



# The Voluntary Stewardship Program October 2023 Stakeholder Survey



Washington State  
**Conservation  
Commission**

SCC presentation – January 18, 2024

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Washington State Conservation Commission  
VSP Coordinator

# Purpose

- To present the summary results of the 2023 Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP) stakeholder survey

# The Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP)

- Protects critical areas (wetlands, frequently flooded areas, aquifer recharge areas, geologically hazardous areas & fish and wildlife habitats) while maintaining agricultural viability
  - An alternative to the Growth Management Act
  - 27 counties have opted-in to VSP
  - Each county:
    - Created a county work group to provide strategic direction
    - Has an approved county-wide work plan with goals & benchmarks
  - Most counties use their local CD for the on-the-ground implementation
  - County-wide plans were approved and are being implemented with 2-year and 5-year reporting requirements
- 
- A map of Washington state with county boundaries labeled. The map uses two colors to indicate which counties have opted into the Voluntary State Planning process: light green and white. Light green counties include San Juan, Skagit, Okanogan, Ferry, Stevens, Island, Snohomish, Chelan, Douglas, Lincoln, Spokane, Jefferson, Grays Harbor, Mason, King, Kittitas, Grant, Adams, Whitman, Thurston, Pierce, Kootenai, Pacific, Lewis, Yakima, Franklin, Garfield, Waukegan, Cowlitz, Skamania, Clark, Benton, Walla Walla, and Columbia. White counties include Whatcom, Clallam, Clatsop, Tillamook, Multnomah, and Clackamas.





# VSP Outreach & Communications

- Meetings, including annual, quarterly and monthly
- Newsletter:
  - Nearly 1,000 subscribers
  - 84 issues over seven years
  - Variety of topics
    - Meeting notices
    - Policy and procedure notices & discussions
    - Success stories
- Webpage:
  - Required by statute for the Statewide Advisory Committee
  - Moved to its own website in 2023
- Surveys:
  - 2022 by SCC Communications staff
  - 2023 by both SCC Communications and VSP staff



January 2024

## In this issue:

### • Upcoming events:

- Jan. 18: Survey results presented to SCC commission
- Feb. 6: VSP stakeholder meeting
- March 12: Joint VSP Technical Panel & Statewide Advisory Committee meeting
- 2024 Joint meeting dates

- Joint TP & SAC meeting information
- County monitoring plan reminder
- Please use "Outcome 2" for monitoring billing
- Check out 2023 monitoring symposiums
- Public review coming soon! Washington Shrubsteppe Restoration & Resiliency Initiative Long-Term Strategy



