

**Yakima County Voluntary Stewardship Program**  
**Workgroup Meeting #2**  
**April 22, 2016 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM**  
**North Yakima Conservation District Office**

In attendance: Lynda Jamison, Gail Thornton, Donna Boers, Michael Tobin, Betsy Bloomfield, Lynn Deitrick, Arden Thomas, Steve George, Laurie Crowe, Troy Schilperoort, Frank Hendrix, Eric Olson, Byron Gumz, Tim Kovis, Scott Downes, Kelly McLain, Evan Sheffels, Stuart Crane, Frank Lyall.

Staff: Neil Aaland, Lisa Grueter.

Welcome and introductions:

Facilitator Neil Aaland opened the meeting. He asked attendees in the room to introduce themselves.

Logistics and Organization

Ground Rules:

Neil reviewed the revised ground rules that were circulated via e-mail for comment. Regarding voting versus consensus approach, there was a great deal of support for working hard to come up with a consensus agreement. Consensus generally means “I may not completely agree but I can live with this outcome”. One comment was we will have a better product if we can arrive at a consensus. Regarding voting, in general members agreed with state agencies not being voting members, if it comes down to a vote. The workgroup was asked to consider the proportions of caucuses represented on the workgroup; some level of support should come from all caucuses. The discussion concluded by agreeing with the proposal, and clarifying that state agencies are not voting members.

Co-chair: As raised at the first meeting, Neil asked if the workgroup wanted to appoint a co-chair to work with him. Several members thought it was important, especially in terms of continuity for the workgroup after the work group completes a plan but needs to stay in existence to monitor the plan. In response to a question, Lynn Deitrick said Yakima County has not discussed the long-term structure of the workgroup. It was noted that facilitation skills are important for the co-chair. The workgroup concluded the discussion by agreeing that a co-chair is important, and selected Frank Hendrix by a consensus decision. Neil said he would start by including Frank in agenda preparation.

Proposed structure (subcommittees/workgroup): This idea will be addressed as the workgroup progresses.

Review sample maps of Wenas Creek basin

Lisa Grueter opened this discussion, and reviewed the maps provided as hand-outs. These are being shown as an example of what the mapping for the project can provide. Kelly McLain noted that the Department of Agriculture maps Yakima County every year, and has more data it can share. Lisa explained they are showing information by basin, and what the overlap with

critical areas looks like. She reviewed the written table. There was some discussion about what constitutes a geologic hazard area (as a critical area).

Other questions and observations included:

- Department of Agriculture has another layer showing wetlands available, but these sites have not been checked out to see that they are truly natural wetlands
- The size and scope of wetlands can change, not a static thing
- This is a starting point for features on the landscape level
  
- Important for CDs to have good information before approaching a landowner
- Does the wetlands mapping include artificial wetlands? [No, those are excluded]
- Byron noted that the Ahtanum basin new flood maps are effective this June; other basins are in different stages
- The map locations and size for recharge areas/well areas seems incorrect; Lisa will look at additional information
- Priority habitat indications may make it look like a large area is a critical habitat, but it could be that a species was seen somewhere at one point in time
  - Betsy and Scott both noted that PHS is a more of a management tool rather than a listing status
  - Scott Downes noted it is helpful to understand what the point is (details) and if the information is relevant to the question at hand, some data is relevant for the map while others may not be relevant to the topic we are discussing under VSP
- It would be good to know distinction between native and non-native species
- Important that these maps are showing real information; don't show things that aren't really there
- It is helpful to understand what the point is (details) and if the information is relevant to the question at hand, some data is relevant for the map while others may not be relevant to the topic we are discussing under VSP.

#### Plan outline

Lisa showed a proposed table of contents for the plan, based on the statute and on work being done for other jurisdictions. In response to a question about what scale are “basins”, she will bring back maps that show different sizes of basins that can be addressed. She also noted that the plan writing team will need help from the workgroup to describe agricultural context in Yakima County. Neil noted that agriculture in Yakima County is more diverse than some other counties, which makes it more complex to describe.

Lisa said it is important to know what conservation practices are being used on a day to day basis; they want to capture that. She suggested at the next meeting workgroup members could be prepared to discuss practices, then she can follow up and prepare a draft description. A question of what is the right scale was raised. Lisa noted that we want to report at the Water Resources Inventory Area (WRIA) scale. She also noted that the objectives for the plan need to address needs, and there may be different objectives for different basins.

A workgroup member suggested that the team e-mail the question in advance of the next meeting, and people can provide feedback prior to the meeting. The question is: What are the most important sectors of agriculture in Yakima County? What are unique matters that the plan should explain and address?

Other questions and observations included:

- For the section on implementation, need to think about the future of the workgroup
- Need to look at size and scale scenarios of the basin
- The North Yakima CD has identified 11 watersheds in their area, and there will be a uniqueness to each basin
- The work plan will not cover any portion of land within city limits, this is only for the unincorporated county
- For prioritization, the county's initial resolution needs to be reviewed; need to focus limited funding
- Good to note the county zoning on maps
- A specific comment was made to WDFW wondering if the elk feeding stations can be improved
- Several additional points were made about the basin scale:
  - Would be good to know what percentage of a watershed meets the definition of inclusion in the VSP workplan
  - Baseline conditions and measures are important, perhaps move them earlier in the plan (section 5?)
  - Important to know what the drivers are of any changes that are noted

The meeting adjourned at 12:00 pm.

**Next meeting: Friday, June 3 from 1 to 3 at North Yakima Conservation District.**