

Agenda
Work Group
Spokane County Voluntary Stewardship Program
May 8th, 2019
6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Work Group Members Present: Casey Flanagan, Amanda Parish, Jay Cronk, Alene Lindstrand,

Staff: Lindsay Chutas, Seth Flanders, Walt Edelen, Doug Phelps

Facilitator: Andy Dunau

Welcome, Minutes and Announcements: Welcome Back! Walt welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made around the room.

A key first quarter objective was to form the implementation work group. While this was occurring, staff also put in place building blocks to successfully implement the VSP plan with the implementation work group.

On behalf of SCD Director Vicki Carter, Walt introduced the South Spokane Farm Corridor.

The South Spokane Farm Corridor is a collaboration among local growers to promote lovingly grown and locally owned farms in the Hangman Creek Watershed. Six farms are founding this effort with the goals to:

- Bring together families, neighbors, visitors and local farm and food producers to create a sense of community and social gathering.
- Provide educational opportunities to the community on the nutritional, environmental and economic value of buying local, sustainably produced farm products.

This supports the VSP outreach objective to “Partner with groups to leverage marketing and branding opportunities such as farmers markets, agritourism, “slow food,” Shepherd’s Grain and Farm Smart Certified.”

An informational handout was distributed, and sample road sign shown.

Amanda noted that the flyer said the effort was sponsored by VSP and asked for clarifications. Walt explained that VSP administration and public outreach efforts would include this effort once approved by the workgroup to move forward. The consensus of the group was to support this effort.

Spokane County VSP Overview:

Each member of the workgroup was given a binder with the work plan and appendices.

Walt provided a PowerPoint that summarized the history of VSP, legislative components, and work plan goals, objectives and actions that were approved by the Washington State Conservation Commission. The PowerPoint is available from Walt by request. The full VSP workplan is also available on the VSP web site.

Specific to the implementation work group, an application was created, applications received and processed, and the County Board of Commissioner appointments made. 10 people are on the work group. 5 work group members were from the previous planning group with terms that expire in 2020; 2 were on the previous group and reappointed to a 4-year term; and 3 are new work group members. A roster with contact information was passed out and is also available by request.

Andy reviewed the Work Group Charter that the previous planning group adopted and is still in effect. The charter is an appendix to the adopted work plan. Some key points emphasized were the goals of the workgroup; that discussion is to be conducted with respect and civility; approval of motions is by simple majority of quorum present; and voting is based on Roberts Rule of Order. Andy noted there are some updates to the charter the group may wish to consider. As they are not major, he recommends they be addressed in the fall after the biennium report is filed with the Conservation Commission.

The Conservation Commission determined that VSP work group activity is subject to the Open Public Meeting Act. As such, for instance, a public information request of VSP materials and emails can be requested of work group members. A training video for new members is required. Andy will email a link to new members and validate/record that they have viewed it. If a work group member wants a specific VSP email address, contact Andy and he will provide it.

VSP Work Group Meeting Times

By consensus, the group agreed to the second Wednesday of each month at 6:00 p.m. through at least August 2019. The initial meeting schedule addresses the need for the group to review information needed for the biennium report.

Biennium Report Due August 30:

The state is requiring all Conservation Districts to provide a two year (biennium) status report on August 30th, regardless of plan approval date. Spokane's plan was approved in late November 2018. Thus, the first biennium report for Spokane effectively covers a 9-month period.

Andy provided a handout and reviewed with the group items from the work plan that need to be updated for the status report. These can be summarized as:

- Implementation work group formation
- Ag Viability based on new 2017 Ag Census Data
- Benchmarks and Monitoring
 - Update Conservation Practice Database with 2017 data
 - Update any new GIS critical area intersect data
 - Provide scope and methodology for proposed aerial imagery
 - County compliance updates
 - Project visitation, ground truthing
- Program updates, e.g.—RCPP and partner activities
- Outreach and Technical Assistance
 - Biennial Plan
 - Summary of outreach to date
 - Materials and resources created, e.g.—story mapping
- Policy
 - Any changes to county ordinances, etc.
 - Develop SCD Agricultural Viability Liasion position
- Trends and Recommendations

Work Group Approvals:

The SCD requested and received \$50,000 of additional VSP related funding from the Conservation Commission to spend by June 30th.

The work group was asked to review and approved the following:

1: Story Mapping: This project will support the outreach and stewardship plan component of the work plan. Its purpose is to provide an interactive web application to support VSP education and promotion of Spokane agricultural conservation and best management practice efforts.

With SCD assistance, landowners can anonymously post stewardship BMP's that are being implemented. Another element of the program will be means for landowners to complete and post stewardship plan interest forms.

The vendor to develop this application would be Mapseed. Walt and Lindsay showed a PowerPoint of a similar project Mapseed started in Whitman County. They also share a draft scope of work.

Funding request: \$15,000. An additional \$5,000 would be earmarked in the 2019-21 biennial budget. SCD will update and maintain the program over time.

2: Aerial Imagery: This component is a key feature of the VSP work plan. Since the work plan was developed, CORE GIS (located in Seattle) has been identified as being able to produce the data set and analysis needed. The essential goal is to show and statistically tabulate both gains and losses of vegetation in riparian areas.

The scope of work being developed will meet the statistical requirements that the technical panel has laid out and adheres to the standards the Spokane workplan outlined. This includes hiring CORE to execute the first series of change detections as well as validate the statistics. The process will then be turned over to the SCD with education for how to execute the process in the future.

Walt and Lindsay showed a PowerPoint of the pilot project CORE GIS successfully completed with Chelan County that was reviewed by the state VSP technical team.

Funding Request: \$15,000

3: Placcic Restoration Project: Lindsay introduced the first VSP inspired implementation project. Lindsay showed a PowerPoint of the property and project.

The project is located on Dartford Creek in the Little Spokane watershed. The landowner is very passionate about establishing a vibrant riparian zone for a perennial stream within his property. The planted riparian zone buffer will extend 50 ft from the stream and 350 ft along the stream length. 800 native plants will be installed along the buffer. The landowner is committed to watering every week to ensure survivability. This project will also include a watering method effectiveness study. This will include four different planting methods: a control bark chip, Polymers, PVC piping injected at root, and a cocoon watering reservoir.

Funding request: \$11,000

The group unanimously supported these projects. Because a quorum was not present and time of the essence, Andy and Lindsay were asked to send an email to the full group explaining these projects and asking for indications of support. If a minimum of two additional members indicate support, the SCD will continue to move forward with these projects.

Action Items and Closing:

- Andy and Lindsay will contact the group for support of VSP projects.
- Andy will send out link to for Open Meeting Act training.
- Draft minutes will be written and sent out for review.

- Draft agenda and meeting announcement will be sent.

No further comments and meeting adjourned.