

RESOLUTION 2012-038

BEFORE THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF BENTON COUNTY, WASHINGTON

WHEREAS, RCW 36.70A.710 provides an alternative program for protecting critical areas in areas used for agricultural activities, referred to as the Voluntary Stewardship Program; and,

WHEREAS, a County must elect to participate in the Voluntary Stewardship Program and said decision to participate must be made by January 22, 2012; and,

WHEREAS, before deciding to participate in the Voluntary Stewardship Program the County has conferred with Tribes, environmental interests and agricultural interests; and,

WHEREAS, on December 1, 2011, Legal notification was published in the Tri-City Herald and was sent to those on the Public Participation list on November 22, 2011; and,

WHEREAS, legal notification and letters were also sent to agricultural, environmental and tribal representatives on November 18, 2011 asking them for their comments and recommendations on the County consideration of the Voluntary Stewardship Program; and,

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission's public hearing was held on December 13, 2011 at 7:00 p.m., in the Planning Annex, 1002 Dudley Avenue, Prosser, WA 99350; and,

WHEREAS, the following members were present: James Wetzel, Darwin Crosby, Rick Giberson, James Willard, Lloyd Coughlin and Martin Sheeran; and,

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission considered all testimony and, after questions to those giving testimony, closed the public hearing; and,

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission considered the factors contained in RCW 36.70A.710(3) and (4); and,

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission entered its written conclusions and recommendations concerning this matter, and forwarded the same to the Board of County Commissioners.

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission at an open record public hearing held on December 13, 2011, considered the evidence submitted and voted five in favor, one against and one absent to recommend that Benton County OPT IN to the Voluntary Stewardship program; and,

WHEREAS, legal notification for the Board of County Commissioner's public hearing to consider the Planning Commission's recommendations on the Voluntary Stewardship Program was published on December 29, 2011; and,

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners public hearing was held on January 10, 2012 at 9:05 a.m. in the Planning Annex, 1002 Dudley Avenue, Prosser, WA 99350; and,

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners did review the record and recommendation prepared by the Planning Commission and considered oral and written arguments at the public hearing; and,

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners did adopt the Planning Commission's Conclusions and Recommendations as their own (which are kept in the VSP File in the Planning Department); and,

WHEREAS, it further appears that the public interest will be served by electing to Opt In to the Voluntary Stewardship Program;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of County Commissioners hereby adopts the Planning Commission's Conclusions and Recommendations as their own and:

1. Elects to participate in the Voluntary Stewardship Program as provided in RCW 36.70A, and
2. Identifies the Lower Yakima Watershed, the Alkai-Squilchuck Watershed and the Rock-Glade Watershed within Benton County for participation in the Voluntary Stewardship Program, and
3. That the Lower Yakima Watershed, The Rock Glade Watershed and the Alkai-Squilchuck Watershed are nominated for consideration by the State Conservation Commission as State Priority Watersheds, and that
4. Benton County will proceed under ESHB 1886 to implement the requirements of the Voluntary Stewardship Program provided adequate funding is provided by the State.

Dated this 10th day of January 2012.


Chairman of the Board


Member


Member

Constituting the Board of County
Commissioners of Benton County
Washington.

Attest.....
Clerk of the Board

MES/djh