Evaluation of EWEB’s Voluntary Incentive Program Pilot

September 2015 Final Report

Prepared for:
Eugene Water & Electric Board
500 E. 4th Avenue
Eugene, Oregon 97401

Prepared by:
Community Planning Workshop
A Program of the Community Service Center
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**CPW Staff**
- Robert Parker, AICP Director
- Casey Hanson
- Michael DeHart
- Sue Lurie, PhD
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents a “process” evaluation of the Eugene Water & Electric Board’s (EWEB) Voluntary Incentive Program (VIP) pilot project. The VIP is an incentive-based strategy that aims to protect existing healthy riparian areas and restore degraded riparian forests along the McKenzie River through voluntary actions. In July 2014, EWEB and its partners received funding to conduct a pilot project with 15 landowners to test the VIP concept. The University of Oregon Community Planning Workshop (CPW) was tasked with evaluating the pilot project to provide valuable recommendations for program modification and enhancements as it moves toward full roll-out in 2016.

A so-called process evaluation focuses on programmatic processes with the intent of identifying programmatic elements that are effective and those that need improvement. The nature of the VIP Pilot lends itself to a process evaluation, since it is short term (one year) and is intended to test various components of the VIP programmatic structure.

Purpose and Methods

The evaluation gathered information through interviews with program partners and landowners surveys. Questions focused on all elements of the pilot program as outlined in the CPW programmatic recommendations report and gauged if the inputs and outputs are achieving the intended outcomes as highlighted in the logic model. Questions included: marketing/branding, outreach, customer service and support, field evaluations, agreements, and other programmatic elements. The evaluation is intended to help EWEB learn more about the perceived success of the pilot program from landowners, program partners and EWEB staff; program aspects that are particularly successful during the pilot; programmatic aspects that caused major issues or problems; and issues and opportunities related to working with program partners and landowners.

Findings and Recommendations

The findings presented in this section represent a synthesis of comments provided by VIP partners during discussions about their involvement and experience with program development and pilot rollout.

Partner roles

- **Concerns about legal liabilities** - The lack of formal agreements between EWEB and the VIP partners raises questions regarding which parties bear legal liability in the event of an injury or lawsuit.

- **Concerns about governance** - Multiple partners have communicated a desire for a more formal decision-making and agreement system. Though the collaborative has thus far been effective, there are concerns about its efficiency in making difficult decisions.
• **Concerns about a single program champion** - The level of responsibility held by the Drinking Water Source Protection Coordinator was a source of concern for several program partners. In the event that he became unable to support the program, there does not seem to be enough stratified leadership to ensure continuity of operations.

• **Assessment coordination may become a limiting factor for enrollment** - Outreach and publicity aside, the number of enrollees the VIP can process at a time is limited by the time it takes for LCOG and TFT to coordinate with MWC and UWSWCD.

**Recommendations**

1. Formalize agreements between EWEB and partner organizations.
2. Consider testing a subcommittee structure.
3. EWEB should consider developing a “point person” to manage VIP.
4. Maintain a consistent group of staff with whom participants interact.

**Fiscal administration**

• **Pilot was a successful learning experience** - Although there was a distinct learning curve associated with training for and using new software, Cascade Pacific staff is prepared to move toward full program roll out.

• **Cascade Pacific did not express concerns about capacity** - Their new software makes fiscal administration of multiple enrollees relatively simple. Upon roll out, there is no foreseeable reason for concern with the number of enrollees as far as fiscal administration is concerned.

**Recommendations**

The current course appears effective; CPW has no specific recommendations related to fiscal administration.

**Landowner recruitment and outreach**

• **Concerns about how to communicate complexity in a simple manner** - Currently, landowners do not seem to know what information is vital for them to understand and what information is unnecessary. Much of this was addressed during the visits between the assessment team and the landowners.

• **Landowners generally have favorable perceptions about the content and frequency of contact with EWEB staff** – Survey results found that a large majority of pilot participants felt the amount of interaction they had with EWEB staff was “about right.”

• **Survey results suggest some room for improvement on information sharing** - For several participants; their personal meetings with assessment
crews and EWEB staff were their only source for programmatic context and information.

- **Continued interaction and stewardship of relationships is essential** - A major factor in many landowners’ choice to continue participation in the VIP was their history of positive interactions with EWEB and VIP partner staff.

- **The pilot did not engage enough of the general population of landowners to effectively test messaging strategies** – It was unclear whether the general population of landowners will view EWEB or the VIP partners as positively as the pilot participants. Therefore, the VIP needs to craft a thoughtful approach to messaging about the VIP to broad audiences.

**Recommendations**

1. Ensure that frequency and quality of contact between landowners and EWEB staff does not diminish with increasing numbers of program participants.

2. Publish, maintain, and seek robust feedback on a dashboard website.

3. Establish standardized terminology for advertising or speaking about the VIP.

4. Emphasize voluntary nature of easement shape and size.

**Eligibility and Land Assessment**

- **On-the-ground assessments were well coordinated between one another** - Assessment staff from the McKenzie Watershed Council and the Upper Willamette Soil and Water Conservation District coordinated their assessments well. The shared perspective and communication between them helped refine assessment and report-writing methods throughout the pilot.

- **Coordination between desktop and on-the-ground assessments is cumbersome** - During the pilot, McKenzie Watershed Council and the Upper Willamette Soil and Water Conservation District shared on-the-ground assessment duties. Meanwhile, LCOG staff and The Freshwater Trust split desktop assessment duties. Coordination between desktop assessments and on-the-ground assessment was characterized by a lack of shared perspective. Considerable effort was spent working to get agreement on the methods and techniques. Riparian area and unit delineations often differed between ground assessments and desktop assessments. Similarly, the partners associated with assessments are still working toward a mutually agreeable level of detail for assessments. Technology issues also proved to be a challenge and are the source of ongoing effort.
• **The assessment process can be time-intensive** - Although assessment methods are consistently being refined, accurate on-the-ground assessments on large properties can take a significant amount of time.

• **Follow-up visits between assessment staff and landowners are useful for building trust and understanding** - Though landowners relied perhaps too heavily upon partner staff for programmatic information, the continuity and transparency afforded by multiple site visits adds to the overall level of landowner trust.

• **Breaking up riparian area into multiple units is confusing for landowners and cumbersome for ground assessors** - The significance of having multiple assessment units was unclear for landowners when reading their assessment reports. Similarly, the units generated at the desktop level were not always compatible with on-the-ground characteristics of properties.

**Recommendations**

1. Continue refining land assessment process.
2. Focus on high-priority lands and manage the number of VIP participants in the early roll-out.
3. Ensure partners associated with assessments are appropriately staffed.
4. Consider establishing a set of thresholds and maps that identify properties that are only eligible for naturescaping agreements.

**Agreements**

• **Agreements need to be explained to landowners in person** - Despite efforts to make the draft landowner agreement easy for landowners to understand, several pilot participants simply wanted to discuss the agreement in person.

• **Compensation options were unclear in the draft landowner agreement** - Largely due to the nature of pilot programs, compensation details and options were unclear to landowners. It is worth noting that the incentives were not fully developed for the VIP pilot and concepts were tested with landowners to gauge what direction on which the VIP should focus our efforts. In this sense the VIP was truly a pilot that tested approaches. This may diminish from word-of-mouth communication between landowners about the program.

• **Enforcement is a source of uncertainty for landowners** - Landowner interviews revealed that details of enforcement were not clearly communicated by the draft landowner agreement.

• **Many landowners want a personalized management plan before signing the agreement** - Despite the inclusion of a two-year probationary period in the draft landowner agreement, landowners understandably want to know
the kinds of actions set to take place on their land over the course of the twenty-year agreement.

- **Landowners prefer adaptive, rather than static, management plans** - As one landowner noted, an environment can change a lot in twenty years. Keeping management plans open to periodic revision can ensure the management plan remains relevant and agreeable throughout the course of the easement.

**Recommendations**

1. Clearly and transparently define compensation.
2. Provide draft management plan along with agreement.
3. Investigate the potential for adaptive management plans.
4. Consider creating a non-agreement pathway for participation.

**Monitoring**

- **The pilot did not test monitoring techniques or processes** - Although the partner organizations charged with monitoring responsibilities upon rollout (MWC and UWSWCD) are familiar with riparian monitoring techniques, a workflow has not been established within the VIP framework.

