Facilitator – Bill Eller, VSP Coordinator, WSCC

Attendees in Lacey: Brian Cochrane, Lauren Driscoll, Kelly McLain, Keith Folkerts, Alicia McClendon; Don Brigham, Heather Bush, Anthony Waldrop, Barbara Adkins, John Kliem, Rod Averill, Terry Willis, Mike Nordin, Craig Nelson, Dick Ewing, Allisa Carlson, Alice Shawyer, Greta Holmstrom

Webinar: Bradley Johnson, Scott Kuhta, Steven Woodley, Ben Floyd, Brandon Roozen, Commissioner Wes McCart, Carmen Andonaegui, Renee Hadley, Barbara Adkins

8:00 am: Opening Comments, Introductions, Session Objective & Agenda

8:05 am: VSP Program update (if any) – Bill Eller, Ron Shultz, WSCC

Bill Eller gave a brief update. Still working on the VSP budget decision package (BDP). The Commission had their meeting on July 19th at which they approved moving forward on the VSP BDP. Requested input from counties, agencies, and others for the BDP budget. Budget spreadsheet – ask from the counties to provide their best guess as to what their budget needs are for FY 19-21. The budget request spreadsheet is not set in stone – those numbers are the counties best guess as to what their needs might be for VSP implementation. Commission staff will use those numbers to help inform the BDP. There are two issues unresolved – whether to include non-VSP counties in the budget ask or just VSP opt-in counties and the other issue deals with allocation of the VSP funding once it is received – should all the counties receive the same allocation or not. Wednesday the SAC met separately and worked on policy advisory 04-18 CAO and New Ag. We’ve completed two other PA’s – 03-18 and 05-18 related to VSP implementation roles and reporting timelines. Those should be available in the next few weeks. PA 04-18 should take more time since Commission staff is still working on that and then it will need to go out for public comment – because this PA has more controversy / issues around it. VSP quarterly reporting just occurred July 10th. Pend Oreille, Thurston and San Juan missed again. Pend Oreille and Thurston missed the deadline for the third straight time.
John Stuhlmiller says that Thurston is working on changing who is responsible for VSP quarterly reporting.

8:15 am: VSP update and issues
- Remaining counties – schedule to submit
  - Aug 24 – Pend Oreille – 1st review; Adams, Cowlitz, Grays Harbor, Lewis, Okanogan – 2nd review & vote;
  - Sept 28 – Ferry – 1st review; Pend Oreille – 2nd review & vote
  - Oct 26 – Spokane – 1st review; Ferry – 2nd review & vote
  - Nov 18 – Spokane – 2nd review & vote

9:00 am: Begin formal review of Adams County VSP work plan.

Bill Eller introduced this topic. Review where we are. Submitted June 29, 2018. Have until September 27, 2018 to finish the Technical Panel review. This is the first review meeting we’ve been able to have. The 2nd will be August 24, 2018. After this meeting, agencies will need to submit their written comments to me so that I can package them and send them to the work group for consideration. We should shoot for August 3rd to have comments to me. Then I can get them to the work group ASAP after that. Then they can meet, as most want to, and have any work plan edits in before the August 24, 2018 meeting.

John Small – Anchor QEA. Lauren from Adams County. Ben Floyd is on the webinar. John Small begins the presentation.

Ben Floyd takes over the presentation and presents on RCW 36.70A.720 (1) (a) – (l). 15% of producers – 500 – both Grant and Adams conservation districts will reach that number of producers annually.

Lauren Driscoll – please add that to the plan – participation benchmarks.

John Small – it is in Appendix E – can be moved.

Brian Cochrane – asks how that level compares to the level of current VSP outreach?

Ben Floyd – it is a significant increase. 15-20 landowner contacts is the current level from each of the conservation districts. The conservation districts are planning to ramp up with additional staff to achieve this.
John Small – some conservation districts are going to work together and have one staff responsible for monitoring for many counties, and one staff available for outreach for multiple counties.

Lauren Driscoll – producer participation matrix – missed that in the Appendix.

Ben Floyd - Adams CD the main technical assistance provider. Will work with a local farmer representative for outreach as well. Appendix E has the outreach plan. Will add a discussion of the current level of outreach effort in the work plan. Benchmarks are discussed in Section 5. The format of the work plan is different – more visually appealing. Technical Assistance is based on the $220,000 budget number. Individual Stewardship Plans are an important part of outreach. Confidentiality is important. Existing development regulations.

John Small – baseline monitoring for participation and stewardship activities. Baseline monitoring for effects on critical areas are in Section 6. Evaluation, adaptive management and reporting is in Section 5 - 6. Section 5 also sets out how we will help state agencies with monitoring. Section 6 talks about other requirements of the program.

