Kittitas County Conservation District
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Voluntary Stewardship Program

Technical Committee Meeting

Washington Cattleman's Association, 1301 N Dolarway, Ellensburg
1:00 PM Friday, September 25, 2017

Meeting Minutes

Attendees: *Anna Lael, Jennifer Nelson, Kat Satnik, Sherry Swanson, Mark Crowley, Mitch Long, Justin Bezold, Heather Kosaka, John Small and Nora Schlenker*

I. **Welcome –** Anna welcomed the attendees to the Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP) Technical Committee Meeting.
   a. Introductions were completed.
   b. Anna let the committee know that Anchor QEA is now contracted by the KCCD to assist with completion of the Work Plan. KCCD and Anchor will have a project kick off meeting today after this meeting.
   c. Anna reviewed the agenda and meeting objectives.

II. **Review of Geographical Areas**
   a. Anna reviewed the different geographical areas with critical areas mapped.
      i. The crop data/agricultural lands is from the Farm Service Agency (FSA) and Washington Department of Agriculture (WSDA) and from 2011. The FSA common land unit consistently has more ag acreage than WSDA. No Federal lands were included in the mapping.
      ii. John and the committee discussed the limiting factors of using 2011 data. John said looking at the changes since 2011 will be more important than having detailed data.
      iii. Kat suggested noting in the plan the limitations of the mapping so as not to exclude a potential producer. Anna stated that if in the County and doing ag practices, you will be covered by VSP.

III. **Review of Critical Areas Matrix**
   a. The committee reviewed the critical areas matrix that Anna created.
      i. The group discussed the geological hazard areas. Jen asked if channel migration zones were included. John suggested that geo hazard areas should be looked at more from an ag viability issue and soil loss and that

channel migration zones would be considered more in the frequently flooded areas. The group continued discussions about water availability and supply in geological hazard areas. Anna let the committee know that the geo hazard areas is based on slopes.

ii. The committee reviewed the individual farm maps in the different geographic areas.

iii. Anna and John talked about grazing in private forests and that it will need to be included in the plan. Jen asked why grazed State lands are not included. John said that the State is already compelled to manage their lands.

b. Fish and Wildlife PHS Data

i. Anna asked the committee if the Fish and Wildlife critical area is for specific species or critical habitat. The mapping is based on critical habitat. Based on the Growth Management Act language, it was advised to pull out Game species since it is a game management issue. Anna asked if we pull out listed species. And Jen responded that the focus of VSP is on function, i.e. protection of wetlands and riparian areas, protect aquatic species.

ii. Jen let the committee know that WDFW is updating their PSH mapping and it will include biodiversity areas and migration corridors.

iii. The committee talked about wildlife issues such as elk and wolf depredation as an ag viability issue.

iv. John suggested that the group come up with critical area functions first and their threats at a county level.

IV. Conservation Practice Physical Effects (CPPE)

a. Anna reviewed an aerial photos of a farms in the different geographic areas. John discussed an example of a field in rill in 2011 and it now being in sprinklers and how that impacts critical area functions.

b. John suggested that we identify key conservation practices for each geographic area and that this will be an important piece for ag viability. The State Technical Panel in review of other plans brings this piece back up.

c. John said use practices to show 2011 to current, “progress to date”. This will also create a baseline for the plan as well.

d. Kat asked about including organic and listing all of NRCS practices. John suggested using 10 practices to fit 90% of the producers rather than 90 practices to fit 10% of the producers.

e. The critical areas sheet will need to be fleshed out more and have the Watershed group tell what practices to use in each geographic community.

f. John said that he used the same point system on the CPPE for each County he has worked with but he isn't sure that will work for Kittitas.

V. General Comments

a. Mitch talked about the varied habitat and multi species use in our county and how ag is the corridor between public lands.
b. Jen stated that development of ag lands is a concern of WDFW's and that ag is important to critical areas.
c. There was mention of the I90 study that could be of use.
d. Kat stated that Urban wants the plan to look at the importance honey bees, they are in the Yakima Plan. There is Olson's Honey in Yakima.

VI. Action Register

a. Have a list of practices with pros and cons. John stressed the importance of the Watershed Group by off on practices.
b. Tour of the County with Anchor.
c. Next meeting for the Watershed Group is October 25, 2017

VII. Adjourn

a. The meeting adjourned at 3 PM.