

Walla Walla County VSP
Sept. '17 Work Group Meeting Minutes

Date: Sept. 5th, 2017

Time: 1:00 p.m.

Place: Conservation
District Conference Room

Board Members Present:

Brian Burns, Tri-State Steelheaders
Judith Johnsons, Kooskooskie Commons
Jonathan Hellberg/Wilson, Ag. Community
Robert Riley, Ag. Community

Mark Klicker, Ag. Community
David Haire, CTUIR
Jason Bulay, Blue Mtn. Land Trust
Brian Maiden, Ag. Community (arrived 1:45)

Also present:

Tom Glover, WW County Planning
Tom Schirm, WDFW
Chris Marks, CTUIR
Renee Hadley, Audrey Ahmann, Joanna Cowles of WWCCD

Don Sims, WW County
Evan Sheffel, (via phone) Farm Bureau
John Wells, Anderson-Perry

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. by Chairman Mark Klicker

Minutes: The minutes were reviewed. Judith Johnson moved and Jason Bulay seconded to approve the June and July minutes as presented, motion passed.

Review:

- 1) **Online Maps:** Hadley showed the group the map developed by Stearns based on the county critical areas maps. The map shows parcels outlined in yellow with layers showing critical areas. Only parcels with an ag-related designation by the county are shown. In response to questions, Hadley explained some parcels cross into incorporated areas and some are within the Urban Growth Areas. The map is intended to be used as a resource for landowners who need to know which critical areas are present on their parcels.
- 2) **CTUIR comments:** Hadley explained that several comments were received from CTUIR in the past week and small changes made to the draft in response. Two issues remained.
 - a. Chris Marks expressed CTUIR's concern that spawning and rearing habitat areas are not identified for protection in the plan. Hadley explained this is due to the County not identifying these areas on their maps and therefore they could not be identified as critical areas for Fish Habitat¹. This led to a gap in the plan. Evan Sheffel clarified that the Work Group is not authorized to designate critical areas; only the County Commissioners have that authority. The group approved adding to Table 5-1 a goal of working with the county to designate applicable reaches as fish spawning and rearing habitat when the County completes the Comprehensive Plan, expected by June of 2018. The group expects that the County will incorporate other plans (e.g., the Sub-basin Plan) and the priorities of other stakeholders (e.g., CTUIR) as they update the Comprehensive Plan; the added goal in Table 5-1 allows the Work Plan to incorporate these future designations into the program as it develops.
 - b. The second issue for CTUIR that could not be resolved easily is the 2011 baseline. Their concern is that with a 2011 baseline, the county could backslide from the 2016

¹ Some are designated as Fish and Wildlife Habitat Critical Areas but not all, and none are specifically noted as spawning-rearing habitat.

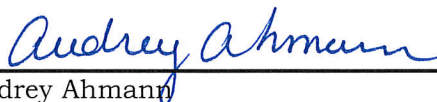
levels, yet VSP may still be considered successful using 2011 baselines as our protection goal. For example, the 2011 baseline for grassed filter strips is zero, but by 2016 we have 17.87 acres. Those acres could revert to active cropping (a loss) yet with a 2011 baseline, we would show, on paper, no loss under VSP. However, as Evan Sheffel confirmed, the baseline of 2011 is set by the VSP legislation and cannot be changed. The group agreed that given we are unable to move the baseline, we could include a reference in Table 5-1 to the 2016 enhancements shown in Table 3-1. While the 5-year report could then claim no loss in acreage from the 2011 baseline, it would be very obvious that protection of recent gains (2012 to 2016) was not achieved, should that be the case. In effect, the Walla Walla VSP plan will recognize the 2016 numbers in reporting protection goals while keeping the statutory baseline—the one we are required by statute to meet in order to continue VSP—at the 2011 level. This solution, that of acknowledging the 2016 numbers in the Table 5-1 and using these numbers in reporting progress, was accepted by those present.

- c. It was moved by Judith Johnson and seconded by David Haire that after incorporating these changes as discussed into the draft Work Plan, the plan be approved to submit either informally or if schedule will allow, formally, for review by the state VSP Technical Committee in September, or if not possible, then in October. Motion passed.
- d. The group also discussed the possibility of holding a special meeting if the plan is submitted for informal review and significant changes are required. This would be to approve submission of the revised work plan.

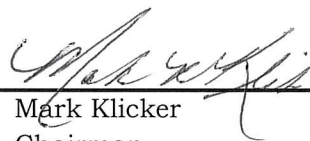
Public Comments: There were no public comments.

With no further business on the agenda, the meeting adjourned at 2:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted



Audrey Ahmann
WWCCD



Mark Klicker
Chairman

Next meeting: October 3rd 1:00