Ben Floyd – go back to Brian Cochrane’s question. Page 1 of the work plans– the statement is there - structures will be regulated is listed there. Page 32 is implied.

Lauren Driscoll – benchmarks for ISP is helpful.

John Small – participation as number of acres is probably better described as participation as individuals or numbers of farms.

Lauren Driscoll – do you have benchmarks for number of ISP’s?

Ben Floyd – we have listed as a benchmark the number of contacts with landowners as the benchmark.

Brian Cochrane – contacts and participation is something that will need to be looked at through adaptive management.

Lauren Driscoll – Table 5-2 – can wetland be added as a habitat. Monitoring – random sampling using aerials.
9:30 pm: Begin formal review of the Lewis County work plan.

Bill Eller introduced this topic. Review where we are. Submitted June 20, 2018. Have until September 18, 2018 to finish the Technical Panel review. This is the first review meeting we’ve been able to have. The 2nd will be August 24, 2018. After this meeting, agencies will need to submit their written comments to me so that I can package them and send them to the work group for consideration. We should shoot for August 3rd to have comments to me. Then I can get them to the work group ASAP after that. Then they can meet, as most want to, and have any work plan edits in before the August 24, 2018 meeting.

John Kliem – begins presentation.

Brian Cochrane – what plans are incorporated in the work plan – need the connection – what was in them that was important to the VSP work plan?

Kelly McLain – Appendix F has some of that information.

John Kliem – continues presentation. Element C – critical area goals. 7 agricultural viability goals. Element D – Outreach and education participation – strategies are in Chapter 4 and Appendix B. ISP framework on pages 65-70 – Appendix B. Lewis County using ISP as a living document to work with the agricultural operator. Looking to gain trust from agricultural operators. Element E – benchmarks for critical areas protection and enhancement are in the work plan on pages 10-32 in Chapter 2. Agriculture is 6% of the county – if defined as agricultural lands of long term significance under the GMA. Not expecting to see a whole lot of change in the numbers of agricultural producers. There are protection benchmarks and enhancement benchmarks.

Brian Cochrane asks if the baseline numbers have been identified for each of the benchmarks.

John Kliem – we will use aerial imagery to determine that.

Brian Cochrane – so that is not yet defined?

John Kliem – no – not defined.
Lauren Driscoll – is there a baseline for practices?

John Kliem – Appendix C has some of the practice baseline data from the Lewis County Conservation District. The benchmarks are tied into how the county will do their monitoring program.

Brian Cochrane – if we don’t know what the baseline is, how will five stewardship practices will get us where we need to go?

John Kliem – Appendix F has data about established wetlands. We can use that 2011 data over the aerial data we will gather. We will use that as our base layer in 2011. We will look at the changes to see what has occurred.

Brian Cochrane – that doesn’t answer the question of how much effort we will need to meet the goal – we don’t know what the loss is. We are setting a goal without knowing what the level is.

John Kliem – the GIS data layer for wetlands for 2011 will give us an idea of where agricultural lands are as of 2011. HRCD will be done, and we will do a landscape cover change analysis, if there is a physical reduction of area, that is one measurement.

Brian Cochrane – agree, but you don’t know the amount of change yet.

John Kliem – we don’t. But we have an aggressive monitoring program – will start doing that this year. It is listed in the work plan in the monitoring section. By December or January the work group will be evaluating results of that first effort.

Rod Averill – we have a good GIS department in the county, so we know somewhat of the baseline in the area. We just recently updated the critical area ordinance – we have more wetlands listed now.

John Kliem – if we had that information before, we would have more accuracy. Our assumption is that there is not a lot of land cover change with commercial agriculture. We are not so sure with non-commercial.

Lauren Driscoll – I struggled with the number of practices – does that mean fencing 1,000 feet of stream is equivalent to 100 feet of stream.
John Kliem – tried to list out the life of the project – it is difficult getting some of the information in NRCS.

Kelly McLain – in the work plan on page 51 is the mention about the first monitoring scenario and how it will inform the 2011 baseline. Maybe have its own subheading on page 51 or otherwise set it out so the reader immediately sees it.

Brian Cochrane – project managers will look for task, deliverable, and timeline. They may miss it.

Lauren Driscoll – what are the participation benchmarks?

John Kliem – it is in the monitoring section. Element F and G – Lewis County will do technical assistance. One regulation to be retained is the frequently flooded areas.

Lauren Driscoll – can you add RCW 90.48 Water Pollution Control Act and 90.58 SMA to other regulations that are involved.

John Kliem – says the SMA is in the appendix, but can add that.

Keith Folkerts – please add the Hydraulics code as well.

John Kliem – monitoring in the work plan – there is a three step process outline in the work plan. WDFW’s HRCD. Monitor agricultural lands. Will monitor implemented practices as well. Monitor agricultural viability as well.

