



## Kittitas County Conservation District

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### Voluntary Stewardship Program

## Watershed Group Meeting

Hal Holmes Community Center, 209 N Ruby St, Ellensburg

1:00 PM Wednesday, October 25, 2017

## DRAFT Meeting Minutes

**Attendees:** Anna Lael, John Small, Nora Schlenker, Terry Clark, Jack Clerf, Lila Hanson, Karen Poulsen, Bambi Miller, John Marvin, Dale Rusho, Justin Bezold, Arden Thomas, Mitch Long, Mark Crowley, Karen Hodges, Kat Satnik, Jennifer Nelson, Tip Hudson, Stuart Crane, Mark Moore, and Bill Eller

- I. **Welcome** – Anna welcomed the attendees to the Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP) Watershed Group Meeting.
  - a. Introductions were completed.
  - b. Anna reviewed the agenda and meeting objectives.
- II. **Discuss Membership, Participation Agreements and Roles Review**
  - a. Watershed Group Representation – Anna had no changes to report.
  - b. Review Past Meeting Minutes - Kat Satnik asked the sign-in sheet from the July meeting be rechecked as she believes she attended the meeting.
  - c. Outreach Update - Anna attended the Kittitas County Cattlemen’s Association Annual Meeting and the Queen of Spades Garden Club meeting.
  - d. Agreements – Anna reported that the agreements are all signed and complete between the District and the County and the County and the Conservation Commission for new funding in this biennium. Anna also reported that any funding not used for the planning process can be used for implementation of the Work Plan through June 2019.
- III. **Anchor QEA Presentation (Click here to see [Power Point File](#))**
  - a. John Small with Anchor QEA introduced himself and provided a brief background on his work with VSP. He emphasized that VSP is designed to balance Critical Areas and Ag Viability. He reviewed the VSP timeline and Watershed Group responsibilities. The Watershed Group is not done when the plan is completed, they are expected to be part of evaluations and reports completed in years two and five after the plan is complete that may lead to adaptive management.

John also reviewed elements emphasized by the State Technical Review Panel in their review of other plans. They are looking for clear information about the watershed group formed; a demonstration of how the producer participation are or will have an effect on critical areas; and a clear baseline monitoring approach that includes watershed scale protection of critical area function, protection of producer privacy, and monitoring indicators, aerial photos, etc.

- b. Nora Schlenker with Anchor QEA provided a Conceptual Overview of the Work Plan. She reviewed each section including:
  - i. Section 1 (to be provided to the Watershed Group before the November 20 meeting for review)
    - 1. Introduce VSP Background and summarize the Work Plan elements
    - 2. Roles and Responsibilities
  - ii. Section 2 – Regional Setting (Watershed Group will provided an opportunity to provide input and approve.)
    - 1. Background
    - 2. Critical Areas
    - 3. Introduction of Community Areas
    - 4. Watershed Group input
  - iii. Section 3 – Baseline and Existing Conditions
    - 1. Connect critical areas to functions and values
    - 2. Discuss critical area intersections
    - 3. Ag Viability
  - iv. Section 4 – Protections and Enhancement Strategies
    - 1. Introduction of Practices
  - v. Section 5 – Goals, Benchmarks, Adaptive Management
    - 1. Work on in November for review in December
  - vi. Section 6 – Implementation (discuss in December and review in January)
    - 1. How to implement
    - 2. Funding for implementation
    - 3. Outreach
- c. John Small went through the sections 1-4 in greater detail, as these will be the first draft available for review by the Watershed Group. In
  - i. Section 1 – Roles & Responsibilities – Section 1 includes the State responsibilities for approval and Administration and local responsibilities for administration and Work Plan development, and the outreach/implementation for ag producers. This is also a place for Frequently Asked Questions. Examples of questions from the Adams County Plan were shared with the group for review.

- ii. Section 2 – Regional Setting – This includes a summary of water resources, soils, ownership and landcover. VSP is specific to privately owned lands where ag practices occur and includes forestland when it's grazed. Forest practices rules cover forestland for all other activities. Census data is being incorporated in the overview of agriculture.

A question was asked about how farming activities on small properties that may not be called a farm will be addressed. Kittitas County has ~1,400 farms but 10% of the people own 90% of the land? (example). John responded that the scale and types of agriculture in Kittitas County is a lot different than in other counties. The group needs to consider what size farm is a viable farm and what does agriculture look like in the different areas of the county/community.

Critical Areas were reviewed including the Fish & Wildlife Habitat Critical Areas (FWHCA)Wetlands, Frequently Flooded Areas (FFA), Critical Aquifer Recharge Area (CARA), and Geologic Hazards (GH). John asked for a decision on including the CARA & GH. He believes the Work Plan will be more defensible and comprehensive with them included. It will require additional tracking though. The Group indicated they would include the CARA and GH in the work plan. A matrix was shown showing how the Ecosystem Functions relate to the different Critical Area components

Community Areas Slide was presented to offer a starting point to discuss how the Community Areas should be organized or changed. There are eight areas on the map. They could be consolidated to just irrigated and non-irrigated are two big and general categories. There could also be a consolidation of the irrigated areas that include the Yakima River and the lower ends of the tributaries, so Manastash/Taneum and Below Cascade could be one area. John is recommending we reduce to four or five communities. The communities need to be recognizable to producers, who are used to having priority areas for programs. Also need to consider geology, maybe pro-ratable water rights (KRD) vs. non pro-ratable, and crops (e.g. orchards/vineyards are more intensive than other croplands). The Group will continue to think about the Community areas.

#### **IV. Action Items**

- a. Not as much of the agenda was completed as hoped, as Section 3 and Section 4 details were not covered. The draft of Sections 1-4 will still be completed and sent to the group prior to the next meeting.
- b. The Agriculture Viability survey results have been emailed out to the group. The Survey is still open if other members would like to participate.

c. The next meeting will be Monday November 20, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

**V. Adjourn**

a. The meeting adjourned at 3:07 PM.