

WATER AND LAND RESOURCES DIVISION KING COUNTY CONSERVATION FUTURES AND OPEN SPACE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Introduction to Program, Goals, and Highlights Conservation Futures Tax Levy

Background on Conservation Futures Tax Levy

Conservation Futures Tax (CFT) levy funds are collected from property taxes levied throughout King County and dedicated to the acquisition of open space in cities and rural areas. The Conservation Futures Citizens Committee (Committee) makes annual recommendations of project funding allocations to King County based on a review of project applications and site visits. This year's citizen committee recommendations total \$10.7 million for projects throughout King County.

Project Prioritization Methodology

Conservation Futures Citizens Committee Recommendations Process

Applications and notice of availability of these funds are mailed out to parks and natural resource directors of King County and its cities at the beginning of each year. In the spring and early summer, preceding the budget submittal, the Committee meets and conducts field trips to develop their recommendations. The Committee reviewed the projects using King County's adopted conservation futures criteria, which the Committee developed at the request of the King County Council in the fall of 2001.

Factors Affecting This Recommendation

The Committee has worked creatively to adequately fund projects that are initiated from competitive local and countywide planning processes, salmon conservation plans, the county's Greenprint plan and other community planning processes, and to promote their successful competition for additional state, local or private matching funds. The Committee's recommendations, in some instances, would provide the first public funding commitment, and thus serve as a strong endorsement to other potential funding agencies such as the Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office. The recommended projects are well distributed geographically throughout King County.

Open Space Acquisitions

Open Space preservation is the permanent protection of important habitat lands including, but not limited to, forest, agriculture, scenic, and ecological lands. Along with the protection of wildlife habitat, natural resources and water quality, open space preservation provides for and protects the community's health, stability, beauty, and quality of life. Accumulating evidence indicates that open space preservation is not an expense but an investment that produces economic benefits. The Washington State Legislature declared in RCW 84.34.010, "that it is in the best interests of the state to maintain, preserve, conserve and otherwise continue in existence adequate open space lands for the production of food, fiber and forest crops, and to assure the use and enjoyment of natural resources and scenic beauty for the economic and social well-being of the state and its citizens." Funding for open space preservation is provided by grant awards from numerous local, state and federal agencies including Conservation Futures Levy (CFT), King Conservation District (KCD), Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB), Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO), Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) and National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF).

2009 Significant CFT and Open Space Project Highlights

The total 2009 Executive Proposed CIP Budget for the Open Space Program is \$18.8 million. This includes the citizen committee recommended amount of \$10.7 million for conservation projects, \$3.4 million for Parks Expansion Levy open space projects, and \$4.7 million for projects such as the Open Space Grant Contingency, Transfer Development Rights (TDR) Bank and Agricultural/Forest Preservation.

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In August, 2007 the voters of King County approved a six-year Parks Expansion Levy, which was authorized by King County Ordinance 15760. The levy provides funding for acquisition of open space and trails in unincorporated King County and its cities, and capital improvements for the Woodland Park Zoo. Approximately \$20 million of the levy is anticipated to be dedicated to unincorporated King County open space acquisition over the six year life of the levy.

This was the first year the Committee reviewed applications and made recommendations for acquisition of open space projects using approximately \$3.4 million of the Parks Expansion Levy. For additional explanation, please refer to the Parks Division highlights within the Capital Improvement Program Plan section.

The most significant CIP project requests for 2009 are highlighted below:

Significant Projects Conservation Futures and Open Space Capital Improvement Projects	2009 Executive Proposed Budget - CFT	2009 Parks Expansion Levy	Continuation of Existing Project
Ballard Open Space	\$ 1,500,000	N/A	
Cougar-Squak Mountain Corridor Addition	\$ 900,000	\$150,000	X
Bellevue Greenways and Open Space	\$ 800,000	N/A	X
First Hill Urban Center Park	\$ 625,000	N/A	
Green River Natural Area	\$ 525,000	N/A	X
Beaconsfield on the Sound	\$ 517,000	N/A	
Open Space Grant Contingency	\$3,515,000	N/A	X
Transfer Development Rights (TDR) Bank	\$1,000,000	N/A	X
Point Heyer Drift Cell (Vashon)	\$ 425,000	\$347,269	
Grand Ridge Additions – PEL	N/A	\$865,735	X
Historic Lower Green APD – PEL	\$90,000	\$90,000	
Patterson Creek Natural Area Addition - PEL	N/A	\$250,000	