Check out VSP resources:  
<https://www.vsp.wa.gov/>

## Upcoming events:

### Survey results presented to SCC commission

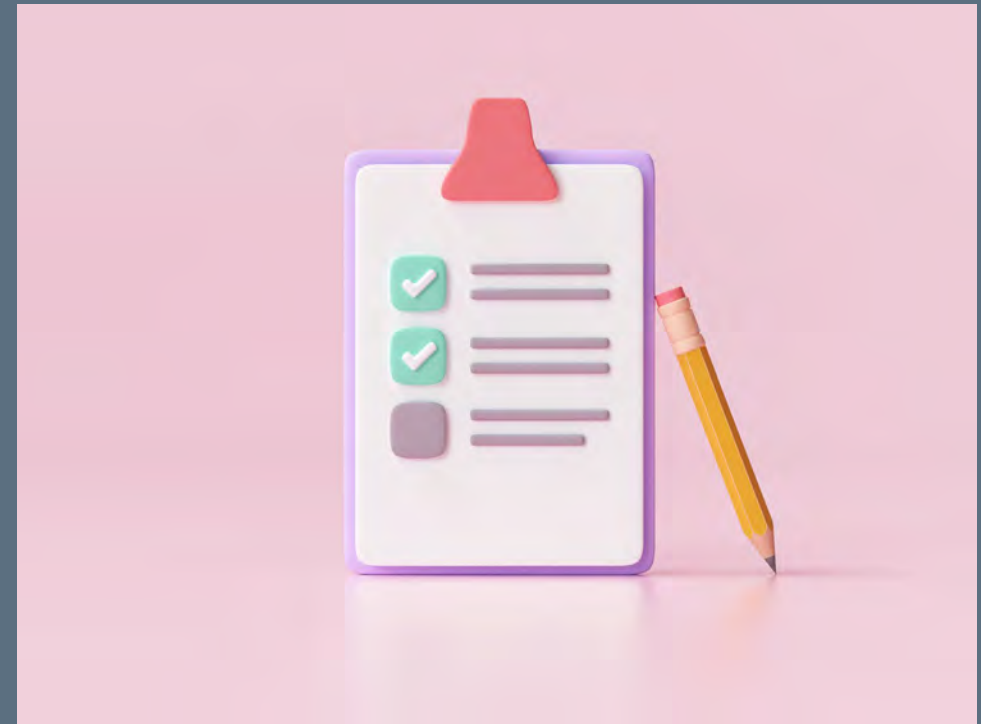
Jan. 18, 2024, Laeey and online

The VSP survey, conducted in October 2023, will be presented to the Conservation Commission at the **January meeting on January 18, 2024**. After consideration by the commissioners, the survey will be presented again at the VSP stakeholder meeting on February 6, 2024.

[Sign up for Zoom Link](#)

# 2022 Survey

- Conducted by SCC Communications staff in Summer 2022
- Purpose: directed at VSP communications and web page development
- 13 respondents
- 15 total questions:
  - 12 check-the-box questions
  - 3 short answer / open ended questions



# October 2023 VSP Survey

- VSP and SCC Communications staff worked together on the survey in late summer 2023
- Notice in the September 2023 newsletter
- Open to any VSP stakeholder
- October 2023 survey –
  - 54 respondents
  - 24 total questions:
    - 10 check-the-box questions
    - 14 short answer open ended questions

## Share your feedback in the VSP survey!

**The survey is open until Oct. 30. Thanks in advance for your participation.**

The State Conservation Commission (SCC) is looking ahead at how best to support the VSP program. We would like to hear your concerns, thoughts, and ideas as we begin this new biennium together. The survey should take 10-15 minutes to complete.

Anyone associated with VSP is invited to respond to this survey including county staff and leaders, technical service providers and conservation district staff, workgroup members, Tribal representatives, landowners, etc. Responses will be summarized and shared at a meeting with the VSP Statewide Advisory Committee and Technical Panel in late 2023.

[Take the survey](#)

# October 2023 VSP Survey



Thank you for participating in the 2023 Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP) feedback survey. This survey is open until October 30, 2023.

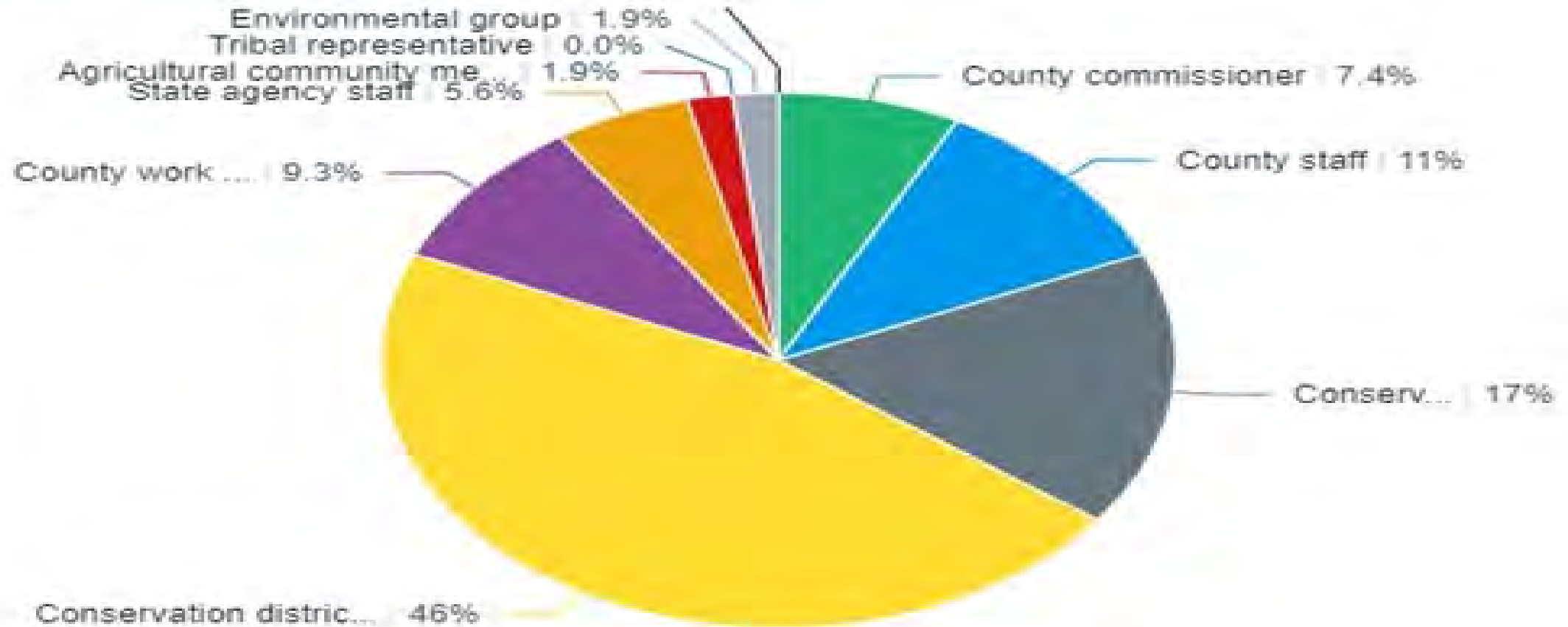
The State Conservation Commission (SCC) is looking ahead at how best to support the VSP program over the 2023-25 biennium. We would like to hear your concerns and ideas as we begin this new biennium together. Anyone associated with VSP is invited to take this survey including county staff and leaders, technical service providers and conservation district staff, workgroup members, Tribal representatives, landowners, etc. Responses will be summarized and shared at a meeting with the VSP Statewide Advisory Committee and Technical Panel in late 2023.