Lauren Driscoll – why not use 303 data for water quality as well?

John Kliem – we were mindful of some of the comments we received previously that this is not a water quality plan. We focused on the critical areas and not water quality as the measure.

Kelly McLain – page 50 lists that discussion.

Brian Cochrane – some critical areas functions improve or mitigate impacts to water quality.

John Kliem – wetlands are listed as a habitat. We discuss wetlands as a habitat in the WDFW HRCD.
Kelly McLain – Table 5 on page 50 – add the statement “to critical area functions in the watershed” to that table. That will be part of my recommendations.

Rod Averill – Lewis County farms are smaller than on the east side. In our RDD area, we have small farms – hobby farms – high value crops on 5 acres. The work group is cognizant that these areas may have equal impact as commercial agriculture. We’ve been working hard for cooperation in the Farm Bureau.

Lauren Driscoll – thought that was good to put into the plan – your efforts surrounding that.

John Kliem – the conservation district is focusing on small farms.

Kelly McLain – that is good to focus on.


Keith Folkerts – asked if the implemented stewardship practices be mapped?

John Kliem – we will report on a watershed scale to maintain confidentiality.

Keith Folkerts – HRCD world uses acres – acres of forest cover, acres removed. How will you get apples to apples comparison for that?

John Kliem – it is impossible to get apples to apples. We are looking at the impact of function.

Brian Cochrane – there is a disconnect between practices and critical areas function – that is key to work plans that use practices equivalent to function. You have to test that assumption to make sure the indicator shows that.

John Kliem – that is why NRCS practices are so important.

Brian Cochrane – the NRCS practices are for individual properties and not for watershed scale – but we are trying to extrapolate for the watershed scale.
John Kliem – can still work at protecting critical areas functions using a variety of practices. It takes a lot of thought. Landscape change and functions affected section in the work plan.

Rod Averill – the Cowlitz watershed covers ½ the county – the farming aspect of it has minimal impact. Chehalis has more agriculture in it.

Lauren Driscoll – page 52 – can you refer to meeting NRCS standards rather than best available science.

Kelly McLain – agrees with Lauren to take that out. PHS meets the BAS, but the NRCS fotogs is another story.

John Kliem – will do landscape cover analysis twice within 5 years. This will help with adaptive management.

Keith Folkerts – one idea – since HRCD reports in acres, maybe could look at 5 BMP’s implemented, but report it out as the number of riparian acres protected for comparison purposes. That would allow for denomination from acres to acres.

John Kliem – reporting – biennial and 5 year. Cooperative monitoring with other agencies and reporting requirements.

Lauren Driscoll – I understand when you say the report is due at the end of the biennia, but should add that is an ongoing duty. The 5 year report does say that.

Kelly McLain – am struggling with adaptive management component. My question is what is the trigger for adaptive management? Normally we see a percentage. When will you adaptively manage? What is terrible? What is no net loss?

John Kliem – if the situation occurs, if the first shows ok, we do the second, if we fall below the 2011 benchmark and we show that in the 5 year report and would do the adaptive management plan at that time. We tried to keep it simple – use the HRCD for the first 2 years. As we get closer to the 5 year report, we will do adaptive management if it looks like we are getting below the baseline.

Lauren Driscoll – I struggled with the trigger for adaptive management. You also say there are reasons we might not meet the VSP goals – public participation may not get
us to our goals. My question would be, if that happens, what are you strategies for addressing that.

John Kliem – that would be in the outreach section.

Lauren Driscoll – we need a cross reference for that.

Kelly McLain – the 5 year report is due in 2021. You will get the data for that in a year or so. During that year, you will still receive information on how you are doing. How will you use that information for adaptive management? Timing and frequency of other stuff besides HRCD – how often those will be happening. Don’t want to get to year 5 and be in a hole and try to get out of it. Just lay out those other things and when they would be reviewed.

John Kliem – drinking water is primary.

Kelly McLain – you won’t just look at that at the end of the 5 years, so just say that in the plan. Lots of work in Chehalis basin and should have lots of data.

Rod Averill – 60 million going into the Chehalis basin right now.

John Kliem – we envision quarterly meeting with the conservation district and the VSP work group.

Kelly McLain – that is why we need that listed in the plan – because all of us will retire from this and those that come after need the direction.

Rod Averill – this is important for us.

John Kliem – one area we can develop more is in the responsibilities of the conservation district and how they work with the work group and link that to adaptive management.

Keith Folkerts – the net lift should occur independent of VSP – enhancement should be associated directly with VSP. Don’t try to take credit for other things than VSP. Is there anything in the plan that clarifies no double dipping?

John Stuhlmiller – this is a long running conversation – the baseline is 2011 and the impact that agriculture is having. Must be a project on agricultural land.
Ron Averill – when we look at the flood control projects, they are not parcel based – but solving issues for the whole area. It may be difficult to separate project benefits out.

