

“It is the intent of chapter 360, Laws of 2011 to: (a) Promote plans to protect and enhance critical areas within the area where agricultural activities are conducted, while maintaining and improving the long-term viability of agriculture in the state of Washington and reducing the conversion of farmland to other uses¹...”

AGENDA
Yakima County Voluntary Stewardship Program
THURSDAY, AUGUST 25, 2016
1:00PM – 3:00PM

North Yakima Conservation District
1606 Perry St # C, Yakima, WA 98902

Primary objective for today’s meeting: Begin shifting the focus to discussing issues related to the VSP Work Plan.

1. Welcome and Introductions (10 minutes) – Facilitator, All
2. Agricultural Viability (30 minutes) – Facilitator, All
 - *Given what the Work Group has discussed at the last meeting with the Agricultural economy and current practices:*
 - *What are the most important aspects of agricultural viability in the County?*
 - *What producer programs are you already participating in? (e.g. Global Gap or Salmon Safe, or others)*
3. Critical Area Functions, Issues, and Potential VSP Goals (60 minutes) – Facilitator, All
 - *In-depth look at Wenas Creek basin (identified priority).*
 - *What are the key environmental issues in this basin?*
 - *What is the relationship of agriculture to critical areas in this basin?*
 - *What are some potential goals for critical areas protection in the Wenas Creek basin?*
 - *What are some goals for agricultural viability in this basin?*
4. Adjourn

Attachments:

1. Updated countywide farmland and rangeland map, subtracting the Federal Wilderness areas from the rangelands dataset
2. Updated technical provider list
3. Updated agricultural context write up
4. Draft framework for Wenas Creek Basin Goals discussion
 - a. Please also bring the last version of the Related Plans document from the June 23, 2016 meeting for Agenda Item 3. Critical Area Functions, Issues, and Potential VSP Goals
 - b. Excerpted intersect maps are provided for reference based on maps prepared for August 5, 2016

¹ RCW 36.70A.700(2)(a)

Contents of a VSP Work Plan
RCW 36.70A.720 (1)

(1) A watershed group designated by a county under RCW 36.70A.715 must develop a work plan to protect critical areas while maintaining the viability of agriculture in the watershed. The work plan must include goals and benchmarks for the protection and enhancement of critical areas. In developing and implementing the work plan, the watershed group must:

(a) Review and incorporate applicable water quality, watershed management, farmland protection, and species recovery data and plans;

(b) Seek input from tribes, agencies, and stakeholders;

(c) Develop goals for participation by agricultural operators conducting commercial and noncommercial agricultural activities in the watershed necessary to meet the protection and enhancement benchmarks of the work plan;

(d) Ensure outreach and technical assistance is provided to agricultural operators in the watershed;

(e) Create measurable benchmarks that, within ten years after the receipt of funding, are designed to result in (i) the protection of critical area functions and values and (ii) the enhancement of critical area functions and values through voluntary, incentive-based measures;

(f) Designate the entity or entities that will provide technical assistance;

(g) Work with the entity providing technical assistance to ensure that individual stewardship plans contribute to the goals and benchmarks of the work plan;

(h) Incorporate into the work plan any existing development regulations relied upon to achieve the goals and benchmarks for protection;

(i) Establish baseline monitoring for: (i) Participation activities and implementation of the voluntary stewardship plans and projects; (ii) stewardship activities; and (iii) the effects on critical areas and agriculture relevant to the protection and enhancement benchmarks developed for the watershed;

(j) Conduct periodic evaluations, institute adaptive management, and provide a written report of the status of plans and accomplishments to the county and to the commission within sixty days after the end of each biennium;

(k) Assist state agencies in their monitoring programs; and

(l) Satisfy any other reporting requirements of the program.