

Water quality plan required by November

by Ben Mouchette

Installing conservation practices on Morrow County's farmland will be receiving more attention under the requirements of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act amendment of 1972.

This act dictates that the nation's water will be "fishable and swimmable" by 1983 wherever attainable. To accomplish this each state must complete their water quality plan by November 1978.

Nationally, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has the responsibility for carrying out the provision of this law. Statewide, the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) has been assigned the responsibility for this law.

DEQ has established a Policy Advisory Committee (PAC) to help them develop Oregon's Water Quality Program. Paul Jones from Heppner is a member of this committee. The PAC has two subcommittees working on the problems of non-point pollution for forestry and agricul-

ture. Dick McElligott from Ione is a member of the agricultural subcommittee. The agricultural subcommittee is working closely with the individual county committees as they develop their individual county plans.

Ken Turner is Chairman of the Morrow County Water Quality Committee that is developing the county's part of the state wide plan with assistance from the State Soil and Water Conservation Commission. The committee is considering all possible sources of "non-point" pollution such as crop fields, range lands, streambanks, roads, urban areas and construction sites in their planning work.

To date the committee has identified the sources of pollution or erosion and established a list of Best Management Practices (BMP's) that can be used to control the non-point pollution.

A key element of the county's plan is the section that outlines how the needed conservation work will be accomplished and who is responsible to see that it is

done—The Implementation Program.

Landowners have been installing conservation practices for years under a voluntary program which includes development of programs and assignment of priorities for technical assistance through the Soil and Water Conservation District, technical assistance from the Soil Conservation Service, cost sharing assistance from the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, and informational and educational programs through the Cooperative Extension Service.

Most people would like to continue this type of program but to meet the requirements of the law the water quality plans must include some form of a regulatory component.

At their January meeting the agricultural subcommittee presented a policy statement to the Policy Advisory Committee on key elements they felt should be incorporated into the statewide implementation program for non-point pollution control. The local water quality commit-

tees feel that these elements need to be included to achieve as much local control as

possible and have the maximum amount of voluntary compliance with the program.

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Cost sharing plan assists local farmers

The Morrow County ASC Committee cost-shared through the Agricultural Conservation Program (ACP), with approximately 50 farmers-ranchers, in the amount of \$58,728.00 in 1977 for performing needed conservation measures.

The cost of the following practices were shared at approximately 75 percent on diversion ditches, terraces, sediment dams, grass seeding, forestry improvement practices, ponds, etc.

In addition to the regular ACP, some 54 farmers-ranchers received \$87,519.00 in emergency assistance through the Drought Conservation Program, as the result of the drought the county

suffered. The emergency practices cost-shared on were livestock ponds, livestock and irrigation wells, livestock pipelines, etc.

Signups are now being taken for participation in the 1978 ACP program, according to Ken Nelson, Chairman of the Morrow County Committee. Practices are basically the same as last year with a major difference in the cost share rate. Major emphasis (90 percent cost share) was placed on terrace outlet structures, waterways, sediment retention structures and permanent seedings. Other practices will vary between 30 percent to 75 percent on cost sharing. For additional information consult your local ASCS office.

WHO SHOULD GET BONNEVILLE'S POWER?

How should the Bonneville Power Administration divide the power that it sells? Should BPA continue selling to its present customers? Should BPA sell to new customers? What about industries?

WHO GETS BPA POWER NOW?

BPA currently contracts for the sale of firm power with 115 preference customers (public bodies and cooperative utilities), 6 Federal agencies, and 17 direct-service industrial (DSI) customers in the Pacific Northwest. These contracts will expire between 1981 and 1994.

BPA has given notice to its current preference customers that it won't have enough firm power to supply their load growth after July 1, 1983. There is also a strong interest in the formation of new public bodies to qualify as BPA preference customers. With these demands on its firm power supply, BPA does not anticipate being able to continue its present service to DSI customers when their contracts expire.

BPA realizes that, with the increasing demand, it is advisable to develop a formula to allocate its power. BPA will consider many alternatives and variables. We expect to consider: class of customer served, customer-owned generation, type of load, grades of energy, rates, energy conservation, and other matters.

WE WANT YOUR IDEAS

If you have ideas concerning how BPA should divide its power, we would like to hear from you in writing by May 1, 1978. Next year, after assessing your recommendations and analyzing the alternatives, BPA will announce a proposed allocation policy and conduct public information and comment forums to hear from you again.

Send your written recommendations to the Public Involvement Coordinator, Bonneville Power Administration, P.O. Box 12999, Portland, Oregon 97212. For further information, write to the above address or call 503-234-3361, Ext. 4715.

BONNEVILLE POWER ADMINISTRATION