John Kliem – Appendix C – excluded projects discussed. We count projects done on agriculture lands.

Lauren Driscoll – the conservation district is going to verify some practices that were implemented?

Ron Averill – yes.

John Kliem – more detail on the procedure is in the work plan and is based on the conservation districts’ interaction with the landowner.

Lauren Driscoll – page 45 – the process is set out there. My question is related to how you will verify the practices implemented.

John Kliem – we have it in the work plan to do ground-truthing by contacting the landowner directly.

10:45 am:  Begin formal review of the Grays Harbor County work plan.

Bill Eller introduced this topic. Review where we are. Submitted June 20, 2018. Have until September 18, 2018 to finish the Technical Panel review. This is the first review meeting we’ve been able to have. The 2nd will be August 24, 2018. After this meeting, agencies will need to submit their written comments to me so that I can package them and send them to the work group for consideration. We should shoot for August 3rd to have comments to me. Then I can get them to the work group ASAP after that. Then they can meet, as most want to, and have any work plan edits in before the August 24, 2018 meeting.

[Brian Cochrane had to step out for this presentation]

John Kliem – begins presentation. Highlights differences between Lewis and Grays Harbor’s plans. Agriculture viability goals different. Outreach and education section similar. The Grays Harbor work group will use the same ISP as Pacific County.
Management objectives for critical areas are similar to Pacific County – Ocean Spray cooperative will provide some information instead of the individual cranberry growers. Grays Harbor Conservation District is the main TSP. Existing development regulations – frequently flooded areas ordinance will be kept as it relates to agricultural lands. The monitoring process is similar in structure to Lewis, but will use Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI) similar to what Stevens County will be doing. Grays Harbor County has a great GIS department. Will start in the fall. Will also use 303(d) list and county water data. Adaptive management triggers will be brought to the work group by the conservation district. Data layers we will use will be similar to the Stevens County data. County parcel data – Land use codes 82, 83, 85, 96, 86, and 97.

Lauren Driscoll – National Wetlands Inventory can’t be used at the monitoring level – not changed frequently enough.

Keith Folkerts – won’t see change without a trigger with NDVI. Can’t compare one year to another year – color. NDVI isn’t like HRCD.

John Kliem – will use landsat data. 2017 data layer. Will use NDVI to see where landscape cover data changes. Agriculture is not extensive in Grays Harbor County, so should be able to individually examine those areas.

Keith Folkerts – except the majority of change is below the minimum level that the landsat can detect. If relying on this, will have to look closely at the commission and omission based on the data collected.

Kelly McLain – would like to see the WSDA data on land use included in your data review subsets. It is at a refined scale and is used in the NAP data.

John Kliem – we can examine that issue. Grays Harbor County thought they could do it in house and more frequently.

Kelly McLain – Stevens County isn’t doing NDVI. They are using actual presence / absence of vegetation using aerial imagery and then checking a subset of that land for verification – they are doing a subset of HRCD.

John Kliem - we had training with the county staff on how that would work. We discussed with Brian Cochrane on how this would work and he thought it would.
Terry Willis – ground truthing is really important.

Kelly McLain – Stevens County looks for presence / absence versus color.

John Kliem – I thought that in the discussion with Stevens County thought that NDVI was being used. Given the size of the aerial imagery in 2011 and 2017, if it can pick up where changes in landscape have occurred, the conservation district should be able to ground truth changes to the critical areas functions and values or do it through their analysis of the aerial data.

Keith Folkerts – if had a 2011 and 2017 panel on your analysis, and could see the changes, and if you could do that for the agriculture areas and identify where those change are, that would work – as long as you look at every acres.

John Kliem – given the scale of agriculture, commercial agriculture, we have the data on where the commercial agriculture is.

Keith Folkerts – what about where you don’t know where the agriculture is.

Kelly McLain – that is why you are using the county land use codes.

John Kliem – we might not know a small percentage of that. The conservation district will find out where those parcel are during their outreach.

Keith Folkerts – but you won’t be able to do that analysis without ground-truthing.

Terry Willis – ground-truthing will help with identifying those non-commercial agricultural operations. We also want to target groups.

[Brian Cochrane back]

John Kliem – as part of the adaptive management process, we expect we may have hick-ups at first. We will continue to refine the process. May be easier to contract with WDFW for the HRCD at some point. The County is enthusiastic about this process and possible applications to other uses.

Brian Cochrane – what I recall from talking with you – any image analysis isn’t measuring the real thing- just the light wavelength coming off that surface. You need
to have an accuracy rate listed in your process – omission / commission. You’ll be able to test the model with validation.

John Kliem – probably a little more discussion on that listed in the work plan.

Brian Cochrane – yes.

