

Appendix B-1 Baseline Conditions Summary Method and Data Sources

Appendix B-1: Baseline Conditions Summary Method and Data Sources

Overview

The effective date of the VSP legislation is July 22, 2011. This is also the date chosen by the legislature as the applicable baseline for accomplishing the following items (RCW 36.70A.703):

- Protecting critical areas functions and values.
- Providing incentive-based voluntary enhancements to critical areas functions and values.
- Maintaining and enhancing the viability of agriculture in the County.

The 2011 baseline sets the conditions from which the County will measure progress in implementing the Work Plan and meeting measurable benchmarks. Measurable benchmarks are a required Work Plan element under VSP (RCW 36.70A.720 (1)(E)) and provided in the Columbia County VSP Work Plan, Section 5: Goals, Benchmarks, and Adaptive Management.

The methods and data sources relied on to establish 2011 baseline conditions for the County's five critical areas and agricultural activities are described in the following sections.

Methods for Establishing Baseline Conditions

The 2011 baseline conditions summary prepared for Appendix B, and the VSP Map Folio (Appendix A) includes an inventory of agriculture land cover and critical area resources. The following methods were applied in the baseline conditions inventory (see Table 1 for a complete list of data sources):

- **Agricultural landcover assessment.** This was based primarily on Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) 2011 agricultural landcover data for croplands (irrigated and dryland agriculture). U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) 2011 agricultural landcover data was primarily relied on for additional data on rangelands. Three major agricultural land categories were characterized within the County: 1) irrigated; 2) dryland; and 3) rangeland. These categories are associated with different crops, agricultural activities, stewardship practices, and intersections with critical areas.
- **Critical areas assessment.** This was based on the following elements
 - Critical areas designations included in the County's Critical Areas Ordinance (CAO; see Appendix B-3 for CAO summary).
 - Data sources for planning-level critical areas mapping (Appendix A: Map Folio) and critical area/agricultural intersections summaries (Appendix B-4: Baseline Conditions Critical Areas Data Summary Tables) ranged from 2007 to 2016 and included data relied on for the County's recent Shoreline Master Program update (2016). See Table 1 for a complete list of data sources.

- **Privately owned lands.** These were used when assessing critical area intersections with agricultural lands. The VSP does not apply to agricultural activities occurring on public lands through leases or other agreements.
- **Use of maps.** Data sources and the VSP Map Folio (Appendix A) were used to assess the potential presence of critical areas within the County, and intersections with agricultural lands were used for planning-level purposes only. Actual critical areas presence is determined on a case-by-case basis through farm stewardship planning.

Data Sources

The data sources listed in Table 1 were used in the baseline conditions inventory to assess the conditions as close to the 2011 baseline as data availability allowed.

Title	Date	Author(s)
GIS Data		
PRISM Climate Group Precipitation Data	2012	Oregon State University
USDA Agricultural Landcover	2011	US Dept of Agriculture
WSDA Agricultural Landcover	2011	US Dept of Agriculture
National Wetland Inventory Data	2010	US Fish & Wildlife Service
Streams and Rivers Data	2015	WA Dept of Natural Resources
Priority Habitat and Species Data	2010	WA Dept of Fish & Wildlife
Critical Aquifer Recharge Area	2015	WA Dept of Health
Water Erosion Potential	2014	Natural Resources Conservation Service
Wind Erosion Susceptibility	2014	Natural Resources Conservation Service
Special Flood Hazard Areas	2010	Federal Emergency Mgt Agency
Hydraulic Unit Code (HUC) 10 data	2013	Bureau of Land Mgt
Watershed Resource Inventory Area (WRIA)	2000	WA Dept of Ecology
Public Lands (Gap Analysis Program)	2016	US Geologic Survey
Public Lands (Public Lands Inventory)	2014	WA Recreation & Conservation Office
Public Lands (Non-DNR Major Public Lands)	2016	WA Dept of Natural Resources