due to a lack of riparian vegetation.

## Ways to address local water quality concerns

- Plant filter strips and cover crops to protect bare soil from winter storm events
- Stabilize streambanks with erosion control matting and vegetation
- Replant and maintain riparian buffers
- Conduct soil tests and use current guides for applying nutrients, irrigation water and pesticides and calibrate equipment properly
- Create off-stream water sources for livestock



Erosion control matting and straw wattles are being installed in a riparian zone prior to planting.

### **As a landowner or land manager, you can:**

1. Work with Marion Soil and Water Conservation District to develop your own voluntary conservation plan;
2. Seek funding sources for installing conservation practices (examples include federal cost-share programs and state and local grant programs);
3. Implement conservation practices on your own to improve water quality;
4. Cooperate with water quality monitoring efforts;
5. Stop by the Marion Soil and Water Conservation District office for a complete copy of the Molalla-Pudding-French Prairie-North Santiam Subbasins Plan and Rules;
6. Share the information with your neighbors!

**Marion Soil & Water  
Conservation District**

3867 Wolverine St NE #16, Salem, OR 97305

Phone: 503-391-9927

Website: [www.open.org/mariswcd](http://www.open.org/mariswcd)

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