**Recommendations**

1. Monitoring and enforcement processes need to be highly transparent.

**General observations**

- **There are questions regarding the role of the collaborative and the VIP as more partners join** - The collaborative and the VIP have the opportunity and access to resources that may allow for the pursuit of broadening program boundaries both geographically and programmatically.

- **There may come a point where the VIP transcends EWEB’s traditional mission boundaries** - If the VIP grows considerably or begins to encompass other ecosystem services (shade credits, wetland mitigation, etc.), the EWEB Board of Commissioners may be required to provide formal direction.

- **It has yet to be seen whether payments to landowners are truly necessary, or whether those funds could be better used to directly fund restoration** - A majority of pilot participants expressed that they do not need an incentive to participate in the VIP.

**Recommendations**

1. Facilitate a high-level discussion with the collaborative on their role and the VIP’s role.
Summary

Our evaluation is that the VIP pilot was largely a success. The pilot tested the components of the program it intended to test, and provided some useful learning as EWEB builds the program. Additional work should address the concerns identified in this evaluation and serve to improve program structure and delivery.
CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

This report presents a “process” evaluation of the Eugene Water & Electric Board’s (EWEB) Voluntary Incentive Program (VIP) pilot project. The VIP is an incentive-based strategy that aims to protect existing healthy riparian areas and restore degraded riparian forests along the McKenzie River through voluntary actions. In July 2014, EWEB and its partners received funding to run a pilot project with 15 landowners to test the VIP concept. The University of Oregon Community Planning Workshop (CPW) was tasked with evaluating the pilot project to provide valuable recommendations for program redesign and enhancements as it moves toward full roll-out in 2016.

A so-called process evaluation focuses on programmatic processes with the intent of identifying programmatic elements that are effective and those that need improvement. The nature of the VIP Pilot lends itself to a process evaluation, since it is short term (one year) and is intended to test various components of the VIP programmatic structure.

Background

The McKenzie River (Map 1-1) is the sole source of drinking water for nearly 200,000 people. In 2001, the Eugene Water & Electric Board (EWEB) established a Source Water Protection Program to evaluate and mitigate risks to water quality. The overall concept of source water protection is to measure the balance between watershed health and human use over time and implement actions that maintain a healthy balance for production of exceptional water quality.

As part of its Source Water Protection Program, EWEB is exploring the possibility of rewarding good stewards of land within the McKenzie Basin. The protection of riparian land is a best practice management technique for the protection of drinking water supplies across the country (Trust for Public Land, 2004). EWEB spent the last four years working with a collaborative stakeholder group and landowners to research, design and build this program, known as the Voluntary Incentives Program (VIP).

In 2014, EWEB initiated a pilot of the Voluntary Incentive Program (VIP) funded through a grant from the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB). The VIP pilot intended to test key systems related to implementation of the program—including site assessments, agreements, and accounting systems. The pilot was also intended to refine the roles of the VIP partner organizations in program implementation. The VIP pilot included 15 landowners in the McKenzie Watershed.

This report presents the results of CPW’s evaluation of the 2014-15 VIP pilot.

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1 http://www.eweb.org/sourceprotection
Purpose and Methods

In 2013, CPW conducted research and helped facilitate a series of meetings with Landowners in the McKenzie River basin in an effort to develop a framework for VIP. That report, “Programmatic Recommendations for EWEB’s Voluntary Incentives Program” outlined the core elements of the VIP. The report also included a set of recommendations specific to the 2014-15 VIP pilot.

This report presents a “process” evaluation of the VIP pilot. A so-called process evaluation focuses on programmatic systems and processes with the intent of identifying programmatic elements that are effective and those that need improvement. The nature of the VIP Pilot lends itself to a process evaluation, since it is short term (one year) and is intended to test various components of the VIP programmatic structure.

This report does not assess outcomes of the VIP program. At the highest level, VIP is working to maintain or enhance water quality in the McKenzie River above EWEB’s Hayden Bridge intake for its treatment plant that serves the greater Eugene area. This is intentional—the program has not yet been fully implemented and we would not expect to be able to measure programmatic outcomes at this time.

Organization of this Report

The remainder of this report is organized as follows:
Chapter 2: Framework – describes the VIP programmatic objectives and the evaluation framework used in this study.

Chapter 3: VIP Administration

Chapter 4: Proposed VIP Implementation Structure

Chapter 5: 2014 VIP Pilot Project

This report also includes two appendices:

Appendix A: Survey Instrument

Appendix B: Respondents’ Explanations of Responses
This chapter provides a framework for the Voluntary Incentive Program as one element of EWEB’s larger Drinking Water Source Protection Program. The chapter begins with an overview of EWEB’s Voluntary Incentive Program and concludes with a description of the evaluation framework used for this study.

**The Voluntary Incentive Program: An Incentive-Based Strategy for Source Water Protection**

The Voluntary Incentive Program is an incentive-based strategy that aims to protect existing healthy riparian areas along the McKenzie River. Because riparian areas provide important ecosystem functions necessary to maintaining water quality, the VIP will focus on maintaining and protecting existing healthy riparian areas.

As an incentive-based approach to source water protection, the VIP provides an attractive alternative to additional land use regulation. Acknowledging the value of healthy riparian areas, the Voluntary Incentive Program seeks to reward landowners for management practices that benefit water quality. These rewards include financial incentives such as cash payments or vouchers for in-kind services such as landscape plans or riparian area plantings. This incentive-based approach not only rewards good land management practices but also incentivizes property owners to restore the condition of their land, ultimately improving the ecological health of the watershed.

The incentive-based nature of the VIP is similar in some respects to a payment for ecosystems services (PES) program. Payment for ecosystem services (PES) programs derive from the premise that the natural capital found in ecosystems has quantifiable economic value that can be preserved and augmented through investment in good stewardship. PES programs are often incentive-based contractual agreements in which a specific service is voluntarily provided by a seller in return for financial compensation provided by a buyer.

The VIP is similar to a PES program in that the VIP seeks to reward landowners whose stewardship practices provide additional benefit to water quality. EWEB must ensure ratepayers that their investment in good stewardship results in the maintenance and/or improvement of current water quality levels. The VIP rewards landowners with a “dividend” for the preservation of habitat that provides the desired water quality benefits.

**Programmatic Goals and Objectives**

The goal Voluntary Incentive Program is to maintain water quality through the protection of intact and healthy riparian areas along the McKenzie River. To

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2 Institute for Natural Resources, “EWEB’s Vision for a Payment for Ecosystem Services – Voluntary Incentives Program”. February 2012
accomplish this the Voluntary Incentive Program has five main programmatic objectives:

- **Protect riparian and floodplain areas**: Healthy riparian areas provide a wealth of ecosystem services that are important to maintaining water quality. Recognizing the importance of maintaining existing healthy riparian areas, EWEB envisions that investments in riparian protection along the McKenzie River will result in the long-term preservation of McKenzie River drinking water quality.

- **Reward good land stewards**: To protect and maintain existing healthy riparian areas, the Voluntary Incentive Program seeks to reward landowners along the McKenzie River for management practices that benefit water quality. By rewarding good land stewardship, the VIP incentivizes beneficial land management practices. These incentives will also entice more landowners to restore the condition of their land, ultimately improving the ecological health of the watershed.

- **Maintain transparency**: One important goal of the Voluntary Incentive Program is to maintain transparency. A transparent process assures ratepayers that their investments are well managed. It also provides the foundation for building trust and developing relationships with landowners in the McKenzie Basin. To maintain transparency, EWEB will provide easily accessible and up-to-date information on their website.

- **Maintain effective communication**: Effective communication is an important goal of the VIP and is essential to the success of the Program. The Voluntary Incentive Program provides EWEB with an avenue to raise public awareness about where their drinking water comes from and how land management practices affect water quality. This includes effectively communicating the correlation between land stewardship in the McKenzie Basin and the drinking water quality in Eugene.

- **Provide an avenue to other stewardship initiatives**: The VIP can serve as a focal point for a range of stewardship initiatives benefiting water quality in the McKenzie Basin. Connections established through the VIP, allows EWEB to direct landowners to appropriate services and partner organizations. For example, landowners whose property is not eligible to enter the VIP may still benefit from direction to other EWEB or partner organization stewardship initiatives such as restoration, conservation easements, and septic systems repair.

