

**WHITMAN COUNTY
VOLUNTARY STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE
IMPLEMENTATION MEETING
PUBLIC SERVICE AUDITORIUM
August 21, 2023
3:00 p.m.**

Members present:

**Jon Jones
Kim Weerts
Alan Thomson**

**John Pearson
Nancy Belsby
Art Swannack**

Zoom: Larry Cochran; Joan Folwell; Leslie Mitchell, WA State Department of Ag, VSP technical panel coordinator.

Others: Brad Johnson, Palouse CD; Caitlin Harrold, Rock Lake CD; Casey Lowder, Pine Creek CD; Josh Larson, Whitman CD; Jennie Weatherol, Ecology; Brandon Johnson, WC Public Works; Elinor Huber, Clerk, WC Public Works.

3:00 p.m. – Brad Johnson opened the meeting. Brad stated the minutes needed to be amended from June 27th of the previous meeting. On page 20, of the minutes it stated that David Lange was resigning and it should have been David Swannack gave notice to resign.

MOTION by Jon Jones and seconded by Kim Weerts to approve the minutes from June 27, 2023, as amended. Motion passed.

Brad Johnson – I just want to give a background on the 2-year status report from my perspective. Everything in the report shows positive progress. It is really good. On page 5, where there are some changes, it is similar to the 2021 report with cost-share from all sources, districts, NRCS, and FSA. The Ag viability is similar to the 2020 Report and all the state work groups are working with the Commission to get the Ag viability included in the 5-year report.

I don't know if you remember, in the first 5-year report we really didn't talk about Ag viability in that report. Everyone feels it is important to get that in there. Indicator sources on Page 9, we are working with the Commission for the 5-year report on that. Everything looks good.

So, then the other changes in the report on Pages 13-15, shows our Action Map. Those are the most up-to-date. Those were changed from the 2020 Report. Page 16, which has the most changes on it, is all the stewardship that was documented in the Action Map. I will hand that out in a minute.

Then lowering temperature monitoring changes, we see an increase in summer base flows, which is good, on two streams and we are seeing decreases in temperature at the Hooper Gage, which is also a good thing to show. Then basically in the conclusions I wrap all this stuff up what I'm

talking about. Here, we are seeing water quality, flow and temperature improvements. We're seeing participation in the Action Map with stewardship and on Page 16, that's the page I want to talk about and hand out.

As that is being handed around, the last four columns we were going off of 2021 benchmark objectives that were in the work plan, and they have changed to the 2026 benchmarks that we identified. Up on the screen shows the hand-out, shows where the WRIA columns are the changes from 2021.

On the very bottom written out is in 2021, there were 80 reports that we received in the Action Map for 608 Stewardship Actions. In 2023 is 95 reports so we had 15 more producers fill out the Action Map and almost 101 more stewardship actions.

So, this was to show the changes from 2021 to what we are reporting in 2023. You can see some of them increased substantially with those 15 additional reports and some of them stayed the same. The bottom line is the 2026 benchmark status and the 2026 enhancement status we are meeting all targets identified in the work plan.

So, that was pretty exciting to me because 2021 benchmarks increased, and I'm sorry, I don't remember but some of them increased by 5,000-7,000 acres. Some of them a few hundred acres, but we are still doing really good with participation voluntarily in the Action Map.

This doesn't include people who are working in cost-share programs with us on the 5-year report. I'm going to get that all in there but the cost-share table that is in the 2-year status report is there for information for what kind of cost-share is going on. We are using the Action Map because that is full form information.

Two years ago, we went through the 2-year status report really well and looked at things. We made a lot of changes in the body of the report. Basically, I didn't change the intent of the report at all. So, this page 16 here has the most changes because of the increase in those 15 reports and associated stewardship with them. It's all showing positive results.

On the next page 17, so, again, we are just looking at the two far right columns for flow and temperature. You can see that we have increasing summer base flows at Hooper. Quite a nice increase, almost not quite 13 cfs and then a little over cfs at the south fork of Pullman. The Potlatch River is at the Idaho border.

You can see flows are going down at the border based pre-2011. Not quite 2 cfs. We are really working hard with the research and monitoring program to get a handle on that what it does within the State of Washington. You can see by Hooper we have increased it.

