



**JEFFERSON COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

REGULAR 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 Frostholt, Associate Planner 

DATE: September 19, 2011

SUBJECT: Public Hearing for Voluntary Stewardship Plan Decision

STATEMENT OF ISSUE:

ESHB 1886, which pertains to a voluntary stewardship program (VSP) for maintaining the viability of agriculture and protecting 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 (BoCC) approved a decision making process on August 1, 2011 that includes soliciting public input and conferring with key stakeholder representatives on the topic. On August 22, the BoCC approved public noticing of a 30-day VSP comment period and a public hearing to be held on September 19, 2011, WITH THE PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD CLOSING AT 4:30 P.M. ON FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2011.

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 BoCC meeting, the Board agreed to a decision making process as outlined in the August 2, 2011 staff memo. This process included preparation of an Informational Paper and a 30-day public comment period with public hearing to gather citizen input. A memo summarizing the August 1, 2011 decisions and a copy of the public notice were attached to the August 22, 2011 Agenda Request, and the Informational Document is available online through the County website.


FISCAL IMPACT/COST-BENEFIT ANALYSIS:

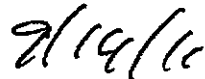
This work will be completed by funds provided to Jefferson County Department of Community Development from the General Fund in support of long-range planning projects. Since Jefferson County must address the requirements of ESHB 1886, some of the money from the General Fund for use in DCD long-range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

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the BoCC 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


Date