



## Kittitas County Conservation District

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## Voluntary Stewardship Program

### Watershed Group Meeting

KCCD Conference Room, 2211 W Dolarway Road, Ellensburg, and Virtually through Zoom

10:00 AM Friday, March 22, 2024

## Meeting Minutes

**In-person attendees:** Brent Dixon, Anna Lael, Ryan Stingley, Kat Satnik, Samantha Cox, and Terry Clarke.

**Zoom Meeting Attendees:** Sean William, Bill Eller, Jack Clerf, John Marvin, Ethan Lockwood, Jamey Ayling, Karen Poulsen, Bill Eller

#### I. Welcome

*Anna welcomed the attendees to the Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP) Watershed Group Meeting and introductions were completed.*

#### II. Review Meeting Minutes

*December 8, 2023, minutes were reviewed with no comments or concerns.*

#### III. Watershed Group Membership

*Anna reported no changes, the dryland representative remains a vacant producer.*

#### IV. WSCC Contract VSP for Fiscal Years 2024 – 2025 (July 2023 to June 2025):

- a. Kittitas County Contract:** *The County's current budget is \$240,000 plus an amendment of \$47,000 for monitoring plan purposes. Amendment 2 for VSP Capital Funds \$181,250*
- b. Kittitas County – KCCD Interlocal Agreement:** *Interlocal agreement with Kittitas County to amend \$47,000 and \$181,250.*

#### V. Financial Assistance: Cost Share Opportunities

*Anna shared and reviewed each funding source available to producers.*

##### a. Natural Resource Conservation Service

- i. NRCS held its sign-up for EQIP and EQIP WaterSMART – NRCS received 30 applications.*
- ii. KCCD's Middle Columbia Steelhead Partnership RCPP second signup closed on November 17<sup>th</sup>. The district received six applications and three were contracted.*
- iii. Upper Yakima River Water Supply and Fish Habitat Improvement – On-farm sign-ups will begin in the fall of 2024.*

##### b. Conservation Commission

- i. Natural Resource Investments (Small Projects) – Cost share will increase to 50-75%, with a \$10,000 cap. Six funded projects are expected.
- ii. Irrigation Efficiencies Program – *Two sprinkler conversion applications were funded, and 1 technical assistance application was submitted.*
- iii. Riparian Grant Funding
- iv. Sustainable Farms & Fields – *Applied to a recent solicitation for Climate-Smart Livestock Management. The next solicitation is expected in July.*
- v. Washington Shrub Steppe Restoration Initiative (WSSRI) – *Virtual Fencing Project application was funded.*

**VI. Monitoring**

- a. Monitoring Plan Requirement (Due July 1, 2024) - *Anna reported that the KCCD has approved a contract with Anchor QEA to complete the monitoring plan.*
- b. *Working Committee will be assembled. Emails will be sent out*
- c. *Ecology Watershed Health Monitoring proposed about 80 sites in total for the central region and maybe half a dozen in Kittitas County.*
- d. *Kat with Kittitas County Water Purveyor reviewed data from this past year.*

**VII. VSP Tech Panel and Statewide Advisory Committee**

- a. *The meeting will be on Tuesday, April 9<sup>th</sup>, and Anna will be presenting at the meeting giving an update to the panel.*

**VIII. Round Table:**

- a. KCCD—*The county now has a new small dairy. A Community Wildfire Defense Grant has allowed the hiring of another staff member, and a Heritage Garden program is growing around the county.*
- b. Sean Williams with WDFW: *A great moment in shrub step restoration in the state, plus data. New resources to assist in the shrub step. Washington Shrub Steppe came out with a 30-year plan. Land cover data set to show a change in shrub step.*
- c. *Bill will be changing roles with the Conservation Commission and the Conservation Commission will have a new staff member overseeing VSP by June 1<sup>st</sup>.*
- d. *Kittitas County Water Purveyors – Will start to sample in a couple of weeks.*
- e. *Ethan Water Trust – water short drought year again. Looking at funding for short term water leases.*

**IX. Action Register**

- a. *Anna will send out the next meeting date.*
- b. *Anna will email a Zoom link for the April Tech Panel meeting.*
- c. *If interested in reviewing the monitoring plan, let Anna know.*
- d. *Will send out a plan to the group.*

**X. Adjourn 11:20 AM**