




**JEFFERSON COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

CONSENT AGENDA REQUEST

TO: Board of County Commissioners
Philip Morley, County Administrator

FROM: Al Scaff, Department of Community Development (DCD) Director 
Stacie Hoskins, DCD Planning Manager 
Michelle McConnell, Associate Planner 
Donna Frostholm, Associate Planner

DATE: August 22, 2011

SUBJECT: Public Input for Voluntary Stewardship Plan Decision– Opt In/Opt Out and Watershed Selection

ATTACHED: 1) August 2, 2011 DCD Memo to Staff; and 2) Legal Notice for August 24 publication in *The Leader*.

STATEMENT OF ISSUE:

ESHB 1886, which pertains to a voluntary stewardship program (VSP) for protecting agricultural lands and critical areas, went into effect on July 22, 2011. Jefferson County must determine whether to opt in or opt out based on requirements specified in ESHB 1886. Should the County choose to opt in, the County must determine which watersheds are to be included in the VSP and must select a priority watershed. As part this process, the Board of County Commissioners has approved a decision making process that includes soliciting public input and conferring with key stakeholder representatives on the topic. Therefore, a public notice is being provided to comply with ESHB 1886 Section 4 requirements for public participation in the decisions.

ANALYSIS/STRATEGIC GOALS/PROS and CONS:

The County must make a decision whether to opt in or opt out within six months of the effective date for ESHB 1886, or by January 22, 2012. To fulfill the legislatively mandated requirements, Jefferson County needs to consider public input. Should Jefferson County decide to opt in, Section 4 of the new legislation requires that public noticing must be followed. Providing a public notice at this time provides the most cost-effective and efficient means of addressing this requirement.

During the August 1, 2011 meeting, the Board agreed to a decision making process as outlined in the attached August 2, 2011 staff memo. This process includes publication of an informational document/white paper and a 30-day public comment period with public hearing to gather citizen input.

FISCAL IMPACT/COST-BENEFIT ANALYSIS:

This work will be completed by funds provided to Jefferson County Department of Community Development from the General Fund in support of long-range planning projects. Since Jefferson County must address the requirements of ESHB 1886, some of the money from the General Fund for use in DCD long-range planning will be used for this emerging issue.

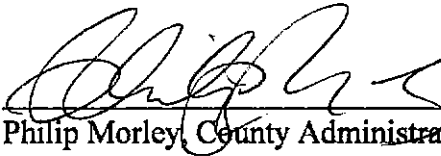
RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the BoCC:

1. Approve the public notice to open a public comment period from 8/24/11 to 9/23/11; and
2. Hold a public hearing on September 19, 2011

to receive comments from the general public that pertain to the VSP opt in/opt out and watershed selection decision.

REVIEWED BY:


Philip Morley, County Administrator

8/17/11
Date



**JEFFERSON COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

621 Sheridan Street
Port Townsend, WA 98368
Al Scalf, Director

MEMORANDUM

Date: August 2, 2011

To: Al Scalf, DCD Director
Stacie Hoskins, Planning Manager
Michelle McConnell, Associate Planner

From: Donna Frostholt, Associate Planner *df*

SUBJECT: Voluntary Stewardship Program (ESHB 1886 – Agricultural Lands and Critical Areas) – BoCC Direction for Next Steps

ESHB 1886, which pertains to a voluntary stewardship program (VSP) for agricultural lands and critical areas, went into effect on July 22, 2011. The County must now determine whether to opt in or opt out based on requirements specified in ESHB 1886. The following summarizes the process approved by the Board of County Commissioners (BoCC) for making the opt in/opt out decision, including watershed selection, based on our discussions with the BoCC yesterday:

1. **Prepare Information about VSP.** DCD will prepare a summary document or white paper that explains the key points of the VSP. This document will provide information about the VSP requirements and identify key points to consider for determining whether Jefferson County should opt in or opt out. This document will also provide information about determining which watersheds to include and which watershed or subbasin should be selected as a priority watershed. DCD expects that the document will be brief in length, and that the document will provide sufficient information for providing meaningful comments.

Due Date: Internal draft completed by DCD by August 4, 2011. Final document will be available no later than the date that the public comment period commences.

