

## Adams County VSP Work Group Meeting Notes

Tuesday, March 13, 2018

11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Attendees:

Work Group Members	Other Attendees
Grant Miller – Landowner	Evan Sheffels – Washington Farm Bureau (phone)
Lynn Olson – Landowner	Heather Bush – Ecology (phone)
Rex Harder – Landowner	Eric Pentico – WDFW
Dave Leatherman – Landowner	Ben Floyd – White Bluffs Consulting
Jake Wollman, Jr – Landowner	John Small – Anchor QEA (phone)
Craig Simpson – East Columbia Basin Irrigation District	Vivian Erickson – Anchor QEA (phone)
Matt Harris – Potato Commission	
Loren Wiltse – Adams County	

### Welcome and Meeting Overview

Ben provided a summary of activities since the November 2017 Work Group meeting and provided an overview of the meeting agenda. Since the November meeting the following has occurred:

- Two public meetings were held on January 17 and 18, 2018.
- Comments received on the December 2017 Draft Work Plan have been captured in a comment/response matrix to be reviewed during the meeting.
- In addition to Work Group comments, the comment/response matrix includes comments received from the State Technical Panel on other county Work Plans (notable Franklin County's) that are applicable to the Adams Work Plan.

Additional discussion items:

- Lynn Olson mentioned that he would like to see a copy of all invoices submitted to the County under VSP. Lynn will follow-up with Loren Wiltse to obtain copies.
- Implementation phase:
  - The Adams Conservation District (CD) Board is working through staffing issues and determining a strategy for staffing for VSP implementation, including potentially hiring a part-time staff or contracting with another CD on an interim basis. The staffing strategy is expected to be in place by June, ready to provide implementation support for the Work Plan which is likely to be approved by the State Technical Panel by end of May 2018.
- During implementation, the Work Group may wish to continue to meet quarterly in the first few years of implementation and then move to twice a year once implementation is underway.

## **Adams VSP Work Plan – Comment/Response Matrix**

The Work Group discussed the comment/response matrix that was provided at the meeting. See the attached comment/response matrix updated during the meeting.

Key discussion items included:

- **Section 6 – Implementation budget.**
  - The Work Group discussed adjusting the implementation budget to indicate more funding under the education, outreach, and technical assistance and less allocated toward administration. Ben suggested keeping the monitoring, reporting and adaptive management efforts as \$70,000 for the initial reporting effort, and Craig suggested adjusting Education, Outreach, and Technical Assistance to \$170,000 with \$10,000 for Work Group Coordination efforts. The group approved the budget. While the State is anticipating \$250,000 in funding availability for each County, the Washington State Conservation Commission (WSCC) is retaining \$30,000 for administration. After the initial reports are developed and a process is in place, future biennium funding could reduce funding allocation toward monitoring and reporting and allocate more toward education, outreach, and implementation.
  - The Work Group discussed adding the following language to provide some flexibility in allocating budget funds: The Conservation Districts have flexibility to move resources within the budget categories during plan implementation. The highest budget priority for the work group is keeping the VSP work plan viable by meeting the protection and enhancement benchmarks of the plan. After keeping the plan viable, the next work group priority is to use funding to support and leverage implementation of as many stewardship strategies and practices as possible consistent with the VSP work plan. Evan Sheffels noted that other Work Plans have noted in the implementation section that the first priority during the implementation is to make sure the protection benchmarks are met. Funding should be managed to support the reporting process to support this finding.
- **Section 6 – Work Group meetings during implementation phase.** Work Group discussed how future meetings would be managed during the transition from Work Plan development phase into implementation phase, especially in light of staffing transitions at the Adams CD. Discussed whether the GCCD could provide implementation support in the interim with Adams CD staffing transition. Ben spoke with Marie Lotz with the GCCD to discuss. Marie is looking to hire a VSP coordinator to support the Grant VSP and there may be staff capacity within GCCD to help support the Adams Work Plan implementation.
  - **Action item:** Loren Wiltse will coordinate to Adams CD Board members to discuss implementation staffing and report back to the Work Group at the next meeting May 2018.
- **Appendix E – Outreach Plan.** The Work Group reviewed the Outreach Plan, a new Appendix E that was developed in response to Technical Panel comments on the Franklin VSP Work Plan.

The Work Group discussed including an outreach goal reaching at least 15% of the producers in the County each year. Prior to targeting outreach efforts, priority areas for outreach should be identified based on GIS and Google imagery review indicating areas where implementation of stewardship strategies and practices are most needed to meeting protection goals.

### **Work Plan Submittal to State**

There was Work Group consensus during the meeting (quorum present) to submit the Adams County VSP Work Plan to the State Technical Panel per the edits in the comment/response matrix updated per meeting discussion (attached).

### **Next Steps**

- March 22, 2018 – Anchor QEA to update and provide redline edits to the Work Group per comment/response matrix
- March 30, 2018 – Anchor QEA provide final Work Plan to Loren and Work Group
- April 2, 2018: Loren submit Adams Work Plan to State
- April 27, 2018: State Technical Panel meeting – Adams Work Plan 1st review
  - Anchor QEA to provide Work Group with meeting agenda when posted
- May 15 (11 to 1 pm) or May 17 (as backup) – Work Group phone meeting (if needed) to discuss any Work Plan revisions in response to Technical Panel Comments
- May 25, 2018: State Technical Panel meeting – Adams Work Plan 2nd review and vote