

## May 2017 VSP Newsletter

---

This is the monthly installment of a Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP) informational newsletter. Please sign up to receive the newsletter [here](#). Feedback is welcome - please direct it to [Bill Eller](#).

**THURSTON COUNTY VSP WORK PLAN APPROVED:** Thurston County's VSP work plan was recommended for approval by the VSP Technical Panel on April 20, 2017. The work plan was then approved by the Executive Director of the Commission, in accordance with RCW 36.70A.725(3)(a)(ii). VSP work plans can be found on the Commission's VSP web page [here](#), and Thurston's plan can be found [here](#). Congratulations to the Thurston County VSP Work Group for all their hard work and effort over the last few years!

**CHELAN COUNTY VSP WORK PLAN APPROVED:** Chelan County's VSP work plan was recommended for approval by the VSP Technical Panel on April 20, 2017. The work plan was then approved by the Executive Director of the Commission, in accordance with RCW 36.70A.725(3)(a)(ii). VSP work plans can be found on the Commission's VSP web page [here](#), and Chelan's plan can be found [here](#). Congratulations to the Chelan County VSP Work Group for all their hard work and effort over the last few years!

**SUBMITTAL OF VSP WORK PLANS TO THE COMMISSION:** During the work plan approval process for Thurston and Chelan county's VSP work plans, it became apparent to the Commission and the VSP Technical Panel that no more than two VSP work plans could feasibly be formally processed by the Technical Panel in a month. As a result, the Commission has set up a schedule for the formal submittal of VSP work plans. Two plans can be reviewing in any given month. Plans must be formally submitted no later than the first of the month in which the review meeting is set for that plan. Counties wishing to formally submit work plans must contact [Bill Eller](#) at the Commission before submitting their work plans so that the plan can be assigned a meeting. [Bill Eller](#) can be reached at 509-385-7512 or by email at [beller@scc.wa.gov](mailto:beller@scc.wa.gov). The next two Technical Panel meetings available for processing VSP work plans as June 20, 2017 and July 18, 2017.

**UPCOMING MEETINGS OF THE VSP TECHNICAL PANEL:** The VSP Technical Panel's next meeting is May 23, 2017 at the Farm Bureau offices, 975 Carpenter Rd NE #101, Lacey, WA 98516. Currently on the agenda that day are the informal reviews of the Benton and Yakima County work plans. On June 20, 2017, the Technical Panel has tentatively set an informal review of the San Juan County work plan. Technical Panel meeting agendas can be found [here](#). These meetings will also be available by webinar. Full details will be available on the [TP web page](#).

**HOW TO FIND VSP WORK PLANS:** To find VSP Work Plans that have been submitted to the Commission, please go to the main VSP web page [here](#). Once there, click on the map the county that you are interested in. An informational box will appear that has the link to the

county work plan (if it has been received by the Commission) and whether any public comment was received by the Commission on the plan.

VSP WORK PLAN “PRACTICE POINTERS”: During its deliberations of the Thurston and Chelan County VSP work plans, the Technical Panel identified a number of “practice pointers” that the other 25 VSP work groups would want to review to incorporate into their work plans before they are submitted to the Technical Panel. Those practice pointers are in the minutes to the meetings on the two work plans, posted on the [VSP web page](#), and are reproduced below for your convenience:

The following practice pointers (listed in no particular order) were identified by the Voluntary Stewardship Program’s Technical Panel. The pointers can be used by VSP county work groups to help in the creation and successful submittal of their work plans to the Technical Panel.

- A. Provide a cover sheet or a cross-walk table with the work plan that lists each element of RCW 36.70A.720(1) (a)-(l) and where to find it in the work plan.
- B. The nexus between the goals, benchmarks and monitoring and adaptive management actions should be clearly and specifically demonstrated. Perhaps consider using consistent language between the plan narrative and adaptive management matrix.
- C. A clearly identified section of the work plan should be identified and include an explanation of how the July 22, 2011 baseline was established.
- D. Clearly explain monitoring, adaptive management, and reporting requirements in the work plan.
- E. Clearly identify and explain adaptive management thresholds in the work plan.
- F. Clearly identify active and inactive VPS participants (or direct and indirect - those participating in VSP and those not) in the work plan, expected numbers of each, and how those participants will interact with the work plan.
- G. Datasets used for monitoring purposes should be repeatable for subsequent analysis.
- H. Clearly set out how agricultural practices will protect critical area functions and how that compares to practices used at the baseline.
- I. Clearly relate monitoring goals and benchmarks to data collected during monitoring.
- J. For ease of reference, please provide sequential page numbers for the work plan and all appendices.

VSP BUDGET: On March 27, 2017, the House released its operating budget. It continues funding for the Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP) at \$7,602,000, the same amount proposed in the Senate’s operating budget. The Governor’s proposed operating budget for VSP is \$7,622,000 (a difference of just \$20,000 from the House and Senate). The Commission is encouraged by these budget proposals. Though they do not reflect the Commission’s original budget request for VSP (\$9.35 million), they all contain a similar amount of VSP funding in their budgets.

VSP END-OF-FISCAL-YEAR VOUCHERING: **All vouchers for VSP eligible expenditures must be received no later than Monday, July 10, 2017** to be processed and eligible for reimbursement. *Vouchers received after July 10, 2017 will not be reimbursed.* Submit vouchers to [Karla Heinitz](#) at the Commission.

VSP MONTHLY CONSULTANT Q&A: The next Q&A webinar for all those interested in VSP at a statewide level is coming up on **Thursday, May 4 from 9am-9:30am**. Please register for Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP) Monthly Q&A on May 4, 2017 9:00 AM PDT at:

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/8704286382246800899>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

This conference call is meant to be a Q & A on VSP for all 27 VSP opt-in counties. The purpose of the call is to be a forum to disseminate information about VSP on a statewide level and to answer VSP related questions. It is open to any who want to phone in, but mainly directed at County staff, Conservation District staff, and consultants and facilitators responsible for VSP.

Links to past webinar recordings are available on the [VSP Workgroups web page](#).

Bill Eller | [beller@scc.wa.gov](mailto:beller@scc.wa.gov) | 509-385-7512 | Washington State Conservation Commission