### Programmatic Structure and Implementation

The 2013 CPW “Programmatic Recommendations” report describes the core elements of VIP. The VIP is one of about a dozen source water protection

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3 Institute for Natural Resources, “EWEB’s Vision for a Payment for Ecosystem Services – Voluntary Incentives Program”. February 2012

4 ibid
strategies EWEB is pursuing. The VIP process includes four programmatic elements: (1) outreach and recruitment, (2) property assessment for determining protection and/or restoration pathway in the VIP, (3) landowner agreements, and (3) property monitoring for compliance. Figure 2-1 illustrates the four programmatic elements.

**Figure 2-1. Overview of VIP Program Structure**

![Program Elements Diagram]

Source: Programmatic Recommendations for EWEB’s Voluntary Incentives Program, CPW, 2013

The process shown in Figure 2-1 is intended to follow a chronological order. The first step is outreach to recruit potential participants within the VIP program boundary. Fifteen landowners are participating in the VIP pilot. Program partners will assist EWEB in assessing interested landowners properties for determining protection and/or restoration pathway in VIP. Landowners whose property is eligible for protection of healthy riparian forests or restoration of degraded areas and desired to enroll in the program will enter into some form of agreement with EWEB. Enrolled properties will participate in riparian management actions and periodic monitoring to assure compliance with the terms of the agreement and document the benefits of riparian protection and restoration efforts.

The VIP program relies heavily on external partners to implement key elements of the VIP. The core partners include:

- **Cascade Pacific RC&D: Cascade Pacific Resource Conservation & Development** will serve as the fiscal agent for the VIP program. They will manage the fiscal transactions between EWEB and landowners, other VIP partners, and corporate and local business sponsors as part of the menu of incentives.

- **LCOG: Lane Council of Government**’s role in the VIP is to provide technical assistance on property assessment and monitoring using their Geographic Information System (GIS) capacity. LCOG’s services will include remote sensing using Laser Imaging Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) data and other tools that will inform the assessment and monitoring process.
• **UWSWCD: Upper Willamette Soil and Water Conservation District**’s role in the VIP is to provide the assessment and/or monitoring of property within the boundary. They will work with the landowner and EWEB to establish and implement protection and/or restoration management plans and will maintain positive relationships with landowners after signing agreements.

• **MRT: McKenzie River Trust** will provide technical support for the development of landowner agreements and play a role in the referral services designed as incentives within the VIP. The referrals will be for landowners interested in engaging into a more permanent conservation easement.

• **MWC: McKenzie Watershed Council** will work to develop and administer the landowner riparian assessment to determine protection and/or restoration pathways, develop and implement riparian management plans, perform monitoring of landowner properties enrolled in the VIP, and maintain positive relationships with landowners.

**VIP Pilot Evaluation Framework**

Process evaluation requires a framework or methodology that describes the key elements in the evaluation. As part of the VIP pilot evaluation, CPW developed an evaluation framework that described data collection methods and key programmatic linkages. The evaluation presented in this report largely relies on qualitative methods including a survey of landowners enrolled in the VIP pilot, interviews with landowners, interviews with representatives of the partner organization, and interviews with other stakeholders. The first step in the evaluation was to develop a so-called “logic model.”

A logic model is a graphic representation of the linkages between programmatic inputs, outputs, and outcomes. It is a simple description of the program action that demonstrates a logical chain of connections showing what the program is supposed to accomplish. The inputs, outputs, and outcomes reflect a series of “if-then” relationships. To elaborate, if these resources are invested in the program (inputs), then these activities will happen (Outputs – activities), if these activities occur, then these people will be reached (Outputs - participation), if these people are reached, then this will be the short, medium, and long term results (Outcomes).

**EWEB VIP Program Logic Model**

The following is a narrative that complements the logic model (see Figure 2-2). The situation resulting in the proposed program is that the McKenzie River is showing signs of water quality degradation. EWEB established a Water Source Protection Program to evaluate and mitigate risks to water quality. Part of the program is looking at rewarding good stewards of land (i.e. EWEB VIP Program) within the McKenzie Basin to preserve drinking water quality.
Inputs

To develop the EWEB VIP Program, operational and administrative fiscal expenditures, staff time, research/data collection, partnerships, and informational/outreach resources are necessary. Fiscal expenditures are needed not only to operate the program, but pay for the landowner agreements. Staff time is needed to ensure the program is implemented and partnerships are maintained. Research and data collection is needed to understand what works well and doesn’t work well for the program so roles/partnerships/and programmatic elements can be refined if needed. Partnerships are needed to build capacity and share expertise. Informational/outreach resources are needed to provide proper information to participants or potential participants of the program.

Outputs

With the investment of these inputs, several outputs can result (stated as if-then relationships):

1. If these resources, particularly website/dashboard resources and staff time are invested, then an outreach and recruitment strategy will be created. This activity can reach interested and participating landowners in the McKenzie River Basin by showing up-to-date information about the VIP and illustrate the program’s benefits.

2. If EWEB invests in partnerships and fiscal expenditures, then it will help develop property assessments for determining landowner pathways in the VIP (i.e., protection and/or restoration). This activity can involve Lane Council of Government (LCOG), Upper Willamette Soil and Water Conservation District (UWSWCD), and McKenzie Watershed Council (MWC).

3. If EWEB invests in partnerships and staff time, they can establish guidelines for landowner agreements. This includes assistance from Cascade Pacific Resource Conservation & Development (Cascade Pacific RC&D) and the McKenzie River Trust (MRT).

4. If partnerships and research/data collection are input to the program, then conducting property monitoring for compliance can occur. This involves MWC, UWSWCD, LCOG and landowners.

5. If staff time and partners take the time to invest in the program, then discussions can occur with the advisory committee. This activity will reach interested landowners in the McKenzie River Basin and make sure the program is developed in a way that is beneficial and open to landowners.

6. If research and data collection is an input, then it allows the program and these preceding activities to be refined.
Figure 2-2. EWEB VIP Evaluation Logic Model

**Situation:** The McKenzie River is showing signs of water quality degradation. EWEB established a Water Source Protection Program to evaluate and mitigate risks to water quality. Part of the program is looking at rewarding good stewards of land (i.e. EWEB VIP Program) within the McKenzie Basin to preserve drinking water quality.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inputs</th>
<th>Outputs Activities</th>
<th>Participation</th>
<th>Outputs -- Impact Medium</th>
<th>Long</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fiscal Expenditures - Operational - Administrative</td>
<td>Create an outreach and recruitment strategy</td>
<td>Interested landowners in McKenzie River Basin</td>
<td>Increase awareness of VIP program</td>
<td>Maintain water quality through the protection of intact and healthy riparian areas along the McKenzie River</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff Time</td>
<td>Develop property assessments for eligibility into the VIP</td>
<td>LCOG, UWSWCD, MWC</td>
<td>Leverage the expertise and capacity of partner organizations</td>
<td>Meet program objectives:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research/Data Collection</td>
<td>Establish guidelines for landowner agreements</td>
<td>MRT, Cascade Pacific RC&amp;D</td>
<td>Refine partner organization roles</td>
<td>- Protect and restore riparian and floodplain areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partnerships - Cascade Pacific RC&amp;D - LCOG - UWSWCD - MRT - MWC</td>
<td>Conduct property monitoring for compliance</td>
<td>MWC, UWSWCD, and landowners</td>
<td>Create mutual trust between EWEB, program partners, and landowners</td>
<td>- Reward good land stewards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources - Website - Dashboard</td>
<td>Hold discussions with advisory committee</td>
<td>Interested landowners in McKenzie River Basin</td>
<td>Increase transparency of program and gauge interest</td>
<td>- Maintain transparency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hold accountability and reliability for all stakeholders</td>
<td>- Maintain effective communication</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>- Provide an avenue to other stewardship initiatives</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Assumptions**
Landowners are interested in voluntarily protecting riparian areas. Partners are carrying out roles and responsibilities outlined in pilot program.

**External Factors**

Rev. 7/09
Outcomes

Assuming each responsible party carries out these activities and reach the correct people, the VIP program intends to result in several short, medium, and long-term outcomes.

Short Term Outcomes

Several of the activities can result in short term outcomes that address some of the concerns and initial goals of the program.

1. Outreach and recruitment. If EWEB creates an outreach and recruitment strategy then it will increase awareness and transparency of the VIP program and allow EWEB to gauge interest. This is vital since advisory committee members stressed the importance of transparency because it allows landowners to understand how the program works.

2. Riparian Condition Assessments. If riparian condition assessments for the VIP occur, then it leverages the expertise and capacity of partner organizations. In addition, this allows landowners to start to build relationships with these organizations and understand the benefits to protection and restoration, as well as techniques they can utilize if they participate.

