

**RESOLUTION 2012-01**

(A Resolution enrolling Skamania County in the ESHB 1886 Voluntary Stewardship Program for Critical Area Protection.)

**WHEREAS**, the Washington State Legislature, through Engrossed Substitute House Bill (ESHB) 1886, effective July 22, 2011, created a Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP) for protection of critical areas in areas of agricultural activities; and

**WHEREAS**, the legislation makes enrollment in the VSP an alternative to protecting critical areas in areas used for agricultural activities through development regulations; and

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to ESHB 1886, counties that wish to enroll must do so by January 22, 2012; and

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to ESHB 1886, Skamania County invited agricultural and environmental groups and local tribes to confer about the County's enrollment in the VSP at a public hearing scheduled on January 18, 2012; and

**WHEREAS**, in advance of the Board of County Commissioner's public hearing, Community Development Department staff mailed out notices to tribes, environmental interests, and agricultural interests, and provided proper notice in the official newspaper of general circulation; and

**WHEREAS**, it appears to be in the best interest of the public to opt-in to the VSP; and

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:**

- A) The board of County Commissioners hereby elects to enroll in its entirety all unincorporated Skamania County located outside of the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area boundary and all of its designated watersheds graphically located within Skamania County and outside of the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area boundary, in the VSP established by ESHB 1886 (2011).
- B) At this time, the Board of County Commissioners does not nominate any watershed for consideration by the State Conservation Commission as a priority watershed.

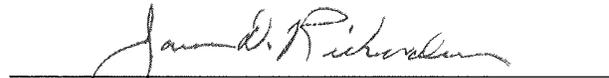
**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that by adoption of this resolution Skamania County is eligible for state grant-funding to accomplish the intent of the VSP, and that Skamania County will proceed as required under the Growth Management Act and ESHB 1886 to implement the requirements of the VSP once adequate funding is provided by the state; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that existing critical area regulations (Skamania County Code, Title 21A) governing agricultural activities within critical areas remain in effect throughout the county, and are supplanted by regulations governing the participation in the VSP only in the specific area where implementation of the VSP takes place through the approval of a watershed work plan in accordance with RCW 36.70A.720 and .725.

~~ADOPTED IN PUBLIC HEARING~~ this 18<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2012.

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
SKAMANIA COUNTY, WASHINGTON**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Commissioner

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Commissioner



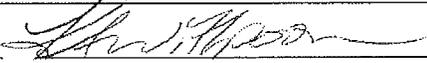
**ATTEST:**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Clerk of the Board

**APPROVE AS TO FORM ONLY:**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Prosecuting Attorney

## COMMISSIONER'S AGENDA ITEM COMMENTARY

<b><u>SUBMITTED BY</u></b>	Community Development Department	 Signature
<b><u>AGENDA DATE</u></b>	<u>January 4, 2012</u>	
<b><u>SUBJECT</u></b>	<u>Resolution 2012-01: A resolution enrolling Skamania County in the ESHB 1886 Voluntary Stewardship Program for critical area protection.</u>	
<b><u>ACTION REQUESTED</u></b>	<u>Consent Agenda</u>	

### **SUMMARY/BACKGROUND**

Under ESHB 1886, the Board of County Commissioners must either elect to comply with the requirements of RCW 36.70A.060 and within two years review the Critical Areas regulations (SCC Title 21A) and adopt critical area regulations providing protection for areas, as is necessary, used for agricultural activities, or opt-in to a Voluntary Stewardship Program. This resolution, if adopted, will provide the necessary documentation to opt-in to the program and begin the prescribed processes under the provisions of ESHB 1886 for establishment of a Voluntary Stewardship Program.

Under the stewardship program, adequate funding must be provided by the state. A county opting-in to the program must designate which watersheds will be covered under the program and identify potential priority watersheds for consideration by a state committee that will establish to administer the program. Once funded, a requirement of the program is to designate and establish a group or committee to administer the program locally. The committee will work with farmers choosing to adopt a Voluntary Stewardship Program tailored to the needs of the farming community that will provide the necessary protection of critical areas where agricultural activities take place. This program will be in lieu of adoption of additional regulations. If there is not adequate funding provided by the state, or if the local committee does not make adequate progress in establishing the stewardship program, the County will be required to adopt regulations for the protection of critical areas as related to agricultural activities within the timelines prescribed within the Bill.

A public hearing has been scheduled for January 18, 2012. The public hearing will also be used to confer with tribes, environmental, and agricultural interests as prescribed by the legislation.

This resolution applies only to unincorporated Skamania County located outside of the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area boundary and all of its designated watersheds graphically located within Skamania County and outside of the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area boundary.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

None at this time. In the future, funding should be provided by the state.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Adopt the resolution, opting-in to the Voluntary Stewardship Program. No further action is necessary until funding is provided by the state.

### **LIST ATTACHMENTS**

Resolution 2012-01