Voluntary Stewardship Program
Joint Technical Panel & SAC Meeting
Friday, December 15, 2017
9:00 am – 3:00 pm

Facilitator – Bill Eller, VSP Coordinator, WSCC

Attendees in Lacey: Brian Cochrane, WSCC (TP); Lauren Driscoll, ECY (TP); Kelly McLain, WSDA (TP); Matt Mueller, WDFW (TP); Alicia McClendon, WSCC; John Stuhlmiller, Evan Sheffels; Adam Cares; Linda Lyshall, Jennifer Thomas

Webinar: Barbara Adkins

VSP TECHNICAL PANEL MEETING & STATEWIDE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Session Objective:
Continue conducting a formal review of Stevens and San Juan County’s VSP work plans; update the Statewide Advisory Committee on VSP-related issues.

9:00 am: Opening Comments, Introductions, Session Objective & Agenda
Introductions were made.

9:05 am: VSP Program update (if any) – Bill Eller, WSCC
Bill Eller gave a brief update. He discussed the VSP regional meetings and the schedule for the remaining work plans to be reviewed.

9:20 am: Stevens County work plan – review agency comments; continue review and possibly vote on the work plan.

Bill Eller introduced this topic. Review where we are. Submitted 10-17-17. Have until 1-15-18 to finish the Technical Panel review. This is the second review meeting we’ve been able to have. First was mid-November. Since then the agencies finished their comments, provided them to me, I put them into the agency comment spreadsheet, provided that to the work group. The work group took the comments during the Nov 17th meeting and the written comments from the Technical Panel and had a work group meeting and made edits to the work plan and supporting documents. We provided those to you a few days ago. That brings us to now, the second review meeting on this work plan.

Bill Eller introduced this topic. He presented the agency comment form for Stevens County’s work plan. Each element of RCW 36.70A.720 (1) (a-l) that needed further discussion was discussed. Each element reviewed based on the changes the work group made to the work plan and supporting documents. Edits made to agency comments document.

Element A

Brian Cochrane brought up this topic. And asked about the plans reviewed.

Adam Cares said they revised the work plan to take out some of the reviewed work plans so as to not confuse the BMP’s that were considered.
Brian Cochrane says a better approach would be to list the ones that were considered and why, and then the ones that were not.

Table 5-1. Brian Cochrane asks for footnotes for each watershed plan.

[General discussion on the remaining (b-l) elements was had. The agency comment document was updated.

**Technical Panel vote taken; unanimous approval of the Stevens County VSP work plan by the Technical Panel members present (all), with a small set of non-substantive amendments to table 5-1 and the final amended plan submitted to the Commission.**

9:50 am: Next meetings – start times at 8 am -
- January 12, 2018 – First formal review of Franklin County VSP work plan; informal review of Douglas County VSP work plan
- January 26, 2018 – Franklin County VSP work plan

Bill Eller brought up this discussion. Talked about the remaining work group and work plans that need to come before the Technical Panel. Decided on move the formal review meetings to the end of the month, and the floater meetings to the beginning of the month. Joint meetings with the SAC will be at the end of the month. Separate meetings – just the Technical Panel only - are the beginnings of the month.

10:35 am: San Juan County work plan – review agency comments; continue review and possibly vote on the work plan.

Bill Eller introduced this topic. Review where we are. Submitted 10-31-17. Have until 1-29-18 to finish the Technical Panel review. This is the second review meeting we’ve been able to have. First was mid-November. Since then the agencies finished their comments, provided them to me, I put them into the agency comment spreadsheet, provided that to the work group. The work group took the comments during the Nov 17th meeting and the written comments from the Technical Panel and had a work group meeting and made edits to the work plan and supporting documents. We provided those to you a few days ago. That brings us to now, the second review meeting on this work plan. No written comments from Ecology yet – Lauren will get those to us. Based on the comments received so far, the work group has been making some changes.

Bill Eller introduced this topic. He presented the agency comment form for San Juan County’s work plan. Each element of RCW 36.70A.720 (1) (a-l) that needed further discussion was discussed. Each element reviewed based on the changes the work group made to the work plan and supporting documents. Edits made to agency comments document.

**Elements A-L**

Linda Lyshall says they have gone through and addressed every comment on the work plan and the comment table.

Jennifer Thomas says about 85% finished with the comments. Go through a – I – Page 33. We will add another plan. San Juan Initiative – how it is related to the VSP work plan. Will add more to the plan about the Puget Sound plan as well – same sort of thing will be added.

**Element B**

Jennifer Thomas says a change was made to add state agency staff to page 12.
Brian Cochrane asks how we know if the right people were in the room. This is what we are trying to get at.

Linda Lyshall said the county council also vetted the list for inclusion. There was one person who wasn’t part of the plan.

Kelly McLain says it is important for those who come after to know which organizations are involved and why.

**Element C**

Jennifer Thomas says there were a few places in the work plan that the work group tried to address the concerns on this issue. Attempts to meet the participation goals were described in the work plan in a few different areas. Section 4.1; page 55, Table 10.

**Element E (i)**

Jennifer Thomas says page 69. Characterizing the intersection with the maps. 1% of agricultural area, concentrated in different watersheds. Statement added on page 69. Will add reference in an appendix on the intersection. Will also write up a process of how they would go about doing the monitoring.

Brian Cochrane says think about other ways of getting at what is happening in the stream.

Jennifer Thomas says for CARA’s. Page 73. Need to add a paragraph on how the monitoring will be done – there is an appendix with a map, but will add more information. Using DOH water quality data – on page 74 – statement added. Will coordinate with the water quality monitoring staff at the conservation district to ensure certain areas will be monitored that are referenced in the work plan.

