



## GRANT COUNTY VOLUNTARY STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

### VSP Community Meeting Minutes 1:00-2:00 PM

October 27, 2016

Hartline Community

Catholic Church Hall, 138 Range Street, Hartline, WA 99135

#### **Attendance:**

Kris Knopp, Brian Knopp, Mike Edwards, Kevin Goetz, Terry Poe, Duane Dormaier, Dan Dormaier (VSP Work Group), Chris Edwards (VSP Work Group), Harold Crose (Facilitator), Marie Lotz (Recorder)

#### **Welcome and Introductions:**

Harold called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM.

#### **Hartline Community Power Point Presentation:**

Harold presented the Power Point presentation showing what the Voluntary Stewardship Program is about and what are critical areas, baseline condition, and the importance for participation by agricultural producers.

Harold went over wetlands in Grant County. Question asked: Are NRCS designated wetlands going to be used for VSP? Harold stated they are not wetlands according to the National Wetland Inventory map. After 1985 any wetlands created, due to the Columbia Basin Irrigation Project, are artificial due to irrigation ended. There will be some wetlands that will need to be addressed and primarily along the Crab Creek areas.

Question asked: How are the other counties approaching VSP, the Grant County process sounds like the way to go, what happens if they do not succeed and Grant County is successful? Harold stated that we are not sure how other counties are going to approach VSP, however if all the other counties fail and Grant County is successful, we will stay under VSP and the others will fall back into Growth Management Act (GMA).

Question asked: How much funding is there to make sure VSP is complete and implemented? Harold stated that there is currently funding to write the plan but no money allocated yet to implement the plans. He also stated it would not make sense for legislatures to only fund the writing of the plan and not the implementation.

Question asked: Does the Crab Creek Corridor include Wilson Creek? Harold stated it contributes to Crab Creek and will be looked at but less than 3% of agriculture land is along Crab Creek.

Question asked: Are you counting terraces? Harold stated that none has been put on ground since 2011 but if you do a plan that has a terrace then we can take credit for it.

Question asked: With land coming out of CRP will that have a negative impact for the baseline? Harold stated the discussion was done with WDFW. Out of the 88,000 acres that was in CRP it was reduced to 66,000 acres and the remaining CRP is in cluster areas that are beneficial.

Question asked: Are you counting CSP? Harold stated we are not counting that until we do a plan on your farm to take credit for it.

Question asked: How does livestock fit into VSP. Harold stated it all depends on the location but most facilities have plans and we can take credit for that.

**Adjourn:** The meeting adjourned at 2:19 PM.



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## GRANT COUNTY VOLUNTARY STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

**November 1, 2016**

**Ephrata/Black Sands Community**

**Grant County Public Works, 124 Enterprise St. SE, Ephrata, WA 98823**

### **Attendance:**

Andy McGuire (WSU Ext.), Eric Pentico (WA Department of Fish & Wildlife), Damien Hooper (Grant County Planning Dept.), Mike Baden (WA State Conservation Commission), Larry Pria, Lois Pria, Harold Crose (Facilitator), Marie Lotz (Recorder)

### **Welcome and Introductions:**

Harold called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM.

### **Ephrata/Black Sands Community Power Point Presentation:**

Harold presented the Power Point presentation showing what the Voluntary Stewardship Program is about and what are critical areas, baseline condition, and the importance for participation by agricultural producers.

Statement: Most farmers know how to use practices to farm for the best crop and take care of the natural resources such as water and soil. Harold stated that is the whole plan, applying practices for ag viability and you are protecting critical areas while doing them. Harold stated that the agriculture community is not very good at telling their story of all the good things they do to protect the environment.