John Kliem – otherwise, pretty much the same as Lewis County as to how monitoring will be done – how to measure the effectiveness of the practice on the critical area function. The County will use the landscape change analysis twice in the first 5 years. We don’t have a lot of information on the amount of change in the county. We assume not a lot of extensive change in the county related to commercial agriculture. The work group will reset their benchmark figures and adaptively manage for that. 2 year and 5 year reporting periods.

Lauren Driscoll – make sure you say they are on-going.

John Kliem – main difference – agricultural viability goals, monitoring data used, and stewardship plan is different (between Lewis and Grays Harbor’s plans).

Lauren Driscoll – liked in the ISP – things you are doing since 2011 and discontinued since 2011. Important for participation rates.

Terry Willis – good point. Lots of new equipment that farmers are putting into place since 2011. We wanted to capture that as we went along.

Lauren Driscoll – good description of work group participation.

Terry Willis – recognize shellfish growers as part of agriculture. Will keep them for the work group implementation committee.

Keith Folkerts – do you mention shellfish in the conservation areas?

Terry Willis – shellfish growers have great data that we can work with.

Lauren Driscoll – Appendix D – similar to Lewis – number of practices installed – need to show the connection to the baseline – “over the last 6 years, we’ve had 14 contracts for brush management, so our target would be to get 2 of those annually over the next 10 years.”
John Kliem – Appendix C has the list. If we’ve seen changes over the years to critical areas, how might those practices installed compensate for that? As Terry mentioned, we will find out when we talk to farmers and gather that practice data.

Terry Willis – we didn’t attach numbers because we wanted to find out what works before we begin suggesting effective BMP’s.

Lauren Driscoll – when doing ISP outreach, will critical areas be verified when you are out there?

Kelly McLain – identifying critical areas is part of the ISP application.

John Kliem – there is certain amount of confidentiality associated with critical area verification in the outreach process.

Lauren Driscoll – verification of critical areas at the watershed scale, not the parcel scale.

Mike Nordin – will report at the parcel scale.

Keith Folkerts – benchmark on page 16 for fish and wildlife habitat on agriculture lands – just agriculture lands, or what?

John Kliem – VSP looks at commercial, non-commercial agriculture lands. Small scale non-commercial agricultural lands are harder to locate. Would look at PHS to see if there is anything new. Also salmon scape to see if there is anything new.

Brian Cochrane – make sure and define what agriculture lands mean to you (where agricultural activities occur).

Keith Folkerts – your change detection will have to be county-wide.

Terry Willis – about 3% of land mass in the county is agriculture – the rest is forested, so we won’t be focused on those lands.

John Kliem – Appendix F has a discussion of agriculture in the county – on where agriculture is viable in the valleys.
Lauren Driscoll – my comment about verification of critical areas – could add that to Table 1, last column – verify during ISP – add a bullet that says that. Like that you point out small scale agriculture would have the biggest issues.

Terry Willis – commercial agriculture has had to deal with protecting critical areas since they began based on the valleys they are in.

John Kliem – Grays Harbor county agriculture is really well established in the areas they are in.

Brian Cochrane – just see a paragraph on monitoring on aerial imagery – could you add more of a walk-through of the process for imagery analysis. Stevens County analysis is a good example. Imagery analysis is as much an art as a science.

Lauren Driscoll – a lot relies on the critical areas monitoring.

Kelly McLain – having the process for aerial analysis set out for those who follow later is helpful. Development pressure affecting agriculture viability – is there any thought on educating non-farmers on that?

Terry Willis – we’ve been doing that. 1979 farms cut up into developments. Ahead of GMA on that – 40 acre, then 10 acre lots that can’t be developed.

Lauren Driscoll – goals for participation – not clear for producers. Also, targets for how much outreach – are there targets for that?

Brian Cochrane – and how did you settle on those numbers?

John Kliem – Purpose of VSP is to protect the critical areas. Number of participants no the mandate of state law. We will have to look to make sure.

Lauren Driscoll – we need to know so I can answer the question that you’ll meet the goals.

John Kliem – not sure where the goals are listed in VSP.

Brian Cochrane – here is the rub – you are talking to a number of folks now, and you have the goal to maintain, how do you know how many more you need to talk to to make sure you are meeting your protection goal.
Lauren Driscoll – could use a number now so you have a goal.

Keith Folkerts – not ever producers is equal with the amount of influence they have on critical areas.

John Kliem – we do talk about including those who are innovators first.

Brian Cochrane – do you know who those folks are?

John Kliem – we will figure that out as we implement the plan. We also have those relationships now with the conservation district. Not always convinced a number tells you anything. So you’ve talked to 10 people, what does that tell you? We need to maintain the baseline, but we can do that with 10 rather than 200.

