

BENTON COUNTY VOLUNTARY STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

Plan Approval Process and Timeline | January 2017

9.0 PLAN APPROVAL PROCESS AND TIMELINE

The Conservation Commission Director must approve the Work Plan within 3 years of funding or the county must comply with the non-VSP (regulatory) critical area protection requirements of RCW 36.70A.735. See Table 1.

The Work Group submits the VSP Work Plan to the Conservation Commission Director, who gives it to the Technical Panel for review. (RCW 36.70A.720 (2)(a)) The Technical Panel has 45 days to make a recommendation. If the Technical Panel says the Work Plan doesn't pass the statutory Work Plan Approval test, the Work Group must modify and resubmit the Work Plan.

If the Conservation Commission Director does not approve the Work Plan within 2 years and 9 months of the county's receipt of funding, the Director must submit the Work Plan to the Statewide Advisory Committee for resolution. If the Statewide Advisory Committee has final say. If the Statewide Advisory Committee recommends Work Plan approval, the Conservation Commission Director must approve it.

Table 1. VSP Work Plan Preparation, Approval, and Monitoring Timeline

| | Action | Timeline |
|----|---|------------------------------------|
| 1. | Receipt of funding to create a VSP Watershed Work Plan. | January 2016 |
| 2. | Prepare a watershed work plan within 18 months after the receipt of funding. | July 2017 |
| 3. | Approval of Work Plan. Director of the State Conservation Commission and technical panel (see RCW 36.70A.735) approves work plan within two years and nine months after receipt of funding - technical panel has 45 days to review and provide response to Director. | October 2018 if plan approved |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If no agreement in 2 years 9 months, work plan is sent to the Statewide Advisory Committee made up of representatives of environmental, agricultural, local governmental, and tribal agencies and stakeholders. • If no agreement in 3 years, the work plan does not go into effect and an alternative regulatory path must be selected. See RCW 36.70A.735 for alternative paths. | |
| 4. | 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. | August 2019, 2021, 2023 et seq. |
| 5. | Report on whether goals and benchmarks have been met in 5 years after receipt of funding, and also at the ten year mark and every 5 years after that. | January 2021 January 2026 |
| 6. | Adaptive management or additional voluntary actions and funding may need to be identified if goals and benchmarks are not met. | ongoing after Jan. 2026 |

Source: RCW 36.70A.700-760; BERK Consulting 2017