Question asked: What about regulations on drainage water getting back into drainage systems. Harold stated all drainages, canals, laterals are exempt due to utility structure of the Columbia Basin Irrigation Project. Does not mean we are not aware of getting nutrients to those drains but doing the practices accomplish those nutrients from getting into the canals. Question asked: If they are polluting into the drainages and canals are you going to regulate them? Harold stated that we are not regulatory however, everyone still must meet the Clean Water Act and other regulations and laws. We are only addressing VSP but if we notice something it could be brought to your attention but no action would be taken.

Question asked: After all your Community Meetings and get input then what happens. Harold stated after meetings and input it will be incorporated into the VSP Plan. The Plan will be reviewed by the State Technical Panel for feedback or approval and if they approve it they forward it to the Director of the Washington State Conservation Commission who has the final approval. Once that happens the Plan will be in place for Grant County and if money is available the Plan will be implemented and over a 10 year period a progress report must be made periodically to the Washington State Conservation Commission.

Question asked: Is Grant County going to be affected by what kind of wells we can drill are we preserving our aquifer? Harold stated wells have a moratorium for irrigation wells and domestic wells are under the same laws and rules of 5,000 gallons a day.

Statement: I really did not think this was a voluntary program but after hearing about it I can now see it is and hope it stays that way.

**Adjourn:** The meeting adjourned at 1:54 PM.



GRANT COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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## GRANT COUNTY VOLUNTARY STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

**November 3, 2016**

**Moses Lake Community**

**WA State Potato Commission, 108 S Interlake, Moses Lake, WA 98837**

**Attendance:**

Eric Pentico (WA Department of Fish & Wildlife), Harold Crose (Facilitator), Marie Lotz (Recorder)

**No Power Point Presentation Given Due to Lack of Participants**

**November 7, 2016**

**Quincy/Black Sands Community**

**Port of Quincy, 115 F St. SW, Quincy, WA 98848**

**Attendance:**

Sam Krautscheid (VSP Work Group), Patric Conelly, John Rylaarsdam, Ben Floyd (Anchor QEA Consultant), Harold Crose (Facilitator), Marie Lotz (Recorder)

**Welcome and Introductions:**

Harold called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM.

**Quincy/Black Sands Community Power Point Presentation:**

Harold presented the Power Point presentation showing what the Voluntary Stewardship Program is about and what are critical areas, baseline condition, and the importance for participation by agricultural producers.

Question asked: Is the farming practices being applied solely going to be based on government programs? Harold stated that producers will continue to do farming practices to help with their crops, soil and water.

Statement: My farm I have some issues I would like to talk to someone about an area. Harold stated to contact our office so we can work with you to tailor your approach.

Question asked: What is your perspective of taking ag land into a natural landscape? Harold stated that would be a benefit such as taking a non-productive area and plant it for wildlife or beneficial insects.

Statement: A lot of soil testing is being done and all that information is not being collated to show outside parties what is being done in farming practices. Harold stated that this program will help to tell the story and keep the inventory of how Grant County is protecting critical areas.

Statement: The next generation know that nothing is private anymore and need to sell the older generation and do PR to get involvement even though they are doing all this you have to get them to share with you their applications and they are doing them with their GAAP and other programs that require it.

Statement: BMW is running advertisements about using renewable energy for carbon fiber and they get it and we need to do the same.



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## GRANT COUNTY VOLUNTARY STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

**November 10, 2016**

**Royal Slope Community**

**Royal City Golf Course, 13702 Dodson Road, Royal City, WA 99357**

### **Attendance:**

ML Sedosky, Austin Allred, Brandon Jenks, Eric Pentico (WA State Department of Fish & Wildlife), Denber Dorsing, Laura Dorsing, Brett Schrom, Harold Crose (Facilitator), Marie Lotz (Recorder)

### **Welcome and Introductions:**

Harold called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM.

### **Royal Slope Community Power Point Presentation:**

Harold presented the Power Point presentation showing what the Voluntary Stewardship Program is about and what are critical areas, baseline condition, and the importance for participation by agricultural producers.

