



Voluntary Stewardship Program Statewide Advisory Committee

Rules & Procedures

Version 1.0

Adopted February 11, 2026

Voluntary Stewardship Program

Statewide Advisory Committee

RULES AND PROCEDURES FOR CONDUCTING BUSINESS

ARTICLE I: Creation and Purpose of the Statewide Advisory Committee

The Washington State Conservation Commission (SCC) is responsible for administering the Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP) as part of the Growth Management Act, which is described in statute in RCW 36.70A.700-760. VSP's Statewide Advisory Committee (SAC) is established in [RCW 36.70A.745](#):

- (1)(a) From the nominations made under (b) of this subsection, the commission shall appoint a [SAC], consisting of: Two persons representing county government, two persons representing agricultural organizations, and two persons representing environmental organizations. The commission, in conjunction with the governor's office, shall also invite participation by two representatives of tribal governments.
 - (b) Organizations representing county, agricultural, and environmental organizations shall submit nominations of their representatives to the commission within ninety days of July 22, 2011. Members of the [SAC] shall serve two-year terms except that for the first year, one representative from each of the sectors shall be appointed to the statewide advisory committee for a term of one year. Members may be reappointed by the commission for additional two-year terms and replacement members shall be appointed in accordance with the process for selection of the initial members of the [SAC].
 - (c) Upon notification of the commission by an appointed member, the appointed member may designate a person to serve as an alternate.
 - (d) The executive director of the commission shall serve as a nonvoting chair of the [SAC].
 - (e) Members of the [SAC] shall serve without compensation and, unless serving as a state officer or employee, are not eligible for reimbursement for subsistence, lodging, and travel expenses under RCW [43.03.050](#) and [43.03.060](#).
- (2) The role of the [SAC] is to advise the commission and other agencies involved in development and operation of the program.

ARTICLE II: Role of Commission in Support of and Coordination with the SAC

Administrative Duties

RCW 36.70A.705 requires SCC to:

- “Review and evaluate the program's success and effectiveness and make appropriate changes to policies and procedures for implementing the program, in consultation with the [SAC] and other affected agencies” – *subsection (2)(f)*
- “Designate priority watersheds based upon the recommendation of the [SAC]. The commission and the statewide advisory committee may only consider watersheds nominated by counties under RCW 36.70A.710. When designating priority watersheds, the commission and the [SAC] shall consider the statewide significance of the criteria listed in RCW 36.70A.710(3)” – *subsection (2)(g)*
- “Provide administrative support for the [SAC] in its work. The Administrative support must be in collaboration with the department of ecology (*sic*) and other agencies involved in the program.” – *subsection (2)(h)*
- “Maintain a website about the program that includes times, locations, and agenda information for meetings of the [SAC.]” – *subsection (2)(i)*
- “In conjunction with the [SAC], conduct a review of the program beginning in 2017 and every five years thereafter, and report its findings to the legislature by December 1st” – *subsection (2)(k)*

Priority Funding

RCW 36.70A.720(4) requires the SCC Director to consult with the SAC before working with local watershed groups to develop accelerated implementation schedules for watersheds that receive any priority funding, per RCW 36.70A.705(2)(g).

Work Plans

Work plans submitted by work groups are reviewed by the SCC Director and the Technical Panel. If the Director does not approve a work plan within two years and nine months after a county receives funding, “the director shall submit the work plan to the [SAC] for resolution. If the [SAC] recommends approval, the director must approve the work plan,” per RCW 36.70A.725(5).

Adaptive Management

Counties may voluntarily or compulsorily initiate adaptive management of their work plans. The SAC will support counties' efforts to revise work plans as outlined in statute and program guidance documents.

Reports

RCW 36.70A.730 describes the process by which the SCC Director must work with the SAC to evaluate the regular five-year reports from local watershed groups:

- (1) Upon receipt of a report by a watershed group under RCW [36.70A.720](#)(2)(b) that the work plan goals and benchmarks have been met, the director must consult with the [SAC]. If the director concurs with the watershed group report, the watershed group shall continue to implement the work plan. If the director does not concur with the watershed group report, the director shall consult with [SAC] following the procedures in subsection (2) of this section.
- (2) If either the director, following receipt of a report under subsection (1) of this section, or the watershed group, in the report submitted to the director under RCW [36.70A.720](#)(2)(b), concludes that the work plan goals and benchmarks for protection have not been met, the director must consult with the [SAC] for a recommendation on how to proceed. If the director, acting upon recommendation from the [SAC], determines that the watershed is likely to meet the goals and benchmarks with an additional six months of planning and implementation time, the director must grant an extension. If the director, acting upon a recommendation from the [SAC], determines that the watershed is unlikely to meet the goals and benchmarks within six months, the watershed is subject to RCW [36.70A.735](#).