If you have any questions, please contact Sarah Wilcox at [swilcox@scc.wa.gov](mailto:swilcox@scc.wa.gov). Learn more about VSP at [www.vsp.wa.gov](http://www.vsp.wa.gov).

Start survey

# 63% of Respondents were CD staff or CD managers

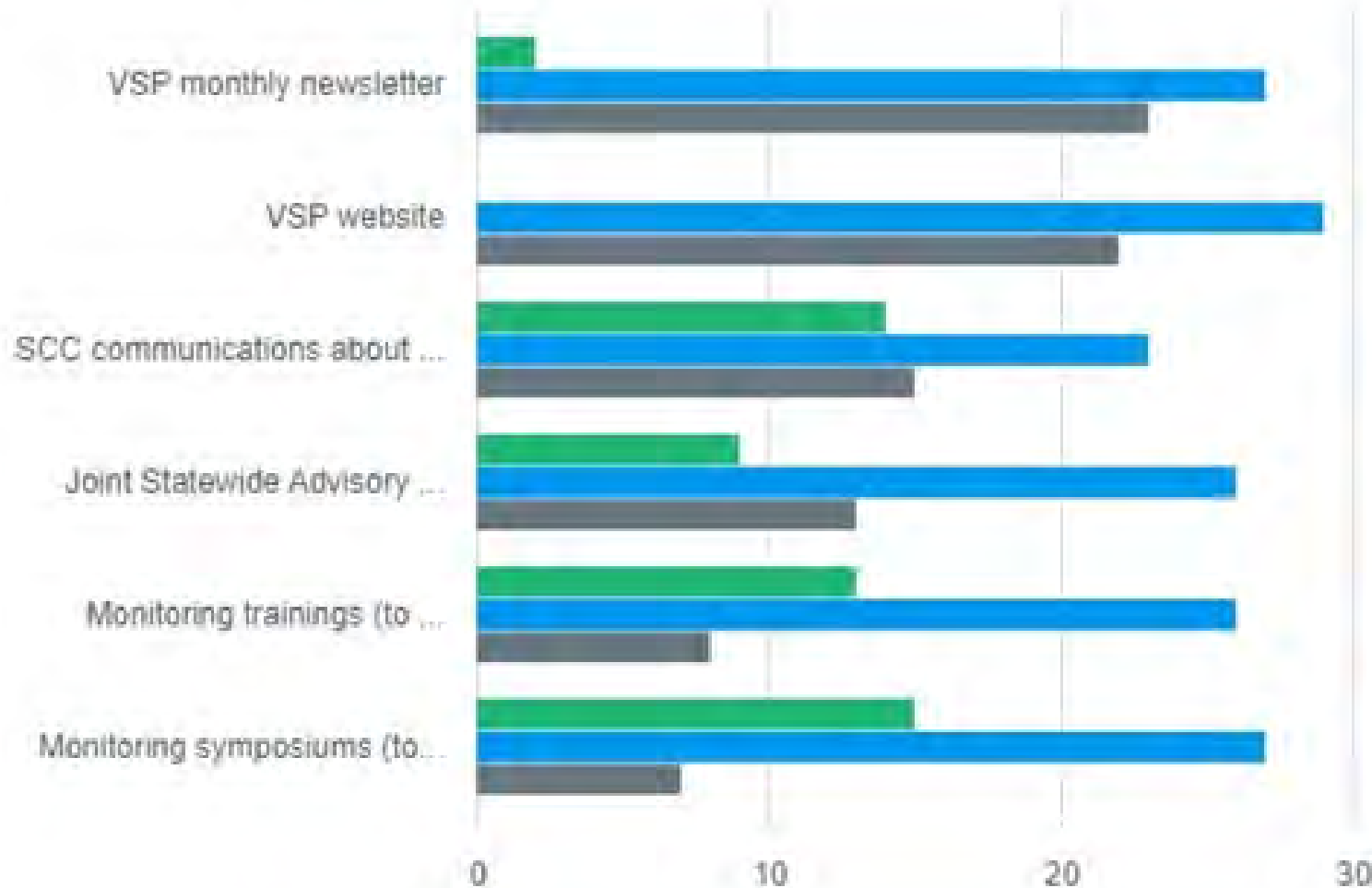
## 1. What is your main role in VSP?