John Pearson – Is that anytime of the year or what is that?

Brad Johnson – So, below is the average for June, July, August, and September, summer-based flow.

John Pearson – It's summer-based flow for those four months? And that is the difference between 2011?

Brad Johnson – So, pre-2011, it was 113.4. Post-2011, it is 126.21 cfs.

John Pearson – You are attributing that to better water cycles?

Brad Johnson – I don't know what to attribute that to. We are seeing similar flow increases on some streams in Southeastern Washington. I don't know if it has to do with, we sure haven't been wetter, from that standpoint, but we are just giving the data. We are really not trying to come up with any analysis on it.

Art Swannack – When was that measured?

Brad Johnson – So, the period of record was the Hooper, each gage is different. I don't know the period of record, but Hooper has like 60 years' worth of data and we did, when we did it the first time, we did the full previous to 2011 and we did post-2011.

Art Swannack – So, it is 2012 and every year thereafter averaged together?

Brad Johnson – Correct. The same for temperature. Temperature is for the whole year. Not any constraints on time frame. That is for the whole year.

John Pearson – That's Celsius?

Brad Johnson – Correct. That is a pretty good decrease.

John Pearson – So, under 20 degrees, say it was a (inaudible) below that.

Brad Johnson - And we are averaging below that for both pre and post.

John Pearson – Do we have a copy of this?

Brad Johnson – I can make copies. I could send it out. I have one copy that I wanted to keep. Just to be clear, the 2-year status report we checked the box. We have to send it, you guys have to approve it, we send it to the Commission. It is not reviewed. We are hoping the Technical Panel will look it over and get comments back to us for a 5-year review but this is just, the Legislature wanted this every 2 years. So, every 2 years, we do one of these. In January of 2025 is when our 5-year report is due a year and a half from now. But that is reviewed. But did any, Nancy, you said you read it, what did think of the report?

Nancy Belsby- I haven't read every page but I thought it was very complete. A lot of work.

Brad Johnson – I will have to say a lot of that was left the same and dates were changed because we are in a new date period. The substantial changes were made on those pages I sent out to you and showed up here on the screen. From my perspective, someone who is looking at this, there is a lot of neat things that are going on to protect the critical areas within Whitman County.

Alan Thomson – It would be good to know the reasons why the flow has increased and the temperature has decreased?

Brad Johnson – I wish I could tell you.

Alan Thomson – Somebody has that information. Ecology?

Art Swannack – It may have the data on the increase or decrease. It may not have the compilation of why.

Alan Thomson – That's an important question of why. What are we doing to cause that?

Jon Jones – It might be something we are not doing at all. It might be something that just happens.

Alan Thomson – Maybe. Right, so again, it would be good to know why.

Kim Weerts – I agree. We are under microscope and there should be a reconning.

Alan Thomson – Then we could duplicate it.

Brad Johnson – I'm not saying it can't be done, but I don't know where you would start. Art, I hope, I'm reaching for stars a little bit but you've had a lot of CRP. You've got a lot of conversion from conventional farming to direct seed over the last, I don't know, 6-10 years. You've got your early adopters, you guys have been out there doing a lot.

We are not seeing it in the aquifer but we are starting to see it in the river. The river is coming back a little bit. There's been a lot of riparian restoration work throughout the whole County but I think it is a combination of changing in farming practices which keeps that water longer on the fields. Then some of these riparian projects if you can slow the water down and keep it there longer into the spring, you get that summer base flow increase.

Jon Jones – Brad, I think you are really on to something there, it is right. We have all seen rush erosion over the years, not only this what we have going here. I don't think we can take credit for it. The farmers are doing a lot better job in keeping the water in the field and then it infiltrates and it goes, some of that goes into the ground stays there and comes out slow. I don't know. It is only nonscientific but that's what we maybe seeing.

John Pearson – You would see it in your springs and I've seen some springs come back but we have no data, no base on that.

