



## **Operating Procedures**

### **Walla Walla Water 2050 Strategic Plan Advisory Committee**

#### **1. Purpose and Charge for the Strategic Plan Advisory Committee (SPAC)**

In 2019, the legislature directed the Department of Ecology (Ecology) and the Walla Walla Watershed Management Partnership (Partnership) to collaborate in the development of a thirty-year integrated water resource management strategic plan (RCW 90.92.050 (2) (c)). In order to develop a strategic plan that draws on local knowledge and reflects local priorities, Ecology and the Partnership agreed, along with the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR), to create a Strategic Plan Advisory Committee (SPAC) to help shape this strategic plan. These operating procedures will guide the work of the SPAC.

The top priority for the SPAC is to provide consensus recommendations for the strategic plan. These recommendations will be provided to Ecology, the Partnership and the CTUIR. The SPAC may be asked for recommendations on additional items if feasible; however, the recommendations for the strategic plan will remain the highest priority.

#### **2. SPAC Tasks**

##### **2.1. Overview**

The SPAC will be a representative stakeholder group of the Walla Walla Watershed. However, other stakeholders will also have opportunities for input into the strategic plan through participation in Working Groups and in stakeholder workshops.

##### **2.2. Milestones/Deadlines**

2.2.1. The SPAC will provide a progress report by XXX.

2.2.2. Final recommendations must be completed by XXX unless an extension is authorized by Ecology.

##### **2.3. Recommendations**

2.3.1. The SPAC is charged with developing science-based recommendations for the strategic plan that will address the diverse water resource challenges of the basin.

2.3.2. Recommendations should include prioritized short-term and long-term actions.

2.3.3. Recommendations should clearly state who is responsible for completing each action.

#### **3. Roles and Responsibilities**

##### **3.1. SPAC Members**

- 3.1.1. The SPAC is comprised of a diverse membership. SPAC members should consider diverse perspectives and work to find common ground. The full list of members can be found on the Walla Walla Water 2050 Website: [SPAC Roster](#).
- 3.1.2. Each SPAC member may identify one alternate. Either the member or the alternate may sit at the table for SPAC meetings, but not both.
- 3.1.3. SPAC members will:
  - 3.1.3.1. Actively participate in all SPAC meetings. Consistency in attendance is important. Remote participation will be allowed.
  - 3.1.3.2. Work between meetings to educate themselves on issues. Members accept the responsibility to come to meetings prepared for the discussion.
  - 3.1.3.3. Actively participate in at least one Working Group.
  - 3.1.3.4. Work cooperatively with each other, the facilitator, and staff to accomplish the purpose of the SPAC (see section 1)
  - 3.1.3.5. Keep other members of your interest group informed of SPAC efforts, solicit input on issues discussed, and share this input with the SPAC.
  - 3.1.3.6. Work to build partnerships, connections and enthusiasm for long-term commitment to watershed health and recovery
  - 3.1.3.7. Follow the discussion Ground Rules included in Appendix A.
- 3.1.4. Ecology and the Partnership will have representatives at SPAC meetings who will sit at the table and fully engage in meetings but will not participate in decision-making.

### **3.2. Working Groups**

- 3.2.1. Working Groups will support the work of the SPAC.
- 3.2.2. Working Groups will provide information requested by the consulting team which will be the basis for the strategic plan.
- 3.2.3. Working Groups will assist in SPAC development by identifying, researching, and analyzing potential actions and formulating draft recommendations for consideration by the SPAC.
- 3.2.4. Working Groups will be provided with specific assignments to provide information to the Strategic Plan.
- 3.2.5. The Department of Ecology or a representative from another state agency will participate in each Working Group.
- 3.2.6. Partnership staff or members will participate in each Working Group as feasible.
- 3.2.7. Each Working Group will identify a lead who will be the primary person to communicate with Working Group members and lead the effort to provide completed assignments to the consulting team. The lead will also be expected to attend SPAC meetings to report on progress and challenges.
- 3.2.8. Members of the consulting team will attend some but not all Working Group meetings.

### **3.3. Coordinating Committee**

The legislation requires the Partnership to collaborate with Ecology to prepare the strategic plan. Ecology and the Partnership have invited the CTUIR into that collaboration. These three entities will form a Coordinating Committee to guide the work of the SPAC. The SPAC's final recommendations will be presented to this Coordinating Committee.

The Coordinating Committee will:

- 3.3.1. Support and guide the work of the SPAC.
- 3.3.2. Serve as a link between the consulting team and the SPAC.
- 3.3.3. Review and provide feedback on draft materials prepared for the SPAC and Working Groups.

- 3.3.4. Ensure and enable a smooth and effective process that meets the goals and timelines.