# How Satisfied.....

## 4. How satisfied are you with...

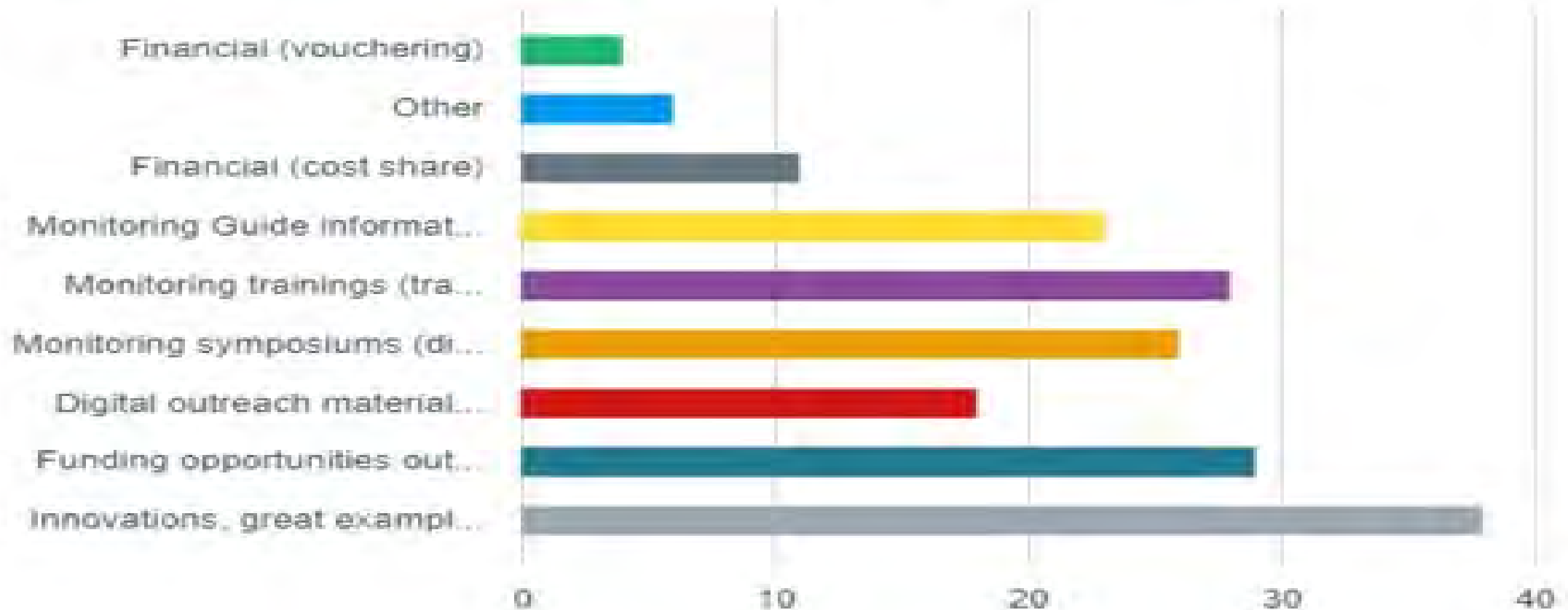


The majority were *very satisfied* and *somewhat satisfied* responses are in blue.