Alan Thomson – It seems kind of important too,

John Pearson – Absolutely, because I've seen it in the 20-25 years that I've had that piece out on the North Palouse. About 10 years ago, the spring started and started to make a track, that's how I noticed it. Then I had to put culvert in and then the spring dried up and it wasn't there for the first 10 years. So that, you also have to figure out how long that water was in the ground. Was it in the ground for 5-10 years?

Art Swannack – Probably not that long from what I've, I don't know why I know this but for some reason, it is one or two years from the time if you are talking spring output from where the water comes into a field, a major field not like a little area.

John Pearson – But if you are trying to re-saturate 100-foot of soil and 3 inches per foot, it takes 300 inches to fix this water to get past the roots, it could take years to replenish of what we have completed over the years. It's a pretty,

Art Swannack – I can throw all sorts of curve balls on that one, as to which channel the water came in and where it came from actually and was it your field that filled it or was it somebody else's or, did it move latterly?

Brad Johnson – I agree 100% with what John is saying. It's not what the conservation district did or didn't do. I think it's a cumulation of a lot of farmers adopting different types of practices. Some of them have gotten cost-share and some of them have done it on their own.

Alan Thomson – Have you seen this in the other counties?

Brad Johnson – Yes, we have a small stream in southeastern WA, (Inaudible) Creek. We put in 1200 post-assisted log structures. They are just small little stimulated wood falling in the stream, and we are seeing phenomenal. We are talking 9-12 cfs changes, 9 cfs pre and 12 so with those structures you can see them water up the (inaudible) almost immediately after they are put in. You guys are seeing the same things. And that little system has got steelhead. It's got a long record for a stream flow gage temperatures maintaining and the base flows are going up.

Art Swannack – Just don't get carried away as the north end of, or the east end of the Tucannon River shows you when you get too much in there, all of a sudden you get major blowouts and other issues.

Brad Johnson – There is that.

Art Swannack – Having sat on the Snake River Board when that was happening and watching it afterwards.

Brad Johnson – But they did show on Marengo a pretty substantial summer-based flow increase and they are still seeing that at the Marengo gage which is about, I don't know if it is about halfway up the Tucannon.

Art Swannack – I'd say it works to a certain extent. It is just if you get too carried away with that in your program you are going to have a lot unintended consequences. In that case, it was like taking out a road, taking out some other structures and things up in the Tucannon.

Brad Johnson – These structures were helicopter trees, old trees with rote rot brought into the Tucannon. To some degree, but again, to be able to put your finger on it exactly what increased stream flow summer-based flows or what decreased temperature, we'd spend a lot of money and I don't know if we would be any further ahead than we are right now.

Maybe there is at some time that somebody could do that but I don't know of any study that has been done to show how summer-based flows have increased and been able to pin point it. It is a cumulation of so many different things and then you have to look at weather patterns.

John Pearson – You've got 4 months of increased flow. I'd be curious to see if there is another period during the year where the average is lower. So, if we are holding water back,

Brad Johnson – That is a great question. So, when we looked at this based on what is in the plan and what Ecology, again, Jennie is here, they wanted to see what summer-based flows were doing, because that is usually when water is limiting. That's why we could see if over the year if we get more, I could have them run that. But in the report, it is based off of summer-based flow.

John Pearson – Then maybe you can say it is coming out of the ground water instead of just the increased population in Pullman right in their waste water.

Brad Johnson – That's a good point.

John Pearson – I think there is an aquifer thing that is completed.

Brad Johnson – So, I put Nancy on the spot only because I talked to her earlier today. Anything in the report that needs to be changed? Any edits to the report? Comments? If not, we are ready for a vote, but I want to give everybody a chance.

Alan Thomson – Have we gotten an increase in vegetation alongside the stream with increases in temperatures?

Brad Johnson – Okay, so right here is Amanda Stahl from WSU. You've got Ag Area, Ag Riparian. There is a .24% change. Casey, do you understand aerial imagery, or Josh? Amanda Stahl does a really good job of explaining this, but wetlands there has been no change detected. Ag Area, minus the pasture, no change. There is a .24% change in Riparian, and a .3% change in priority

habitat species. That is WDF&W's mapping. Basically, Amanda told me these are non-detectable changes. So, again, we are not seeing vegetation being removed but it shows a,

Josh Larsen – I'm just mentioning that a lot of that is probably aerial like lidar measuring, so that technology is still being developed. So, more than likely, they are just getting into that technology to be able to take an image and actually see how much the vegetation has changed. So, we know because of the project, but how you can actually test that? That is a lot of footwork. That technology will probably eventually come but it would be nice to know how much vegetation is actually increased.

