

**Spokane County VSP  
Work Group Meeting  
Minutes  
March 15, 2017**

**Work Group Members Present:** Brent Burger, Judy Crowder, Doug Greenlund, Ty Meyer, Crystal Oliver, Amanda Parrish, Kevin Paulson

**Staff:** Lindsay Chutas, Seth Flanders, Walt Edelen

**Facilitator:** Andy Dunau

**Welcome, Minutes and Announcements:** Andy Dunau welcomed participants to the meeting. Doug made a motion to accept the February 15 minutes and Ty seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

The VSP “retractable” display was shown. The group was pleased with the result. A manufacturing flaw will be repaired.

WSU Extension is forming an Urban Farmers Group, and the group asked Walt to get more information.

Brent announced formation of a group called SPN, whose general objective is to preserve existing large Ponderosa Pine and other native species in the City of Spokane and surrounding areas. Contact Brent for times when the group will be meeting.

**Mapping Report:** A revised source list was passed out defining data sources, rationale for being used and repeatability information.

Tables were reviewed showing the total agriculture acres that intersect with critical areas in each watershed, and this acreage as a percentage of all agricultural activities. There is one table for the entire county and a table for each of the five watersheds.

The labeling of the percentage column will be renamed to “Percentage of Ag Activities that Intersects with Critical Areas” for clarity.

Lindsay asked for clarity on the level of specificity required for critical areas and discussed the idea of breaking down certain specific aspects of the critical areas and their intersection with agricultural activities. Options discussed were:

Frequently Flooded Areas: Potentially breaking out the 500 year and 100 year flood area intersections.

Wetlands: Potentially broken down by wetland type and their intersections with agriculture activities.

Geologic Hazards: identifying specific intersects with agriculture such as steep slopes and highly erodible soils.

Critical Aquifer Recharge: Discussing with Spokane County on what is called out in the existing Critical Areas Ordinance-is it only the Critical Aquifer Recharge Area?

Priority Habitat Species: Prioritizing a few key species to direct benchmarks and priorities for the county.

The group discussed and agreed to process of sharing the mapping and tabulation of intersections to date with local technical team. Their input will be used to determine level of specificity to include for each critical area, and priorities to consider for benchmarks and/or monitoring. The workgroup will then take their input into consideration when finalizing tabulation of intersection and setting benchmarks.

**Proposed Resolution Clarifying VSP Work Plan Goals:** Draft language for resolution clarifying VSP work group nonenforcement policy was reviewed. Judy made a motion to approve the language (See Attachment A) and that it be included in the Charter and future draft work plan. Crystal seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

**State Updates:** Andy reported that the Thurston VSP Work Plan was submitted and he had begun reviewing it. The Chelan Work Plan is also expected shortly. A report on how these plans are crafted will be given at the next work group meeting to help inform development of the Spokane plan.

**License to Farm Video:** This documentary was developed by a coalition of ag producers in Canada. It explores different perspectives between consumers, ag producers and scientists about the integrity and security of agricultural produce going to market.

This is an example of outreach material that the work group may wish to develop to strengthen the understanding and connections between Spokane farmers and residents (particularly suburban and urban) about agricultural production, related stewardship and environmental issues, protecting critical areas, customs and culture, and agricultural viability. The video can be viewed at <http://licensetofarm.com/>.

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

- Andy will draft and distribute March minutes.
- Walt will explore WSU Extension Urban Farmers Group.
- Lindsay will continue mapping, including seeking technical team input.
- Andy will review and report back on Chelan and Thurston work plans.
- Seth will continue summarizing related plans.
- Walt will continue to identify field trip opportunities.

The next VSP meeting will be Wednesday, April 19th, 6:00—8:00 p.m. at the Spokane Conservation District. The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

## **Attachment A**

### **Spokane County Voluntary Stewardship Program Non-Enforcement Policy**

When implementing the Voluntary Stewardship Program Work Plan, it is the expressed intent of this work group to work collaboratively with farmers, stakeholders, and landowners conducting agricultural activities.

If progress toward the goals and benchmarks of this plan is not proceeding in a satisfactory manner, further outreach and education will be designed and implemented to address the shortcomings of this plan.

The workgroup will only work collaboratively with landowners to voluntarily implement the work plan, and will not use enforcement or other regulatory actions to facilitate achieving work plan protection goals and benchmarks.

The workgroup agrees that we will not utilize or rely upon mandatory enforcement as described under RCW 36.70A.720 (3). RCW 36.70A.720 (3) says that: "Following approval of a work plan, a county or watershed group may request a state or federal agency to focus existing enforcement authority in that participating watershed, if the action will facilitate progress toward achieving work plan protection goals and benchmarks"