

Grays Harbor VSP Work Group Meeting

6:30 P.M. March 14, 2019
County Commissioners Meeting Room
Montesano, WA

Attendees:

Work Group Members: Jay Gordon, Logan Zepp, Owen Shaffner, Ed Lagergren, Gary Waltenburg, Terry Willis (chair), Terry Moore, Darrell Haglund

Grays Harbor Conservation District Staff: Anthony Waldrop, Natalie Osowski

Grays Harbor County Staff: Jane Hewitt

NRCS Staff: Noah Bates

Public: N/A

Work Group Members Absent: Kyle Deerkop

Minutes:

The Grays Harbor County Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP) Work Group Meeting was called to order at 6:30 P.M. by Chair Terry Willis.

Public Comments: There were no public comments

Changes to the agenda: Additional Item: Coordinated Ag Education Meetings

Old Business:

- The Work Group reviewed the minutes from the February 7, 2019 VSP Work Group meeting. Owen Shaffner made a motion to approve the February 7, 2019 VSP Work Group meeting minutes. A second was made by Logan Zepp. The motion passed by consensus.
- A Letter of Understanding regarding collaboration on Regional Agriculture Development in the South Puget Sound/SW Washington Region was signed by Terry Willis and a copy was given to Natalie Osowski.
- Anthony Waldrop gave the Technical Service Provider report to the Work Group by updating the group on cost-share developments, an introduction of Natalie Osowski, the VSP Specialist, and completed site visits. See the February TSP report for more details.

New Business:

- NRCS Presentation by Noah Bates, Resource Conservationist
 - Noah gave an overview of NRCS providing technical and financial assistance to farmers including agronomy, forestry, etc. Some of their programs are eligible for VSP including EQIP and CSP. Noah will email the presentation to the Work Group.

- Additional VSP Funding Available
 - Additional funding available to be spent by June 30, requests have to be submitted by March 22. A discussion was held about how there are projects in the pipeline, but the timeline is constricting those projects. Some suggestions for spending the money were marketing and outreach, purchasing a no-till drill, renting equipment, and planting trees. Terry Willis suggested passing on the available funding since there are not enough projects to spend the funds.
- Cost Share Process
 - The Work Group was presented with some cost-share site visit information. Cost-share has to be an NRCS approved practice and go through Washington State Conservation Commission to be approved. Other counties have a policy in place; Asotin County VSP Cost-share Policy was given to the Work Group as an example. The Work Group can develop its own policy. A discussion was held about how the policy could have objective scoring or a ranking criteria, a check-list, or no policy at all.
 - Regarding the site visit information given to the group, one landowner would like a manure spreader and a storage facility. The Work Group discussed the process for approving the manure spreader and the question was posed how the landowner would be held accountable without a nutrient management plan and whether or not the Work Group can pay for the nutrient management plan. Owen Shaffner made a motion to reject the spend request of the cost-share project and instead, assist with doing a nutrient study to proceed with the landowner's storage facility. A second was made by Jay Gordon. Discussion about the motion was held and the Work Group determined that the motion was not needed. Owen Shaffner pulled his motion.
 - **Action item:** Anthony and Natalie will take the Asotin Cost Share Policy and determine what to add or subtract, and replace Asotin list with the GH VSP work plan list. Anthony and Natalie will talk with landowners to get more cost share project details.
- Cost Share Labor Rate and Reimbursement Rate
 - The Work Group needed to approve the cost share rate and cost share labor rate, and designate a signer of contracts. Darrell Haglund made a motion to approve a 90% cost share rate reimbursement. A second was made by Logan Zepp. The motion passed by consensus. Darrell Haglund made a motion to approve the cost share labor rate for \$22/hour. A second was made by Logan Zepp. The motion passed by consensus. Darrell Haglund made a motion to authorize VSP Work Group Chair Terry Willis as the signer of cost share contracts. A second was made by Terry Willis. The motion passed by consensus.
- Future Meeting Dates and Topics
 - Next meeting will be April 11th at 6:30 PM at the County Commissioner's Room in Montesano, WA.
- Coordinated Ag Education Meeting
 - No discussion was held.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:47 pm. Next meeting will be April 11th, 2019 at 6:30 PM at the County Commissioner's Room in Montesano, WA.

Summary of Motions:

1. Owen Shaffner made a motion to approve the February 7, 2019 VSP Work Group meeting minutes. A second was made by Logan Zepp. The motion passed by consensus.
2. Owen Shaffner made a motion to reject the spend request of the cost share project and instead, assist with doing a nutrient study to proceed with the landowner's storage facility. A second was made by Jay Gordon. Owen Shaffner pulled his motion.
3. Darrell Haglund made a motion to approve a 90% cost share rate reimbursement. A second was made by Logan Zepp. The motion passed by consensus.
4. Darrell Haglund made a motion to approve the cost share labor rate for \$22/hour. A second was made by Logan Zepp. The motion passed by consensus.
5. Darrell Haglund made a motion to authorize Terry Willis as the signer of cost share contracts. A second was made by Terry Willis. The motion passed by consensus.