



Kittitas County Conservation District

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Voluntary Stewardship Program

Watershed Group Meeting

Armory, Kittitas Valley Event Center, 901 E 7th Ave, Ellensburg and Virtually through Zoom

10:00 AM Friday, January 14, 2022

Meeting Minutes

In-Person Attendees: *Anna Lael, Brent Dixon, Mark Crowley, Terry Clarke (KC Cattlemen), Mark Charlton (KC Farm Bureau), Karen Poulsen (Producer), Samantha Cox (KC Flood Control Zone District), and Jennifer Nelson (WDFW).*

Zoom Meeting (Mtg ID: 965 3987 0355) Attendees: *Erin Eaton (Trout Unlimited), John Marvin (Yakama Nation), Kat Satnik (KCWP), Elizabeth Torrey (WDFW), Evan Newell (Ecology), Jim Carroll (Ecology), Jack Clerf (Cascade Irrigation District), Lloyd Stevens Jr. (Ecology), and Brendan Oats (WDFW).*

[Meeting PowerPoint available here.](#)

I. Welcome

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

II. Review Meeting Minutes

The July 23, 2021 minutes were not distributed via email to the Zoom attendees. Anna will send them out after the meeting for review and comments.

III. Watershed Group Membership

Anna reviewed the current members of the Watershed Group. The current list includes at least a couple of individuals who are no longer participating. Lila Hanson is no longer representing Dryland operators and has asked that it be conveyed that she still believes dryland (crop or pasture) needs representation. Kevin Haydon no longer works for the Washington Water Trust, so he will need to be replaced. A couple of other members have not participated, due to the difficulty with availability based on their own work schedules. Anna will be sending letters before the next meeting to the entities currently represented asking those entities to confirm who their representative is and to the individuals on the watershed group as well. Anna proposes that the next terms be 2 years, not the full five until the next major report is due.

IV. Financial Assistance: Anna shared and reviewed each funding source available to producers.

- a. **Cost Share Opportunities** – *Anna reported that NRCS is currently accepting applications for the EQIP WaterSMART initiative which is for KRD irrigated lands. Although the press release didn't go out until January 4 and 30 days' notice is required, applications are due January 24. Producer must ensure their eligibility with FSA is completed by February 1. There is currently no sign-up for the new RCPP grant as the*

partnership agreement between NRCS and the Yakama Nation is delayed while NRCS figures out how to get funds to “water management entities”. Anna reported that the 2018 Farm Bill indicated water management entities were eligible for funding, but that NRCS says for EQIP, not RCPP. NRCS staff are working on potential supplemental agreement options for the requested funding.

- b. Construction – Anna reported that the other category of projects with producers include those where KCCD does the construction. The Fish Barrier Removal Board grants were due yesterday and KCCD applied for two projects, one on Naneum Creek and one on Coleman Creek. The Salmon Recovery Funding Board grant cycle is coming up. KCCD has no current plans to submit, but other entities working on private lands may.*
- c. VSP Funding Assistance – KCCD continues to provide assistance to landowners working to complete planting projects. The latest one planned is on Whiskey Creek.*

V. Monitoring Activities

- a. Water Quality Data- Anna introduced Evan Newell and Jim Carroll with Ecology to present their [2019 Water Quality Data](#). After their presentation, Anna introduced Kat Satnik to present the [KCWP 2021 Water Quality Data](#). After the presentations, Anna introduced Lloyd Stevens, who is doing the work that Jane Creech did before she retired. Lloyd introduced himself and talked about his activities including collecting additional water quality data at key locations. Anna stated that VSP funds can be used to support additional monitoring and that she will be talking with Kat about adding locations to her sampling work. In particular adding locations on Cherry Creek tributaries to better focus efforts in that area.*

VI. Issues for Discussion

- a. Kittitas County Critical Area Ordinance Update – Anna reported that the CAO ordinance was approved by the County Commissioners. She reminded the Watershed Group of the exemption for private lands where agricultural practices occur. Jen Nelson added that she believes the CAO will be official February 7th if there are no appeals. Mark Charlton asked if the comments submitted were addressed, particularly the conflicting definitions of agricultural practices. Anna will follow-up with the County.*
- b. Carcass Dumping / Compost facility – Anna introduced Brendan Oates (WDFW) to update on the carcass dumping issues. Brendan shared that the signs have gone up at the dumping sites (Reecer Creek, Schnebly Creek, Coleman Creek, Parke Creek and the green gate into the Whiskey Dick Wildlife area) and so far are in good condition. These are short term actions; the long-term action is a carcass composting facility. He has been talking with Wildlife Services (USDA APHIS) about potential funding for a facility. They have funding (\$20,000) for non-lethal deterrents which could be used. He’s also talked with DNR about potential locations on their lands. There are several options. He asked if VSP could support the permitting process for a facility as that will be a significant undertaking.*

VII. State Technical Panel and Statewide Advisory Committee

Anna reported that Bill Eller (Conservation Commission) contacted her in December to invite the County to present to the State Technical Panel and Statewide Advisory Committee. All counties are being offered this opportunity starting this month. Bill reported that the Counties are able to

discuss whatever issues they would like during their 45 minute time slot. He recommends talking about any hot issues we are encountering.

Mark Charlton asked if the State Technical Panel members (particularly WDFW) understand better their role and VSP as well as the impact of their comments on the reports. Bill stated that the Kittitas County 5 year report was in the first group and that after reviewing the other 24 reports, yes the Tech Panel members have a better understanding. He also said that multiple training opportunities are being offered and designed for the panel members.

VIII. Additional Items

Anna reported that the KCCD Long Range Plan was completed. As part of that process, a need to update and republish the Small Ranch Manual and Rural Living Handbook, or something similar came up. KCCD will be working on that. Terry noted that the Cattlemen have been talking about a pamphlet about open range and the right to farm ordinance. Both could be included the republishing of the handbooks. It was also suggested that the handbook or manual be shared with realtors. Perhaps a business card with the link to the on-line version and an option to request a paper copy.

Anna also reported that KCCD's annual election for the Board of Supervisors is coming up in February. Any eligible voters (in the unincorporated areas of the County or the cities of Cle Elum and Roslyn). Ballots can be requested on the KCCD website (<https://www.kccd.net/elections>) or by asking directly.

IX. Action Register

- a. Anna will send out the July 23, 2021 minutes for review and approval.*
- b. Anna will share the February 10 State Tech Panel and Statewide Advisory Committee meeting information.*
- c. Anna will follow up with Kittitas County regarding the comments that were submitted for the CAO*

X. Adjourn