**Green** was *not satisfied*. *Monitoring symposiums and trainings and SCC communications about VSP* skewed toward *not satisfied*.

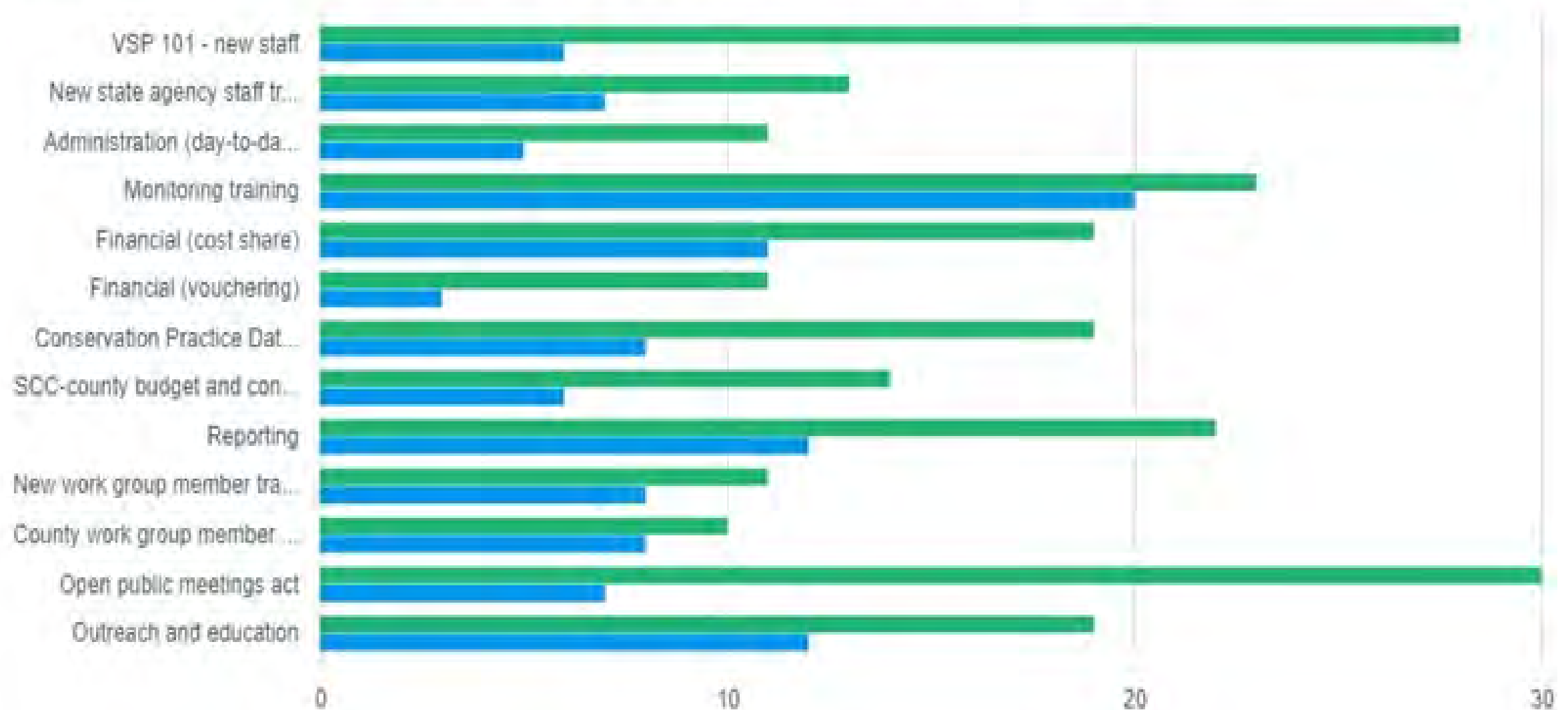
# What Information Would You Like More Of.....