2. **Prepare a Public Notice.** DCD staff will prepare a public notice for BoCC review and approval at a Monday morning meeting. The public notice will announce that the County is seeking comments about opting in or opting out of the VSP, watershed selection, and priority watershed determination. The public notice will identify how to provide comments and the date of public hearing before the BoCC. Public comment period will run for 30 days, from August 24 through September 23, 2011.

Due Date: DCD will bring a draft public notice to BoCC on the morning of August 22, 2011, with the intention of submitting the notice to The Leader by 1:00 PM that same day.

3. Confer with Caucuses. Jefferson County staff will meet with agricultural, environmental, and tribal stakeholders. BoCC will receive input from these stakeholder caucuses to assist with opt in/opt out decision and watershed selection.

Due Date: Meetings to run concurrently with public notice period.

4. BoCC Public Hearing. BoCC anticipates holding a public hearing on September 19, 2011.

5. Public Comment Reviews. During the 30-day comment period, Jefferson County will receive public comments and DCD staff will begin compiling public input. DCD will prepare a summary report describing the results of public input and then provide recommendations to the BoCC.

Due Date: DCD will have summary report completed by October 6, 2011.

6. BoCC Decision. BoCC will make decision to either opt in or opt out of VSP.

Due Date: BoCC will make decision by October 13, 2011. If BoCC decides that the County will opt in, they may direct DCD staff to begin tasks needed to prepare a resolution reflecting the decision to opt in by January 22, 2012. A UDC amendment may subsequently be needed to reflect the VSP option and would follow a regular Planning Commission process. If the BoCC decides that the County will opt out, they may direct DCD to begin a UDC amendment process to address agricultural development in critical areas within the legislatively mandated timeframe (July 22, 2013).

Planning Commission Involvement:

Yesterday, the Board gave DCD staff direction that the Planning Commission (PC) is not formally tasked with providing a recommendation on opting-in/out of the VSP. That said, they also recognized the high level of interest in the VSP by both the PC and the public that's been attending PC meetings. The Board will welcome and encourage the PC's input to the upcoming public comment period and hearing on VSP (individual comments or a group position if they so choose). Therefore, the PC may invite guest speakers to help educate the PC about the issue, but are not to hold any formal stakeholder workshops or confer with the Tribes about the VSP. The Board indicated appreciation and a high regard for the PC's perspective but wants to avoid creating a dual track process given the statutory timeline and process requirements.

TO: Port Townsend & Jefferson County Leader

LEGAL NOTICE

Please publish one (1) time: Wednesday, August 24, 2011 *in 7-point font*

BILL: Jefferson County Department of Community Development
621 Sheridan Street
Port Townsend WA 98368
Attn: Donna Frostholm, Associate Planner
Tel: 360-379-4450 Account # 17385

DATE: Monday, August 22, 2011

**NOTICE FOR PUBLIC HEARING ON
PARTICIPATION IN VOLUNTARY STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM (VSP)
FOR PROTECTING AGRICULTURAL LANDS AND CRITICAL AREAS**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Jefferson County Board of County Commissioners (BoCC) will hold a public hearing on Participation in the Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP) **Monday, September 19, 2011 at 6:30 pm** at the Jefferson County Superior Court Room, 1820 Jefferson St., Port Townsend, Washington. The BoCC is seeking public input in favor or opposition to County participation the State of Washington's VSP, including (1) whether to opt in or opt out of the VSP, (2) which watershed(s) to include if the County opts into the state program, and (3) which watershed or sub basin should be selected as a primary watershed if the County opts into the VSP.

Written comments will be accepted by the Board of County Commissioners from August 24, 2011 until 4:30 p.m. on September 23, 2011. Written comments should be sent to:

- BoCC - VSP Comments, PO Box 1220, Port Townsend, WA 98368; or to
- JeffBoCC@co.jefferson.wa.us.

Availability of Documents: Information about ESHB 1886 and the VSP can be reviewed at Department of Community Development, 621 Sheridan Street, Port Townsend or electronically at the Department of Community Development VSP webpage

(<http://www.co.jefferson.wa.us/commdevelopment/VoluntaryStewardshipProgram.htm>).
For further information, please contact Department of Community Development (DCD),
at (360) 379-4450 or dfrostholm@co.jefferson.wa.us.

This legal notice was approved by the BoCC on:

August 22, 2011,

John Austin, Chair