



Voluntary Stewardship Program

Work Group Meeting, Tuesday, March 19, 2019

The meeting started at 12:35pm with a welcome from Ben Floyd. Today's meeting was call in/WebEx only. LCCD's boardroom was open for anyone who wanted to attend and listen in. County Commissioner, Mark Stedman attended the meeting at LCCD office. Ben had Elsa start the meeting with staffing updates.

Elsa -Tim Robinson, is LCCD's new GIS Specialist- Natural Resource Planner. He will be sharing time with Pend Oreille County, working with David Marcell on GIS mapping for VSP. Tim is currently working on GIS base maps with Critical Area overlay. Tim grew up in Lincoln County and is very comfortable being out in the field. With the weather finally breaking-up Tim plans being in the field and sharing mapping with producers. LCCD will be following mapping examples currently being used by Franklin and Benton County. Also, Douglas County has an interactive online mapping system where local producers can "fly in" and see critical areas. We are also looking into offering something similar.

Elsa – We've got quite a few updates on our outreach/public involvement. In October we attended the annual meeting for the Lincoln County Farm Bureau in Reardan, WA at the Highway Café and distributed the new VSP flyer/mailer and the Overview & Checklist. 20 people were in attendance. November LCCD attended the Lincoln County Wheat Growers Meeting presenting with Sara Cossio from Lincoln County FSA, 12 people attended this meeting. LCCD also presented in November at the annual Lincoln County Noxious Weed Seminar with a slide show and handing out VSP materials. 40+ people attended this annual seminar.

In January, Val attended the Reardan Lion's Club meeting and presented an hour-long program on VSP. This was a roundtable/focus group discussion on the effectiveness of marketing materials and whether the current "checklist" was self-explanatory, and would they use it or not? Most agreed that the more straightforward marketing was better and that the check sheet looked good and easy to use. There were 15 members in attendance. In February LCCD attend Highline Grain Growers meetings in Odessa and Davenport with presentations from Tom English, VSP coordinator from Grant County Conservation District. Due to weather we were unable to attend the meeting in Wilbur. The meeting in Odessa had 120 people attend and in Davenport, 75.

A "Shop meeting" at the Sprague Fire Station for producers in Sprague and Harrington was scheduled for the last week in February but was cancelled due to weather. Working to reschedule in early April.

Bill Eller – Legislative Update: The ask for the VSP budget was 9.9 million and did not go through. 8.4 million is the number now. The 12 counties not in VSP did not get funded. That is essentially the monetary difference. **John Stuhmiller** – The budget ask is positioned well to carry forward as it has already been funded and not new legislation. **Bill Eller** – Senate bill 5259 which was the addition of the 12 counties not originally adopting VSP really didn't go anywhere – the ask was for 3.5 million. **John Stuhmiller** – Not a great year for expansion of AG statewide. It was a noisy confusing and heated session that just didn't fit.

Ben – Asked Bill and John to go over the latest on the 2 yr summary status. **Bill** – Send a draft to the Tech panel to look at it. Commission is waiting for full staff before there would be anymore guidance which means there will probably be no more guidance. **Vivian** - Resending draft to Bill /commission. **John** – There has been very little time that has passed since the actual Work Plan was approved. Reporting should be what you've done and where you are meeting goals at this time. Recommend high level proof of meeting goals etc. Much lighter read than an implementation read which will come in a couple more years. **Ben** – Will work on having 5-10 pages with graphics of work that has taken place. **John** - That would be my recommendation and the tech panel would agree. Remember that the clock started before the Work Plan was approved. **Bill** – Very helpful to include that information on both the 2 & 5 yr summary - contract date vs. approval date of Work Plan.

Upcoming Activities through June:

Elsa – Will complete the (2) livestock watering facilities by June 30, 2019. Waiting for snow to melt. Working thru cost share applications etc. for any matching projects for future VSP implementation so that we are ready when funding hits. Continuation of email updates with a link in April of the reworked 2 yr. summary to the Work Group.

Next Steps:

Ben - Continue working on draft for the 2 yr. status with activities for review.
Next meeting will be May 28th 7-8:30pm, with a follow-up phone/Webex meeting June 18, 2019.

Attendees:

Workgroup members:

Ron Mielke

Val Vissia

Elsa Bowen

Mark Stedman

Ron Mielke -phone

Other Attendees:

Vivian Erickson-phone

Kristen Balko

Tim Robinson

Bill Eller -phone

John Stuhmiller -phone