## 8. What information about VSP would you like more of?



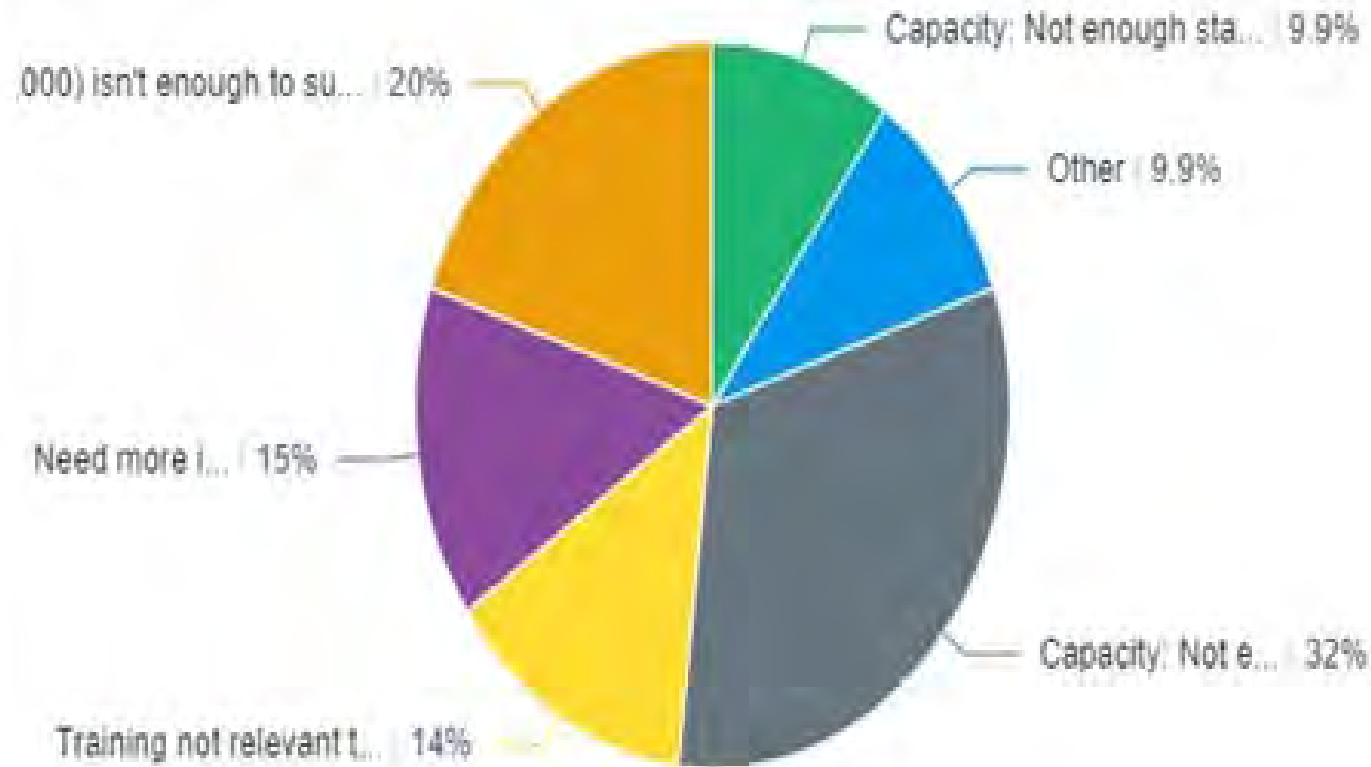
# What Trainings Have You Done; What Would You Like More Of

11. What trainings have you participated in and what training would you like MORE of?



# What Barriers Are There To Training...

15. What barriers are there to your participation in VSP trainings?



- *Not enough time to attend* (32%)
- *VSP allocation for training (\$4,000) is not enough to support travel to attend* (20%)
- *Need more in-person trainings* (15%),
- *Training not relevant to my needs* (14%)
- *Capacity: Not enough staff to cover duties while I am training* (9.9%)
- *Other* (9.9%)



# Summary of Main Themes

- Communications:
  - Including the newsletter, trainings, and website. Themes include making communications easier, simpler, and addressing a wider variety of VSP-related topics.
- SCC staff and CD staff capacity:
  - To attend county work group meetings, to put on and attend more trainings, including monitoring symposiums and field trainings, and to put on and attend more regional and statewide meetings
- SCC policy choices:
  - To review programmatic choices made in prior years, including locally-led versus state-led emphasis on control and direction of county work plans, reporting, outreach, education and monitoring; and new policy choices that could be made, including eliminating the two-year report or moving its due date, the monitoring plan requirement, and capital funding guidelines.
- February 6, 2024, VSP Stakeholder Feedback meeting – Spokane CD – 9am-12 noon – present these results, receive feedback, and brainstorm ideas for the program.



# Thank You!

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**Conservation Commission**