

Columbia County Voluntary Stewardship Program
Work Group Meeting Minutes
April 25, 2023 at 8:30 a.m.
Conservation District Boardroom/Zoom

I. Call to Order

Work Group Chair Rick Turner called to order the regular meeting of the Columbia County VSP Work Group at 8:30 a.m. on April 25, 2023.

II. Attendance

Attendance: Rick Turner, DJ Frame, Roland Schirman, Joy Eckhoff, Terry Bruegman, Marty Hall (County Commissioner), Aneesha Dieu and Ben Kleist (Conservation District Staff), Dena Martin (County Planning Staff)
Zoom Attendance: Reid Camp, Cramer Fish Sciences

III. Minutes

- Joy Eckhoff motioned to approve the January 10, 2023 minutes, Schirman seconded; all in favor.

IV. Reid Camp – Web Portal Monitoring Project Update

- Reid Camp of Cramer Fish Sciences provided a review of progress on the web-based monitoring portal and data compilation to date.
- Turner requested that the work group be involved in reviewing the compiled data.
- Schirman asked if there was a way to determine ag profitability or loss associated with voluntary practices.
- Camp said he would look into what might be available to include from an economic standpoint.

V. County/CCD Updates

- **County**
 - Martin provided a budget update and an update on cost-share commitments.
 - Dieu shared that the *Millet Riparian Plantings (VSP 2022-03)* will not take place this biennium. Martin asked about how to let the SCC know that those funds will not be used.
 - Martin reported that the State Conservation Commission awarded the following cost-share funds through Supplementary Budget Funding, to be added to the 2021-2023 Columbia County VSP Budget through Budget Amendment #3 dated January 11, 2023:
 - *Ryan Malecha Culvert Installation Project (VSP 2022-06) - \$12,180 Cost Share/ \$3045.00 Technical Assistance*
 - Martin shared that Bill Eller requested a response from VSP work groups regarding a proposed discontinuation of WSCC support of HRCDD data provided by WDFW.
 - Following discussion, the work group requested that Martin respond by acknowledging appreciation for the previous data funding and requesting that future funding be allocated to those counties that used the HRCDD data to pursue collecting HRCDD data on their own.

- Martin noted that the next two-year report will be due in August, 2023.
- The work group briefly discussed outreach opportunities.
 - Dieu suggested introducing students to VSP, possibly in connection with the CD greenhouse project.
 - Schirman noted that the Washington Grown legume episode (available on YouTube) includes an interview with Clay Hutchens' VSP nutrient management project.
 - VSP has been mentioned multiple times in the CD newsletters which are available online.
- **Conservation District Update**
 - Kleist gave a presentation on the possibility of purchasing a drone to be used for data gathering and outreach.
 - The work group asked questions related to software, skills to operate the drone and use the software, and whether or not the preferred drone could be purchased with state funds.
 - Schirman asked if the CD or Salmon Recovery Board could “share” a drone. Dieu commented that a mutual usage agreement may be possible.
 - Schirman asked about looking into buying a drone vs. contracting with another agency to use their drone for monitoring.
 - Kleist will do additional research to review other models, software and use agreements.

VI. Discussion/Action Items

- **Review/Approve Malecha Cost Share Budget Increase**
 - The work group reviewed and discussed application VS 2022-06 for a culvert installation/replacement.
 - The project was originally approved through the supplemental budget at \$12,180.00 cost share and \$3045.00 technical assistance.
 - The actual project was \$24,647.00 in cost share. After deducting a 25% producer match, this leaves \$18,485.25 in cost share, or an overage of \$6,305.25 over what was approved for cost share through the supplemental budget.
 - *Schirman moved to approve paying the overage out of the general cost share budget, Eckhoff seconded; all in favor.*
- **Other Discussion Items**
 - None.

VII. Next Meeting

The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for June 8, 2023 at 8:30 a.m. at the Planning Department conference room and via Zoom.

VIII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:42 a.m.