

**Spokane County VSP
Work Group Meeting
Minutes
August 24, 2016**

Work Group Members Present: David Boleneus, Brent Burger, Judy Crowder, Casey Flanagan, Doug Greenlund, Paul Jensen, Robyn Meenach, Ty Meyer, Crystal Oliver, Amanda Parrish, Kevin Paulson, Tom Vandever

Staff: Lindsay Chutas, Walt Edelen, Seth Flanders

Facilitator: Andy Dunau

Visitors: Evan Sheffels, Washington Farm Bureau

Welcome and Introductions: Walt Edelen and Andy Dunau welcomed participants to the first work group meeting. Walt provided an overview and purpose of the VSP, its mission, and the role work group members will play in development and implementation of a plan. All meeting attendees introduced themselves.

Work Group Charter and Ground Rules: The work group reviewed a draft document, “Spokane County VSP Charter and Ground Rules.” The document addresses background, roles and responsibilities, decision-making processes and administrative matters. Key discussion points included:

- Background and Purpose: Andy explained that the state uses April 22, 2016 (the date Spokane County received VSP funding) as a critical date. Keyed off this date is the deadline the work plan is to be delivered to the State Conservation Commission (December 8, 2018), and other deliverables. Andy also clarified that if funding for work in the next biennium is not received, the state has said the VSP process will be frozen on June 30, 2017 and all deadlines moved back until further funding is received.
- Work Group Appointment: Tom Vandever asked that he be moved from work group member status to staff. As representing Spokane County Planning Department, he felt this clarified his role as supporting work group activities and work plan development. The work group agreed and Andy was asked to make the adjustment.

Per direction provided by the county commissioners, work group members were drawn by lot to initially serve either a two or four-year term. This information will be included in an updated work group roster.

Andy clarified that the term “watershed group” in the county’s resolution was drawn from the legislation and subsequent contract signed between the state and the county. The state and counties now use the term “work group.”

Per direction from county resolution, the work group designated a “clerk” to communicate with the commissioners to address various administrative matters. By consensus, the work group selected Walt Edelen to serve this role.

- Work Group Responsibilities: As a publicly appointed entity, it was explained that work group members may be subject to public information requests. This includes emails sent to a majority of work group members. Work group members were advised that they can address the email situation be either 1) placing all VSP related email into a separate folder in their email program, thus making it easier to find pertinent materials if requested, 2) SCD can provide a work group member a separate _____@spokanecountyvsp.org email account at their request, or 3) if information is requested, they can sort through the entirety of their email to determine if something pertains.

Work group members wanted to know what definitions and regulations, e.g.— agricultural lands and development regulations, apply to their work. It was clarified that agricultural lands are to be defined by state shoreline regulations, which will be presented as part of several definitions at a future meeting. Tom will provide a definition of “development regulations,” which will be added to section 8 for clarification.

For decision making, the work group agreed to a two-step process. First, the facilitator will try to achieve consensus from the work group, assuming a quorum is present. In the absence of consensus, a motion can be made. If a majority concur, work group actions will proceed accordingly.

The work group agreed to a process whereby staff could form, with work group consent, ad-hoc groups or a technical team needed to provide information and input. Such teams are not decisional, and work group members may attend as they wish.

- Spokane Conservation District Responsibilities: SCDs role as staff to convene meetings, organize materials, develop agendas, draft the work plan, meet work group member needs, develop and maintain the web site, provide technical assistance, satisfy state reporting requirements, communicate with stakeholders and the public, and meet various other administrative needs was discussed and agreed to.

The group was encouraged to regularly update stakeholders and constituents that they engage with, but stipulate they were providing their view. Members also asked that they determine with staff when draft documents are ready for broad public distribution.

Additional Discussion points included:

- Work group requested that the contact information roster they share amongst themselves also include staff contact information. This will be done and distributed at next meeting.
- A definition of the lands to be addressed by the work group will be added to the Charter and Ground Rules.

- Clarifications were given that:
 - An approved work plan and subsequent compliance is based on a watershed rather than parcel by parcel analysis;
 - all landowner participation in VSP is voluntary;
 - if Spokane County “failed out” of VSP, the county would be required to develop and approve regulations that would be enforced on a parcel by parcel basis;
 - landowner participation in VSP does not void their need to comply with other federal, state and local regulations. However, as part of landowners creating and implementing voluntary, incentive based stewardship plans, the likelihood is that they will be in compliance with other regulations.

The work group requested that changes discussed be made and reviewed for approval at next meeting.

Request to Convene Technical Team: Staff explained their recommendation to form a technical team to define and map the intersections between agricultural land and critical areas. This will be used to form the base line for critical area functions and values dating back to July, 2011; establishing goals and objectives to assure the baseline at a watershed level is protected; and identifying priorities for enhancements.

Lindsay Chutas, Resource and GIS specialist for SCD, explained the technical team will provide input into definitions being used, and assistance acquiring GIS maps needed to show and document intersections. Output from the technical team will come to the work group for review and possible action.

By consensus, the work group approved formation of the technical team.

Meeting Schedule: The work group determined that they will meet the 3rd Wednesday of every month with the option of adding and rescheduling meetings as necessary.

Work Plan Outline: A draft Work Plan Outline was given to each member to review and be ready to discuss at next month’s meeting. Andy explained it as a “living document” showing the contents to be included in a work plan. Updates will occur as the work group identifies specific needs, and the state continues to provide additional clarity on depth and breadth of content required.

Closing and Action Items: Follow-up and action items include:

- Update Charter and Ground Rules for review at next meeting, including definitions for lands to be included in the work plan and development regulations.
- Update member roster and include staff information.
- Make a poster that will be used to remind members the purpose of the work group.
- Initiate technical team and mapping, with report back to group at next meeting.
- Provide, as requested, VSP email address to members who request one.
- Identify date in October for VSP field trip to visit areas demonstrating intersection between critical areas and agriculture.

The next VSP meeting will be Wednesday, September 21st at the Spokane Conservation District.
The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 pm.