



Okanogan County VSP Meeting Minutes

A regular session of the Okanogan County VSP Workgroup was held on October 6, 2016 at 6:30 p.m. in Commissioner's Hearing Room, 123 5th Avenue North, Okanogan, Washington.

OKANOGAN COUNTY STAFF: Director Perry Huston, Natural Resources Planner Angela Hubbard, Planner 1 Pam Wyllson, Administrative Secretary Lauren Davidson

VOULUNTARY STEWARDSHIP MEMBERS: Bill Tackman, Les Kinney, Megan Kernan, Jerry Barnes, Dick Ewing, Dan McCarthy, Maurice Joy.

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Lynda Hofmann, Zach Meyer

Approval of Agenda: No changes, Megan moved to approve, Jerry seconded.

Approval of Minutes: Jerry moved to approve, Les seconded.

Zach Meyer from the Department of Ecology attended the meeting and introduced himself.

Workgroup Duties: The workgroup went over the work group duties as outlined in RCW 36.70A.720 and then reviewed examples of work plans from Thurston & Chelan Counties.

Draft Introduction / Table of Contents: The workgroup reviewed the draft, it was asked where the documents for that came from. Natural Resources Planner Angie Hubbard explained that the draft documents came from conservation commission and dept. of agriculture about ag viability. Mr. Ewing asked if they had enough information to add to the draft or to accept it as it stands. Mrs. Hubbard explained that she only added information that they had already discussed.

Ag Viability: There was discussion regarding ag viability and how it is defined. There was discussion on regulations resulting in a loss of land; Les Kinney stated that he thinks the biggest threat in regards to losing land is subdivisions. Megan agreed. There was also discussion regarding using ag as a buffer. Mr. Ewing asked what is currently declining in ag, and what is the future viability of agriculture. Megan responded that they need to keep and expand practices that support agriculture and that in the Thurston County example; table 14 on page 3, might be helpful to the group as it has both bench marks on ag and critical areas. Director Huston asked the workgroup what their thoughts were on ag as a whole still being viable. Les Kinney stated that he believes that ag as a general rule is still viable but that statistically there are less and less farmers working in agriculture. It was brought up that the workgroup wanted a baseline to capture what has been happening in ag from 2011-2016. There was a discussion regarding agencies buying land and not managing it.

Consultant: Megan Kernan asked if the workgroup was planning on hiring a consultant so that the workgroup wasn't going to be responsible for coming up with every single detail. Director Huston explained that Thurston county did hire out of WSU, but was unsure of who the consultant was. The workgroup was asked if they wished staff to come up with a draft RFQ to hire a consultant, it wouldn't be ready by next meeting however.

Next Step: The workgroup asked for examples of things already in regulation, practices to protect critical areas and also the intersection of Ag with Critical Areas summarized by area.

Adjourn

Lauren Davidson
Administrative Secretary