Matt Muller asks about #2 on the CARA chart on page 73 / 74. Hard to draw a straight line between those, may want to revise those.

Lauren Driscoll asks about the statement on page 72 if the time was changed to 5 and 10 instead of 2. Just try to make sure they line up. Asks about the individual stewardship plans and tracking the data – when will that data be looked at for wetlands? Will that be done at regular intervals?

Linda Lyshall says the intent is the check more often and the Appendix B timelines show that.

**Element E (ii)**

Jennifer Thomas says protection as of date of adoption. Functional lift would be enhancement. Table E-1 are all enhancement related. Using % cover as a surrogate for functional life. We have protection, but enhancement isn’t guaranteed in the plan. Individual stewardship plans won’t give us the ability to know what is going on other than at that site. There is no data on any species presence in the county. That would be enhancement, do we wouldn’t have to do it.

Brian Cochrane says it would be an enhancement in knowledge, but how does it affect the critical area? Are those who are not participating in VSP causing a change in the functions and values of the critical areas? We need to figure out ways that those who are not participating can be identified.
Jennifer Thomas says we do try to capture that in the % cover, as supplemented by other efforts. We will get parcels who will come into the program, so we can’t manage the system in total.

Brian Cochrane says could use aerial imaging to try to get at the watershed scale analysis. Could also do a critical areas and agriculture intersect if that area. Could also use on the ground analysis if you have small area. Characterization of whole watershed over time.

Kelly McLain says the number of participants isn’t as important as the coverage of the entire watershed.

Brian Cochrane says if you are looking at the watershed scale, the resolution doesn’t need to be all that fine.

**Element G**

Linda Lyshall says that their individual stewardship plan checklist was modified to clarify its purposes. It doesn’t replace the farm plan, but is a component of it. The individual stewardship plans will add on to the farm plan. Main edits are on page 117.

Kelly McLain says that a question could be asked on the isp about if you are not doing any of these practices, is there something that you would be willing to do? Or is there something that you are doing that we should know about that we could use elsewhere? The box that was added does help.

**Element H**

Jennifer Thomas says page 39 has some added language to explain this further. Regulatory backstop mentioned as SHA.

Added language satisfied the concerns previously identified by the Technical Panel.

**Element I (i)**

Jennifer Thomas says that a supplemental monitoring table was created to meet the concerns expressed here.

Lauren Driscoll asks about the specifics of the goals and benchmarks.

Jennifer Thomas says the types of agriculture is an issue here. More will be added to this table (“priority watersheds”, etc). The work group discussed the most likely reason for failing to participate is selling the agriculture land. Will look at the participation and try to figure out if people are participating or not and why. Similar process for participation as meeting the critical areas goals. Will use parcel-specific maps to see trends and changes annually.

Lauren Driscoll asks about the high resolution change data and if you will look at non-participating parcels. ECY wetland change analysis is going to be every 5 years, could use that as well.

Jennifer Thomas says San Juan County is at a finer scale, so we should be able to do change detection.

Kelly McLain asks about landowners buying agriculture lands just for views. If those landowners are not actively farming, is there an effort to communicate with them to see if a farmer could use the land for farming in a leasing arrangement.

Linda Lyshall says yes.
Matt Muller – page 77 – looking at the metrics there – they don’t seem to have benchmarks associated with them. There are a few more examples. For every metric, make clear there is a benchmark associated with it.

Jennifer Thomas says the narrative ended up in the new monitoring table. Geo hazard areas are done, but the table will be added to address the other critical areas.

Kelly McLain says the concerns I raised in my written comments are addressed in the monitoring table – as long as all the benchmarks will be included.

Jennifer Thomas says each critical areas text will be updated with this language.

Linda Lyshall asks if, under the critical areas column of the monitoring table, is what is under that section adequate for a benchmark in CA1?

Lauren Driscoll says I am still not sure what your baseline is.

Brian Cochrane says there needs to be an action verb in the benchmark.

[Discussion on benchmarks in general and how to craft them.]

Matt Muller says to keep in mind the group ten years from now and how they will have to interpret this.

Brian Cochrane asks if the guess work can be taken out of the species monitoring.

Jennifer Thomas says there is a piece in the work plan that talks about that, but we could add more discussion to walk through the process.

Brian Cochrane says it will help for executing the plan in the future.

Kelly McLain says you could add a statement that says annual or biannual review of the PHS analysis will be done.

Jennifer Thomas says a % cover will be added as well.

The monitoring table layout is great, just needs to be completed for every goal and benchmark.

**Element I (ii)**

[This element was discussed during the discussion on Element (I)(i) above]

**Element I (iii)**

[This element was discussed during the discussion on Element (I)(i) above]

The Technical Panel set up a schedule where the San Juan work group will provide amendments by Jan 5th for the Technical Panel to consider for their Jan 12th meeting. Reset for Jan 12th for final vote. Add a cover sheet with page numbers for where these amendments are to be found – where are the changes or the information and what page number is that on.
Linda Lyshall tells the Technical Panel that some local environmental groups have apparently raised concerns about the work plan, even after being part of the work group from the beginning of the VSP process, but have not disclosed yet what those concerns are nor if they will affect their support of the work plan.

1:55 pm: SAC VSP update and issues
- VSP regional meetings – after action report
- Remaining counties – schedule to submit work plans to Technical Panel
- Other

[These items previously handled on the agenda]

2:10 pm: Adjourn