



## Okanogan County VSP Meeting Minutes

1 A special meeting of the Okanogan County VSP Workgroup was held on December 22, 2020 at  
2 6:00 p.m. via web: Microsoft Teams Meeting and phone conference.

3 **OKANOGAN COUNTY STAFF:** Director of Planning Pete Palmer, Natural Resource Planner  
4 Angie Hubbard

5 **VOULUNTARY STEWARDSHIP MEMBERS:** Bill Tackman, Jerry Barnes, and Maurice Joy,  
6 Dick Ewing, George Thornton.

7 **OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:** Amy Martin

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9 **Approve Agenda: Dick moves to approve the agenda as written. Jerry seconded the**  
10 **motion.** The agenda was approved as written

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12 **Approve Minutes:** Dick made a motion to approve the minutes from the September 29, 2020  
13 meeting. Jerry seconded the motion and the minutes were approved with no corrections. Bill  
14 made a motion to approve the minutes form the December 15, 2020 meeting. Jerry seconded  
15 the motion and the minutes were approved with no corrections.

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18 **5 Year Review:** Amy Martin updated the group on the work that has been done for the 5 year  
19 review and report.

- 20 • Amy Martin updated the group starting with the document titled Draft 5 year report.
- 21 • The five year plan will be reviewed by the state advisory committee and tech panel to  
22 see if we are meeting the benchmarks contained in our plan. Leslie further explained it  
23 is a long process. Close to a three month timeline from the submittal to Conservation  
24 Commission. As we learn throughout this process there will be some changes and  
25 working out the kinks for future reviews. Any comments on the process should be had  
26 with the Conservation Commission.
- 27 • Amy continued to go over the 5 year review. The access database has taken a lot of  
28 work to get going. There are 10 WRIA's or so that we have to report on. The report  
29 evaluates protection benchmarks, participation benchmarks, effectiveness monitoring for  
30 the critical areas. Basically, are we reporting and is there proof that we have been  
31 achieving those benchmarks.
- 32 • Secondary review on adaptive management, and Agricultural viability. For Adaptive  
33 management what can we do to make this work better and prove it. For Agricultural  
34 Viability provide how Ag has changed since 2011. We are seeing a reduction in those  
35 lands which impacts our benchmarks and participation.
- 36 • Amy presented a snapshot of the access database to give the group an idea of what the  
37 reporting looks like and how it relates to critical areas. Amy will present the data in excel  
38 for the workgroup. It is more manageable.

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- Amy asked about VSP jurisdiction on the reservation. Pete explained that she didn't think that we have the authority to regulate on the reservation. If we are funding projects on the reservation, we should bring them into the discussion. Lynda explained that WDFW has authority for HPA's and holdings on tribal land but it is not clear. Amy explained that we need to clarify the role of VSP on the reservation in order to clarify what will need to happen in the future. Leslie stated that Spokane County has the Spokane Tribe involved in the VSP process so you could reach out to see how they have worked that out.
  - Amy continued to describe the benchmarks. There is great staff at NRCS and they have implemented many projects and hitting our mark in all categories except habitat management. Once we get some additional records for implementation, our stream habitat metric will improve.
  - Lynda and Craig thank Amy for doing such a great job.
  - Amy stated that it is clear we have a lot on conservation going on and we have exceeded our benchmarks. There is some adaptive management I think we should consider to integrate for pest management. We should also reevaluate habitat and stream to consider whether we need to alter that number. Amy explained that some projects will be added from Trout Unlimited and the Conservancy.
  - Amy presented the results so far. A question was asked regarding if the foster creek project was included in the numbers. Amy said the data is mostly NRCS and that she will check in with Foster Creek.
  - Lynda asked how many pages is the report and Amy replied 200 plus pages. Leslie asked if there was anyway to have this attached to the workplan. Amy replied they are discouraging extra documents but does feel like the agencies need to be able to see the work being done. Adding forest health related practices would be a good idea as well as range management work.
  - Amy continued presenting. In the Foster Creek, Sanpoil, and Kettle WRIA most of the projects are forest health. 80% of Ag occurs in the Okanogan WRIA. That is where a bulk of the reporting is.
  - Okanogan's Columbian sharp-tailed grouse population (Tunk Valley) is increasing after translocation efforts to public and private land. Okanogan habitat trend monitoring shows improving steelhead habitat in all tributaries except Loup Loup. Game species show positive trends. In-stream flows improved through significant efficiency projects on Methow, Loup Loup, and Salmon Creek, etc. Lynda is concerned with the game species showing positive trends. There should be some habitat trend data for the Methow River.
  - Amy continued with Wetlands Geo Hazards, and floodplain. The illustration shows changes from 2011 to 2019 captured from the effectiveness monitoring tool. 2019 picked up a lot of brown on the imagery due to the drought year. Craig stated this seems similar to fire assessment data which can be quite challenging to ground truth. Amy said that or plan will be using Adaptive Management to figure out how to capture some of these changes. Amy plans on working with DOE and the workgroup to consider monitoring wetlands.
  - Groundwater data seems a little limited. We are seeing a lot of data for spills but not related to Ag activities.

83 **Next Meeting:** December 22, 2020 at 6:00 pm

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86 **Adjourn:** Meeting adjourned at 7:32 p.m.

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### Summary of Motions

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90 No motions due to lack of quorum.

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94 Angie Hubbard  
95 Natural Resource Planner  
96 Okanogan County Office of Planning & Development