



Walla Walla County  
VSP Work Group  
March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025 Meeting Minutes

Date: March 4, 2025 Time: 4:00 p.m. Via: Zoom and in person

**Work Group Members Present:**

Dana Sheedy, CTUIR;  
Lindsey Williams, WWCC;  
Phil Neumann, Mainstem Malt;  
Ryan Rea, Ag. Community;

Judith Johnson, Kooskooskie Commons;  
Brian Burns, TSS;  
David Talkington, TSS;

**Absent:**

Randy Bright, Ag Community;  
Tom Schirm, WDFW ex-officio

**Also present:** Grace Cooper, Renee Hadley, Jenny Freer of WWCCD; Roman Rangel of WWCo.

The meeting began with an invitation for public comments. There were none.

**Approval of meeting minutes:** After review, **Neumann motioned and Johnson seconded to approve the October 2024 minutes as presented; motion passed.** After review, **Talkington motioned and Johnson seconded to approve the December 2024 minutes as presented; motion passed.**

**New or interested work group members:** None at this time.

**Welcome & Introductions:** **Hadley and Cooper** shared a presentation updating the work group on the purpose of VSP and reintroduced the group to each other.

**VSP Monitoring:**

- **Three Requests to Alter Work Plan Goals:**

- The protection goal for assessing 30 unknown fish passage barriers in Walla Walla County has confusing wording and is difficult to manage with current resources (Fish and Wildlife Habitat). The group was provided alternative options that would clarify wording and either A) change the goal to enhance and add a no new barriers protection goal, B) lower the protection goal to a manageable percentage, or C) no other changes. After discussing options, the group voted and option B won majority of the votes.

**Neumann motioned and Johnson seconded to approve to change the fish passage barrier assessment goal for clarity and to lower the goal to a manageable percentage as presented; motion passed.**

- The protection goal for maintaining existing fish passage by auditing fish screens and maintaining at least 85% functionality every 2 years has confusing wording and is difficult to manage with current resources (Fish and Wildlife Habitat). The group was provided alternative options that would clarify wording and either A) change the goal to enhance and add a new protection goal to replace 2 broken screens every 2 years, B) lower the

- protection goal to a manageable percentage, or C) no other changes. After discussing options, the group voted and option B won the majority.
- o The protection goal for reducing use of consumable water source by maintaining auditing 30 flow meters and maintaining 80% functionality every 2 years has confusing wording and is difficult to manage with current resources (Critical Aquifer Recharge Areas). The group was provided alternative options that would clarify wording and either A) change the goal to enhance and add a new protection goal to replace 2 broken meters every 2 years, B) lower the protection goal to a manageable percentage, or C) no other changes. After discussing options, the group voted and option B won the majority.

**Group members decided to combine the motion for changes to the screen and meter goals. Johnson motioned and Neumann seconded to change the goals to their respective Option B with sentence structure changes for clarity. The new goals are that we will audit 30 screens and 30 meters every 2 years, and have at least 60% functionality. Motion passed.**

**VSP project updates:** Hadley updated the work group on projects:

- Mojonniere: Contractor has completed planting, just maintenance remaining.
- Equestrian Way Riparian: Has been completed since the December work group meeting.
- Dry Creek Screen: Has been completed since the December work group meeting.

**Program Updates:** **Cooper** presented that the new state VSP coordinator recently visited and got to know about VSP success/struggles in Walla Walla County. WSDA and Ecology Watershed Assessment outreach for well testing in Walla Walla County is underway and testing will begin in the spring. Preliminary results of the vegetation change analysis has been completed using Dr. Stahl's methods. Fish passage barrier assessment outreach is nearly complete and Cooper will begin assessments soon (March-May), and is hoping to complete 17. An aerial survey for mapped wetland areas was completed for the Lower Snake Watershed and SW portion of the Walla Walla Watershed with ~0.02% accurate. Partner outreach has provided some great information and metrics for upcoming reports.

**Partner Updates:**

**David Talkington, TSS:** The 5<sup>th</sup> Ave bridge project is completed with passage panels under the walking bridge being installed. The design phase for 3<sup>rd</sup> St to Colville has started for the Mill Creek project. The design phase for the Roosevelt to Tausak way project has begun. They are also in the design phase for Gose St, which includes modifications to the fish ladder. A phase of the Bridge-to-Bridge project is being partially funded by WWCCD was recently completed and another phase is being applied for. For upcoming news, TSS will be working with the Whitman Stream Team to do restoration projects with landowners. The Salmon School program has 29 tanks across dozens of school districts.

**Lindsey Williams, WWCC:** WWCC acquired additional land that includes water ground. New Plant and soil science instructor; Joe Montoya. A Position is open for the Dean of work force. Williams will be doing a statewide tour with 10 students.

## VSP December 3rd 2024 Work Group Meeting Minutes

**Judith Johnson, Kooskooskie Commons:** In January, finished Yellowhawk riparian project. Looking to Caldwell and Russel Creek plantings for next steps.

**Dana Sheedy, CTUIR:** Large grant submitted end of February for Umatilla. Working with USACE on weir projects. Gose project is being worked on. Working on culverts and large dam. Working on projects in Umatilla, including screens and meters. Learning new role.

**Phil Neumann, Mainstem Malt:** Project in Dayton has begun but is still in design and engineering phase. Freezes in funding has caused unforeseen challenges. Wants to bring grant opportunities to the table.

**Ryan Rea, Ag Community:** Plenty of moisture in the ground and crops seem healthy. Spring fieldwork beginning. Streams got fast/full recently with snow melt but no overflow for their area.

2025 Meeting Dates:

- June 3<sup>rd</sup> at 4pm
- October 7<sup>th</sup> at 1 pm
- December 2<sup>nd</sup> at 1pm

Respectfully submitted,

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Work Group Member

WWCCD

Next meeting: June 3, 2025 at 4 pm