

Voluntary Stewardship Program

ESHB 1886

Effective date: July 22, 2011

Deadline for response on opting in: January 22, 2012

Notes from Planning Director's meeting with WSAC (Washington State Association of Counties) officials including Ron Shultz, Policy Director for the Washington State Conservation Commission, June 29, 2011, Olympia, WA.

The Voluntary Stewardship Program:

- Adds a new section to the Growth Management Act and the State Environmental Policy Act
- Promotes work plans to protect and enhance critical areas
- Maintains and improves long term viability of agriculture
- Focus and maximize voluntary incentive programs
- Encourages good riparian and ecosystem stewardship
- Is an alternative to historic approaches used to protect critical areas
- Use existing work and plans of local watersheds
- Encourage and foster a spirit of cooperation and partnership
- Rely on stewardship practices
- No cessation of agricultural activities
- Administered by the State Conservation Commission
- For Counties only, not Cities
- Emphasis on agricultural activities
- Not required to implement until funding is available
- Estimated to cost \$150,000 per county in year 1
- Estimated to cost \$100,000 per county in years 2&3
- Estimated to cost \$120,000 per county in years 4 thru 6
- Prior to opt in decision, Jefferson County shall engage affected and interested individuals and entities on whether the County should pursue the Voluntary Stewardship Program in lieu of traditional regulatory schemes for protection of critical areas pertaining to agricultural activities.

*Prepared by Al Scalf
July 7, 2011*