Significant Projects Conservation Futures and Open Space Capital Improvement Projects	2009 Executive Proposed Budget - CFT	2009 Parks Expansion Levy	Continuation of Existing Project
Paradise Valley – Judd Creek (VI) – PEL	\$300,000	\$325,000	
White River/Pinnacle Peak/Red Creek - PEL	\$300,000	\$285,000	
Bass/Beaver/Dandy Lake Complex – PEL	\$312,000	\$174,800	X
Lower Cedar River Conservation Area - PEL	\$300,000	\$150,000	X
Issaquah Creek Basin TDR Initiative – PEL	\$250,000	\$500,000	X
Green River Natural Area Additions – PEL	\$525,000	\$233,066	X

Ballard Open Space: \$1,500,000

Seattle is acquiring a .9 acre property in the central Ballard neighborhood, at 9th Avenue NW between NW 70th and NW 73rd streets. The community is deficient in local open space resources. Seattle has been interested in purchasing this property for many years and moved quickly to secure it when it recently became available.

Cougar-Squak Corridor Addition: \$900,000

King County will work to acquire a key 48-acre inholding in the trail and wildlife corridor between Cougar Mountain Regional Wildland Park and Squak Mountain State Park on State Route 900. Acquisition of the property has been an acquisition goal of King County since the 1990s due to its location within the corridor.

Bellevue Greenways and Open Space System: \$800,000

Bellevue will make important additions to its greenway and open space system, with the first priorities being property in the Richards Valley area that will be added to Bellevue's Lake-to-Lake greenbelt. Bellevue has acquired several important properties in the greenbelt in the past two years with the help of a local park bond.

Beaconsfield on the Sound: \$517,000

The new project will acquire fee simple and conservation easement rights along a quarter mile of Puget Sound shoreline north of Marine View Park in the City of Normandy Park. The project will help assist in the regional effort to protect and restore Puget Sound's natural shoreline. The project is a high priority of WRIA 9 and helps address an emerging priority of other state, regional and local Puget Sound planning groups.

Grand Ridge Additions – Parks Expansion Levy (PEL) - \$865,735

This project consists of the acquisition of forest land on Grand Ridge and Mitchell Hill in the I-90 corridor east of Issaquah. The first priority parcels contain high quality mature second growth forest.

Historic Lower Green APD – PEL - \$90,000

This project consists of the acquisition of development rights on a 20-acre farmland parcel at 78th Avenue South, between S 277th Street and the Green River. This property is still actively farmed, located within the 1,500 acre Lower Green River Agricultural Production District, an important regional open space separator between Kent and Auburn.

Patterson Creek Natural Area Addition – PEL - \$250,000

This project will fund acquisition of approximately 120 acres (3 parcels) from Washington State Department of Natural Resources located east of Sammamish. This would be an addition to Patterson Creek Natural Area.

Paradise Valley - Judd Creek (Vashon Island) – PEL - \$325,000

This project consists of the acquisition of riparian and meadow land on Judd Creek, located on 11th Avenue SE, on Vashon Island. This proposed acquisition is part of a larger multi-year, multi-parcel effort to preserve the Paradise Valley reach on Judd Creek.

Point Heyer Drift Cell (Vashon Island) – PEL - \$347,269

This is a multi-parcel nearshore marine habitat acquisition project located on the eastern shore of Vashon Island between SW Soper Road and Ridge Road SW, near SW 184th Street. The goal of the project is to acquire conservation easement rights and fee title on approximately one mile of shoreline to preserve sand and gravel replenishment of the beach littoral zone for the benefit of salmonid and other marine aquatic species.

