



Walla Walla County VSP Work Group Oct.4 2022 Meeting Minutes

Date: Oct. 4th, 2022 Time: 1:00 p.m. Via: Zoom and in person

Work Group Members Present:

Robert Riley, Ag. Community	Lindsey Williams, WWCC
Judith Johnson, Kooskooski Commons	David Haire, CTUIR
Randy Bright, Ag. Community	Jonathan Hellberg-Wilson, Ag. Community
Brian Burns, TSS	

Absent: Brian Maiden

Also present: Grant Traynor, Renee Hadley, Lynda Oosterhuis, Audrey Ahmann, Annie Byerley of WWCCD; Leslie Michel, WSDA; Tom Schirm, WDFW; Don Sims, WW County Planning; Morgan Morris, TSS; Phil Naumann, Ryan Rea, members of the public

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

Approval of Minutes: After review, Riley moved and Haire seconded to approve the June and September 2022 minutes; motion passed.

New Project Approval:

- 1) Dixie Spring Catch Basin: this project has the following critical areas: steep slopes, soil liquefaction potential, erosion impacting riparian area (and water quality). The proposed project is to install a sediment catch basin with a pipeline to divert overland flow to a seasonally wet area planted with wetland plants, plus a 2.5 acre native grass filter. Five acres will be returned to production. The total budget is approximately \$7,500. The landowner will be involved with the seeding.
- 2) Pikes Peak Tree and Shrub Planting: This reforestation project was designed and proposed for funding by NRCS. Critical areas include geologically hazardous areas: highly erodible ground, critical aquifer recharge area and protecting habitat (creek sedimentation). The project needs only weed control prior to planting and the VSP funds are being matched with additional funds. In response to questions, Traynor explained the ground was probably cleared in the late 1800s and is a NE facing slope.

Randy Bright moved and Lindsey Williams seconded to approve the Pikes Peak and Dixie Catch Basin projects for funding, motion passed.

Use of Conservation Corps and others: It was suggested the Work Group be consulted as to the use of the state Conservation Corps, Dept. of Correction Crew, and volunteer groups like the Blues Crews for restoration projects. After discussion, **Robert Riley moved and David Haire seconded to approve using conservation crews as described for restoration projects as needed, motion passed.**

Updates on Partner Activities:

R. Hadley, WWCCD: The district is applying for a capacity grant from NOAA for stream restoration work. Other recent grants include funding from the Conservation Commission for riparian plantings on non-CREP areas. Staff are also completing capacity grant applications for Touchet Flood mitigation in partnership with the Little Walla Walla River working group.

J. Johnson, Kooskooski Commons is continuing work on critical areas with the City of Walla Walla Planning.

L. Williams, WWCC has obtained a grant to fund a new staffer and they are seeking applicants.

D. Sims, County Planning said the department is very busy.

M. Morris, Tri-State Steelheaders wrapped up another quarter mile on the Mill Creek channel in Walla Walla and are preparing for next year's phase.

R. Bright: Work continues on the Walsh Creek project.

D. Haire, CTUIR received a Bureau of Reclamation drought resiliency grant to add stream gauges.

Phil Naumann told the group that he co-founded Mainstem Malts; they source local grains for distilleries with a focus on conservation.

Project Updates:

Traynor opened discussion by reviewing how VSP developed as a compromise between regulatory action and ag viability using voluntary participation in conservation efforts.


- 1. Flow meters and screens:** Traynor said three meter projects were completed. Two screen projects are planned for the WW River and Stone Creek; each are replacement projects and will cost 1,123 and 800 respectively¹.
- 2. Riparian Projects:** Traynor said the E. Little Walla project site prep is complete with the contractor on board. Dry Creek project is complete. Two projects are planned for later this month: Walsh Creek (Phase 2) and replanting the Coppei Creek project.
- 3. Work Plan Changes:** As explained at the previous meeting, the WW Work Plan needs to be modified in response to state panel suggestions and reviews. Traynor explained that the Work Plan is a monitoring document that includes conservation goals and a plan for achieving these goals. A draft of proposed changes to the work plan was presented. The changes were highlighted in the document. For example, Traynor explained that the goal for screens was changed to an enhancement goal instead of a protection goal. A protection goal of making sure the number of operating screens didn't fall below a set number doesn't allow for events like a catastrophic flood that suddenly removes many screens from operation. All changes were reviewed. The Work Group decided to table approval of the changes to a later meeting to allow members more time to evaluate the proposal.

Traynor then asked the Work Group if they would like to change meeting time to evenings. The group agreed to continue to meet at 1:00 for the December meeting and will discuss other time changes later on.

The meeting was closed at 2:25.

Respectfully submitted,

/S/: **David H. Haire**


Audrey Ahmann
WWCCD

David Haire
Vice-chair

Next meeting: Dec 6, 1:00 pm

¹ The Work Group has approved an overall budget for screen and meters rather than approve each project as they come up.