

February 2019 VSP Newsletter

PROPOSED VSP LEGISLATION:

There are a few pieces of legislation that have been proposed by the Washington State Legislature related to the Growth Management Act. One that would directly affect VSP is [SB 5259](#). SB 5259 would, among other things, open VSP up again to the 12 remaining counties who originally chose not to opt into VSP. SB 5259 would give those 12 counties until July 1, 2020 to decide whether or not to “opt-in” to VSP. The Commission is monitoring this legislation as it moves through the process. For more information, please refer to the [legislation](#).

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 Wednesday, April 10, 2019, from 9 am – 12 pm. The meeting is available by webinar and we encourage webinar attendance.

To register for the April 10th webinar meeting, please use the link below:

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/2374861949646384897>

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

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.

After the January 30, 2019 joint Technical Panel and Statewide Advisory Committee meeting, the Statewide

Advisory Committee recommended that Commission staff hold off on pursuing legislation on this topic and instead begin work on a guidance document for those who implement VSP to use. Commission staff have begun work on that document, and when it is available it will be posted on [our VSP web page](#) and linked in this newsletter.

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 are

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](#).

VSP AND THE BUDGET: The Governor's budget funds VSP at \$8,456,000. We had sought \$9,925,000. The Governor included funds for implementation for each county, administration of VSP through the Commission and other agencies, and supported funding for the expansion of WDFW's [HRCD](#) to serve all VSP counties. However, the VSP budget won't be set until the Legislature has its say during the upcoming session.

As for the some other VSP budget issues, here are some important points to remember:

For the current fiscal year which ends on June 30, 2019, counties have been allocated up to \$110,000 to support their VSP efforts. One question counties have is, how much, if any of the current fiscal years' funding can be pushed forward into the next biennium? The answer is none.

Another question is, what happens if, after June 30, 2019 there's no additional funding for VSP? The answer is that the

Commission will need to make a determination at that time whether the counties have adequate funding for VSP and if not they need to implement one of the four options specified in statute. See [RCW 36.70A.735\(2\)\(c\)](#).

The failure by the Legislature to adequately fund VSP would affect all 27 counties that have opted in-to VSP as per the provisions of RCW 36.70A.735 (2) (c). Therefore, it is important for counties to inform their local legislators (some of whom may not be aware of the effect of inadequate funding of VSP on their own local county) of the operation of the statute in this instance.

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