Kelly McLain – let’s say the number is 10. If at 2-3 years down the road, if you are not meeting your goal, then you need to adjust your number up. Producer number might not match the potential for actual lift. You could also say we will try to reach 10% of those producers that intersect with agriculture. We as the Technical Panel evaluate, at the end of 10 years, if you will meet your goals – we need a measure to let us know that you could.

Lauren Driscoll – not meeting the number doesn’t require failing out of VSP.

Brian Cochrane – you then get a better idea of how to reach those folks and that informs your dollar outreach effort to get to those folks. Helps to know if the outreach is effective.

Kelly McLain – less concerned about the number of producers as opposed to the amount of intersect with the critical areas and agriculture. Adaptive management can then be used to tell you how many producers you need to contact to meet your goals. Will also inform you on where projects can be done.

12:20 pm: Begin formal review of the Okanogan County work plan

Bill Eller introduced this topic. Review where we are. Submitted June 22, 2018. Have until September 20, 2018 to finish the Technical Panel review. This is the first review meeting we’ve been able to have. The 2nd will be August 24, 2018. After this meeting, agencies will need to submit their written comments to me so that I can
package them and send them to the work group for consideration. We should shoot for August 3rd to have comments to me. Then I can get them to the work group ASAP after that. Then they can meet, as most want to, and have any work plan edits in before the August 24, 2018 meeting.

Craig Nelson – begins presentation. Outlined work group process.

Dick Ewing – work group makeup. Smaller farms in county. Working with Okanogan County Conservation District to write the plan. Harold Crose and Grant County Conservation District presentation on VSP.

Craig Nelson – continues the presentation. Wildfire has greatly affected Okanogan County. Practices were installed after the fires, then they burned again. Highlighted in the plan. CAO approved in 1994, currently being updated.

Brian Cochrane – how did you use the information from the plans to inform your work plan?

Craig Nelson – just for information purposes. Summarizes Element A – plans relied on in our work plan.

Kelly McLain – none of the recommendations in those plans that were reviewed we used in your work plan?

Craig Nelson – those plans talked about implementation of BMP’s in the county.

Kelly McLain – make that connection in your work plan to those plans and the BMP’s. Just put a footnote in to explain where the BMP recommendations came from.

Craig Nelson - Element B – tribal participation. Colvilles - they will review what we sent them. Got something from the Yakamas. Gave presentations to Cattleman’s Association and Horticulturists. Appendix J

Heather Bush – good description of outreach, but how do you know the right people were in the room. Also, succession plan?

Craig Nelson – the work group we have now will be the same going forward. County solicited the members. As for the right people in the room for the work group – it was asking the groups for names. For environmental groups – we asked them to self-
nominate someone. We have participation from the most well-established environmental group on the county.

Dick Ewing – in Okanogan County, once you are on the work group, you can’t get off.

Craig Nelson – Element C – page 51, then each separate goal for all the benchmarks – Table 5.1 on page 58. Fish screen replacement, fire recovery, and conservation easements (for enhancement). 49% of private lands are range lands.

Brian Cochrane – measuring practices as a view of measuring lift – there is drag as well – those properties that were agriculture but are not being actively managed.

Element D – Table 7-1 on page 71 covers outreach and technical assistance. Okanogan Conservation District will lead.

Brian Cochrane – how much and what kinds of outreach will get you to your goals.

Dick Ewing – the ISP will be the main way to get outreach done. That will be self-reported by the landowner. This is a way to get them to participate. The ISP checklist on page 127 is a way to inform them about VSP as they evaluate their land.

Brian Cochrane – how many folks does the conservation district work with now?

Craig Nelson – pre 2014 – 15-20 new producer contacts. After that, 200 or so in the first 9 months of 2014 or so. It has come down to 50-60 new producer contacts this year. Before the fires, we wouldn’t get that many.

Kelly McLain – the disaster cycle in Okanogan drives that.

Brian Cochrane – from a technical perspective appropriate and enough to get to the goals that you have in the work plan? Is that articulated in your plan?

Dick Ewing – page 58.

Craig Nelson – we based a lot of our participation rates on pre-2011 contact rates. It should be higher than that. We do less outreach now, but have more people come through the door.
Kelly McLain – one of the benefits of a disaster is that producers know where to go for technical expertise.

Craig Nelson – one of the outreach items is educating our partners (NGO’s) about VSP on a regular basis.

Kelly McLain – related to participation – see how to track disenrollment, but do you have a goal for the number of people you are going to reach. Or, do you have a percentage of producers you want to contact.

Dick Ewing – we didn’t put a number on it, but were looking more at the interaction between critical areas and agriculture.

Heather Bush – Table 6-1 has those numbers, but could add “will have targets in the next 2 years” for targets for participation.

Kelly McLain – could be a sliding scale once you’ve done some outreach and know how many you will need and how many you might be able to reach. The first couple of years could be used to generate that data.