3. Guidelines. Guidelines are necessary for landowners to feel comfortable entering the program, and for EWEB to leverage the expertise and capacity of partner organizations, and maintain accountability. It is important these agreements are flexible and inclusive agreements so they don’t deter participation. This outcome is essential since landowners have influence within the community and can affect recruitment and participation.

4. Monitoring. Although getting landowners comfortable to enter into the program is vital, it is necessary to evaluate the protection and restoration of the riparian area because it can impact the expansion of the program. Therefore, the program must have a monitoring component. If partners and landowners assist in riparian monitoring for compliance, then it again not only leverages the expertise and capacity of partner organizations but holds accountability and reliability for all stakeholders.

Medium Term

Overcoming some of the concerns and attaining the initial goals of the program, will allow the program and relationships to strengthen and evolve which can encourage a successful program expansion. If an awareness of the program is expanded, landowners feel comfortable entering into the program, and transparency of the program is increased then it will help build relationships within the larger community. Again, this is necessary for successful recruitment and expansion.

If EWEB can leverage the expertise and capacity of partner organizations, it allows them to refine partner organization’s roles as everyone learns more about the program. If transparency of the program is increased and stakeholders are held
accountability and landowners feel comfortable entering into the program then a mutual trust is created among all participants. Essentially, the short term outcomes can contribute new outcomes that increase the number of participants entering the program.

Long Term

Overall, if these short term and medium term outcomes come to fruition, then it will lead to the main goal of the program, which is to maintain water quality through the protection of intact and healthy riparian forests and restoration of degraded areas along the McKenzie River. Attaining this goal will meet program objectives to protect and restore riparian and floodplain areas, reward good land stewards, maintain effective communication, and provide an avenue to other stewardship initiatives.

Evaluation Methodology

The evaluation gathered information through interviews with program partners and landowners surveys. Questions focused on all elements of the pilot program as outlined in the CPW programmatic recommendations report and gauged if the inputs and outputs are achieving the intended outcomes as highlighted in the logic model. Questions included: marketing/branding, outreach, customer service and support, field evaluations, agreements, and other programmatic elements. The evaluation is intended help EWEB learn more about the perceived success of the pilot program from landowners, program partners and EWEB staff; program aspects that are particularly successful during the pilot; programmatic aspects that caused major issues or problems; and issues and opportunities related to working with program partners and landowners.

Interviews with Project Partners

CSC conducted interviews with staff of all five of the VIP program partners. The interviews were conducted in Summer 2015 as the one-year pilot program was wrapping up. The interviews were structured (e.g., CPW used an interview script) and focused on partner’s experiences and perceptions of the VIP pilot. The interviews included questions regarding recommendations the VIP partners have with respect to enhancing VIP. The core partners interviewed include: Cascade Pacific Resource Conservation & Development, Land Council of Governments, Upper Willamette Soil and Water Conservation District, McKenzie River Trust, and McKenzie Watershed Council.

Interviews with Landowners

As a first step in understanding landowner experience with the VIP, CPW conducted an online survey, through Qualtrics, of all 15 landowners enrolled in the VIP pilot. The survey asked questions that gather information about the experience and perspectives of landowners. The surveys were followed up by on-site interviews. The on-site interviews were organized by EWEB and focused on landowner experience with the pilot.
CHAPTER III: VIP PILOT PARTICIPANT PERSPECTIVES

This chapter summarizes landowner perspectives and experiences with the VIP pilot. It begins with a summary of the survey of landowners enrolled in the VIP pilot and concludes with a summary of key themes from the landowner interviews.

Landowner Survey Findings

This section summarizes the responses to the online survey of landowners. The survey included 21 questions related to the respondents’ participation in the proposed EWEB program. CPW received 10 responses to the online survey.

Many of the survey questions included close-ended responses. When possible, questions were followed by an area for comments. Respondents’ comments are summarized in this section. A copy of the survey instrument is included in Appendix A.

General Observations

Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements regarding your participation in the Voluntary Incentive Program pilot.

Overall, the response to the general statements regarding participation in the VIP pilot were positive. All survey respondents indicated that overall they enjoyed their experience with the EWEB VIP program. The responses indicate a confidence among respondents in regards to their knowledge of good stewardship practices.

Seventy percent agreed that VIP increased their knowledge of awareness of water quality and that VIP provided helpful stewardship information (Table 3-1). One landowner disagreed that the VIP pilot had enhanced their understanding of good stewardship practices; we expect this is due to a high level of knowledge prior to participating in VIP.

One respondent indicated that the role of partner organizations was unclear. However, 70% agreed at some level with understanding partner roles. Another area where responses indicate a lack of strongly agreeing is in increasing the sense of ownership in the greater McKenzie Watershed as a result of participation.
Table 3-1. Level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements regarding your participation in the Voluntary Incentive Program pilot

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Total Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have enjoyed my experience with the VIP pilot</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIP has increased my awareness of water quality in the McKenzie River Basin</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I already considered myself a good steward to the McKenzie Watershed before enrolling in the pilot</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIP confirmed that I was a good steward of my property</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIP provided information that will allow me to be a better steward of my property</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel a greater sense of ownership in the McKenzie Watershed as a result of my participation in the VIP pilot</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have a greater awareness of the condition of my property as a result of participation in the VIP pilot</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have a greater awareness of good stewardship practices as a result of participation in the VIP pilot</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I clearly understand the mission and objectives of the VIP program</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand the role of the VIP partner organizations</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EWEB materials help me understand the VIP</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: EWEB VIP Survey, CPW, 2015

Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements regarding your interactions with EWEB staff and VIP partner organizations while participating in the Voluntary Incentive Program pilot project.

This question asked respondents to identify the frequency and quality of their interactions with EWEB staff as well as VIP partner organizations. Table 3-2 shows the results of this question.

In their interactions with EWEB staff, the respondents show strong agreement in satisfaction of EWEB’s customer service. Four parts of the question received unsure responses – clarity and ease of understanding staff provided information, communication intervals, and promptness and clarity of responses. No parts of the question received disagreement.

EWEB staff’s courtesy and professionalism received the highest ‘strongly agree’ responses with 80%. VIP partner interactions, comprehension of proper contacts, and promptness followed, all with 70% strongly agreeing, respectively.
Table 3-2 Level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements regarding interactions with EWEB staff and VIP partner organizations while participating in the Voluntary Incentive Program pilot project

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Total Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EWEB staff was courteous and professional in our interactions</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information provided by staff regarding the VIP was clear and easy to understand</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EWEB staff communicated with me at appropriate intervals</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EWEB staff were prompt in response to my questions</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The quality of my interactions with EWEB staff was high</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIP partners were courteous and professional in our interactions</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My contacts with EWEB partner organizations have been met with clear and prompt responses</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understood who to contact if I had questions about VIP</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: EWEB VIP Survey, CPW, 2015

The amount of contact I had with EWEB staff regarding my participation was:

A follow up to the level of agreement or disagreement with interactions with EWEB and VIP partners, the survey asked respondents their opinion of the level of interaction (Table 3-3). The majority of respondents (89%) indicated they found the level of contact to be ‘about right’. None of the respondents reported too much contact by EWEB staff. Only one respondent felt there was too little contact.

Table 3-3. Amount of contact with EWEB staff

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The amount of contact I had with EWEB staff regarding my participation was</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Too much</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About Right</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too Little</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: EWEB VIP Survey, CPW, 2015

Communications and VIP Information

What is your preferred method of contact?

All of the respondents preferred email as the method of contact.
Table 3-4. Preferred method of contact

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is your preferred method of contact?</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phone</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mail</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (Specify)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: EWEB VIP Survey, CPW, 2015

Prior to this survey, had you visited EWEB’s VIP website?

Sixty percent of respondents indicated they had visited the VIP website. While this result suggests that most pilot participants were aware of the website and its resources, EWEB should be more systematic in informing landowners about VIP resources.

Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements regarding the VIP website.

Responses indicate that the VIP website generally provides useful information and easily navigated (Table 3-5). In both cases, all respondents indicated they agreed with both qualities. While respondents reported that the site provides useful information, half of the respondents reported not using the website for up-to-date information on VIP. Some participants may prefer in-person contact—one landowner commented, “I used direct interaction with the staff, who I knew prior to the VIP pilot, to get information rather than the website.”

Table 3-5. VIP website usefulness and navigability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Total Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The VIP website provides useful information about VIP</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EWEB’s VIP website is easy to navigate</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I used the VIP website to stay up to date on the pilot project</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: EWEB VIP Survey, CPW, 2015

Site Assessment

Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements regarding the site assessment process.