Brad Johnson – The thing about vegetation increase is when, again, I don't want to speak for the other CDs, but when we put a project in, there's 15-20 years before you get a benefit from that vegetation planting. Something that is going to grow up high enough to shade the stream or provide partial shading, things like that.

So, a lot of these things that we are dealing with, it took lots of years to remove vegetation or whatever. It will take a lot of years to detect that change, especially when you are talking riparian plantings. Unless you are going to a nursery and getting a tree that is already 20' tall or putting in potted plants that are less than knee high. And they are sitting there struggling for a lot of years and hopefully surviving and then starting to grow. Once you get them established, they grow faster but that's in my, you know, if you can get their feet wet you can get faster growth but it takes time for them to grow.

Art Swannack - So, I went to the meeting 3-4 years ago they had on high resolution change protection from WDF&W in Spokane, and honestly the technology is not at a point where it can measure grass lands well. It measures forests well, because it really was designed for that and it can measure removal of trees, growing trees, what the tree canopy density is. But when you get out here into our ground with changing colors or vegetation as you go through spring dry up and everything else, it doesn't do a good job of measuring green on our streams or green in those areas, unless you are talking large forestation.

Brad Johnson – That's why we chose not to use it.

Art Swannack – Right, it just wasn't worth it. The technology, at least talking to the guys that were there, it was going to take a long time to get the technology to be able to figure out the difference between dirt clods and brown grass.

Josh Larsen – The technology would be putting sensors in every one of those streams to measure shade. So, you would be measuring side effect shade. Every single project that we did, you'd have to put sensors in to actually get that.

Brad Johnson – So, what do you think of the 2-year status report? Is there a motion to approve? I'd submit it probably tomorrow or Thursday. It's not due until the 30th. I was given myself a thank you for meeting today, if I had any edits to make or whatever, get those made.

MOTION by Jon Jones and seconded by Nancy Belsby to approve the 2-year status report. Motion passed.

Brad Johnson – Okay, I have to find my agenda here. I just wanted to give the chance for the conservation districts to, oh, first of all, we are on VSP cost-share program. I'll start it out. It looks like the Palouse CD, I met with Mark Storey today, just outside of Colfax on the south fork of the Palouse. It is close to Jon Jones's house. There has been a spot along the county road that's eroding.

Fifteen years ago, they did a project in there to, bank stabilization is eligible and some green barbs are eligible so the Palouse CD was contacted by Jon who went out and took a look at it. It would be for a rock tow and some bank barbs. I do not have a cost estimate but that is one project that you will probably see in September from the Palouse CD.

Caitlin Harrold – I'm still working on coordinating with, I did speak with Evan, the engineer that you guys wanted me to contact for the Ewan project. I do not think we will be able to get in an application in this round. I think that is a little ambitious for myself but I am working on it.

Josh Larsen – So, we applied for a couple different grants, for the State Commission first, to see if we actually would get funded. So, we are still waiting to hear back on some of those projects. So, our status update would just be that we are not putting in an application just yet but we are still reviewing potential projects.

Casey Lowder – I'm working with two different producers on two different applications that we anticipate for putting in for VSP. One of the is on Little Hangman Creek to support some cost overruns on planting.

The other one is a livestock watering facility that would potentially include multiple VMPs, solar pump, water well, watering facility and heavy use area. So that is one that I haven't worked on myself before, and I still need to do some talking to some experts on cost and processing and implementing a project like that.

I have consulted with our area engineer just to get a preliminary feasibility look at that project. It looks like it could be a good project but still working on the budget piece. If any of you know or have worked on that kind of project, I would love to talk to you about that.

Brad Johnson – Any questions for those CDs that are looking at projects for VSP cost-share?

Alan Thomson – Caitlin, what was your conversation with Evan like? Is he going to be on board at some point?

