

**COMMISSIONERS' MINUTES
KITITAS COUNTY, WASHINGTON
COMMISSIONERS CONFERENCE ROOM
SPECIAL MEETING**

MONDAY

2:00 P.M.

AUGUST 1, 2011

Board members present: Chairman Paul Jewell, Vice-Chairman Alan Crankovich and Commissioner O'Brien.

Others: Julie Kjorsvik, Clerk of the Board; Anna Nelson, GordonDerr; Dan Valoff, Staff Planner; Kirk Holmes, Public Works/Interim Community Development Services Director; Neil Caulkins, Deputy Prosecutor; Ron Shultz, Policy Director from the Washington State Conservation Commission and a representative from the Department of Ecology's Shoreline Master Plan.

SPECIAL MEETING

VOLUNTARY STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

COMMISSIONERS

At 2:00 p.m. Chairman Jewell opened a Special Meeting to obtain a report on the Voluntary Stewardship Program from the Washington State Conservation Commission.

Ron Shultz, Policy Director from the Washington State Conservation Commission reviewed the background and County goals of the Voluntary Stewardship Program. He explained the new program is an alternative approach for Counties to protect critical areas on agriculture lands. Counties are given two options which include opting-in to the voluntary stewardship program, or continue under existing law in GMA to protect critical areas on agricultural lands. The Counties have 6 months from the effective date to select if they want to opt-in to the program, and must be done no later than January 22, 2012. By not opting-in to the program, the County will be subject to the existing GMA requirements to designate and protect critical areas on agricultural lands, and the current moratorium expires. However, they are subject to existing challenges and appeals under GMA. The current funding estimates for the program development and administration is \$150,000 per county in year 1, \$100,000 per county in years 2 & 3 and \$120,000 per county in years 4-6. Within 60 days of the initial receipt of funds, the County must designate a watershed group and entity to administer the funds and must confer with tribes and interested stakeholders before designating or establishing a watershed group. The role of the watershed group is to develop a work plan to protect the critical areas while maintaining the viability of agriculture in the watershed and must include goals and benchmarks for protection and enhancement of those

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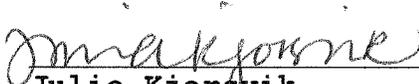
areas. He indicated there would be outreach and technical assistance for individual landowners from a designated organization.

If the county has opted-in, they may withdraw from the program by adopting an ordinance or resolution and can do so at the end of either three, five or eight years after receipt of their funding or any time after ten years from receiving funding. He also described the consequences and relationship to GMA, enhanced enforcement and impact to landowners.

The Board asked questions of the program and noted the Kittitas County Conservation District would be the agency for outreach and assistance.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

CLERK OF THE BOARD



Julie Kjorsvik

**KITTITAS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
KITTITAS COUNTY, WASHINGTON**



Paul Jewell, Chairman