

**State Technical Advisory Committee Meeting**  
**October 25, 2012**  
**Spokane, Washington**

**Opening Remarks and Introductions**

Introductions were made (see attendee list at end of document).

Roylene opened the meeting by thanking everyone for their participation. She mentioned that we still do not have a Farm Bill and are only working on existing contracts. Staff will be working to prepare for a new Farm Bill. The new Farm Bill may merge some programs. Washington was the only state that used STAC input to come up with our budget.

**Improving Investments in Ecosystems Services – Heather Simmons-Rigdon**

Heather gave an overview of what her RC&D Council does. She spoke about the Yakima Basin Clean Water Partnership which is a committee formed to find out about the suitability of an ecosystem service market in the Yakima Basin. The ecosystem services market was mentioned which has the potential of providing tools to reach conservation goals. Heather also spoke about the RC&D receiving NRCS funds to assist with development assessments and tools. The projects are as follows:

- Conservation Technical Assistance
  - ✓ Market Outreach – will be completed by end of year, but will likely be revised over the next few years.
  - ✓ Market Analysis – will be completed by end of year.
  - ✓ Floodplain Supply and Opportunity Analysis (potential sellers) – will be complete by the end of the year.
  - ✓ Demand Analysis (potential buyers) – will be complete by the end of the year. Draft report next week.
- Washington Conservation Innovation Grant
  - ✓ Nutrient Tracking Tool – workshop scheduled for November 7-8, 2012

For further information contact Heater at [heathersr@scwrcd.org](mailto:heathersr@scwrcd.org)

**ACTION – post presentation on website**

**Easement Priorities FRPP/WRP GRP – Dave Kreft, Monica Hoover, Jeff Harlow**

Monica spoke about the requirement to set priority areas for FRPP in the state. These areas would focus the program and direct funds to the highest priority area. Applications in these areas would get additional ranking points. The STAC was asked for recommendations in September, 2012, but no input was received. We would like to give the STAC another opportunity to provide input.

Dave spoke about GRP/WRP Geographical Rate Caps proposal for fiscal year 2013.

Roylene asked for a group discussion on how to better use our easement programs. She wants to give incentive to go above and beyond.

**Frank O’Leary** – need to address ecological outcome we want, include expectations, put details in a management plan, include information in ranking plan, are you willing to enhance or improve?

**Jeff Harlow** – we can target to a specific area

**Frank O’Leary** – this could cause problems

**Frank O’Leary** – FRPP – set criteria above criteria that doesn’t disqualify, but gives higher ranking, don’t just maintain, but enhance.

**Terry Mansfield** – look at sage grouse initiative, leveraging funding, make available to west, central and east areas of state, maybe one criteria for each area.

**Ginger Phalen** – focus work with NRCS on safe harbor agreements

**ACTION** – Sherre Copeland – send meeting notice for a sub-committee on easements to those interested. - Frank O’Leary, Ginger Phalen, Terry Mansfield, Don Larsen

### **WRP/GRP FY13 GARC – Dave Kreft**

Dave Kreft gave an overview of how Geographical Area Rate Caps (GARC) work. WRP had no GARC last year because of change over in staff. An area wide market analysis has been done for WRP. Last GARC, west area sign-up was higher than the rest of the state. In the past, GARCs were 80 percent of the market value – proposed that it be the same this year. Dave then reviewed the proposed GARC for each area.

**Question** – are you comfortable with the market analysis

**Answer** – Yes

**Comment** – it is good that you kept reserved grazing rights; good example of leveraging

**ACTION** – Dave Kreft – post GRP handout on website.

**ACTION** – STAC members provide comments to Dave Kreft by October 29, 2012

### **329 Residue Management System: Direct Seed with Harrow – Bonda Habets**

A discussion was held on what has happened since Ty Meyer, Spokane Conservation District, presented a white paper regarding removal of harrows from full-width tillage under practice standard 329.

On May 21, 2012, two west region agronomists came to Washington. It was mentioned that all four criteria on 329 are not being utilized. They didn’t get the chance to see equipment at the time. The agronomists returned on October 16, 2012 and met with members of the Direct Seed Association and conservation districts where a discussion was held on full-width tillage. Ty Meyer’s feels that a lot of progress has been made and he now has a better understanding. He feels additional practice under 345 will help. Says it is hard to tell no tillers that they are now mulch tillers. Would like help with the process of making changes to 329.

**Bonda Habets** – 329 will soon be under consideration/review

**Bonda Habets** – Ty wants a variance for the fiscal year. He will need to justify why it is needed.

**Jeff Harlow** – Review of payment rates is coming soon (November)

**Bonda Habets** – there will be one payment price for the whole state

**Jeff Harlow** – in 2013 there will be different scenarios for each practice (regional) came up with cost (%), state can change the percentage paid

**Jeff Harlow** – On November 2<sup>nd</sup> input can be provided, but most of the work is done, changes will be minimal. Must submit state % by November 9, 2012

**ACTION** – Bonda Habets – let the STAC know when 329 is up for review

**ACTION** – Sherre Copeland - repost information on sub-committee input and how to submit a variance

**ACTION** – Bonda Habets – set up a meeting for Ty Meyer with the national agronomist

### **STAC Sub-Committee Updates – Bonda Habets, Larry Johnson**

*Riparian Buffer sub-committee* is on hold. A plan has been started to compile science involved with riparian buffers. Once this is complete, it will be brought to the sub-committee. This could take two years.

