

RESOLUTION NUMBER 2012 023

**BEFORE THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS, FRANKLIN COUNTY, WASHINGTON
IN THE MATTER OF COUNTY PLANNING**

RE: The State of Washington recently passed ESHB 1886 (known as Critical Area Protection-Voluntary Stewardship Program) as recommended by the William D. Ruckelshaus Center. The Program offers counties and landowners the option of using a Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP) to protect critical areas on agricultural lands.

WHEREAS, Franklin County has complied with the public participation and notice requirements in RCW 36.70A.035 as it relates to the Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP);

WHEREAS, the Franklin County Planning Commission held a Public Meeting/Workshop regarding the Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP) on September 6, 2011.

WHEREAS, the County Commissioners held public meetings/workshops regarding the Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP) on July 28, 2011 and August 17, 2011.

WHEREAS, the County Commissioners accepted written public input regarding the County decision to opt-in or opt-out of the Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP) from November 1, 2011 to November 30, 2011;

WHEREAS, the County Commissioners conducted a public hearing to accept oral and written testimony on the decision to opt-in or opt-out of the Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP) on December 14, 2011;

WHEREAS, after consideration, the County Commissioners find it to be in the best interest of the public to opt-in to the Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP);

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Board of County Commissioners elect to opt-in to the Voluntary Stewardship Program and adopts the following:

1. Approximately 33 individuals and agencies/groups were specifically notified of the public comment period, public hearing, and public meeting associated with the County's decision of whether or not to opt-in to the Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP). Additionally, public notice was supplied to the Franklin County Graphic and the Tri-City Herald.
2. The County chooses to have the entire unincorporated area of the County included in the Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP). This specifically includes those unincorporated areas of Franklin County in the Lower Snake Water Resource Inventory Area #32, the Esquatzel Coulee Water Resource Inventory Area #36, and the Palouse Water Resource Inventory Area #34, as described in Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 173-500-040.
3. Farming is vital to the economy of Franklin County and is significant in all 3 described Water Resource Inventory Areas. Approximately 85% of Franklin County's land base is utilized for agricultural or rangeland activities.

VOLUNTARY STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM (VSP)

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4. The County has locally available technical resources, including the local Farm Bureau, the County Natural Resource Advisory Committee, and the local Conservation District to potentially assist with development and implementation of the Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP).
5. There is likelihood of success with a local effort to establish, develop, and implement the Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP) when adequate funding is determined and available.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Franklin County, by adoption of this resolution, is eligible for State grant-funding to accomplish the intent of the Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP) and that the County will proceed as required under the Growth Management Act and ESHB 1886 to implement the requirements of the Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP) once adequate funding is provided by the State.

SIGNED AND DATED THIS 18th DAY OF JANUARY 2012.

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FRANKLIN COUNTY, WASHINGTON**

Brad Peck - Absent

Chairman

Attest:

Mary Withers
Clerk of the Board

[Signature]

Chair Pro Tem

[Signature]

Member