

December 2018 VSP Newsletter

REGIONAL VSP MEETINGS
THIS MONTH: There is still time to attend one of the two VSP regional meetings the Conservation Commission is hosting this month. Come learn about VSP work plan implementation at one of our informational sessions.

Two dates and locations are being offered (Chehalis and Moses Lake). The agenda for both meetings is the same, so you'll only need to attend one meeting. **Lunch will be provided only for those attendees who have already RSVP'd, but don't let that stop you from attending and grabbing lunch on your own.**

December 4, 2018 – at the Veterans Memorial Museum, 100 SW Veterans Way, Chehalis, WA 98532

9:00 am to 4:00 pm

December 11, 2018 – at the Moses Lake School District Board Room, 940 E. Yonezawa Blvd., Moses Lake, WA 98837

9:00 am to 4:00 pm

An agenda is available [here](#).

Due to the interactive nature of the meetings, no webinar will be available.

If you have questions or are a person with a disability and need special accommodations, please contact the Conservation Commission at (360) 407-6200.

SPOKANE COUNTY VSP WORK PLAN APPROVED: Spokane County's VSP work plan was approved by the Technical Panel on November 30, 2018. VSP work plans can be found on the Commission's VSP web page [here](#). Congratulations to the Spokane County work group for their hard work and effort! All 27 VSP counties now have approved work plans.

VSP OUTREACH MATERIALS AVAILABLE: The Commission has harvested from each county's VSP work plan outreach materials that can be used as examples during VSP implementation. Those materials are

available on the [Commission's VSP implementation web page](#), under the "Outreach Materials" tab.

Those materials include examples of VSP individual stewardship plans, individual stewardship checklists, brochures, overviews, postcards, handbooks, surveys, FAQ's, and press releases. Please continue to check the web page periodically as new information and resources are continually being added to it to assist you with VSP implementation.

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. The next meeting is set for Friday, January 4, 2019, from 8 am – 11 am at the Farm Bureau building, 975 Carpenter Rd NE #101, Lacey, WA 98516. The meeting is available by webinar and we encourage webinar attendance.

To register for the January 4th webinar meeting, please use the link below:

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/8465515350877301763>

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

Question: *How often should a watershed work group meet during VSP implementation?* **Answer:** As often as it takes to successfully implement the county VSP work plan and meet the other obligations under the VSP Statute, RCW 36.70A.700-760.

[Policy Advisory 03-18](#) identifies the roles of each of the entities responsible for VSP implementation, and further explains that the watershed work group should meet "regularly". Regularly gives each county watershed work group flexibility on how often to meet. When there isn't business to conduct, the work groups shouldn't meet. However, a county watershed work group shouldn't go six months between meetings. This is because there is a lot of business for a work group to conduct related to implementation of the county VSP work plan and meeting the obligations under the statute, and six months without a meeting to monitor progress and take adaptive management actions might lead to failure of the work plan.

The watershed work group has an important oversight role to play during implementation. [Policy Advisory 03-18](#)

explains, in summary fashion, that the watershed work group has many different duties during implementation, including

- Overseeing implementation;
- Providing leadership on VSP in the local county;
- Meeting regularly;
- Participating in outreach efforts, fosters and builds partnerships with other natural resource entities;
- Providing direction and oversight to the VSP technical service provider on compliance with VSP goals and objectives;
- Establishing a succession plan for the work group, i.e. what will you do when work group members leave, how will you maintain your commitment to a diverse work group;
- Working with the VSP County Commissioners, County Staff and Fiscal Staff Responsible for the County – Commission VSP contract, and VSP Technical Service Providers to establish a budget for VSP implementation that outlines tasks, amount allocated for outreach, monitoring, technical provision, and any other task or deliverable needed;
- Every 2 years, periodically evaluating (programmatic, economic, and resource) and reporting on the VSP;

- Adaptively managing implementation if not meeting the established goals and benchmarks in the work plan; and
- Every 5 years, reporting to the Commission and the County on whether the work plan’s protection and enhancement goals and benchmarks have been met.

County watershed group members should read the county’s VSP work plan, understand its terms and requirements; receive training in the background and history of VSP, as well as how the work group functions as an entity of the county. Watershed work group meetings are open public meetings under the [Open Public Meetings Act, RCW Chapter 42.30](#), so all volunteer members of the watershed work group will need to be familiar with the OPMA and should undergo the [attorney general’s OPMA training](#). Remember, [OPMA refresher training is required every four years](#).

For more detail on VSP watershed work groups during implementation, please see last year’s [December 2017 VSP regional meeting presentation materials](#) on implementation and [our implementation page on the VSP web page](#). This topic will also be addressed during the VSP regional meetings December 4 in Chehalis and December 11 in Moses Lake.

HOW TO FIND APPROVED COUNTY 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 and whether any public comment was received by the Commission on the plan.

VSP, CAO'S AND "NEW AGRICULTURE": The Commission continues to work with the VSP Statewide Advisory Committee (SAC) on clarifying how VSP and critical area ordinances apply to "new" agriculture. Commission staff is working on a draft statement of the issue for review by the SAC and relevant agencies before moving forward. A public comment period will be available during that process. More information, as it becomes available, will be published here in the VSP monthly newsletter and on [the Commission's VSP web page](#).

VSP 2 YEAR AND 5 YEAR REPORTING REQUIREMENTS: [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 [PA 05-18](#) to ensure they understand these two-year and five-year

deadlines. The Commission suggests setting up a project management system to track reporting requirements and deadlines. 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 SAC web page [here](#).

The Commission is working on adding clarity to the VSP statute through the adoption of Washington Administrative Code regulations setting out the 2 year and 5 year reporting content in more detail so that counties are clear on the expectations for the content of the reports and can satisfy all of the related requirements. Commission staff is working on draft regulations for review by the SAC and adoption as soon as practicable. A public comment period will be available during that process. More information, as it becomes available, will be published here in the VSP monthly newsletter and on [the Commission's VSP web page](#).

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