*590 Standard sub-committee* last meeting was held by teleconference. Meetings are going well, but prefer face-to-face. Working on the Phosphorus Index; adding levels.

**Larry Davis** – encourages state to hold off on this until we hear from national  
**Roylene** - NHQ will look at our state index and provide review/comments

*Irrigation Guide sub-committee* has had no activity. We are waiting on comments on the crop consumption rate.

### **Special Initiatives – Rick Noble, Jeff Harlow**

*Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Partnership* – We had a short turnaround time for this project. Rollout included partners in order to bring producers in the door. It was decided to focus on three funding pools.

- ✓ Remove fish passage barriers
- ✓ Riparian habitat improvement
- ✓ Waste storage decommissioning/

The screening tool was used to direct funds.

National Water Quality Initiative (NWQI) – Five percent of EQIP goes to NWQI. We received funding late last year. Last year we got one watershed contract (\$600,000). Would like to see more success this year so we have put together a draft NWQI request for projects (see handout). Want to solicit high priority projects using the 12 HUCS. Fiscal Year (FY) 2013 guidance should be similar to FY 2012. Should have more details by March/April 2013. We are currently taking input from employees and partners.

**Question** – Can LWG nominations be considered in the NWQI?

**Answer** – Yes

**ACTION** – Jeff Harlow – send criteria to the STAC and post it on the website when request for proposals is ready for distribution.

### **FY 2013 LWG Packages/Discussion for FY14 Kickoff – Jeff Harlow, Alan Fulk**

#### **Summary of FY 2012**

- ✓ EQIP - \$16,511,979 obligated; 601 contracts
- ✓ WHIP (Sage Grouse Initiative) \$748,622.27 obligated; 7 contracts

- ✓ EQIP (Sage Grouse Initiative) \$537,479 obligated; 5 contracts
- ✓ AWEF \$806,932 obligated; 13 contracts
- ✓ NWQI \$194,304 obligated; 1 contract

**FY13 Initiatives**

- ✓ Certified Organic
- ✓ Organic Transition
- ✓ On-Farm Energy
- ✓ Seasonal High Tunnel

WA Wildlife Special Initiative – General EQIP FA

Sage Grouse Initiative

**FY 2013 Tribal Pool Changes –By land use**

Range 30%, Forestry 35%, Cropland 15%, Pasture 10%, Other Land 10%

**FY 2013 Screening Tools for LWGs and State Initiatives**

High – applicant will clearly treat 1 of the top 10 priority concerns within priority areas on SRA

Medium – applicant will clearly treat 1 of top 10 priority concerns outside priority area

Low – applicant is eligible, but doesn't treat one of the top 10 resource concerns.

Updated SRA should be available around the end of this calendar year.

**Ranking Tools**

Cost efficiency score

National questions – 250 points

State questions – 100 points

Local questions – 650 points

**FY 2013 State Changes**

Contract length changed from 5 years to 3 years or less

Points for existing RMS Plan

Remove socially disadvantaged, beginning farmer question

LWGs still assign points

Add proximity to tribal land question and treating tribal resource concern question

Do practices treat a tribal resource concern?

Are practices on land adjacent to tribal lands or in a shared watershed? If so, are practices compatible with activities on the tribal land?

No changes to FY 2013 LWG allocations

General EQIP sign-up cutoff date is December 21, 2012

**ACTION – Sherre Copeland – post Alan Fulk's presentation to the website**

**ACTION – Jeff Harlow – send screening tool to the STAC members**

FY 2014 LWG kick-off is scheduled for January 22, 2013 and will be held in the central part of the state.

Location will be determined based on cost analysis and meeting approval.

**Question** – who is the contact person for the tribes?

**Answer** – Westside is Robin Slate; Eastside is Rebecca Stuart

**Comment** – would like to see LWGs have representation from local agencies. We would need marketing for this.

**Roundtable/Closing**

**Question** – for LWG composition, do they reach out to salmon recovery groups?

**Answer** – probably not (from a LWG chair)

**ACTION** – Carol Smith – send link to salmon recovery groups to Sherre Copeland

**Attendees**

Jeff Harlow	Peter Bautista	Georgia Sormun	Lynn Engdahl	Alan Fulk
Larry Brewer	Dave Kreft	Terry Mansfield	Sherre Copeland	Chuck Warner
Megan Stewart	Ron Schiebe	Don Larsen	Dan Harwood	Larry Cochran
Frank O’Leary	Dave Vogel	Ray Abriel	Larry Davis	Ginger Phalen
Carol Smith	Karma Anderson	Ed Teel	Dale Bambrick	Robin Slate
Nicole Berg	Ron Cummings	Monica Hoover	Jack Fields	Bonda Habets
Ray Ledgerwood	Amanda Ettestad	Rick Noble	Heather Simmons-Rigdon	
Roylene Rides at the Door				