

LUBGWMA

State Actions

Presented by:

The Office of Governor Kotek

The Oregon Health Authority

*The Oregon Department of
Human Services*

*The Department of
Environmental Quality*

*The Oregon Department of
Agriculture*

*The Oregon Water Resources
Department*

Report

- I.** Office of the Governor
- II.** Oregon Health Authority, Oregon Department of Human Services
- III.** Department of Environmental Quality
- IV.** Oregon Department of Agriculture
- V.** Oregon Water Resources Department

LUBGWMA Engagement | *Governor's Office*

- **Background:** Governor's office has engaged with EPA and state agencies on the LUBGWMA since beginning of administration.
- **Agency Directive:** Last spring, the Governor directed state agencies to coordinate an immediate public health inter-agency response and to develop a plan for the long-term remediation efforts in the LUBGWMA.
- **Legislative Ask:** At the Governor's request, the Legislature allocated funding through June 2025 to support testing, water provisioning and treatment systems in the LUBGWMA, as well as continued outreach and education by state and local public health authorities and community-based organizations.

Immediate Public Health Response | OHA, ODHS

- **Public Health Risk:** High nitrate levels in drinking water is of greatest concern for formula-fed infants due to reduced ability of red blood cells to carry oxygen from short exposures.
- **Background:** OHA and ODHS began building capacity for direct public health intervention in LUBGWMA in 2022, starting with ODHS water delivery in June.
- **E-Board Funding (2022):** OHA contracts for: laboratory testing; water treatment systems; resourcing counties and CBOs for local outreach and advise state agencies; OHA staff. Funding made online testing voucher available (early 2023)
- **Partners:** OHA, ODHS, Morrow/Umatilla County health departments, local community-based organizations.

Timeline of Layered Approach to Overcoming Testing Access Barriers | OHA, ODHS

- **February 2023:** Announced free well testing and water delivery (through OHA and ODHS).
- **May 2023:** Launched bilingual mass communications campaign: direct mailings, ongoing radio, social media, targeted web ads, print and online newspapers. Launched new website.
- **June 2023:** Increased number of CBOs engaged to five; advised by them and county health partners developed branded materials – banners, magnets, yard signs, posters, billboards, more, deployed at two dozen community events, including two community forums in August.
- **Mid-July through September 2023:** Door-to-door canvassing identifies all well-dependent households in LUBGWMA and offers on-the-spot water collection, 211-info contracted.

Ongoing Public Health Work | OHA, ODHS

- **Collaboration:** Partners continue meeting biweekly. Participants include: OHA, ODHS, Morrow/Umatilla County public health depts., Doulas Latinas International, Eastern Oregon Center for Independent Living, Euvalcree, National Center for Alternatives to Pesticides, Oregon Rural Action.
- **Data:** Captured mass of data under campaign conditions – water testing lab results, household and well – now undergoing cleanup to support follow up.
- **Testing Availability:** Continuing mass communications, free water collection and initial testing, water delivery, and treatment system installation. Appointments are still available by calling 2-1-1.
- **Long Term:** Designing free re-testing procedures, assessing adequacy of water delivery, expanding treatment system installation capacity and maintenance. Supporting County-led initiative to assess options for expanding existing/establishing new public water systems with public health project data

