

INLAND ROGUE AGRICULTURAL WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT AREA PLAN AND RULES

The Oregon legislature passed the Agricultural Water Quality Management Act in 1993. It requires the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) to prevent and control water pollution from agricultural activities.

As a result, ODA worked with local advisory committees to develop Water Quality Management Area Plans and Rules through the state. ODA originally approved the Inland Rogue Area Plan and Rules in 2001 that were revised in 2012.

What is the Plan?

The Inland Rogue Area Plan guides landowners on how to prevent pollution. The Plan's goal is to get all people engaged in agricultural activities to maintain and improve water quality while preserving and enhancing economic viability.

Agricultural water quality concerns in the Inland Rogue area are primarily:

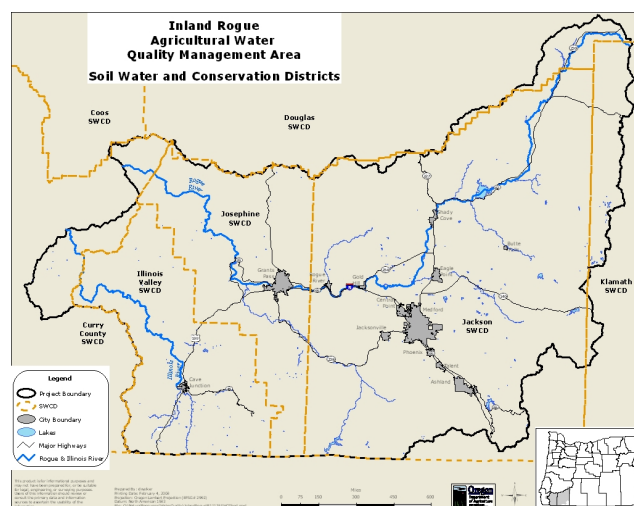
- Nonpoint pollution
- Degraded fish habitat

The Area Plan does not tell anyone how to farm, ranch, or otherwise use the natural resources. Rather, it includes recommended practices that a landowner can choose from. The practices can help them meet their business and conservation goals, while also preventing water pollution.

What are the Regulations?

The Agricultural Water Quality Management Program focuses on voluntary and cooperative efforts by landowners and others to protect water quality. However, the Agricultural Water Quality Act also provides for enforcement to ensure prevention and control of water pollution from agricultural sources when land managers fail to correct problems.

Agricultural water quality regulations (Area Rules) allow landowners flexibility in how they protect water quality. Area Rules describe characteristics that landowners must achieve on agricultural lands, rather than practices they must implement.



The local advisory committee helped ODA develop the Area Rules specifically for the Inland Rogue area. These Rules address

water quality objectives identified in the Area Plan.

The following is a summary of regulations that apply to the Inland Rogue area:

- *There shall be no visible evidence of erosion resulting from agricultural management in a location where erosion has contributed or will contribute sediment to waters of the state.*
- *Agricultural management of riparian areas shall not impede the development and maintenance of adequate riparian vegetation to control water pollution.*
- *Runoff of surface irrigation that enters waters of the state shall not exceed water quality standards.*
- *Landowner actions may not cause pollution to any waters of the state or place any wastes in a location where such wastes are likely to escape or be carried into the waters of the state by any means.*

Do the Plan and Regulations apply to me?

The Area Plan and Rules apply to all lands in current agricultural use, regardless of size, and those lying idle, or on which management has been deferred. It also applies to agricultural operations within incorporated city boundaries and urban growth boundaries.

What do I need to do?

Evaluate your agricultural activities and try to determine whether they might:

1. Pollute streams, canals and groundwater, and
2. Protect growth of appropriate vegetation along streams.

Then change any problem practices to ensure compliance with the Area Rules.

Who can help me?

The Jackson, Josephine, and Illinois Valley Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) are the primary source of landowner assistance to address water quality concerns. SWCDs are non-regulatory and can help with technical assistance, information, and direct you to additional sources of help.

You can contact:

Jackson SWCD at (541) 664-1070
Josephine SWCD at (541) 474-6840
Illinois Valley SWCD at (541) 592-3731

For more information on Rules, Plans and how to file a water quality complaint, contact the Water Quality Specialist:

Beth Pietrzak
epietrzak@oda.state.or.us
(541) 414-8797

Oregon Department of Agriculture
Natural Resource Programs
(503) 986-4700

<http://www.oregon.gov/ODA/programs/NaturalResources/Pages/AgWaterQuality.aspx>