Responses regarding the site assessment were mixed and suggest some improvements could be made to the site assessment process (Table 3-6). The question also covered a varied of aspects regarding the assessment process, from scheduling the assessment to qualifications of the assessors and final report clarity.

5 Source: EWEB VIP Survey, CPW, 2015
Most respondents (80%) found scheduling simple. However, those who did not agree (20%) felt strongly that the process was not simple.

Regarding the on-site assessment work—the results were somewhat varied. A majority of respondents found the individuals doing the assessments to be knowledgeable (80%), approachable (80%), and helpful with cultivating understanding (70%). Note that two respondents strongly disagreed with the statements.

Responses regarding the methods and the reporting of findings were mixed, with some respondents agreeing they understood the methods and findings and others disagreeing. Again, this suggests some improvement could be made to the assessment process and how the results are reported. It should be noted that the survey was conducted prior to landowners receiving the riparian assessment reports, which helped explain methods and results.

**Table 3-6. Level of agreement or disagreement with statements regarding the site assessment process**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Total Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scheduling the assessment was simple</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The individual(s) conducting my site assessment were knowledgeable</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The individual(s) conducting my site assessment were approachable</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The site assessment process was respectful of my privacy</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The site assessment process was engaging and educational</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand the methods and criteria used to conduct the site assessment</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The determination report provided at the conclusion of the assessment clearly presented the findings and recommendations</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: EWEB VIP Survey, CPW, 2015

**Agreements**

Please indicate the type of agreement you received.

Six of the nine respondents to this question received the Protection/Restoration agreement.

**Table 3-7. Type of agreement received by participant**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of agreement</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Protection/Restoration</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naturescaping</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: EWEB VIP Survey, CPW, 2015
Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements regarding the VIP Restoration/Protection agreement.

This question gauged users understanding and comfort regarding the VIP agreement. Of the responses, there were somewhat mixed feelings regarding the agreement’s clarity, with half agreeing that it was clear and the other half uncertain. Some of their reasoning is available in the comments provided in Appendix B. Similar responses were collected regarding information provided by EWEB staff.

Respondents reported better understanding of specific aspects of the agreement. Understanding regarding property restrictions and easement conditions received higher (17%) ‘strong agreement’ and ‘agreement’ (33%). EWEB should pay close attention to landowner perceptions of the specific legal vehicles used in the agreements—the pilot program involved a relatively small number of participants and it is possible that a significant number of basin landowners may not be willing to agree to an easement.

Increased positive feedback relating to program transparency was also indicated. No property owners reported discomfort with an EWEB easement.

Uncertain or neutral agreement was indicated with reference to an alternative legal vehicle preference.

Table C-5 Level of agreement or disagreement with VIP Restoration/Protection agreement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Total Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The contents of the VIP agreement were clear</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EWEB staff provided enough information about the landowner agreement and compensation options</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand the restrictions associated with my property under the VIP agreement</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am comfortable with the idea of EWEB having an easement on my property</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am comfortable with the amount of time the easement will be in effect</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would prefer another legal vehicle over an easement</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The agreement was flexible with my needs and expectations</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The program was transparent</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: EWEB VIP Survey, CPW, 2015

Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements regarding the VIP Naturescaping agreement.

Participation in the VIP Naturescaping agreement was limited to two participants. For each aspect surveyed, responses were split between strong agreement and neutral.
Table C-6. Statements regarding the VIP Naturescaping agreement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Total Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The contents of the VIP agreement were clear</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EWEB staff provided enough information about the landowner agreement</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand the restrictions associated with my property under the VIP agreement</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The agreement was flexible with my needs and expectations</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The program was transparent</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: EWEB VIP Survey, CPW, 2015

Final Thoughts

After participating in the VIP pilot, will you enroll in the full VIP program?

Half of the respondents indicated that they intend to enroll in VIP; the other half are undecided. None of the respondents indicated they would not enroll in VIP. It appears that most of the undecided landowners continue to have questions about the program. Comments provided by survey respondents included:

- I’m not sure as one of the very small properties if we can add a great deal to the program.

- Right now more information is required regarding non-monetary compensation to join the VIP. I do not think owners will sign away rights for small yearly payments, I do feel small landowners would be more willing to sign away rights if the VIP took care of the subject riparian zone for them (possibly just take care of the first 100 feet from the river). I also understand that the maintenance/restoration form of payment is likely too onerous for current VIP funding.

- Several questions need to be answered, mainly around restrictions, encumbrances and other impacts.

Table C-7. Future enrollment in full VIP program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: EWEB VIP Survey, CPW, 2015

The results suggest that EWEB should pay close attention to landowner comments as it moves towards full implementation. It also suggests that VIP will not be the right vehicle for every landowner.
Will you recommend the VIP to other landowners?

Although half of respondents were undecided in their future full VIP program enrollment, 80% were willing to recommend the VIP program to other landowners.

### Table C-8. Recommendation of VIP program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: EWEB VIP Survey, CPW, 2015

### Personal Interviews

CPW staff joined with members of the assessment teams to meet with each VIP pilot participant in their homes in July and August, 2015. Each interview included a detailed review of the assessment report and landowner agreement, and provided the landowners the opportunity to ask questions or communicate concerns about the VIP. This section provides a summary of common themes that arose during conversations with landowners about the assessment report, the draft landowner agreement, and their general sentiments regarding the VIP.

### Assessment Reports

- **Excited to get assessment** - Regardless of whether landowners were likely to pursue enrollment in the VIP, the majority of pilot participants expressed excitement and gratitude for the information within the assessment reports.

- **Scoring methods were difficult to understand** - Multiple landowners had questions regarding the scoring techniques, leading a few to ask the question; “Is a high score good or bad?” or, “Do these work like golf scores where the low ones are good?” This issue was addressed in later reports after the assessment teams began including the total possible points alongside each score.

- **Once interpreted, scoring results were broadly agreeable** - The personal visits between the assessment staff and landowners was essential to the landowners’ understanding of the scoring results. While the assessment reports could be more easily interpreted, a face-to-face interaction with landowners is necessary to adequately communicate the significance of scoring results.

- **Assessment report maps give landowners the impression that they will not be able to select which parts of their property will be enrolled** - Although landowners have the option to select which parts of their property they do not wish to enroll, the maps provided within the assessment report are a source of confusion.
• **Landowners expressed a lack of clarity regarding their degree of autonomy when enrolling land** - A handful of landowners were not aware of their option to enroll some parts of their land while excluding other parts. The map included with the report was the primary source for this confusion; some landowners assumed the entirety of the surveyed riparian area was required for enrollment. This element of free choice could be a determining factor between enrollment and non-enrollment.

• **Landowners expressed a lack of clarity regarding the definition of the boundaries of their riparian area** - The landowner reports mention “riparian area,” “riparian habitat,” “riparian forest,” and “riparian buffer.” While these each terms have different definitions, a handful of landowners were unsure of their differences and similarities in definition and physical appearance.

**Landowner Agreements**

• **Lack of clarity surrounding prohibited uses** - Prohibited actions were a primary concern among landowners, leading several to ask the question, “What can I not do?” Multiple landowners expressed a desire to preserve light recreational uses, but are unsure what types of actions are allowable under a VIP agreement.

• **Encumbrances are a primary concern** - The implications of twenty-year easements are a source of concern for landowners. Many participants plan on selling or bequeathing their properties—potentially within twenty years. This stirs uncertainty regarding the marketability of their property.

• **Enforcement is a source of concern and uncertainty** – The Programmatic Recommendations report identified enforcement and a key issue. This is related to accountability, equity and fairness – EWEB needs to demonstrate the program is having the intended results. “This seems great with you guys here, but once I sign, we might not be talking to someone as nice as you.” This quote from a landowner sums up the unease surrounding commitment for a handful of participants.

• **Landowners indicated that it was not about the money** - A handful of participants indicated the proposed dollar value of their VIP incentive was not much of an incentive. Landowners also indicated that their participation was not about money—it was more about sound stewardship. In many instances, landowners indicated that they were already committed to good stewardship and that VIP was an avenue for them to get better information about their property and actions that they could take.

• **Landowners like the idea of receiving assistance from work crews as an incentive** - Building from the limited cash incentives offered by the VIP, several participants liked the idea of receiving assistance from work crews to maintain or restore their riparian area, as well as to help out on other projects on their property.
• **Landowners want to see a personalized management plan prior to signing an agreement** - Multiple landowners would not want to sign an agreement until they had a detailed understanding of the management activities that would occur on their property.

