

August 2018 VSP Newsletter

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

COLUMBIA COUNTY VSP WORK PLAN APPROVED: Columbia County's VSP work plan was approved by the Technical Panel on July 27, 2018. VSP work plans can be found on the Commission's VSP web page [here](#). Congratulations to the Columbia County work group for their hard work and effort!

PEND OREILLE COUNTY VSP WORK PLAN SUBMITTED: Pend Oreille County submitted their VSP work plan to the Commission on July 31, 2018. The public is invited to comment on any VSP work plan submitted to the VSP Technical Panel within 14 days of submittal. The public has until August 14, 2018 to comment on the plan. The public can use this public comment [form](#) to capture any comments made. The work plan can be accessed from the Commission's VSP web page [here](#). If you have any questions, please contact Bill Eller at beller@scc.wa.gov or by phone at 509-385-7512.

SUBMITTAL OF VSP WORK PLANS TO THE COMMISSION: Nineteen VSP counties have approved work plans. There are six counties whose work plans are currently under review by the Technical Panel (Cowlitz, Okanogan, Grays Harbor, Adams and Lewis and Pend Oreille). That leaves just two counties left to submit work plans to the Commission (Ferry and Spokane). Due dates to submit work plans for the remaining three counties are as follows:

Ferry – September 14, 2018

Spokane – October 22, 2018

The Commission has set up a schedule for the formal submittal of VSP work plans. 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 in the schedule. If you have not already done so, please contact [Bill Eller](#) at 509-385-7512 or by email at beller@scc.wa.gov to schedule the submittal of your county's work plan.

Action by Work Group on Work Plan: Remember, the action the VSP work group needs to take in sending the work plan to the Commission is that the work group should move to submit the work plan to the Commission and VSP Technical Panel, not “approve” the work plan.

Technical Panel Review Process: The Technical Panel typically has at least two meetings during the review process. The first meeting is the first time the Technical Panel has an opportunity to discuss the work plan amongst themselves as they can only talk about the plans amongst themselves during an open public meeting. They also make oral comments on the work plan during that initial meeting. A representative from the submitting work group is asked to attend and make a brief presentation (30 minutes) on the work plan goals and benchmarks. After that initial meeting, the Technical Panel members work to craft written agency comments that are compiled by the Commission and supplied back to the work group that submitted the plan. Then, at the next Technical Panel meeting on the work plan, the Technical Panel considers the work plan in light of the written comments the members made. Sometimes more than two meetings are needed to complete the review process.

STATEWIDE ADVISORY COMMITTEE POLICY ADVISORIES: The Commission, after consultation with the VSP Statewide Advisory Committee (SAC), has added to an existing Policy Advisory (PA) and created a new one. [PA 03-18](#) has been amended to add some additional clarity around the roles and responsibilities during VSP implementation. The new Policy Advisory, [PA 05-18](#) deals with implementation reporting requirements for VSP. All work groups, county staff, conservation district staff, and other staff responsible for VSP implementation should review both PA's, and should create their own tracking system for meeting the deadlines in [PA 05-18](#) for the two year and five year reporting requirements. More details and a complete schedule for submittal of two year and five year reports are in [PA 05-18](#). All PA's can be found on the VSP web page [here](#) and on the Statewide Advisory Committee web page [here](#).

POLICY ADVISORY 04-18: The VSP Statewide Advisory Committee (SAC) held a meeting on July 25, 2018 to discuss Policy Advisory (PA) 04-18 regarding how VSP and critical area ordinances apply to “new” agriculture. The SAC has been working on this PA for the last few months, and used this meeting to give further advice to the Commission on the PA. Commission staff received that advice, and will work on

incorporating it into the next draft of the PA. When the PA is ready, it will be released for public comment and the public comment notice will be published in the monthly newsletter and on the [Commission's VSP web page](#).

UPCOMING JOINT MEETINGS OF THE VSP TECHNICAL PANEL AND STATEWIDE ADVISORY COMMITTEE: The VSP Technical Panel and Statewide Advisory Committee continue to update their meeting schedules. The most complete and up-to-date meeting schedule and meeting agendas can always be found on the [Technical Panel web page](#) and the [Statewide Advisory Committee web page](#). All meetings will be held at the Farm Bureau building, 975 Carpenter Rd NE #101, Lacey, WA 98516, unless otherwise noted. Each meeting is also available by webinar. To register for the webinar, please use the link below:

Joint Technical Panel and Statewide Advisory Committee meeting **on August 24, 2018 at 8:00 AM PST** at:
<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/971986259578355971>

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

VSP FY 19-21 BUDGET DEVELOPMENT – IMPLEMENTATION BUDGETS REQUESTED: ***The opportunity to submit draft budgets has been extended to August 9.*** Conservation Commission staff are currently working to put together budget decision packages (“BDP”) as per the process outlined by the Office of Financial Management. One of those BDP’s is for VSP. Some of you have already created budgets in anticipation of FY 19-21 funding. We have reviewed all submitted work plans and gathered any implementation budgets for FY 19-21 in them. **We would request that any county or VSP technical assistance provider that has created an implementation budget for FY 19-21 to send a copy to Bill Eller at beller@scc.wa.gov so it can be tallied with the other budgets and prepared for the BDP. Even if you’ve included a budget in an approved work plan, sending an additional copy of it would serve to double-check that the figures already gathered are correct.** There is no guarantee of funding at a requested level or for an identified need, but this is why we need the budgets so we can present that level and/or need to the legislature in our VSP BDP. **BDP’s are due in early August, so please send any budgets you might have created August 9.** We understand some of you are still in the planning stage, and we will take that into account in our BDP, but having as many identified VSP implementation budgets as possible will add more specificity to our BDP. Budgetary categories we’ve identified include Education, Outreach &

Technical Assistance, Monitoring, Reporting & Adaptive Management, Work Group Coordination, Project Implementation, County Administrative / Financial costs, and Identified FTE (employees).

Bill Eller | beller@scc.wa.gov | 509-385-7512 | Washington State Conservation Commission