Cougar-Squak Corridor Addition – PEL - \$150,000

This is an approximately 48.2 acre acquisition project located on the western slope of Squak Mountain on Renton-Issaquah Road SE. The property is a major inholding in the Cougar/Squak Mountain corridor and a portion of the property may eventually contain a parking area to serve both Squak and Cougar Mountains.

White River/Pinnacle Peak/Red Creek – PEL - \$285,000

This is a multi-parcel habitat acquisition project located along the White River, south of SE Mud Mountain Road and lower Red Creek. The goal of the project is to protect the riparian habitat corridor along the river and to preserve a wildlife habitat connection between the corridor and Pinnacle Peak for species that include wintering elk.

Bass/Beaver/Dandy Lake Complex – PEL - \$174,800

This is a 120-acre, multi-parcel acquisition project located east of State Route 169 along Southeast 383rd Way, north of Enumclaw. The goal of the project is to acquire habitat lands to buffer and preserve portions of the riparian system that includes Bass, Beaver and Dandy Lakes and the stream system that connects them.

Lower Cedar River Conservation Area-PEL - \$150,000

This project consists of the acquisition of multiple parcels along an approximately six-mile-long segment of the lower Cedar River between Maple Valley and the Cedar Grove Natural area east of Renton. The first priority acquisition area for this project is the Lower Lions Reach Natural Area along SE 184th Street, which contains Lions Club Creek.

Issaquah Creek Basin TDR Initiative – PEL - \$500,000

This project will provide funding for the acquisition of open space in unincorporated King County within the Issaquah Creek Basin, with a goal of acquiring Transferable Development Rights (TDR). There are multiple eligible parcels, with a highest priority being the area near the confluence of Issaquah and Holder Creeks, located west of the Issaquah-Hobart Road near SE 172nd Street.

Green River Natural Area Additions – PEL - \$233,066

This is a multiple parcel project consisting of the acquisition of up to 4 parcels of hillside land adjacent to the Green River Natural Area (GRNA). The properties identified in this year's funding request will protect several small creeks that seep down through the natural area to the Green River and will help retain the outstanding views within the GRNA by preventing houses from encroaching on the upper edges of the valley walls.

Open Space Grant Contingency: \$3,515,000

The grant contingency project will be used for grants and accompanying match monies awarded during

the course of the year for open space and habitat acquisition projects. Applications have been submitted for a number of projects to acquire lands in the Water Resource Inventory Areas (WRIA) from various state grantors. This will provide spending authority once the grants have been awarded.

The following list is a sampling of projects which grants have been applied for in 2008 for funding of 2009 projects:

- **Pt. Heyer Drift Cell Preservation – (North Reach Phase)**

The project area is located on Vashon Island. The project will preserve the Pt. Heyer drift cell, protecting sediment transport and beach nourishment processes that sustain important salt marsh and estuarine habitat at Pt. Heyer. The project will aid in recovery of ESA listed Puget Sound Chinook and Steelhead and other important fish resources. The current proposal will focus on protection of the northern reach of this drift cell as a Phase I effort. Preservation of these parcels will ensure that salmon and other important resident wildlife species and habitat are not compromised by future shoreline alteration or conversion.

- **Judd Ck – Paradise Valley Preservation – Phase II**

This project is part of a larger effort to protect key wildlife habitats in the Judd Creek Watershed on Vashon Island. The target parcels include more than 3,000 feet of Class S stream, as well as the convergence of the east and west forks of Judd Creek. This effort will protect Judd Creek from increased runoff and surface water pollutants. Preservation of undeveloped forested land in this area will aid in maintaining groundwater quality and quantity – 100% of the target acreage is classified as Category I ground water recharge. Judd Creek is the largest single source of fresh water to nutrient-challenged Quartermaster Harbor, so this project will protect and improve water quality for juvenile Chinook salmon and other marine species.

- **Grand Ridge Acquisition**

This project will purchase approximately 75 acres of forested land which will be added to the King County owned Grand Ridge Park. This large area of contiguous forest provides habitat and migration areas for numerous wildlife species. The area contains valuable connections to existing trails in the surrounding network of public lands.

