

Chelan County Voluntary Stewardship Program  
Quarterly Work Group Meeting

Date: June 3rd, 2025; 2:00-3:30pm

Virtual Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85815453180?pwd=cIFEBbJ4POFVbB7TjuKtCPnBT7Z99g.1>

Meeting Agenda

- Welcome and Introductions
  - In attendance: Britt Dudek, Nathaniel Bentencourt CDFB, Rainie Haas WSTA, Shawn Cox Pesashtin hi-up growers, Randall Chipman, Ben Alsworth Stemilt, Mike Kaputa CCNRD, Stephen Lesky CCNRD, Mike Poteet SCC
- Public Comment
  - No public comment was presented to the group
- Discussion Topics & General Updates
  - 2025-27 Biennium
    - Stephen gave the group an update on how the next biennium will look funding wise and expecting 2025-27 SCC Contract very soon for review.
  - Capital Implementation Funds
    - Stephen updated the group on changes to the Capital Implementation Funds. Most notable changes are there will be three dedicated rounds for project application each county can only receive up to \$750,000 per round, and, each county will be allotted \$40,000 of capital funds at the start of the new biennium. Projects must still meet capital fund criteria however.
  - New VSP Statewide Coordinator
    - Mike Poteet, SCC VSP Coordinator was in attendance and provided an introduction of himself and some of the 2025-27 changes to the program
  - Budget
    - Budget Review
      - Stephen gave the group a budget review, noting amount of funds remaining and should likely be spent by end of biennium
      - Mike Poteet added that with the new contract the operating funds will be increased to \$290,000 to incorporate what was the monitoring funds from this beinnium
  - Project Updates
    - Icicle Irrigation Efficiency

- Mike Kaputa gave an update on this project and it is looking likely that we will be able to construct the new irrigation system in 2026.
- Yaksum Infrastructure
- WCID Canal Improvements (Completed)
- Plain Irrigation Efficiency (completed)
- Mission Creek Fish Passage
- Colockum Cr. Habitat Assessment
  - Stephen gave updates for all of the above projects. Notable updates were that the Yaksum project had to return the VSP Capital funding and will be re-applying for those funds in August. WCID completed the concrete canvas and is highly please with the outcome of the project and is interested in applying for additional capital funds to line more of the canal this fall.
- New/Developing Projects
  - Peshastin Weather Stations (VSP)
    - Randall Chipman presented on a new project idea of utilizing micro -weather stations in Cashmere area orchards to aid in implementing localized IPM programs and reducing irrigation water use and herbicides applied throughout the growing season.
  - Commercial Ag Designation Review
    - Stephen and Mike K. gave a brief review of the Commercial Ag Designation workshop the county held. Noting there was a lot of feed back from those in attendance and the county is currently reviewing that feed back and developing next steps. There will likely be another meeting on this topic and CCNRD will send invites to this group once a meeting time and place have been determined.
  - Stemilt/Squilchuck Creek habitat and barriers
    - This is project Mike Kane CCNRD is pursuing to determine anadromous fish use and habitat of Stemilt and Squilchuck creeks. VSP is currently not involved in this project but is tracking it as there may be some habitat and/or irrigation upgrade projects identified as a result of Kane's efforts.
  - Lake Chelan Relic Toxics (EPA Funding)
    - Chelan County has received funding from the EPA and DOE to study the sources and transport method of relic toxics (primarily DDT) in Lake Chelan. VSP is tracking this project as the primary hypothesis is the source of DDT is in orchard soils and is being transported to the lake via erosion and overland flow,

there may be irrigation efficiency projects identified as a result of this study.

- Lake Chelan Watershed Update (BOR Funding)
  - Chelan County was awarded a BOR WaterSmart Cooperative Watershed Planning grant to review and update the watershed management plan for the Lake Chelan Watershed. This project is just starting but it will be important to get agricultural groups on the development committee to ensure ag topics are addressed in the update.
- Capital Funding Projects
  - Yaksum
    - Stephen will seek Work Group approval at the next meeting to re-apply for funds to match the BOR grant to complete this project.
  - Icicle Irrigation
    - Stephen will have proposal for Work Group review at next meeting for capital application of new irrigation system
  - WCID Canal Lining
    - Stephen will work with WCID Director to develop proposal for work group review for capital funding application for additional sections of canal to receive concrete canvas lining
- 10-Year Report
  - Executive Director Determination
    - Stephen notified the work group that the SCC Executive Director made the determination the Chelan County VSP is “Meeting it’s goals and benchmarks” in concurrence with the State Advisory Committee.
- 2023-25 Biennial Report
  - Due August 30<sup>th</sup>. Stephen will work on developing a report for work group review and approval for submission ahead of the August 30<sup>th</sup> deadline.
- Outreach
  - Stephen has been attending CDFB events to talk VSP with members
  - Stephen to give a VSP overview presentation at June CDFB meeting
  - WSDA Director to give a talk at the May Rotary meeting; May 29<sup>th</sup> 12pm at Pybus Market.
- Next Meeting Date / Adjourn

- Next meeting will be held mid-July, Stephen to send out Doodle poll to set date/time