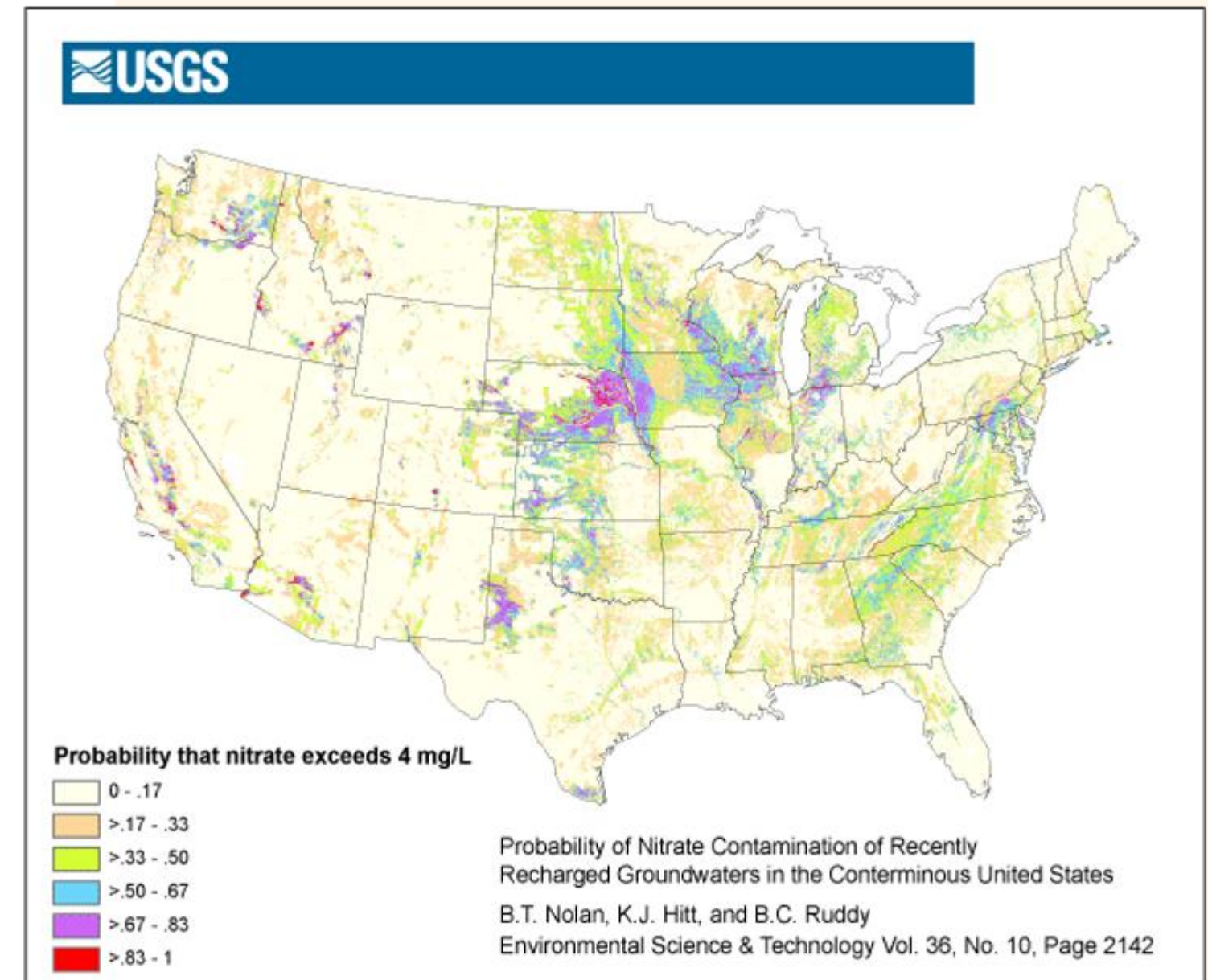
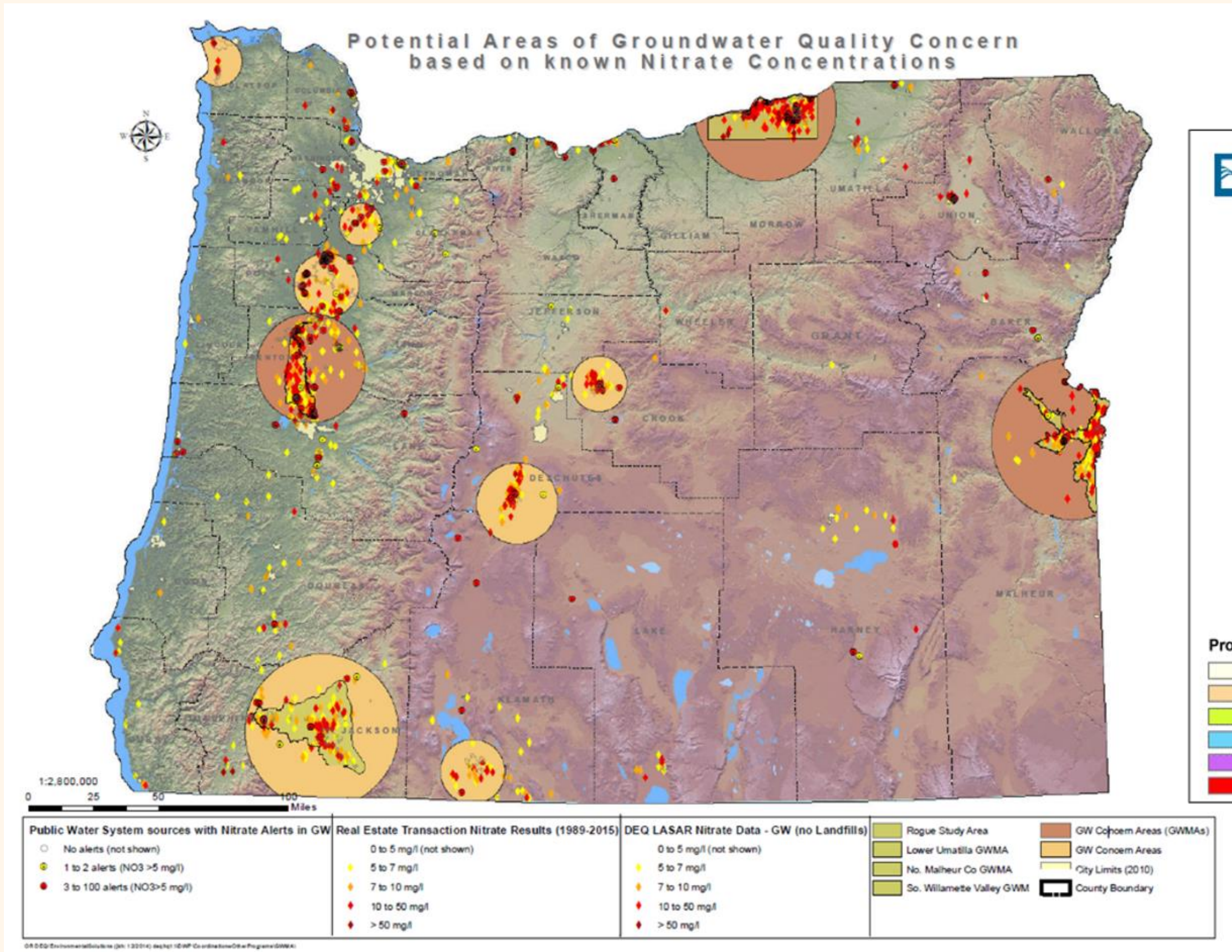
Summer 2023 Campaign Accomplishments | OHA, ODHS