- **Cedar River Legacy Acquisitions**

The Cedar River Legacy – Phase II acquisition project will acquire 15 to 20 acres, 2 – 4 parcels of property along the lower Cedar River to implement the adopted WRIA 8 Salmon Conservation Plan. It will focus on riparian and floodplain habitat, and the purchases are voluntary. This project proposal continues to build upon the conservation and restoration work that has occurred along the Cedar River over the last decade as part of the Cedar River Legacy and associated efforts.

- **Green River Acquisitions**

This project will acquire approximately 38.5 acres of land adjacent to the Green River Natural Area. This site is an extremely important site for fish and wildlife habitat. The acquisition will facilitate future restoration projects including removing Lones Levee and re-routing Burns Creek and re-vegetating the site with native plants.

- **White River Acquisitions**

This project will acquire approximately 78 acres along the White River Basin south of Pinnacle Peak Park. Purchase of these eleven parcels will result in protection of three fish species identified as threatened by the ESA.

Transfer Development Right Bank: \$1,000,000

The King County Transfer of Development Right Bank acts as a revolving fund to accomplish land preservation through the buying, holding, and selling of Development Rights authorized by the TDR Program in King County Code 21A.37. Revenues are received from the sale of TDRs. The TDR Bank will purchase development rights from private rural land owners already qualified to sell their development rights.

CIP Program Accomplishments and Completion Lists

Projects Completed in 2007

047111	Cedar River Ricardi Reach – 1 Parcel
352133	Soos Creek Area
352305	Cedar River Elliott Bridge – 1 Parcel
352305	Cedar River - Rainbow Bend - 4 Parcels
352305	Cedar River Legacy - 4 Parcels
352338	Maury Initiative - 20 Parcels
315158	Bass/Beaver/Dandy Lakes
315171	Griffin Creek - 1 Parcels
315183	Vashon Maury Island Land Trust
315193	Vashon MILT – Needle Point
315196	Cedar River - Taylor Creek 3 Parcels
315196	Lower Taylor Creek
315743	Lake Forest Park
316021	Preston Athletic Fields
316441	Kanaskat – 2 Parcels
384206	Enumclaw APD Gwerder

Projects to be Completed in 2008

0S1795	Vashon - 3-4 Parcels
1A1647	North Wind Weir Intertidal Restoration
315138	Maury Initiative - 15 Parcels
315149	Mueller Farm
315158	Bass/Beaver/Dandy – Phase 2 + 1 Parcel
315163	Issaquah Creek – 4-5 Parcels
315168	Boise Creek Dairy Farm
315171	Griffin Creek – 2 Parcels
315173	Snoqualmie - 4 Parcels
315183	Vashon Island – Judd Creek
315205	Raging River – 3 Parcels
316021	Soos Creek Trail
316441	Landsburg-Kanaskat Trail - 3-4 Parcels
316717	Mt. Peak – 4 Parcels
339101	Taylor Mt. Inholdings - 2 Parcels
352215	Green to Cedar River Trail
352128	Redmond to Redmond Trail

352305	Cedar River - Rainbow Bend - 2 Parcels
352305	Cedar River – Rainbow Bend Mobile Home Park
352305	Cedar River Legacy – 5 Parcels
384001	Enumclaw Plateau APD
384001	Lower Green APD
384200	Carnation Farms – 3 Parcels
P27020	Vashon Island – Ellis Creek
P2020C	White Center House
P27026	Vashon Island – Pt. Heyer 3 Parcel

Projects to be Completed in 2009

315122	Midfork Snoqualmie - 3 Parcels
315138	Maury Initiative -- 5-10 Parcels
315175	Tolt River – San Souci
315208	White River PSE Corridor
316441	Landsburg-Kanaskat Trail – 1 Parcel
3522GC	White River/Red Creek Acquisition
3522GC	Grand Ridge – 2 Parcels
3522GC	Green River – 3 Parcels
352345	BNSF Eastside Rail Corridor
352401	Bear Creek -- 5-6 Parcels
352S02	Tolt River – Stossel Creek
352S06	Tolt River Natural Area
384001	Lower Green APD
P27026	Vashon Island – Pt. Heyer -- 20 Parcels