Caitlin Harrold- Yes, Evan sounded very interested in helping. He thinks that, it was a very preliminary conversation but first steps he said is obviously a site visit and then from there it

could be more comprehensive or less. It depends on what the initial site visit looks like, he said. He threw out a number for the more comprehensive, up to \$20,000 just for his time and reports. It is very costly, so I am hoping that with an initial site visit he will maybe conclude that we don't need to go that whole route, the full flood analysis. We are just going to have to see how that goes.

Alan Thomson – Okay, thanks.

Art Swannack – The bank stabilization was where?

Brad Johnson – On the south fork of the Palouse River. Just past Jon Jones' house.

Jon Jones – I didn't do it.

Brad Johnson – I reached out to Mark Storey because we would like the County to do the work and folks were missing vacation and different things. When the right person got back in there like, ya' we've been looking at this, we really need to do something. It's 80 yards long and 15 feet high at least. So, there is a lot of sediment that comes in when the Palouse River is high there.

I was told this morning, and Jon told me this, too, the road has been moved about 10 feet. They have no more room to move it away from the stream because it is bordering on a small field right there. So, Mark and Brian are working on an estimate for us and we will get a cost-share application signed with Jon. He wouldn't be able to vote on it. People on the work group are eligible for projects. They just can't vote on their own project.

Art Swannack – So, are we expecting the couple of you that aren't ready yet, are you looking at stuff later in the year, or what are you thinking?

Josh Larsen – So, a couple of our projects were going to fit in the VSP but I had already had applications in with the State, so we are just waiting to see if we get funded. One of the projects actually didn't get funded, so I will roll that into VSP potentially. So, I am potentially applying to VSP because some of my grants to the Commission did not go through.

Brad Johnson – And the process is open until they spend all the money. It is just we would have to have a meeting to approve it to submit it on to the State. So, these applications are due August 30th. Once they come in, we will look at them, make sure they are eligible, from the standpoint of being in the VSP work panel, which they will all going to be, and then we will reach out to you and see which date in September we can have a meeting to approve.

Art Swannack – I'm not impressed with your scheduling times right now, Brad.

Brad Johnson – I get that.

Art Swannack – August is harvest and September will be the Fair and planting.

Brad Johnson – We can send these out and do a zoom meeting. That is the hardest part about volunteer groups is trying to find a time that works for all of you.

The next agenda item is an update. We approved VSP monitoring funding at our last meeting and we had \$12,000 that we didn't allocate. We actually now have \$17,000 that is unallocated. Because the Fair booth and cover for the VSP focus is not eligible, and strictly VSP education and outreach, they said that wasn't eligible. So, VSP education and outreach was \$4,000. The Fair booth cover VSP focus was \$1,000. So, we will within the next, within this biennium we've got \$17,000 out of the \$47,000 that is not allocated.

We've been working to develop the VSP monitoring plan. The aerial analysis for PHS wetlands and riparian areas won't happen until we do our 5-year status report. The analysis and reporting of monitoring will not occur until right before the 5-year status report, which is January 2025.

But everything else looks good. I just wanted to give you an update. We have \$17,000 unallocated as opposed to \$12,000. Based on the color of the money, it is capital funding. You can't buy a Fair Booth display and they didn't want to see education from the Commission.

Those were guidelines that came out about 3 days after we had our last meeting. I didn't know they weren't eligible or I wouldn't have presented them. But within 3 days after our June 27th meeting, I found out it wasn't eligible. So, we pulled that out and so,

Art Swannack – The education was how much?

Brad Johnson – The education was \$4,000 and the Fair booth was \$1,000. We had \$12,000 that was unallocated as of our last meeting. That brings it to \$17,000.

Alan Thomson – Can we go backwards a little bit under the WPCP projects, Jon Jones area? Since this is VSP, I am kind of in conflict here. If this is a bank stabilization project and it is in a floodplain that automatically triggers a SEPA, but since it is VSP, activities are exempt from the Critical Areas Ordinance and a SEPA. I'm kind of wondering, do we have the authority to do that, if this is a VSP project that asks for a SEPA and floodplain development permit? Because we have not done that before. It has always been these bank stabilization projects going through the process of a floodplain development permit.

Art Swannack – Is this Ag land?