Background: Canvassing coordinated by ODHS–Office of Resilience and Emergency Management deployed ODHS & OHA–contracted canvassers augmented by county & CBO support from July 17–September 30. Up to 25 canvassers canvassing 8 hours/day.

Results:

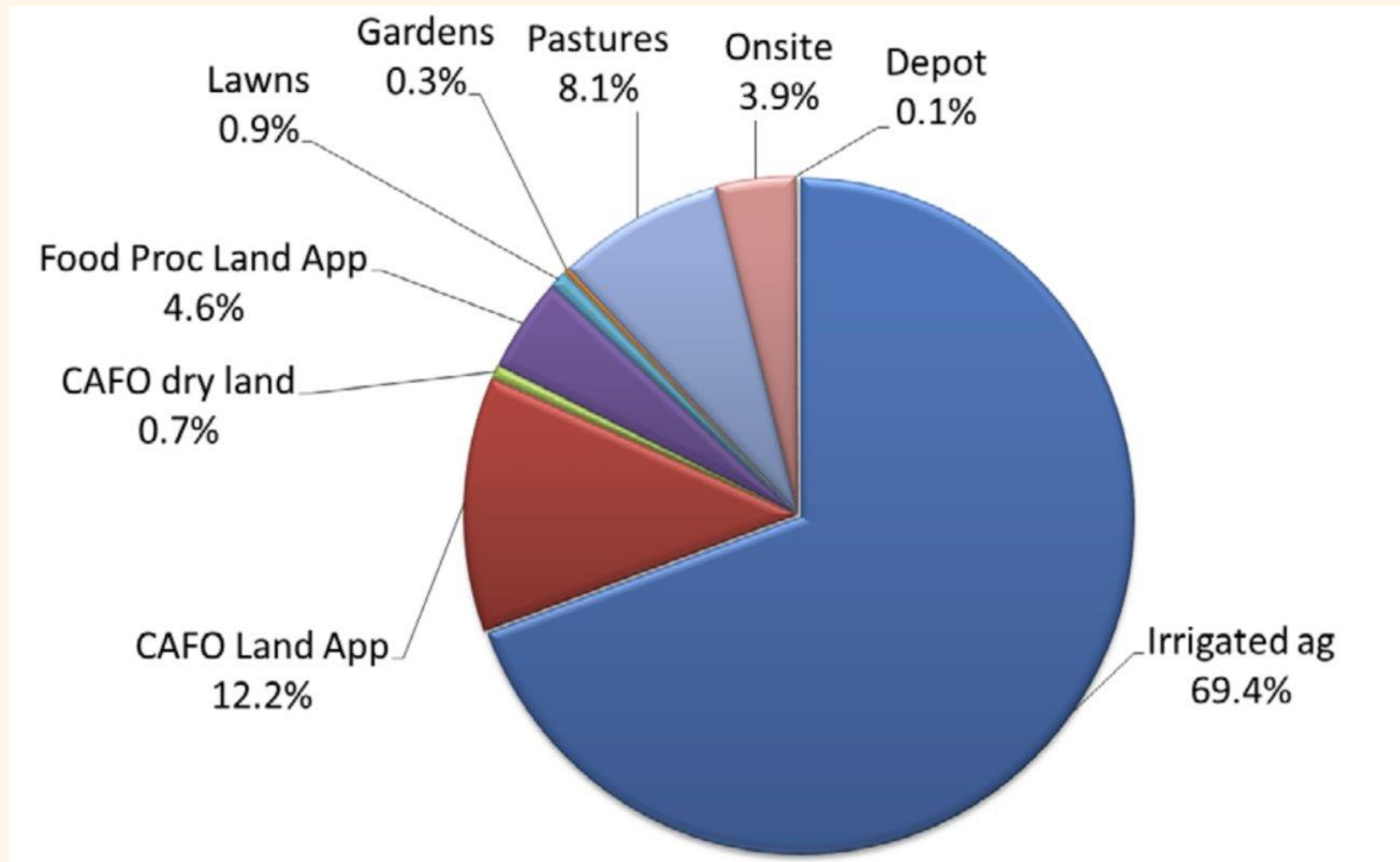
- Identified **3,291** residences in the LUBGWMA that depend on domestic wells for drinking water (**882** in Morrow County and **2,409** in Umatilla County).
- Collected water samples from **1,018 (31%)** of well-dependent households.
- Identified addresses for **1,186 (36%)** households that were inaccessible (no trespassing signs, guard dogs) for follow up through tailored mailing campaigns.
- Identified **516 (16%)** of households where residents said they were not interested in receiving services.
- Identified **571** households (**17%**) that were not home for follow up through targeted mailing campaigns.
- Determined through laboratory analysis that **252** of the **1,018** well water samples (**25%**) tested above the Environmental Protection Agency maximum contaminant level of 10 milligrams of nitrate per liter of water.
- Signed up **312** households for water delivery.

Nitrate in Groundwater, Oregon and Nationally | DEQ



Estimated Sources of Nitrate | DEQ

The LUBGWMA is a key agricultural region of the state. Each player has a part in the LUBGWMA ecosystem. We must work together to find solutions.