[General discussion about outreach]

Craig Nelson – continues with presentation on Element E – page 126-127. CPPE and historical participation rates. Table 5-1 on page 58.

Brian Cochrane – not everyone calls what happens on the ground is the same thing. BMP’s need to make sure the specific practice is identified. Element F - page 56 is participation monitoring. Element H – development regulations. Appendix A, page 74.

Kelly McLain – please add RCW 90.58 to the list.

Brian Cochrane – is there any VSP covered critical areas regulations that are still in effect? Does VSP cover everything? Be clear to mention in the plan development regulations still apply.

John Stuhlmeiler – ask “what does VSP rely on? It stands on its own because…”
Heather Bush – page 4 of the ISP – all critical areas that intersect with agriculture, but wetlands not mentioned. The definition is there, but list out wetlands. Page 48, wetlands decided on a case-by-case basis – have that in the plan. Agriculture viability – have a list of ideas and incentives in the ISP on page 7 – add that.


Heather Bush – can you add the “on-going” requirement for 2 and 5 year reporting requirements to Table 7-2.

Craig Nelson – yes.

John Stuhlmiller – Table 5-1 – participation benchmarks for protection, page 58. The benchmark for protection doesn’t hinge on participation.

Brian Cochrane – each plan’s outreach plan is different, just need to explain that.

Kelly McLain – the number of producers in the county is important for determining the outreach plans.

1:00 pm: Begin formal review of the Cowlitz County work plan

Bill Eller introduced this topic. Review where we are. Submitted June 29, 2018. Have until September 27, 2018 to finish the Technical Panel review. This is the first review meeting we’ve been able to have. The 2nd will be August 24, 2018. After this meeting, agencies will need to submit their written comments to me so that I can package them and send them to the work group for consideration. We should shoot for August 3rd to have comments to me. Then I can get them to the work group ASAP after that. Then they can meet, as most want to, and have any work plan edits in before the August 24, 2018 meeting.

Greta Holmstrom begins presentation, explains the 4 watersheds in the county, geography. Goes through each element of RCW 36.70A.720 (1) (a) – (l). Talks about the work group participants.
Lauren Driscoll – asks about the work group makeup of the environmental representatives on the work group.

Greta Holmstrom explains how the work group is broken into 5 sections. Regulations that apply. Baseline conditions established. Goals and strategies identified for each strategy. Implementation strategy – looked at existing programs, technical assistance and outreach. Monitoring and adaptive management chapter. Appendix has the ISP. Page 3 has a breakout of the RCW sections and where the requirements are addressed.

Greta Holmstrom - Element A – regulatory context and plans reviewed – page 20, broken out by the 4 watersheds and the Columbia River.

Kelly McLain – was there anything in those plans that made it into your monitoring strategies. If the piece on page 20 could be tied to Table 6.2.1. Could be footnoted.

Greta Holmstrom - Element B – page 2 is the list of work group members.

Brian Cochrane – how do you know those people were the right people to participate?

Kelly McLain – only two actual farms represented on the work group, so add an explanation of how they were good representatives of agriculture.

Lauren Driscoll – could also add that other farmers participated, but didn’t want to be formal work group members.

Heather Bush – describe how you engaged the tribes and how much contact you’ve had with them.

Greta Holmstrom - Element C – Section 4, on page 64.

Heather Bush – the benchmarks read more as a goal or objective than a benchmark. A benchmark would be measurable and specific.

Kelly McLain – another way to put it – is there background data on practices and activities associated with that?

Greta Holmstrom – not yet.
Kelly McLain – put a line in the work plan to say that we don’t have that yet, but will put that in after we gather data during these first 5 years and then will adaptively manage.

Lauren Driscoll - 4.4.1 goal – terrestrial habitat – wetlands should be added there – no net loss or whatever that goals or benchmark is for wetlands.

Brian Cochrane – goals are the aim, benchmarks are the measure to know if you got to that goal.

Kelly McLain – the county probably has 2011 intersect acres of critical areas and agriculture.

John Stuhlmiller – it’s not acres, it’s what was done in 2011, not necessarily acres – it’s what was being done in 2011 is no worse than. Capture that correctly so you are not put in a box you can’t meet.

Keith Folkerts – aerial imagery – how will you measure… how will it be done? Change using aerial imagery – how to know what the quality of the information will be that will be presented.

Greta Holmstrom – we will follow the Stevens County model. Landowners are concerned about privacy. We will look at the watershed scale.

Kelly McLain – are the aerial imagery analysis steps included in the plan?

Brian Cochrane – we need to see more specificity on how the aerial analysis will be conducted.

Keith Folkerts – Lewis County is using another method. They will share with us how they will do that work, and we will assess that. Something that describes how it will be done – the more specificity, the more comfort we will have.

