San Juan County Voluntary Stewardship Program
Meeting Summary
January 27th, 2016
11:30am – 1:30pm
San Juan Grange
152 1st St, Friday Harbor, WA 98250

Action Items:
1. Review materials in 3-ring binder (All)
2. Review new materials provided one week prior to the March meeting (All)
3. Next Meeting: Monday, March 28th, 2016, 10:30am – 12:30pm. Orcas Hotel, Orcas Landing

11:30 – 12:15 Introductions of All Participants; Group

Each participant introduced themselves and provided a brief overview of why they were there and what they hoped to achieve through the process. A common theme was to promote sustainable agriculture that protects critical environmental resources.

Participants that attended the meeting include the following:

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<tr>
<th>Agricultural Producers</th>
<th>San Juan County Advisory Committees</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thor Black (Black Family Farms)</td>
<td>Kelsey Green (SJICD staff)</td>
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<td>Matt Claussen (Red Roof Acres)</td>
<td>Kimbal Sundberg (WRMC)</td>
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<td>Julie Johnston (Helen’s Farm)</td>
<td>Learner Limbach (ARC)</td>
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<td>Meyers (Sweet Grass Farm)</td>
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<td>Kathy Morris (West Beach Farm)</td>
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<td>Amy Plant (Good Earth Farm)</td>
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<td>Kathryn Thomas (Horse Drawn Farm)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Agricultural Organizations</th>
<th>San Juan County Departments</th>
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<tr>
<td>Kelsey Green (SJICD staff)</td>
<td>Kim Bayas (WSU Extension)</td>
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<td>Bruce Gregory (SJICD staff)</td>
<td>Byron Rot (Salmon Recovery)</td>
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<td>Vicki Heater (SJICD Board)</td>
<td>Erika Shook (Community Development)</td>
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<th>Environmental Organizations</th>
<th>Interested Parties:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Candace Jagel (Agricultural Guild)</td>
<td>Peggy Bill (ARC)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Linda Lyshall (SJICD staff)</td>
<td>Lynn Bahrych (Washington State Conservation Commission)</td>
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12:15 – 1:00 Overview of VSP; Linda Lyshall

History of VSP
- 2007 – Washington Legislature charges Ruckelshaus Center—a collaborative, problem-solving center—to examine the conflict between protecting agricultural land and protecting critical areas under GMA.
- 2010-11 – Based on recommendations of the Ruckelshaus Center, legislature creates VSP.
  - Voluntary, incentive-based approach that offers counties an alternative for meeting GMA requirements related to protecting critical areas and agricultural lands.
• 2012 – Counties are given option to opt-in to VSP or continue to meet GMA requirements as written under existing law.
  • 28 of 39 counties opt-in to VSP.
• 2013 – State funds made available for two pilot counties—Thurston and Chelan—to begin VSP planning process.
• 2015 – State provides funding for 26 remaining VSP counties to begin planning process.

Purpose, Goals, and Requirements
• Counties designate a work group to develop a watershed-scale plan that will:
  • Identify critical areas and resource concerns.
  • Identify agricultural activities in the critical areas.
  • Create a plan for targeted outreach to assist landowners in developing farm plans that address agricultural impacts to critical areas on their property.

Overall Goal:
• Identify and maintain economically viable agriculture while protecting and enhancing critical areas.

Deliverables and Tentative Schedule
• March 2017 Work Plan Submitted to State Technical Review Committee
• May 2017 Technical committee has 60 days to review and approve, or send back for additional work.
• June 2017 Tentative Work Group Meeting to address any concerns and approve final draft.

Upcoming event: VSP Presentation at the Agricultural Summit February 13th.

1:00 – 1:15 Meeting Organization and Protocols

Ground Rules
• Preferred Decision-Making Process is by Consensus
• We will try to stick to the agenda and not get off topic
• Creativity is encouraged
• Thoughtful media interactions; no one ‘represents’ the group
• Considerate dialogue, one speaker at a time

Discussion
There was a discussion regarding the role and innovative nature of VSP, the importance of it and the win-win outcomes. Several questions were discussed.

Q – Are we focusing on specific sites?
  • No. More general, county wide.

Q - What is the funding mechanism for the long term?
  • The program is currently funded for two years. Intent and expectation is that it will be funded long-term.
Q – Who provides technical service?
- Technical assistance is currently, and will likely continue to be provided by the Conservation District.
- A consultant will be hired to assist with establishing baseline data, monitoring and evaluation to measure effectiveness of program.

Q – Is this regulatory?
- No. VSP is an alternative to regulation to provide landowners and producers a safe harbor to address concerns. If someone is violating county code, then they can be regulated if they don’t address the issues through a farm management plan and implementation of BMPs.

Q – What is Department of Ecology’s involvement?
- The Conservation Commission has worked with DOE to implement the program.

1:15 – 1:30 Meeting Schedule/ Wrap up

Worked as a group to set dates for future meetings that work best for everyone.
- Mondays seem to be the best day for the group
- Agricultural producers expressed difficulty of attending meetings due to haying limitations beginning potentially first week of May and rest of spring. Adjusted second meeting accordingly.
- No meetings will be held in the summer season.
- SJICD will assist in coordinating transportation when needed. Ferry expenses will be reimbursed if attendee needs to drive on.
- Video or phone conferencing is discouraged. Best work done in person.
- Materials will be sent at least a week before meetings for review.
- Please bring VSP binder to every meeting. New materials will be added.

Upcoming Meetings

1) Monday, March 28th, 2016
   10:30am – 12:30pm
   Orcas Hotel, Orcas Landing

2) Monday, April 25th, 2016
   10:30am – 12:30pm
   Lopez – Location TBD

3) Monday, September 12th
   11:30am – 1:30pm
   San Juan Island Location TBD

1:30 Meeting Adjourned