



Walla Walla County VSP Work Group

Dec. 6th 2022 Meeting Minutes

Date: Dec. 6th, 2022 Time: 1:00 p.m. Via: Zoom and in person

Work Group Members Present:

Lindsey Williams, WWCC	Jonathan Hellberg-Wilson, Ag. Community
Judith Johnson, Kooskooski Commons	David Haire, CTUIR
Randy Bright, Ag. Community	Morgan Morris, TSS (Brian Burns Alternate);

Absent: Brian Maiden, Robert Riley

Also present: Grant Traynor, Lynda Oosterhuis, Audrey Ahmann, Annie Byerley, Kayla Peterson, Joanna Cowles Cleveland of WWCCD; Corrie Thorne-Hadley, WDFW; Brian Cochran, SCC; Tom Schirm, WDFW; Don Sims, WW County Planning; Sarah McClure, Ryan Rea, members of the public

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

Approval of Minutes: After review, **Judith Johnson moved and Lindsey Williams seconded to approve the October 2022 minutes; motion passed.**

Project Updates and Budget Approval:

- 1) The East Little Walla Walla project went over budget due to the unexpected density of invasive blackberries. The estimate was from an experienced restoration contractor but the site preparation was considerably over budget. **After discussion, Lindsey Williams moved and David Haire seconded to approve amending the project to increase the budget to 12,100; motion passed.**
- 2) The Dry Creek Riparian Project also went over budget but not as significant an amount. There were similar weed issues and other factors. After discussion, **Lindsey Williams moved and David Haire seconded to approve amending the project to increase the budget to 7,400; motion passed.**

VSP Monitoring, Work Plan: Traynor explained the Work Group needs to approve changes to the Work Plan; the proposed changes are related to monitoring whether the county is meeting the goals of the Work Plan. All changes were presented to the Work Group. If approved by the Work Group, the State Conservation Commission would register the changes, make them public for review, and the County also needs to approve the revised Work Plan. After considerable discussion of the changes, the Work Group elected to postpone approval until the March meeting, giving members more time to review changes.

Work Group Vacancies and meeting times: The Work Group has been short two members. Sarah McClure introduced herself; she farms near Lowden and expressed interest in the VSP process and plans to continue to attend meetings as a member of the public. **After discussion, Lindsey Williams moved and Randy Bright seconded to add Ryan Rea and Phil Neumann to the Work Group, motion passed.** Traynor then asked the Work Group if the meeting time (1 to 3pm) was hampering attendance. Producers suggested no meetings be scheduled from July to September and March-June meeting be held either early or at the end of the day.

VSP Project Updates: Traynor presented progress on the Coppei and Walsh Creek projects. The Coppei project is complete; Walsh Creek close to complete. Both are within budget. The Dixie project has been delayed as staff have been unable to reach the landowner after numerous calls and emails. A letter will be sent to the landowner as a final attempt to reach them. If no response

is received the project will be cancelled. Traynor requested funding for Pikes Peak and additional fish screens; he expects to receive approval soon.

Updates on Partner Activities:

J. Johnson, Kooskooski Commons completed knotweed eradication work on Touchet and Mill Creek and asked that any sightings of knotweed be referred to her.

L. Williams, WWCC obtained funding to hire a program manager to identify career-connected opportunities for students state-wide with interest in ag and forestry.

Corrie Thorne-Hadley, WDFW reported planting at two sites of Feel Free to Hunt ground. Poor weather has slowed the work but over 1,800 native plants will be planted.

J. Hellberg-Wilson reported he has stopped fall seeding; fall weather has been colder than usual.

J. Cowles Cleveland reported that 1200 stems were planted on the Touchet.

M. Morris, Tri-State Steelheaders expect to have 80% of the Mill Creek channel improved for fish passage by 2024.

R. Bright: Inclement weather has slowed completion of the Walsh Creek project.

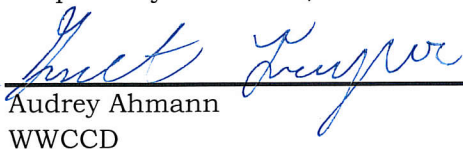
D. Haire, CTUIR is looking for gauging sites on Russell and Cottonwood near Yellowhawk.

D. Sims, County Planning; T. Schirm, WDFW; R. Rea had no report.

The next meeting will be Tuesday March 7th from 4 to 7:00 pm. Light refreshments will be provided. Traynor asked all Work Group members to submit comments on the proposed Work Plan edits to him prior to the meeting.

Randy Bright moved and Judith Johnson seconded to close the meeting at 2:15, motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,


Audrey Ahmann
WWCCD

ISI: 
David Haire
Vice-chair

Next meeting: March 7, 4:00 pm