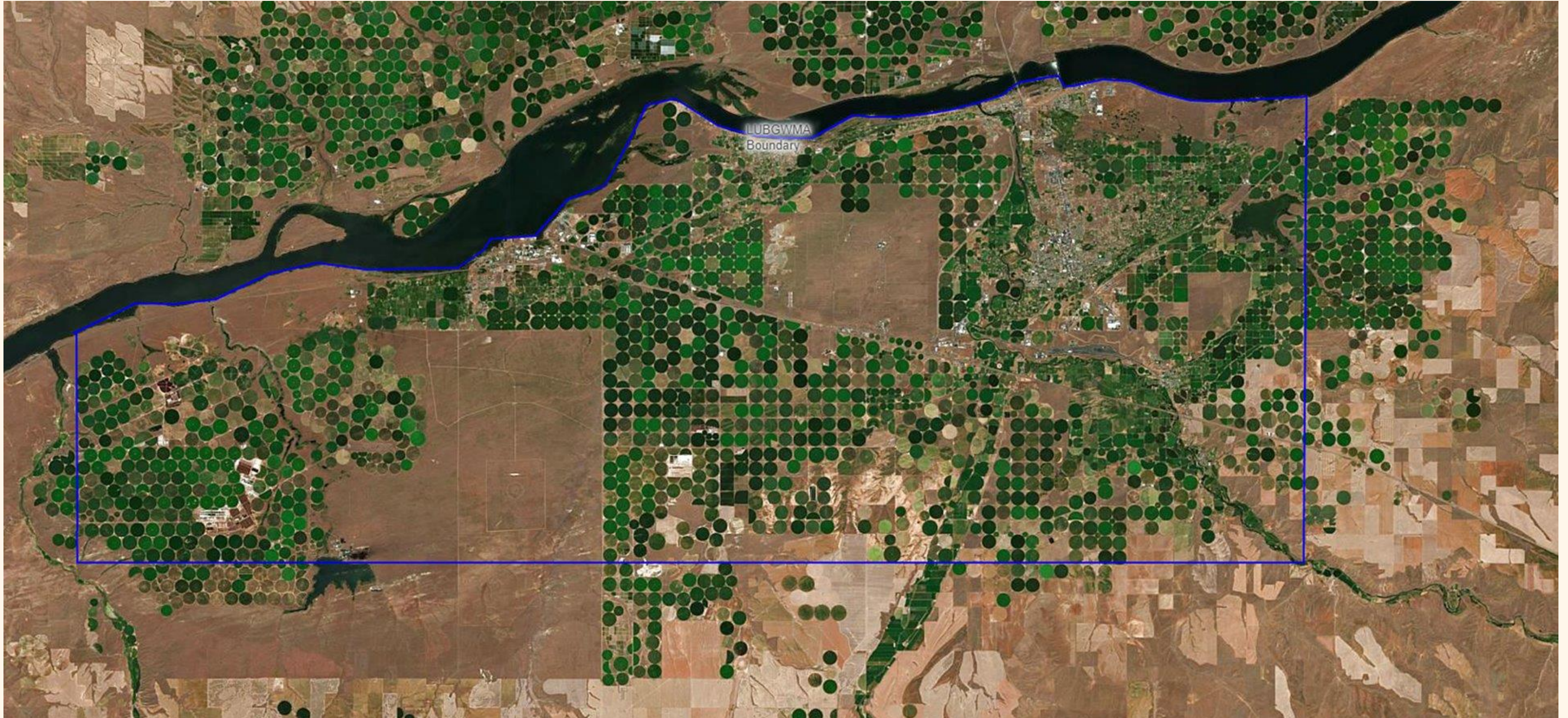
Wastewater Permitting | *DEQ*

- **WPCF permit:** state wastewater permits to protect groundwater
- Permits water reuse on about 20,000 acres in LUBGWMA
- (about 12% of irrigated land in LUBGWMA)
- Recent actions for stronger, more protective permits.
- Limited wintertime application.
- Requires tracking/reporting all nitrogen sources and adherence to crop-specific agronomic rates.
- Enforcement for noncompliance

Confined Animal Feeding Operations | ODA

- CAFO program operated by ODA in partnership with DEQ through a MOU (7-2021) that describes each agency's roles and responsibilities.
- Issue National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) and Water Pollution Control Facility (WPCF) water quality permit to protect waters of the state.
- All permits have a zero-discharge limit.
- Facilities are inspected at minimum of every 10 months.
- 13 permitted CAFOs in the LUBGWMA. There are 5 facilities on Individual CAFO Permits and 8 facilities registered to the General CAFO Permit.
- SB 85 passed in 2023 made GWMA specific changes to CAFO permitting including a new nutrient application permit for manure exports from CAFOs.

LUBGWMA Irrigated Agriculture



Agricultural Water Quality Program | ODA

- Regulatory compliance for state Ag water quality
- Waste Rule prohibits waste being placed in or where likely to enter waters of the state, including groundwater.
- Responsible for ensuring agricultural meets pollutant load allocations assigned by DEQ in its Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs).
- LUBGWMA Work:
 - New SIA with Morrow SWCD focused on groundwater with technical assistance to growers to meet the regulatory requirements.
 - Moved up area plan reviews Umatilla Basin and Willow Creek management areas to ensure clear measurable objectives for groundwater protection.

Water Wells | *OWRD*

- **Well Construction:**

- Inspect water wells to ensure compliance with well construction standards
- Evaluate wells for the need to have backflow prevention devices
- Investigate complaints of wasteful or unauthorized water use

- **Data Sharing:**

- Multiple agencies providing groundwater and data to Morrow and Umatilla County

Public Water Systems | *OWRD*

- **Long-Term Efforts:**
 - Congressional funding in the LUBGWMA
 - OWRD is participating on Morrow County's Water Advisory Committee
- **Initial effort:**
 - Evaluate options to connect users to municipal systems
 - Evaluate options for areas where connections to municipal systems are not possible

Questions?