Program Funding

SCC is required to submit a report to the legislature every two years, by August 31, about the adequacy of funding available to the participating watersheds to establish and implement the program. This is done, per RCW 36.70A.740, “in consultation with the [SAC] and other state agencies.”

SCC shall be responsible for facilitating this discussion with the SAC in the first quarter of the year in which the legislative report is due. The draft legislative report shall be provided to the SAC in the second quarter of the year in which it is due. A copy of the final report submitted to the legislature shall be provided to the SAC after it has been submitted and accepted through the Office of Financial Management.

ARTICLE III: Quorum and Voting Privileges

A quorum of the SAC for the purposes of transacting business shall be 50% of the voting members currently appointed, to be no less than three. Each voting member of the SAC shall be entitled to one vote on any matter duly before the body. Members shall abstain from voting on matters that create a conflict of interest with their professional role or with an organization they represent. Each voting member’s alternate may vote in their stead, per

RCW 36.70A.745(1)(c). See ARTICLE I for more information on membership and voting privileges.

ARTICLE IV: Meetings, Rules and Records, Public Comments

The SAC shall set its meeting schedule for the following year no later than December 31 of the current year. At least six (6) meetings shall be scheduled during each calendar year. All meetings are open to the public and adhere to Chapter 42.30 RCW, Open Public Meetings Act, Chapter 42.56 RCW, Public Records Act, and other applicable state laws and county codes.

Meetings may be led by the SAC Chair (the SCC Director), or they may be facilitated by SCC staff representing VSP. All meetings shall be conducted in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order. Meeting agendas shall be distributed to all SAC members in advance of meetings, and the agenda will be posted in advance on the meeting announcement page of SCC's VSP website.

When practicable, meetings are to be held in a hybrid format allowing for remote or in-person attendance for SAC members and the public. Hybrid meetings shall provide in-person and virtual opportunities for public comment. Procedures, links, meeting identifications, and passwords for remote access shall be included on the meeting agenda. Public notification shall be via SCC's VSP website. All meetings shall be recorded and posted online within seven (7) days from adjournment.

Agenda

A copy of the agenda for every regular meeting of the SAC shall be provided to each member not less than 5 working days prior to the date of that respective meeting at which that agenda is to be considered. The agenda shall be posted on the VSP webpage for the meeting no less than 2 working days prior to the date of the meeting.

The agenda shall include Introductions for the public record and a Program Update from SCC's VSP staff. Agendas shall be prepared by SCC VSP staff.

Voting

A simple majority of affirmative votes of a quorum of committee members is necessary to approve or recommend approval of any matter before the SAC. Any matter which does not receive the required affirmative votes is deemed to be disapproved (this includes ties since a simple majority would not be met).

Five-Year Reports

The SAC will review five-year reports from all counties following their due dates and subsequent review by the VSP Technical Panel. A separate recommendation for each county's report shall be made to the SCC Director in accordance with RCW 36.70A.730. The recommendation shall be made in the form of a Motion, stating the position of the SAC. The Motion and its final vote count shall be included in a final summary document provided to the SCC Director.

Minutes

Minutes shall be taken by SCC staff during each public meeting of the SAC. Minutes for previous meeting(s) shall be presented for approval at the outset of each meeting where a quorum is present. Minutes from individual meetings shall be posted on the VSP website once approved.

Public Comment

Public Comment shall be called following the approval of the minutes and be limited to items on the agenda. Individuals must be recognized by the meeting facilitator and may speak for up to 3 minutes. Members are allowed to ask follow-up questions of the individual, keeping in mind the overall agenda schedule.

Study Sessions & Field Trips

Study sessions and field trips may be held by the SAC at times and locations appropriate to the work of the committee. Study sessions/field trips shall be subject to the Open Public Meeting laws whenever a quorum of the SAC members is present, unless no business of the SAC is being conducted.

Study sessions may be called at any time by the Chair, subject to notice as required for a special meeting. Any matter may be discussed; however, no action shall be taken by the SAC on a matter pending before the committee during a study session/field trip.

ARTICLE V: Limitation of Authority

No SAC Member shall represent themselves as a spokesperson for the committee or SCC on official matters (e.g., lobbying). However, Members are allowed to speak publicly on behalf of the county, Tribe, or organization they represent.

ARTICLE VI: Amendments to the Rules

Modifications or changes to these rules may be made at any regular or special meetings of the SAC by a majority vote. Changes or modifications shall not become effective until seven calendar days following the date of the meeting at which the changes or modifications are approved.

ARTICLE VII: Conduct

By accepting a position on the SAC, Members thereby affirm their commitment to respectfully work and communicate with fellow Members, SCC staff, program partners from VSP counties, and staff from other agencies. Members that cannot abide by this commitment to maintaining a respectful working environment may be subject to removal from the SAC by the Chair.