



## 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, July 22, 2022

## Meeting Minutes

**In-Person Attendees:** *Mark Charlton, Ryan Stingley, Karen Poulsen, Ethan Lockwood, Tip Hudson, Samantha Cox, Jen Nelson, Mark Crowley, Brent Dixon, and Anna Lael.*

**Zoom Meeting (Mtg ID: 894 7508 6125) Attendees:** *Kevin Eslinger, Jim Miller, Mitch Long, Erin Eaton, Kat Satnik, and 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

*March 4, 2022, minutes were reviewed and there were no comments or concerns.*

#### III. Watershed Group Membership

*Anna went over membership and alternates for the representative groups. Still have an open position for a dryland operator. Teanaway Grange had a representative but has passed away. Kevin E mentioned Bart B just picked up dryland. Anna will reach out.*

#### Financial Assistance

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

- a. **Cost Share Opportunities** – *Anna reported that NRCS held its first sign-up for the EQIP WaterSMART initiative which is for KRD irrigated lands. NRCS has \$400,000 in applications with \$1,000,000 being allocated for the first year so NRCS might have another sign-up. NRCS made changes in their cost share rate just prior to the sign-up, reducing cost share on sprinklers from 75% to 50%. The cost share rate reduction and economy have caused producers to defer or cancel their applications. Anna is working with the NRCS State Advisory Committee and NRCS State Conservationist, Roylene Comes at Night.*

*The new RCPP grant is still pending as the partnership agreement between NRCS, and the Yakama Nation is delayed while NRCS figures out how to get funds to “water management entities”.*

*Conservation commission Salmon Recovery Funding – money needs to be spent July in 2023. 1.3 million riparian plants. NYCD may be holding plants*

*Site visit with the commission, impressed with planning.*

*Bill talked about the 3 million dollars that VSP received in the capital budget. Projects eligible for the funding must be on the ground projects and implemented between now and next year. Funding can be pushed over to the next biannual to use in the next cycle. Bill will send out guidelines as soon as the final version gets published.*

*For projects using NRCS standards, the commission will give preference but is not required.*

- 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 applications are in and waiting to hear back. One project on Naneum Creek and one on Coleman Creek.*
- c.** VSP Funding Assistance – *KCCD continues to provide assistance to landowners working to complete planting projects.*
- d.** Have had folks referred from County due to the critical ordinance
  - i. Samantha with the county said DOE and county are looking at the CMZ.*

#### **IV. Monitoring Activities**

- a.** Water quality turbidity monitors just arrived in late June. Kat has them installed at Cherry Creek and in Wipple Waste Way. Kat has downloaded the data twice, currently working out the kinks, and will have data for the next meeting. Ecology is coming up weekly and looking around and potentially trying to find something.

#### **V. Issues for Discussion**

- a.** Anna brought the issue about solar facilities going in Yakima County, and the pressure of the VSP group to provide habitat with facilities going in.

#### **VI. Review Goals and Benchmarks and Adaptive Management Needs**

- a.** *Anna reviewed the Watershed Plan's 2025 goals and benchmarks and showed that we are meeting or exceeding most of the practice implementation goals. She suggested that the goals and benchmarks need to be updated and better described (e.g. structural vs Anna will work on updating numbers and report back to the Group.*

#### **VII. Action Register**

- a.** Anna will ask Jeremy Johnson for an update on the appeal to the Critical Areas Ordinance.

#### **VIII. Adjourn 11:17 AM**