

Agricultural Water Quality Management Area plan and rules

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 rules 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 rules outline requirements for agricultural landowners to protect water quality. Landowners must manage their operations to 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 rules.

Where can I get help?

Soil and Water Conservation Districts

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

Watershed Councils

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

Oregon State University Extension

Central Oregon	
Ag Research Center	447-8567
Crook County	447-6228
Deschutes County	548-6088
Jefferson County	475-3808
Warm Springs	
Reservation	553-3238

Oregon Department of Agriculture

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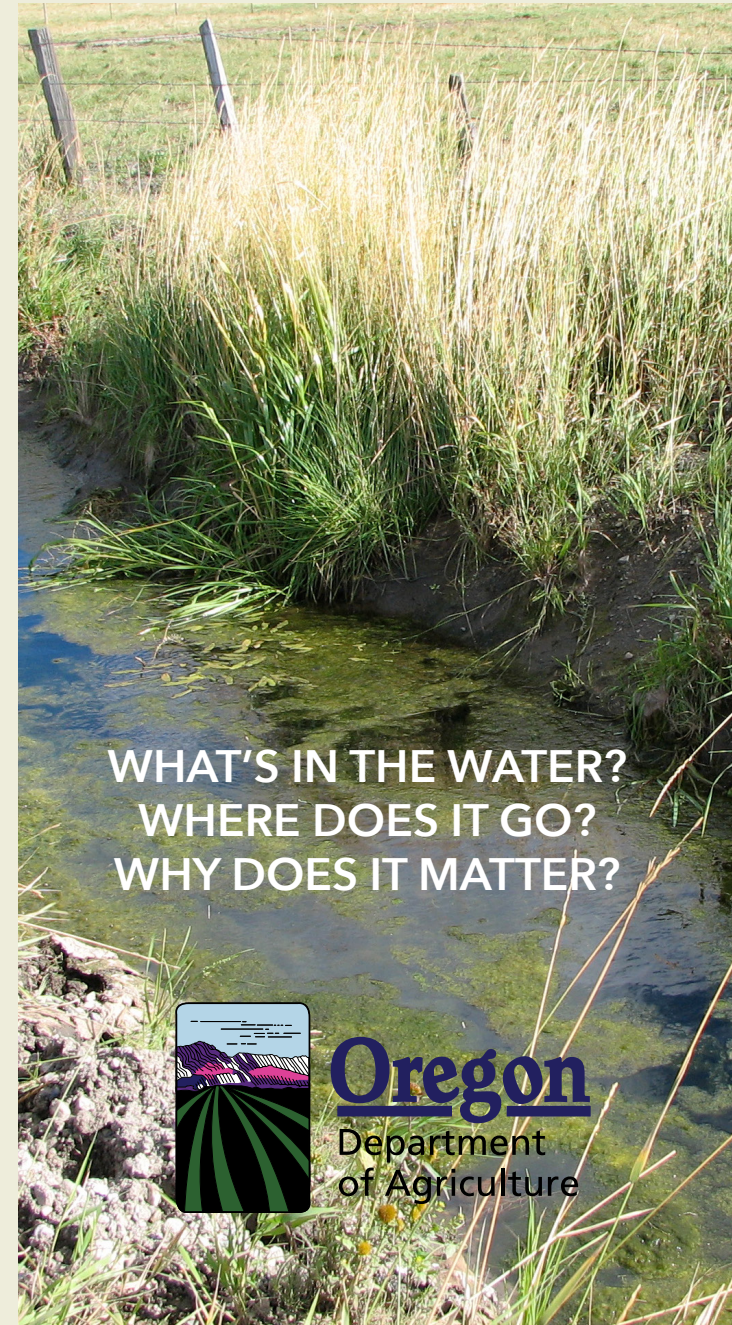
Your irrigation district

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



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Water Quality Requirements: Canals and Ditches



WHAT'S IN THE WATER?
WHERE DOES IT GO?
WHY DOES IT MATTER?



Oregon
Department
of Agriculture



WATER

Where's it going?

Water can have different affects 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?

Water contents 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.

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 use 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 banks 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.