**General Sentiments**

• **“I want to do it right.”** - Several landowners enthusiastically expressed desire to practice good stewardship on their property. Regardless of their desire to sign an agreement or allow an easement, most pilot participants were ideologically aligned with the VIP.

• **“We want to help, but we just need advice.”** - Building from the desire to practice good stewardship on their property, multiple landowners also acknowledged that they need guidance to effectively maintain or restore their riparian habitat.

• **The concept of adaptive management plans was well received** - Given that EWEB is seeking twenty-year easements and the dynamic nature of landscapes, it makes sense for the management plans to be open for periodic revision.

• **The concept of a two-year probationary period was well received** - Perhaps foreseeably; landowners were somewhat hesitant to commit to a twenty-year agreement with EWEB. A two-year period during which landowners are allowed to opt-out of the program has the potential to encourage enrollment.

• **There is some interest for a participatory, non-enrolled pathway** - This potential pathway would include a standardized property assessment, as well as a management plan with no official easement or perhaps even agreement. These landowners would purportedly implement the management with their own time and resources.

• **The sentiments of pilot participants may represent a positivity bias** - The cohort of landowners who opted to participate in the pilot is characterized by a pre-existing interest in stewardship. As the VIP seeks to attract a broader audience of enrollees, it will likely encounter landowners who are less enthusiastic about stewardship and less trusting of EWEB and partner organizations.
CHAPTER IV: FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter summarizes CPW’s key findings from the process evaluation of the 2014-15 VIP pilot. It concludes with a set of recommendations for next steps as EWEB moves into the next phase of implementation.

Key Findings

The findings presented in this section represent a synthesis of comments provided by VIP partners during discussions about their involvement and experience with program development and pilot rollout.

Program boundary

EWEB has invested considerable effort into the delineation of a VIP boundary. The rationale for the boundary is twofold: (1) to identify areas that are most appropriate to potentially enroll in VIP; and (2) to provide clarity to landowners on whether and which portions of the property might be eligible for enrollment in VIP.

Based on initial analysis from the 2013 “Programmatic Recommendations” report, the VIP program area boundary includes approximately 8,213 acres of riparian and floodplain areas along the McKenzie and its tributaries, of which 3,498 acres is vegetated. The average vegetation cover ratio for tax lot sections within the boundary is 55%. This includes approximately 198 miles of river and stream frontage (on both banks) and 2,696 individual tax lots. There are 2,188 permanent structures in the boundary with an average size of 1,513 ft².

Subsequent to the initial boundary analysis, EWEB and LCOG tested alternative methodologies for boundary determination. Those procedures are discussed at length in the “EWEB VIP Pilot Project Report” (EWEB, 2015) and are not repeated here. Moreover, we do not evaluate the merits of any method, but want to comment on some of the potential problems that relate to any method.

- **Boundary determination process is complicated and not transparent.** All of the models used by EWEB and LCOG are quite complicated by design and difficult to describe to laypersons. This erodes transparency in the process (e.g., the boundary determination is a “black box”) and challenges in communicating the analysis and determination.

- **Boundary determination process has created questions and confusion among some property owners about eligibility.** The output of the models is a line that demarcates lands that are eligible or ineligible. Because the determination is based on a computer model, the results are an approximation of the boundary that have the potential for error, particularly when ground-truthed. This creates complications in describing the boundary determination process and is inherently inflexible. Other methods have the problem of being perceived as arbitrary.
• **Does a detailed boundary serve the purpose of the program?** We offer an initial affirmative response to this question, but boundaries are in some respects inconsistent with EWEB’s programmatic objective of creating relationships with landowners in the basin. That said, boundaries are necessary in order to demonstrate benefits of the program—that is that VIP focuses on the lands that provide greatest benefits to water quality and return on investment.

**Partner roles**

**Findings**

• **Concerns about legal liabilities** - The lack of formal agreements between EWEB and the VIP partners raises questions regarding which parties bear legal liability in the event of an injury or lawsuit.

• **Concerns about governance** - Multiple partners have communicated a desire for a more formal decision-making and agreement system. Though the collaborative has thus far been effective, there are concerns about its efficiency in making difficult decisions.

• **Concerns about a single program champion** - The level of responsibility held by the Source Water Protection Manager was a source of concern for several program partners. In the event that he became unable to support the program, there does not seem to be enough stratified leadership to ensure continuity of operations.

• **Assessment coordination may become a limiting factor for enrollment** - Outreach and publicity aside, the number of enrollees the VIP can process at a time is limited by the time it takes for LCOG and TFT to coordinate with MWC and UWSWCD.

**Recommendations**

5. **Formalize agreements between EWEB and partner organizations** - Although partners have only expressed slight concern regarding the lack of formalized agreements, unforeseen circumstances could complicate the relationships between EWEB and VIP partners.

6. **Consider testing a subcommittee structure** - Subcommittees based on generalized roles could provide the VIP with a nimbler organizational and decision-making structure. While the open forum of communication embodied by the collaborative structure should continue, logistical decisions should be relegated to involved parties rather than the collaborative.

7. **EWEB should consider developing a “point person” to manage VIP** - Although a program champion is absolutely necessary to bring a program of this scale to action, the program architect should not necessarily function as the administrator.
8. Maintain a consistent group of staff with whom participants interact - Relationships are the foundational basis for VIP’s success. Maintaining the same individuals with whom landowners interact builds trust among landowners, and can help maintain a personal tone as the program grows to include a greater number of landowners.

Fiscal administration

Findings

- **Pilot was a successful learning experience** - Although there was a distinct learning curve associated with training for and using new software, Cascade Pacific staff is prepared to move toward roll out.

- **Cascade Pacific did not express concerns about capacity** - Their new software makes fiscal administration of multiple enrollees relatively simple. Upon roll out, there is no foreseeable reason for concern with the number of enrollees as far as fiscal administration is concerned.

Recommendations

The current course appears effective; CPW has no specific recommendations related to fiscal administration.

Landowner recruitment and outreach

Findings

- **Concerns about how to communicate complexity in a simple manner** - Currently, landowners do not seem to know what information is vital for them to understand and what information is unnecessary. Much of this was addressed during the visits between the assessment team and the landowners.

- **Landowners generally have favorable perceptions about the content and frequency of contact with EWEB staff** - Survey results found that a large majority of pilot participants felt the amount of interaction they had with EWEB staff was “about right.”

- **Survey results suggest some room for improvement on information sharing** - For several participants; their personal meetings with assessment crews and EWEB staff were their only source for programmatic context and information.

- **Continued interaction and stewardship of relationships is essential** - A major factor in many landowners’ choice to continue participation in the VIP was their history of positive interactions with EWEB and VIP partner staff.

- **The pilot did not engage enough of the general population of landowners to effectively test messaging strategies** - It is unclear whether the general population of landowners will view EWEB or the VIP partners as positively
as the pilot participants. Therefore, the VIP needs to craft a thoughtful approach to messaging about the VIP to broad audiences.

Recommendations

5. **Ensure that frequency and quality of contact between landowners and EWEB staff does not diminish with increasing numbers of participants** - The trusting relationships formed by EWEB staff and partners with landowners was one of the major victories of the pilot program. It is essential to VIP success for staff and partners to maintain positive, proactive contact with participants.

6. **Publish, maintain, and seek robust feedback on a dashboard website** - A useful, informative dashboard site can simplify programmatic elements for potential participants. This process is already underway.

7. **Establish standardized terminology for advertising or speaking about the VIP** - In instances where there may be multiple similar or interchangeable terms to describe programmatic details, staff and partners should default to a common set of terms and phrases. Although jargon contained within landowner reports and landowner agreements is modest by industry standards, there remains a distinct learning curve for potential participants.

8. **Emphasize voluntary nature of easement shape and size** - Although the pilot did not effectively test outreach, personal interviews with pilot participants indicated a poor understanding of the process by which VIP easements are created. Outreach efforts should emphasize the voluntary nature of enrollment details, as well as EWEB’s willingness to negotiate on the shape and size of easements.

Eligibility and Land Assessment

**Findings**

- **On-the-ground assessments were well coordinated between one another** - Assessment staff from the McKenzie Watershed Council and the Upper Willamette Soil and Water Conservation District coordinated their assessments well. The shared perspective and communication between them helped refine assessment and report-writing methods throughout the pilot.

