

Grays Harbor VSP Work Group Meeting

6:30 P.M. May 9, 2019

County Commissioners Meeting Room

Montesano, WA

Attendees:

Work Group Members: Owen Shaffner, Ed Lagergren, Kyle Deerkop, (vice chair), Terry Moore, Darrell Haglund

Grays Harbor Conservation District Staff: Anthony Waldrop, Natalie Osowski

Grays Harbor County Staff: Jane Hewitt, Alice Shawyer

Cedarville Farms; Thurston County Farm Bureau:

Public: N/A

Work Group Members Absent: Terry Willis (excused), Logan Zepp (excused), Gary Waltenburg (excused), Jay Gordon (not excused)

Minutes:

The Grays Harbor County Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP) Work Group Meeting was called to order at 6:34 P.M. by Vice Chair Kyle Deerkop.

Public Comments: There were no public comments

Changes to the agenda: There were no changes to the agenda.

Old Business:

- The Work Group reviewed the minutes from the April 11, 2019 VSP Work Group meeting. Darrell Haglund made a motion to approve the April 11, 2019 VSP Work Group meeting minutes. A second was made by Terry Moore. The motion passed by consensus.
- Natalie Osowski gave the Technical Service Provider report to the Work Group by updating the group on a collaboration between the Grays Harbor Conservation District (GHCD) and the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) to purchase a no-till drill using a grant that WDFW has received to promote conservation practices to provide habitat for wildlife. WDFW would purchase the no-till drill and then lease it to the conservation district at no cost to the conservation district. The conservation district will then have an agreement with Elma Feed Store to store the no-till drill. The no-till drill will then be available to landowners to rent. This is pertinent to the VSP work group as they had previously discussed purchasing a no-till drill using VSP funds. Natalie had spoken with Terry Willis about coordinating an "Ag Education" meeting for landowners to potentially learn about VSP, the Farm Bureau, Washington State University (WSU) Extension, and the Northwest Agriculture Business Center. Natalie also spoke with Kiley Smith from WSU Extension and they discussed hosting the meeting in the fall to

accommodate for wheat growers. For outreach efforts, Natalie hopes to target horse owners and small farms for the time being since local farmers are in the heart of planting season right now. Natalie has also been working on Individual Stewardship Plans (ISP) using a template the work group had previously drafted. This ISP is developed after a landowner has scheduled a site visit and filled out an ISP checklist. The ISP provides documentation of the conversation between and landowner and the GHCD representative and suggests possible implementation practices. The ISP is optional to the landowner and is never a final document.

New Business:

- GHCD Contract with Grays Harbor County (GHC) Update
 - The contract between GHCD and GHC was in need of an amendment to include the ability to fund other purchases besides staff time. The original contract limited the county's billing ability to the conservation district to only pay for staff time. GHCD and GHC have been working together on the amendment and have also included the Washington State Conservation Commission (WSCC) in some discussions. The amendment will have to be signed by the GHCD board of supervisors and the county commissioners before it is adopted. No action needs to be taken by the VSP Work Group.

- Grays Harbor County VSP Cost Share Policy
 - Anthony Waldrop and Natalie Osowski presented a revised draft of the cost share policy to the work group. The revised draft included agricultural viability as an eligibility requirement. Attachment A was also edited to include agricultural viability NRCS practices. This policy is a stand-alone policy, it is not the Grays Harbor Conservation District's policy. Terry Moore made a motion to approve the Grays Harbor County VSP Cost Share Policy. A second was made by Darrell Haglund. The motion passed by consensus.

- Discussion about equipment purchases
 - There was discussion held regarding equipment purchases for the VSP. This discussion stemmed from the possibility of some VSP funding left over at the end of the biennium. A few suggestions on what equipment to purchase included a vehicle, and a manure spreader. The vehicle would be used for VSP related activities including but not limited to site visits and trainings. The vehicle could also be used as advertising for VSP by putting a VSP emblem on the vehicle. There was some concern on whether to purchase or lease a vehicle. The work group advised GHCD employees to look further into purchasing or leasing a vehicle and depending on what the Washington State Conservation Commission (WSCC) approves, present the appropriate bids to the work group. The manure spreader would be rented out to landowners and could be considered a conservation activity every time the manure spreader is used, which could also count towards VSP evaluation scoring according to the work plan. The work

group advised GHCD employees to request manure spreader bids. Given the timeline of the biennium, the approval for vehicle and manure spreader bids may constitute scheduling a special meeting, which the work group was not opposed to.

- **Action Item:** GHCD employees Natalie and Anthony will look into purchasing or leasing a vehicle and present bids to the work group. They will also research manure spreaders and seek out bids to present to the work group.

- Future Meeting Dates
 - The next meeting was scheduled for June 13, 2019 at 6:30 PM. The meetings will be held in the County Commissioner's Room in Montesano, WA.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:30 pm. Next meeting will be June 13, 2019 at 6:30 PM at the County Commissioner's Room in Montesano, WA.

Summary of Motions:

1. Darrell Haglund made a motion to approve the April 11, 2019 VSP Work Group minutes. A second was made by Terry Moore. Motion passed by consensus.
2. Terry Moore made a motion to approve the Grays Harbor County VSP Cost Share Policy. A second was made by Darrell Haglund. The motion passed by consensus.