

**Baker County Republican Central Committee**  
**17996 Old Auburn Road**  
**Baker City, Oregon 97814**

Andrea Matzke  
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Water Quality Division  
811 SW 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
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**RE: Position in Opposition to DEQ Toxics Reduction Rulemaking Package**

The Baker County Republican Central Committee strongly opposes the proposed rulemaking package on Toxics Reduction, for the following reasons:

1. Sec. 319 of the Federal Clean Water Act specifically requires the process to identify "best management practices to control each category and subcategory of nonpoint sources (agriculture) and to reduce to the maximum extent practicable, the level of pollution resulting from such category and source."
2. It also states that the "State shall, to the maximum extent practicable involve local public and private agencies and organizations which have expertise in control of nonpoint sources of pollution."
3. To achieve both of the above points, the Oregon legislature passed SB 1010 in 1993 which enacted the Agricultural Water Quality Management Act to prevent and control water pollution from agricultural activities and soil erosion.
4. In 1995, the Oregon legislature passed SB 502 and 503 declaring the Oregon Department of Agriculture to be the sole agency responsible for developing and implementing programs and rules which protect agricultural water quality.
5. Every county, and/or every watershed in Oregon has an active Soil and Water Conservation District structure, and an active Local Advisory Committee (LAC) for Agricultural Water Quality Management Plans, in total compliance with both of the sets of law cited above.

The proposed Toxics Reduction Rule not only usurps Sec. 319 by ignoring the "best management practices" and "maximum extent practicable" standards, but would impose mandatory TMDL's which would be a numeric tool. This is counter to both Federal and State laws controlling nonpoint sources for water quality pollution relating to agriculture.

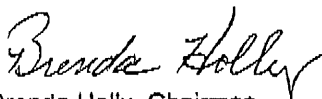
We believe the fish consumption numbers are artificial, and are not based on sound science. Until new, scientific and controlled research is done on actual consumption of ALL people eating fish out of the Columbia, we reject the notion that 175g/day fish consumption threshold is either realistic, or can be scientifically substantiated. Further, this proposed rule does not take into consideration that amount of time that many fish spend in the ocean environment, but rather changes the rules for agricultural nonpoint pollution. We believe that this is gross over-reaching by the state.

This proposed rule will have an extreme adverse economic impact on the agriculture operations in Oregon that rely on irrigation water and practices from even a minor tributary of the Columbia River system.

At a time when the state of Oregon is having great difficulty in reducing unemployment, stimulating business recovery, and financing the most basic responsibilities of government – adding impossible-to-meet new standards, imposed on all of production agriculture, for all of the wrong scientific reasons, makes absolutely no sense.

Thank you for your consideration to our comments.

Sincerely,



Brenda Holly, Chairman  
Baker County Republican Central Committee