



## Walla Walla County

### VSP Work Group

#### December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024 Meeting Minutes

Date: December 3, 2024

Time: 1:00 p.m. Via: Zoom and in person

#### **Work Group Members Present:**

Dana Sheedy, CTUIR

Lindsey Williams, WWCC

Phil Neumann, Mainstem Malt

**Absent:** Ryan Rea, Ag. Community;

Judith Johnson, Kooskooskie Commons;

Brian Burns, TSS;

Randy Bright, Ag. Community;

Tom Schirm, WDFW ex-officio

**Also present:** Grant Traynor, Jenny Freer, Annie Byerley of WWCCD. Jackie McCool, WDFW

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

**During this meeting, a quorum was not present, no action taken during this meeting.**

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

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

#### **Action Items:**

Approval of October 2024 minutes & Proposed Goal Changes will be held and voted on at the March 2025 meeting.

**A discussion was held with members present regarding Fish Passage Barrier**

**Assessments-** Options include to leave goal as a protection, to change the goal to enhance, or to lower the goal to a manageable percentage. Further discussion on this matter included looking into the real estate market for barriers prior to purchase and to add outreach to the found barriers outcome. An option B was also discussed stating that we should change the goal to; Establish that there are no new physical barriers.

**Another discussion was held with members present** about changing the language under **Fish Screen & Flow Meters**. The language in the Work Plan outlining the amount of outreach and the functionality of surveyed screens and meters is vague. Additionally, the current language does not leave room for natural disasters affecting the possibility of meeting this goal and. Natural disasters also impacts on why there is a lower "functionality" percentage for meters compared to screens. Options given were to: change the functionality goals to enhancement goals, lower the percentage of functional screens/meters for feasibility to meet the goal, or to measure outreach and replacements instead of working meters.

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

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- Ohima Rd Riparian – This project is complete.
- Mojonner Rd Riparian – This project is currently in the hands of the contractor and should be completed middle of December
- Lower Waitsburg Rd Riparian – 2 acres is currently in the hands of a contractor and should be completed middle of December.
- Equestrian Way Riparian- Land owner is completing this project and is seedling planting now.
- Screens and Meters: There is one fish screen and ~~meter~~ left to replace
- Test Plot- Funding was secured for mule deer test plot on Lewis Peak Rd and future ground cover for projects.

**Program Updates:** Traynor presented to the group VSP's efforts to monitor ferruginous Hawks and the progress of the pocket gopher survey that is in partnership with WDFW. Traynor also shared that there is a wildlife diversity grant opening up for endangered species that may be beneficial. Partnership with WSU, is monitoring geological erosion with imagery and outreach. A tool is being developed so that individuals can look at tillage over the years utilizing satellite and radar and should be available in January of 2025. WSDA is doing well testing in Touchet Valley for the quality of drinking water in the area.

### Partner Updates:

**J. McCool, WDFW:** Mill Creek assessments have begun and permits closed the 5<sup>th</sup>.

**P. Neuman, Mainstem Malt:** Funding is rolling in to complete the 15 million architecture which will determine the size of the project. Matched funding is coming from the port. Expected opening date is the middle of 2026


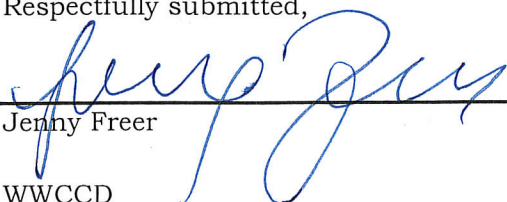
**D. Sheedy, CTUIR:** shared that she is leaving the water resources department and moving a department where fish passage barriers is the focus starting in January. The drought grant has been finished and a finalization of other water quality projects. Sheedy will continue to monitor water quality data collection even after the new year.

**L. Williams, WWCC:** A plant and soil science instructor has officially been hired and currently have an interim Dean.

### 2025 Meeting Dates:

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

Respectfully submitted,

  
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Jenny Freer Work Group Member  
WWCCD

Next meeting: March 4, 2024 at 4 pm