

BURNT RIVER 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 approved the Burnt River Area Plan and Rules in 2003.

What is the Plan?

The Burnt River Area Plan guides landowners on how to prevent pollution. The goal of the Plan is to prevent and control water pollution from agricultural activities and soil erosion and achieve applicable water quality standards. Agricultural water quality concerns in the Burnt River area are primarily:

- Temperature
- Chlorophyll a
- Flow modification

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 following is a summary of regulations that apply to the Burnt River area:

- *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.*
- *Agricultural activities will allow the establishment and development of riparian vegetation, consistent with site capability.*



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 Area Plan describes water quality concerns, lists sources of help, and includes recommended practices.

The Burnt River Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) is 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 the Burnt River SWCD at (541) 523-7121 Ext 100

OR

For more information on Rules, Plans and how to file a water quality complaint, contact the Oregon Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Programs (503) 986-4700 or

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

