



## Okanogan County VSP Meeting Minutes

1 A regular meeting of the Okanogan County VSP Workgroup was held on April 5<sup>th</sup>, 2018 at 6:30  
2 p.m. in the Natural Resource Conference Room, 123 5th Avenue North, Okanogan,  
3 Washington.

4 **OKANOGAN COUNTY STAFF** Director of Planning Perry Huston, Natural Resource Planner  
5 Angie Hubbard, Administrative Secretary Rocky King

6 **VOULUNTARY STEWARDSHIP MEMBERS:** Jerry Barnes, Dick Ewing, Les Kinney, Megan  
7 Kernan, Nicole Kuchenbuch, Maurice Joy

8 **OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:** Amy Martin, Craig Nelson, Mindy Widell,  
9

10 **Approve Agenda:** Dick suggested to ament to add ag viability after Chapter 5. Nicole moved  
11 to approve as amended, Les seconded, all approved  
12

13 **Approve Minutes:** Nicole asked to amend line 41 to say “the group discussed that conservation  
14 easements could”. Jerry moved to approve as amended, Nicole seconded, all approved.  
15

16 **Meeting Dates:** The group voted to keep the April 26<sup>th</sup> meeting.  
17

18 **Chapter 5:** Amy presented the edited chapter and pointed out the changes. She informed the  
19 group that there is not time to incorporate the CPE data. The group discussed including  
20 enhancement options like what is in the Stevens County plan. Megan thinks that anything over  
21 protection will be considered enhancements. Dick asked if we don’t meet the benchmarks of no  
22 net loss, how do make up for that. Megan suggested that is what adaptive management is for.  
23 Craig informed the group that is for when farmers haven’t been doing any practices.

24 Enhancements are when we do more acreage than what our benchmarks asked for. Adaptive  
25 management encourages implementation in areas that aren’t participating. Nicole reminded  
26 the group of her phone conference with Evan. She would like to send him the draft so that he  
27 can give his feedback. Amy will forward it to him.

28 The group discussed adding a row about participation from the Stevens County plan. Perry  
29 suggested that they stick with measurements and list tools that will be used separately. Amy  
30 suggested adding water trust and conservation easements as enhancement tools and not  
31 protection benchmarks. Nicole said that it would make sense to pull the practices that don’t  
32 have NRCS codes and add them some other way so they count.  
33

34 **5.4:** Amy and Dick worked together to come up with section 5.4 and presented it to the group.  
35 Jerry would like more direct language in 5.4.1-1. The group discussed the best way to add  
36 language that hinders losing ag lands and ways to help farmers keep their land. Jerry  
37 suggested adding wording in both section 5.4.1 and table 5.4.2. Amy suggested an edit to say  
38 “development and public acquisitions that convert land from ag to other uses, and rising land

39 values can increase pressure on rural ag lands”. Les is concerned that buffer zones will also  
40 take land away from farmers. Amy pointed out selections of the plan that address that issue.  
41 #1 will be edited to say: For agriculture to remain viable in Okanogan County, adequate land  
42 must be available so that agricultural activities can be conducted at an economically worthwhile  
43 scale. Development and public acquisitions that convert land from agriculture to other uses  
44 should be minimized. Urbanization, rising land values, and taxation put increase pressure on  
45 rural agricultural landowners to convert land to other uses.

46 In chart 5.4.2 in the second box of the second column, the group would like to add “or  
47 increased”. In the second box of the third column, they will add “no net loss and increase  
48 access to public land for ag use”. Nicole would also like to add language that will increase  
49 frequency and duration.

50 In the third column, third box from the bottom, Megan would like to edit it to say “number of  
51 practices that are permitted and included in incentive programs.”

52 In the second column, fourth box from the bottom, Dick would like to add “the public”.

53

#### 54 **5.4.3:**

55 The group would like to edit the third bullet to say “advocate for diverse land use activities, on  
56 ag land, to be permitted”

57 The group would like to add a bullet to the bottom of the list that says “seek opportunities to  
58 access new water for ag use”.

59 On page 14, they would like to add a bullet to say “advocate for an increase in grazing  
60 leases/permits on public lands”.

61 The group also wants to add a bullet to say “encourage forest management protocols that  
62 improve forest health and increase productivity of range lands.”

63

64 **Introduction:** The group would like to add “geologically hazardous areas” in the green box.  
65 Nicole would like to integrate number 4 from the Stevens County preface.

66 Dick would like to add pages 2 and 3 from the Stevens County in the preface also. He also  
67 suggested adding a FAQ section. Amy said that the info is already in the introduction. Craig  
68 suggested that the FAQ may be better electronic.

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70 **Chapter 6:** Amy presented the chapter. Nicole suggested adding “or is being infringed upon”  
71 in the fourth box down in the adaptive management trigger column.

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75 **Next Meeting:**

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77

78 **Adjourn:**

79

80

81 Rocky King

82 Admin Secretary