Question asked: How are you going to treat wasteways and manmade waterways and those waterways with salmon in them? Harold stated drainages, canals, wasteways, laterals are all exempt even if salmon are running in them. However, even if they are exempt we should try to keep nutrients out of those areas to do the best we can to keep the water clean and comply with existing laws for water quality standards but not our job to implement those laws but hope we can compliment them.

Statement: On your baseline data sheet you strictly have government programs where as a private consultant I have over 30,000 acres of producers doing precision ag. Harold stated that we plan on going to private industry and get company involvement to build the case and reach the goals.

Statement: We need to show the environmentalist and others the good work we are doing in Grant County. Harold stated we want to work with people to do demonstrations and field days to show the good works and the new technology that is being used in the Columbia Basin.

Question asked: Looking for GAAP will this allow us to show compliance of how much we participate in land conservation. Harold stated this will show the planning process to the facilities and should fit with other plans you may have and as we work on Farmed Smart for irrigated agriculture this will give you a standard set on farming and you get a certification signed by Department of Ecology and gives you safe harbor.

Question asked: With this being a voluntary program and you change your practices does this give you certainty your not getting a cut in your taxes. Harold stated that capital investments you can take a credit such as a pivot. Then asked if you have a piece of ground that is set aside for wetlands voluntarily and then take out of production will you get a tax reduction. Harold stated no more than open space taxation but you would need to talk with the County or IRS for those rules and regulations.

**November 15, 2016**

**Warden Community**

**Warden Senior Center, 114 N Oak Ave., Warden, WA 98857**

### **Attendance:**

Lee Davis, Margaret Davis, Shane Cox, John Preston (VSP Work Group), Paul Glasco, Glenn Burkholder, Eric Pentico (WA State Department of Fish & Wildlife), Harold Crose (Facilitator), Marie Lotz (Recorder)

### **Welcome and Introductions:**

Harold called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM.



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### **Warden Community Power Point Presentation:**

Harold presented the Power Point presentation showing what the Voluntary Stewardship Program is about and what are critical areas, baseline condition, and the importance for participation by agricultural producers.

Question: If you looking for critical areas why would you come on to a farm? Harold stated we would not come unless invited but by being invited we can inventory the agriculture practices being applied. We need to tell the story for the public to see you are protecting critical areas. You may not see the affects by not voluntarying this generation but in two generations those farmers will see the affects when it falls into regulatory.

Statement: If this was not a voluntary approach the Conservation District would not be involved and if there was a suggestion to correct something on your farm it would be between the Conservation District and the producer. Harold went into the Farmed Smart for irrigated land that if you farm a certain standard it is documented and Department of Ecology is signing off you met the standard and the bar will not be raised once you have that safe harbor.

Statement: Going over the question will someone be looking for critical areas on my farm? The statement was made that there was a ruling that people could not come onto private property without permission. Harold the word looking onto property is much different today than in the past such as satelite imagery and other forms.

Statement: You want to get any information on my farming activities such as cover crops. Harold stated we can take credit for any activities your doing to protect critical areas. We want to be a clearing house to collect what Grant County is doing and why it is important to get the word out and feature it in stories and field days.

Statement: You can see how the outside world looking in don't understand the good work farmers are doing especially from 20 years ago and with global competetion we really need to have good farming practices. Harold stated it is about minimizing input and maximizing outputs.

**November 17, 2016**

**Mattawa Community**

**Mattawa Community Center, 101 Pportage Ave., Behind 76 Gas Station, Mattawa, WA 99349**

### **Welcome and Introductions:**

Harold called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM.

### **Attendance:**

Matthus Leitz, Richard Leitz, Harold Crose (Facilitator), Marie Lotz (Recorder)

### **Mattawa Community Power Point Presentation:**

Harold presented the Power Point presentation showing what the Voluntary Stewardship Program is about and what are critical areas, baseline condition, and the importance for participation by agricultural producers.

Statement: I can see now on my operation that I meet the baseline condition which should make it easier for individuals to come in to get a plan done.



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