### **3.4. Observers/Public Comment**

- 3.4.1. Meetings of the SPAC will be open to the public.
- 3.4.2. At each meeting, a public comment period will allow observers to offer comments related to issues at hand, subject to time limits stated on the agenda. During the public comment period, SPAC members will listen, and comments will be recorded. There will not be discussion.
- 3.4.3. Written public comments may be submitted online ([WWW 2050 Online Comments](#)) or provided to SPAC staff or members of the consulting team at any SPAC meeting.
- 3.4.4. Working Group meetings are open to the public but will not include formal public comment opportunities.

### **3.5. Facilitator**

The facilitator is an impartial individual who guides the process and facilitates meetings. The facilitator will:

- 3.5.1. Keep the group focused on the agreed-upon agenda.
- 3.5.2. Suggest alternative methods and procedures to move forward when necessary.
- 3.5.3. Encourage participation by all SPAC members.
- 3.5.4. Halt or redirect dialogue that is disrespectful, off-topic, or dominating the conversation so that others are not able to effectively participate.
- 3.5.5. Ensure that SPAC members and other meeting participants adhere to the ground rules found in Appendix A.
- 3.5.6. Prepare clear and concise summaries of each meeting.

### **3.6. Consulting Team**

The Strategic Plan Consulting Team will support the SPAC and Working Groups by:

- 3.6.1. Consistently communicating with SPAC and Working Group members about upcoming meetings and Strategic Plan development next steps.
- 3.6.2. Providing logistical and facilitation support for all SPAC meetings.
- 3.6.3. Providing logistical and facilitation support for Working Group meetings, as budget allows.
- 3.6.4. Providing Working Groups with a roadmap and associated framework for information gathering and reporting.
- 3.6.5. Compiling working group input into draft recommendation language for SPAC consideration.
- 3.6.6. Drafting Strategic Plan for SPAC review.

## **4. Decision Making**

- 4.1. Quorum: A minimum of 8 SPAC members is necessary to constitute a quorum. A quorum is necessary for the SPAC to make decisions or recommendations. If a quorum is not present, the meeting may continue with no actions being taken.
- 4.2. Committee members shall abstain from decisions if they have a vested personal financial interest in the matter.
- 4.3. The SPAC will use consensus-based decision-making and will not rely on parliamentary procedure.
- 4.4. The SPAC will make all decisions with full consensus.<sup>1</sup> The levels of consensus include:

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<sup>1</sup> Definition of Consensus: Consensus is a group process where the input of everyone is carefully considered and an outcome is crafted that best meets the needs of the group as a whole. The root of consensus is the word consent, which means to give permission to. When members consent to a decision, they are giving permission to the group to go ahead with the decision. Some members may disagree with all

- I can say an unqualified "yes"!
  - I can accept the decision.
  - I can live with the decision.
  - I do not fully agree with the decision; however, I will not block it.
- 4.5. If any member does not consent to a decision with one of these levels of consensus, the action will not go forward. Further discussion will be encouraged to resolve disagreements and reach consensus.
- 4.6. The facilitator will ask for decisions to be made using the following process
- Thumbs up – approval
  - Thumbs sideways – (accept, can live with, will not object)
  - Thumbs down – disapproval/blocking consensus
  - Five fingers – abstain
- 4.7. The meeting summary will record decisions. When members make statements about their decision, the meeting summary will document the statements.
- 4.8. The member or the designated alternate must be present to participate in decisions, although remote participation will be allowed. Proxies will not be permitted.

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or part of the decision, but based on listening to everyone else's input, all members agree to let the decision go forward because the decision is the best one the entire group can achieve at the current time.

## Appendix A

### DISCUSSION GROUND RULES for SPAC Meetings

*Only SPAC members may speak during the meeting. Other participants may speak during public comment.*

*All participants at SPAC Meetings agree to:*

#### **1. Be Respectful**

- Listen when others are speaking.
- Do not interrupt and do not participate in side conversations.
- One person speaks at a time.
- Recognize the legitimacy of the concerns and interests of others, whether or not you agree with them.
- Cooperate with the facilitator to ensure that everyone is given equitable time to state their views.
- Present your views succinctly and try not to repeat or rephrase what others have already said.
- Silence cell phones and refrain for using laptops during the meeting, except to take notes.

#### **2. Be Constructive**

- Participate in the spirit of giving the same priority to solving the problems of others as you do to solving your own problems.
- Share comments that are solution focused.
- Avoid repeating past discussions.
- Ask for clarification if you are uncertain of what another person is saying.

#### **3. Be Productive**

- Adhere to the agenda.
- Ask questions rather than make assumptions.
- Respect time constraints and focus on the topic being discussed.

#### **4. Bring a Sense of Humor and Have Fun.**