Alan Thomson – Well, yes, I assume it is Ag land.

Jon Jones – It is a county road that is being eroded away. If they moved the road again it would take more crop land.

Alan Thomson – In that case, then it's not a plowed field.

Brad Johnson – It is a riparian area.

Alan Thomson – Yes, so it is still going to trigger a SEPA and floodplain development permit. You can also do emergency stabilization without these permits initially if it is a threat to the road and then do the permitting afterwards.

Jon Jones – It is not only a threat to the road but it is a safety issue where somebody is going to drive off and get one wheel off and get a 15' tumble.

Alan Thomson – Then it needs to be repaired ASAP. You go in and do that without any permitting and then you'll need to go through the permitting afterwards.

Art Swannack – Your issue, Alan, that you are bringing up is, is this something that VSP should cover under VSP's Goals and Objectives?

Alan Thomson – If it is an Ag field that is eroding.

Art Swannack – Is it an Ag field that is eroding or is it the road being eroded?

Alan Thomson – Road.

Art Swannack – Okay, so then the road is not an Ag field. So, is it something that is eligible for spending VSP dollars on? Is that what I think you are saying, right?

Jon Jones – The road would have to be moved to fix,

Art Swannack – But that's a different subject in terms of where we can put VSP dollars. It is supposed to be,

Kim Weerts – VSP is critical areas, a roadway is not a critical area in VSP.

Art Swannack – VSP is for Ag lands instead of critical, instead, of the voluntary caring of critical areas that aren't designated as regular critical areas. The road would be designated as a regular critical area.

Brad Johnson – If I can interject, the critical areas at this project addresses in my mind are Fish and Wildlife Habitat, and Fish Habitat. It affects frequently flooded areas. There is no wetland there, so there's two, not geological unstable because it is in a floodplain, but its Fish and Wildlife Habitat in frequently flooded areas.

Art Swannack – But it is not Ag land. So, it is under full regulation under the county critical areas ordinance, not VSP.

John Pearson – Why are we using VSP money to save a county road? Wouldn't there be other sources of money to do this? Aren't there other projects we can be doing with this money?

Alan Thomson – We wouldn't because it is not Ag. That's clear. It is just the road that is collapsing.

Art Swannack – That's what Alan is saying. Is it even eligible to be used for this purpose?

John Pearson - Is it even our interest? Why don't we use it on something that is not going to get done without VSP money? Because this would be done with county money.

Alan Thomson – I would make the call that this has to go through a floodplain development permit and a SEPA.

Kim Weerts – I think I goes back to the fact that, and we've have had long discussions about this, that we are looking for projects that don't fall under anything else. It is not just another pot of money for someone to use and I think that those are the projects we need to look at. Not projects that can get funding from any other source.

Brad Johnson – Like I said, Jon called me, I went out and took a look at it. From the pot of money that the district has access to, this was the only pot, because of the steam bank protection and the fish habitat barbs were eligible within this funding source. But you guys make the decision on whether it is eligible.

Kim Weerts – I think that, aren't we kind of premature because this isn't a meeting to look at the projects and approve them?

Brad Johnson -Correct, but if you guys aren't interested in it, I will walk upstairs and tell them not to put a budget together, and we will not bring a cost-share application for this in front of you at the next meeting. I just want to get some ideas of what we are looking at to make sure. We are not making the decision today.

Kim Weerts – I still think this discussion is premature, I don't think we can make a true decision that based on the information that we have right now.

Brad Johnson – Okay, so we will put it in an application and bring it,

Art Swannack – I disagree on that one Kim, because we know it is a road bank that we are stabilizing. Road banks are not part of VSP. We have to go through all the regulatory process of everything, the full critical areas ordinance regulation. It is not Ag regulation. So, a project that is working on a road bank doesn't meet VSP requirements so I don't see where it is even worth filling out the application.

Kim Weerts – Okay, then I would agree with that. If it is not eligible and we know that, then there isn't a reason. But if we are dissecting this one project then we take off on a rabbit trail and track and dissect the rest of them. If the answer is, it is not eligible, that is a decision that can be made now. But if it is, then it has to go into the process.

