

# Water Quality & Agriculture

IT'S YOUR RESPONSIBILITY



## Oregon's Agricultural Water Quality Program

- ▶ In 1972, Congress passed the federal Clean Water Act to clean up water pollution from human activities such as forestry, factories, wastewater treatment plants, and agricultural runoff.
- ▶ Oregon's legislature passed the Agricultural Water Quality Management Act in 1993 to help farmers and ranchers address water pollution.
- ▶ The 1993 legislation is the foundation of the Oregon Department of Agriculture's (ODA) Agricultural Water Quality Program (Program) and directed ODA to assist the industry to prevent and control pollution.
- ▶ The Program regulates every farm and ranch with the potential to pollute water, but the bulk of our efforts support voluntary conservation to meet water quality goals.
- ▶ ODA created 38 watershed-based Agricultural Water Quality Management Areas (Management Areas) throughout the state, and each with an Agricultural Water Quality Management Area Plan (Area Plans) and Rules (regulations).
- ▶ Compliance with the regulations is required by state law. The regulations provide landowners flexibility to achieve the required outcomes in ways suitable for their farm or ranch. If a landowner will not comply, they are subject to enforcement actions, including fines.
- ▶ The program prioritizes work in these three areas:
  - Streamside vegetation: agricultural activities must allow streamside vegetation to establish and grow to provide shade on perennial and some intermittent streams, stabilize banks, and filter pollutants. These efforts also result in improved fish and wildlife habitat.
  - Erosion control: keep soil in place and out of streams and ditches.
  - Manure and nutrients: use efficiently to keep them out of streams and ditches.
- ▶ The Program works closely with Oregon's 45 Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs). The SWCDs help implement the Area Plans and provide landowners with technical and financial assistance.

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## Where can I get help?

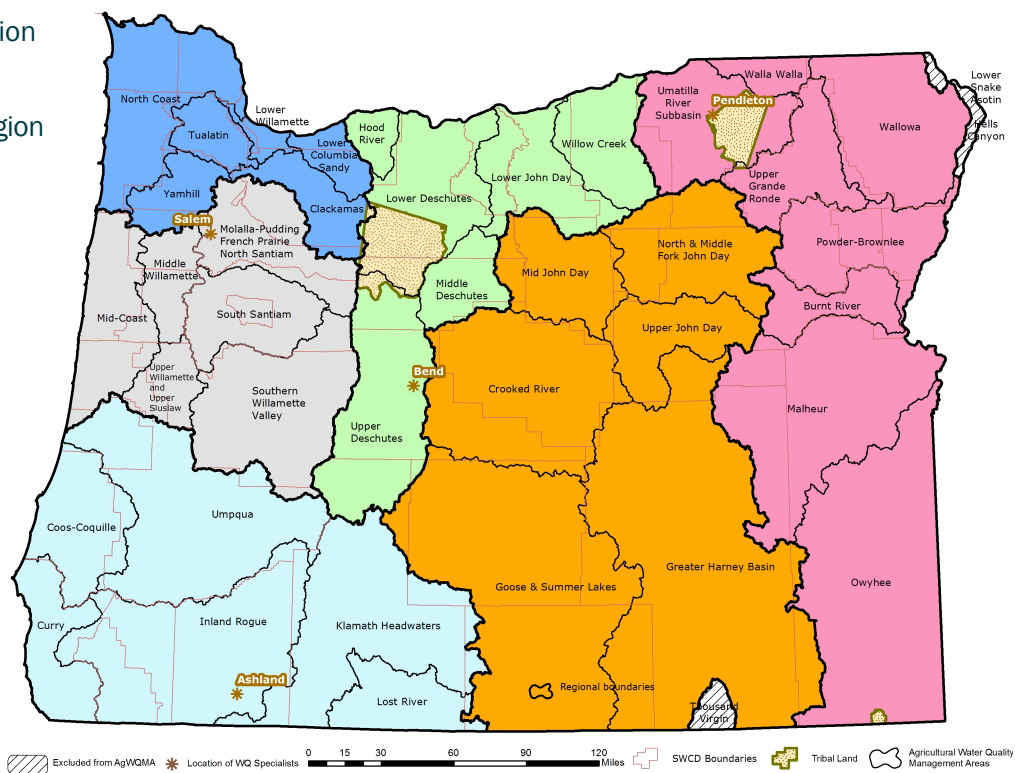
- ▶ Technical assistance is available at no charge from SWCDs, watershed councils, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, Oregon State University Extension, and ODA.
- ▶ In some cases, funds are available through grants and programs that deal specifically with water quality issues. Often, implementing management alternatives helps the environment and also makes operations more productive and profitable.

## Where can I learn more?

- ▶ Information about the Program, Area Plans and regulations, recommended management activities, SWCDs, and other water quality and agricultural issues is available at: <https://oda.direct/AgWQPlans>

## ODA Agricultural Water Quality Management Areas

-  N. Coast / N. Willamette Region  
(541) 986-5141
-  Mid Coast / S. Willamette Region  
(541) 986-4712
-  Southwest Region  
(541) 414-8797
-  Central / North Region  
(541) 931-1754
-  Central / Southeast Region  
(541) 699-2263
-  Eastern Region  
(541) 969-6282



Oregon Department of Agriculture  
 Agricultural Water Quality Program  
 635 Capitol St. NE, Salem, OR 97301-2532  
 Phone: (503) 986-4700  
 Web: [Oregon.gov/ODA](http://Oregon.gov/ODA)