Greta Holmstrom - Element D – outreach and technical assistance – page 73, Chapter 5 and Chapter 1. Table in Chapter 5. Conservation District will provide the technical assistance, but the county will administer the plan. Table on page 74 for outreach events.
Brian Cochrane – there is some level of outreach being done now, how is this outreach that is going to be done will reach your goals. Is this kind of outreach appropriate to the groups we are trying to reach and how do we know that the amount is effective?

Kelly McLain – historic participation, or what it is based on.

Heather Bush – wondering what those roles entail – the county is in charge of administration, but who is responsible for doing the outreach work? The county, the conservation district, etc.


Lauren Driscoll – doing 2 year and 5 year reports – just point out that they are ongoing. Should also add a sentence that says you will comply with ongoing reporting requirements, Section 6.3.

Brian Cochrane – in the indicator and monitoring methods – Table 6.1 – “potential” sources. What will be done?

Greta Holmstrom – the intent is that these are options to be used.

Brian Cochrane – would like to see some specificity on which ones and when and how looking at them will get you where you need to go.

Heather Bush – process for how the conservation district will work with landowners and the ISP and how that will work.

Greta Holmstrom – the producer can choose who they want to help them fill out the checklist. The county would track participation that way.

Heather Bush – is that in the plan?
Greta Holmstrom – it should be, but if not, could be put in.

Brian Cochrane – need to get an idea of how accurate the unassisted checklists are versus the assisted checklists – to compare how well the landowners filled out the unassisted checklists.

Keith Folkerts – bald eagles and falcons are delisted, need a more recent download of PHS data to fix that.

Heather Bush – do you list any thresholds that will trigger adaptive management? Something quantifiable?

Lauren Driscoll – is VSP covering everything?

Greta Holmstrom – the building code will still apply, but we are using VSP for flood plains. Page 12.

Keith Folkerts – making sure that efforts funded through salmon recovery, for example, don’t count toward protection efforts. Salmon recovery efforts shouldn’t offset degradation of the critical areas.

Lauren Driscoll – the baseline is covered by VSP, can be covered for enhancement, not protection. Liked the incentives on page 75.

2:35 pm: Continue formal review of the Columbia County work plan and take a vote if needed.

Bill Eller introduced this topic. Review where we are. Submitted May 10, 2018. Have until August 8, 2018 to finish the Technical Panel review. This is the second review meeting we’ve been able to have. First was June 19, 2018. Since then the agencies finished their comments, provided them to us, we put them into the agency comment spreadsheet, provided that to the work group. The work group took the comments during the June 19th 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 the 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 – plans relied on. Page 64 of the pdf. Added 3 plans.

Kelly McLain – are the plans relied on also tied to what will be monitored?

Lauren Driscoll – appendix B.2 – watersheds and critical area functions – would it help to tie it in there?

Brian Cochrane – incorporation piece – if there other plans identify BMP’s, are those incorporated into VSP.

Kelly McLain – not required for protection, but there are themes in those other plans that are also in the VSP, where are you doing work where you are meeting a dual purpose.

Don Brigham – I think that is in there. There are elements that overlap.

John Stuhlmiller – review and incorporate applicable plans. Should say in the plan that we reviewed the plans and they were not applicable is a valid thing to say, but should say that in the plan.

Kelly McLain – the new section added has some language that describes plans that are relied on.

Lauren Driscoll – could add it to B-2 – a reference.

Brian Cochrane says that the WRIA 35 watershed plan was used to inform objectives. What are the objectives in the VSP plan that came from the WRIA 35 plan?

Kelly McLain – the WRIA 35 watershed statement on page 65 of the pdf – what are those recommendations and considerations. Most other work plans added a footnote that listed those recommendations in it.
John Stuhlmiller – could tie the goals and benchmarks to the plans that apply – those listed on page 65 of the pdf – WRIA 35, Salmon Recovery Plan, etc.  

Easier might also be added in Table 5-5 – add that a footnote at the top.

Element B – added language to Section 1.7, all Technical Panel members ok with that change.

Element C – edits made in numerous places, all Technical Panel members ok with that change.

Element D – addition of ISP, all Technical Panel members ok with that change.

Element E (i) – edits made, all Technical Panel members ok with that change.

Element E (ii) – same as above.

Element F – same as above.

Element G – add language to show who will be administrating the ISP – on page 14 of the pdf, all Technical Panel members ok with that change.

Element H – all Technical Panel members ok with that change.

Element I (i) – same as above.

Element I (ii) – same as above.

Element I (iii) – same as above.

Element J, K, L – same as above.

Formal vote to approve the Columbia County VSP work plan with the understanding that the edit will be made to Element A, as outlined above.  Unanimous approval.

3:45 pm:  

Adjourn