Alan Thomson – I brought this up because I don't think it is eligible and I need to inform Brad of that, that he is going to need to go through a SEPA and a floodplain development permit. Not eligible for VSP.

Brad Johnson – We weren't going to circumvent any permitting or anything like that.

Alan Thomson – That is the reason I brought it up.

Kim Weerts – Yes, that is the point, and I think Alan hit the nail on the head.

Brad Johnson – Okay, thank you.

Art Swannack – However great an idea might be to fix it, no matter what. It will end up coming from a different source. Your gas tax, because they won't give us carbon tax.

John Pearson – I got an old pickup body I can bring down.

Alan Thomson – They are already cleaning up the Palouse. Did you have something to do with that John?

John Pearson – Only if the serial numbers are ground off.

Brad Johnson – It sounds like we will have a couple of projects for you to look at. I just wanted to get those, not dissect those, Kim, I know we don't have a lot of information. Just kind of what people were thinking.

So, the technical panel and the Statewide advisory committee. This has been on a lot of our agendas. October 12th, it is from 10-6 p.m. at the Plant Material Center. Obviously, when I find out more information, I'll get it out to you.

The Technical Panel and the Statewide Advisory Committee will be meeting in Pullman at the Plant Material Center on WSU Campus from 10-6. We will have a chance to give presentation on just VSP within WC.

Art, I don't know if you are available that day, but I was hoping if Art wasn't available, Jon is our chairman, I'd like to have Art come and welcome the group as a county commissioner. We have plenty of time.

Art Swannack – I have that day marked off for that one right now. Give me more info and I can do it.

Brad Johnson – Then whoever from the work group wants to come, I believe all four of the districts will be there. Then the next day, Friday at 8:00 a.m. Leslie, with the Department of Ag, Chelsey, with Ecology and Shawn Williams with WDF&W are coming to our office to take a look at some of the implementations that have occurred within WC, that protect and restore critical areas.

Obviously, we don't have VSP projects to show them. We might have some in the hopper that are going through but, just talk to them about the different stewardship that was on this hand-out. Then talk to them about our monitoring and education for VSP, how we get the word out. Talk to them about our action map. Talk to them about the different monitoring that we are doing just so they get a better feel for, it's really valuable.

I know Kim doesn't like me to talk about this, but we did have them in Garfield County and Justin Dixon showed up and we toured around and looked at the good and the bad and the ugly. They were really impressed with what we were doing. It is just to build back comaradery with them and let them see what we were doing. Leslie, if you are still on the line do you have anything to add to that?

Leslie Mitchell – Yes, I think that it will definitely have all four of us technical panel coordinators there, but I've also had Bill Eller and Tom O'Brian accept the calendar invite that I sent, so I believe that they will also be there.

It will be just a couple of differences between Thursday with the VSP meeting is, you know, it is an opportunity to hear how other counties are conducting VSP. But really on Friday the 13th this is the opportunity for WC to show us around and if you guys can make it that would be awesome. We would love to have you here, but it is really an opportunity for you guys to ask questions and hear some feedback from us.

I'm really excited because we will have Bill there, so yes, we've gone, I think about 19 of the counties now and it's been really good and we just really appreciate the opportunity to come and see what you guys have going on and hear feedback.

Brad Johnson – Thanks, Leslie. Any questions for Leslie? Okay, we will be back in touch with you when we get the applicants as of August 30th and see if we can't find a day where we can take a look at how many projects are submitted for VSP and go from there.

Anything else for VSP? Jennie, you are new to the area. Do you want to give a little background on what you are working on?

Jennie Weatherol – So, I've been with Ecology for about a year and living in Pullman actually. My area is kind of Snake River treads and down towards the southeastern portion of the State, so this is a little outside of my territory. But I had asked Brad to share the VSP 2-year report and he shared with the Salmon Recovery Board some of the water quality pieces and highlights.

I was excited to see all the work that is being done and wanted to come and meet people in person and get a better pulse for all of the implementation of various types that are occurring. It is a pleasure to meet you all.

Brad Johnson – Awesome. I would say, its 3:52 p.m., and I would say the VSP work group meeting is adjourned.

Adjourned – 3:52 p.m.