- **Coordination between desktop and on-the-ground assessments is cumbersome** - During the pilot, McKenzie Watershed Council and the Upper Willamette Soil and Water Conservation District shared on-the-ground assessment duties. Meanwhile, LCOG staff and The Freshwater Trust split desktop assessment duties. Coordination between desktop assessments and on-the-ground assessment was characterized by a lack of shared perspective. Considerable effort was spent working to get agreement on the methods and techniques. Riparian area and unit delineations often differed between ground assessments and desktop.
assessments. Similarly, the partners associated with assessments are still working toward a mutually agreeable level of detail for assessments. Technology issues also proved to be a challenge and are the source of ongoing effort.

- **The assessment process can be time-intensive** - Although assessment methods are consistently being refined, accurate on-the-ground assessments on large properties can take a significant amount of time.

- **Follow-up visits between assessment staff and landowners are useful for building trust and understanding** - Though landowners relied perhaps too heavily upon partner staff for programmatic information, the continuity and transparency afforded by multiple site visits adds to the overall level of landowner trust.

- **Breaking up riparian area into multiple units is confusing for landowners and cumbersome for ground assessors** - The significance of having multiple assessment units was unclear for landowners when reading their assessment reports. Similarly, the units generated at the desktop level were not always compatible with on-the-ground characteristics of properties.

**Recommendations**

5. **Continue refining land assessment process** - Staff and partners associated with land assessments are still working to streamline their workflow. As the VIP approaches and begins rollout, there will be further opportunities to increase efficiency and arrive at a level of detail that avoids collecting too much data without sacrificing accuracy.

6. **Focus on high-priority lands and manage the number of VIP participants in the early roll-out** - Since the VIP pilot program was limited in size, it was unable to test how the VIP would handle high volumes of participants. Therefore, it will be important to focus on large, high-priority participants in the early phases of rollout. These larger properties can have a much greater impact on riparian function if successfully enrolled in the VIP. As staff and partners grow more accustomed to processing participants, the VIP can begin to include higher numbers of smaller lands.

7. **Ensure partners associated with assessments are appropriately staffed** - Although the hours spent on a per-assessment basis will decrease with continued process refinement, some program partners will require additional staff to accommodate increased enrollment. Although some of the work will fluctuate seasonally, the need for consistency in staff that interacts with landowners may require permanent staff additions.

8. **Consider establishing a set of thresholds and maps that identify properties that are only eligible for naturescaping agreements** - Partners associated with desktop assessments could potentially apply a
set of thresholds that would prevent excessive outlay of effort for ground assessment partners. Rather than engaging in a full assessment for these properties, a ground-truthing could confirm or deny the initial screening.

**Agreements**

Findings

- **Agreements need to be explained to landowners in person** - Despite efforts to make the draft landowner agreement easy for landowners to understand, several pilot participants simply wanted to discuss the agreement in person.

- **Compensation options were unclear in the draft landowner agreement** - Largely due to the nature of pilot programs, compensation details and options were unclear to landowners. It is worth noting that the incentives were not fully developed for the VIP pilot and concepts were tested with landowners to gauge in what direction the VIP should focus efforts. In this sense the VIP was truly a pilot that tested approaches. This may diminish from word-of-mouth communication between landowners about the program.

- **Enforcement is a source of uncertainty for landowners** - Landowner interviews revealed that details of enforcement were not clearly communicated by the draft landowner agreement.

- **Many landowners want a personalized management plan before signing the agreement** - Despite the inclusion of a two-year probationary period in the draft landowner agreement, landowners understandably want to know the kinds of actions set to take place on their land over the course of the twenty-year agreement.

- **Landowners prefer adaptive, rather than static, management plans** - As one landowner noted, an environment can change a lot in twenty years. Keeping management plans open to periodic revision can ensure the management plan remains relevant and agreeable throughout the course of the easement.

**Recommendations**

5. **Clearly and transparently define compensation options** - In addition to making the compensation options more easily understood by landowners; transparency can prevent the loss of landowner trust that could stem from inconsistencies in compensation from one property to the next.

6. **Provide draft management plan along with agreement** - To accommodate landowners’ desire for management plans up front, a draft management plan should be provided with agreements. Rather than providing a complete management plan, a draft can cut down on costs while still giving landowners an idea of what to expect.
7. **Investigate the potential for adaptive management plans** - Periodic revision of management plans can ensure plans remain relevant. EWEB and partners will need to decide how frequently to revisit management plans.

8. **Consider creating a non-agreement pathway for participation** - This potential pathway could include a standardized property assessment, as well as a management plan with no official easement or perhaps even agreement.

**Monitoring**

**Findings**

- **The pilot did not test monitoring techniques or processes** - Although the partner organizations charged with monitoring responsibilities upon rollout (MWC and UWSWCD) are familiar with riparian monitoring techniques, a workflow has not been established within the VIP framework.

**Recommendations**

2. **Monitoring and enforcement processes need to be highly transparent** - As much of VIP’s success hinges on personal interactions, enrollees need to know exactly what to expect in terms of monitoring and enforcement.

**General observations**

**Findings**

- **There are questions regarding the role of the collaborative and the VIP as more partners join** - The collaborative and the VIP have the opportunity and access to resources that may allow for the pursuit of broadening program boundaries both geographically and programmatically.

- **There may come a point where the VIP transcends EWEB’s traditional mission boundaries** - If the VIP grows considerably or begins to encompass other ecosystem services (shade credits, wetland mitigation, etc.), the EWEB Board of Commissioners may be required to provide formal direction.

- **It has yet to be seen whether payments to landowners are truly necessary, or whether those funds could be better used to directly fund restoration** - A majority of pilot participants expressed that they do not need an incentive to participate in the VIP.

**Recommendations**

2. **Facilitate a high-level discussion with the collaborative on their role and the VIP’s role** - The collaborative should have useful insight regarding these issues, and their perspective after developing and witnessing the pilot should be invaluable.
This appendix presents the survey instrument distributed to landowners enrolled in the VIP pilot.
EWEB Voluntary Incentive Program: Landowner Perspectives Survey

In 2014, the Eugene Water and Electric Board (EWEB) initiated a pilot of the Voluntary Incentives Program (VIP). As EWEB moves towards full implementation of the VIP, gathering information about the experience of landowners with the pilot is critical. This survey is one part of an evaluation of the VIP pilot that is being conducted by the University of Oregon’s Community Service Center. The results will be used to help EWEB refine the VIP and better serve both landowners in the McKenzie Basin as well as EWEB ratepayers.

You can move forward or back through the survey using the next/back buttons. We estimate the survey will take 10 to 15 minutes to complete.

Thank you for taking time to fill out this survey. If you have questions regarding this survey or the nature of the evaluation, please contact Bob Parker of the UO Community Service Center (bparker@uoregon.edu), or 541.346.3801.

Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements regarding your participation in the Voluntary Incentive Program pilot.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have enjoyed my experience with the VIP pilot</td>
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<tr>
<td>VIP has increased my awareness of water quality in the McKenzie River Basin</td>
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<tr>
<td>I already considered myself a good steward to the McKenzie Watershed before enrolling in the pilot</td>
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<td>VIP confirmed that I was a good steward of my property</td>
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<tr>
<td>VIP provided information that will allow me to be a better steward of my property</td>
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<td>I feel a greater sense of ownership in the McKenzie Watershed as a result of my participation in the VIP pilot</td>
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<td>I have a greater awareness of the condition of my property as a result of participation in the VIP pilot</td>
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<td>I have a greater awareness of good stewardship practices as a result of participation in the VIP pilot</td>
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<td>I clearly understand the mission and objectives of the VIP program</td>
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<td>I understand the role of the VIP partner organizations</td>
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<td>EWEB materials help me understand the VIP</td>
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Please comment on your responses.
Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements regarding your interactions with EWEB staff and VIP partner organizations while participating in the Voluntary Incentive Program pilot project.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EWEB staff was courteous and professional in our interactions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Information provided by staff regarding the VIP was clear and easy to understand</td>
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<tr>
<td>EWEB staff communicated with me at appropriate intervals</td>
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<td>EWEB staff were prompt in response to my questions</td>
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<tr>
<td>The quality of my interactions with EWEB staff was high</td>
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<tr>
<td>VIP partners were courteous and professional in our interactions</td>
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<tr>
<td>My contacts with EWEB partner organizations have been met with clear and prompt responses</td>
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<td>I understood who to contact if I had questions about VIP</td>
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</table>

The amount of contact I had with EWEB staff regarding my participation was:

- Too much
- About Right
- Too Little

Please comment on your responses:
What is your preferred method of contact?
- Phone
- Email
- Mail
- Other (Specify)

Prior to this survey, had you visited EWEB's VIP website? (http://www.eweb.org/sourceprotection/vip)
- Yes
- No

Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements regarding the VIP website.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The VIP website provides useful information about VIP</td>
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<td>EWEB's VIP website is easy to navigate</td>
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<td>I used the VIP website to stay up to date on the pilot project</td>
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Please comment on your responses:
Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements regarding the site assessment process.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scheduling the assessment was simple</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>The individual(s) conducting my site assessment were knowledgeable</td>
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<tr>
<td>The individual(s) conducting my site assessment were approachable</td>
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<tr>
<td>The individual(s) conducting my site assessment helped me understand what they were doing</td>
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<td>The site assessment process was respectful of my privacy</td>
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<tr>
<td>The site assessment process was engaging and educational</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>I understand the methods and criteria used to conduct the site assessment</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>The determination report provided at the conclusion of the assessment clearly presented the findings and recommendations</td>
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Please comment on your responses:

Agreements

Please indicate the type of agreement you received:

- ☐ Protection/Restoration
- ☐ Naturescaping
- ☐ Both
Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements regarding the VIP Restoration/Protection agreement.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
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<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The contents of the VIP agreement were clear</td>
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<td>EWWEB staff provided enough information about the landowner agreement and compensation options</td>
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<td>I understand the restrictions associated with my property under the VIP agreement</td>
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<td>I would prefer another legal vehicle over an easement</td>
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<td>I am comfortable with the amount of time the easement will be in effect</td>
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<td>I am comfortable with the idea of EWWEB having an easement on my property</td>
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<td>The agreement was flexible with my needs and expectations</td>
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<tr>
<td>The program was transparent</td>
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Please comment on your responses:


Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements regarding the VIP Naturescaping agreement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The contents of the VIP agreement were clear</td>
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<td>EWWEB staff provided enough information about the landowner agreement</td>
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<td>I understand the restrictions associated with my property under the VIP agreement</td>
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<td>The agreement was flexible with my needs and expectations</td>
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<td>The program was transparent</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Please comment on your responses:

Final thoughts...

After participating in the VIP pilot, will you enroll in the full VIP program?

- Yes
- No
- Undecided

Please explain your response:

Will you recommend the VIP to other landowners?

- Yes
- No
- Undecided

Please explain your answer:

Are there any specific actions EWEN could take to make the program better?
APPENDIX B: RESPONDENTS’ EXPLANATIONS OF RESPONSES

This appendix presents the written responses from survey respondents to open ended survey questions.

Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements regarding your participation in the VIP pilot.

• I expect the upcoming meeting to clarify my neutral responses. I shied away from "Strongly Agree" because I consider such sentiments preclude what I consider about the most positive things in one's life: a work in progress.
• Have enjoyed the intelligent discussions we've had about the McKenzie River and our property in particular.
• The question marked "Neither Agree nor Disagree" was marked such for I felt information to bring property up to VIP standards was not thoroughly covered, simultaneously I also believe that subject wasn't within the initial goals of building the pilot VIP.
• We knew we had some invasive grasses, and the pilot project confirmed this.
• We still have a lot of questions that will hopefully get cleared up at our next meeting

Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements regarding your interactions with EWEB staff and VIP partner organizations in the VIP pilot.

• While the program developed a little more slowly than I anticipated, the staff was always available for questions about the status and provided pertinent information without being asked at appropriate intervals.
• Being a member of the VIP (pilot) has been an educational process that I thoroughly enjoyed. I also feel my voice was heard with attentiveness.
• Since I do not currently live up the river, coordination was complicated, but accomplished.

Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements regarding the site assessment process.

• The site assessment was respectful of my "privacy," which gave me time to do other things while it was in progress, which meant I wasn't directly "engaged," - although the information relayed to me after the assessment was educational. Also, my neutral answer to "I understand the methods and criteria used to conduct the site assessment" reflects my statement that I wasn't directly "engaged."
• I have not received the determination report yet but I anticipate it will be the same high quality as the data gathering process.
• I appreciate the information garnered and shared regarding my property's evaluation. The energy I put forth to achieve the assessment was minimal as compared to the valuable information received, thank you! I do believe garden areas, whether planted with indigenous species or not, can add to the positive attributes to a healthy riparian zone. For instance, my garden attracts birds (and more) who spread seeds etc. to other areas.

• The layout of this question was confusing, because the agree side is on the right, rather than the left as in the previous questions.

• Need follow-up consultation regarding best enhancement actions in several areas. I understand this was not part of the prototype evaluation project. I believe that an assessment follow-up should have been made during the wet season to consider the impact of seasonal changes in riparian areas.

• The report was a bit confusing and left us with a lot of questions.

Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements regarding the VIP Restoration/Protection agreement.

• I hope neutral answers are not looked upon as insignificant to this survey. Hopefully, one can tell by my amount of comments regarding my responses that I am trying to be diligent. The neutral answers on this page are meant to show my indecision - pending a meeting on July 31st - regarding my commitment.

• Regarding the agreement, I feel it was clear if the subject property fully qualified for VIP funds as is. Regarding property that requires attention, it wasn’t as clear and possibly I’m missing some of the accompaniments. I do feel owners of parcels as small as mine would be interested in services (restoration and ongoing care of the subject area) over a very small payment to enter into a VIP agreement. My area measures small, but has high impact along the river’s bank. Throughout the VIP creation process, I’ve promoted the first 100 feet of land from the riverbank should receive a higher priority than land further from the river (even just for a canopy of trees to help reduce visible thermal pollution). The answers above that I marked "Neither Agree nor Disagree" were primarily marked such as a consequence of requiring more information.

• We have not yet had a meeting, so the agreement has not been finalized. Hope to do this in mid August.

• Not clear on all this yet

After participating in the VIP pilot, will you enroll in the full VIP program?

• I’m not sure as one of the very small properties if we can add a great deal to the program. Will know this better after our upcoming meeting the end of July.

• Regardless of the assessment results, I know there are areas that continue to need work both in the Riparian area between the river and the house and behind the house up to the road. I will use every available resource to continue making those improvements.

• Right now more information is required regarding non-monetary compensation to join the VIP. I do not think owners will sign away rights for
small yearly payments, I do feel small landowners would be more willing to sign away rights if the VIP took care of the subject riparian zone for them (possibly just take care of the first 100 feet from the river). I also understand that the maintenance/restoration form of payment is likely too onerous for current VIP funding.

- I fully support riparian restoration.
- I agree with the goals of the program, and think that it is flexible enough to fit our situation.
- I hope that the fact that most of "my" riparian area is state owned property does not eliminate it from rewarding my efforts.
- Several questions need to be answered, mainly around restrictions, encumbrances and other impacts.

Will you recommend the VIP to other landowners?

- I believe in conservation and - regardless of any personal decision - believe that those that might qualify for VIP should be made aware, so that they can make their own decision.
- Education is always good; property owners generally are people who love the river and value its good water, wildlife and beauty.
- I already have. My neighbor participated in the pilot on my recommendation.
- I require more information, but I will likely promote the VIP to landowners who stand to gain mightily from the program.
- I think all lands along the rivers should be maintained as riparian green zones.
- I would first like opportunity to review several real landowner recommendations. I know this work is still underway.

Are there any specific actions EWEB could take to make the program better?

- I stand by my statement about "works in progress," which is echoed by "a learning experience." And, so far, from the materials I have received, the program seems competently and congenially staffed, cohesive - and has provided good verbal and visual information through its "pilot" stage.
- A little more speed will help keep engagement high. The pilot did take a lot of time from the assessment to the report.
- I do feel the program should offer payment to maintain healthy qualified areas as well as offering solutions to correct areas who's physical characteristics fall short of VIP approval. And I believe that's where this pilot program is headed. I also believe that building a restoration system and handling small parcel landowners makes the creation of the program more difficult than just paying for current qualified land. Foremost, if landowners within the VIP zone hear the VIP proposal (especially for the first time), seize that opportunity to have something for everyone instead of creating a polarized split of the audience (qualified and not qualified, have and have nots). It all becomes a positive and the river will be better for it. Thank you for letting me participate in the creation of the VIP and more so, thank you for seeking innovative solutions for this need.