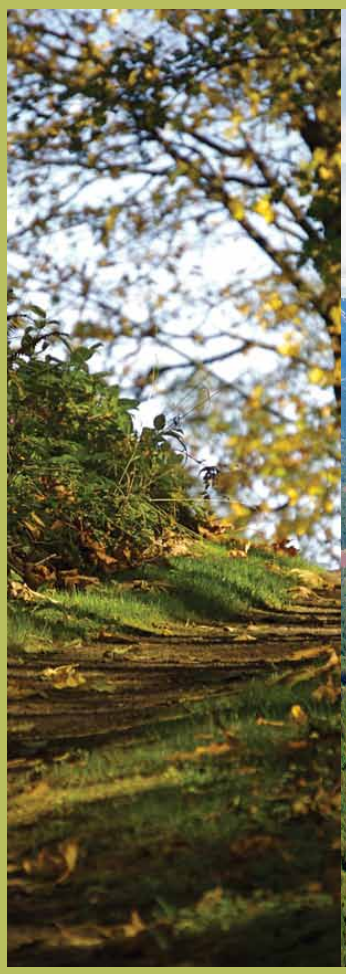
2010 King County Open Space Plan: Parks, Trails, and Natural Areas



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King County Parks **Your Big Backyard**

King County

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King County Open Space Plan: Parks, Trails, and Natural Areas

2010 Update

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Executive Summary

King County, with 1.9 million inhabitants, is the 14th most populous county in the country. With nearly one-third of Washington State's population, King County is also the state's urban center and economic engine. At the same time urban and rural, King County is known for its majestic mountain ranges, forests, farmlands, waterways and shorelines that define the natural beauty and character of the region's landscape, which extends from Puget Sound on the west to 8,000-foot Mt. Daniel at the Cascade crest to the east.

These natural features contribute to an open space system that provides environmental benefits and recreational opportunities. The open space system offers places to exercise, participate in competitive sports, socialize with others, and experience the solace of the natural environment. It provides habitat for fish and wildlife, maintains air and water quality, offers scenic beauty, and helps retain agriculture and forest activities in the county. Trails link the features of the county's regional open space system and serve recreation, transportation and habitat corridor functions.

Altogether, the lands that make up the county's open space system contribute to residents' physical, mental and emotional health and support the high quality of life for which our area is known. The open space system also contributes to the economic strength of the county by attracting businesses, jobs and tourists. King County residents have repeatedly declared the importance of preserving open spaces and quality of life through their continued support of funding for parks and recreation and to acquire a wide range of open space lands.

The 2010 *King County Open Space Plan: Parks, Trails, and Natural Areas*, an update to the 2004 plan, provides a framework guiding King County in the planning, development, stewardship and management of its complex system of 200 parks, 175 miles of regional trails, and 26,000 acres of open space. The plan reflects the many changes King County's Parks and Recreation Division has undergone in recent years and reconfirms the agency's mission and goals of stewarding regional passive and active parks, regional trails, natural area parks, local rural parks, and forest lands to provide recreation and environmental benefits to the residents of King County.

The Parks and Recreation Division's objectives for this plan include:

- Serving as a strategic plan guiding the division
- Establishing the policy framework for operating and capital funding priorities
- Improving coordination among King County agencies involved in expanding and stewarding King County's open space system
- Defining the division's role as a leader of regional trails, regional natural area parks, and regional recreation facilities
- Defining the division's role as a provider of local parks in the rural area of King County
- Providing clarification and guidance on maintenance and operations
- Guiding the development of individual park management and master plans

Over the past decade, the Parks and Recreation Division has transitioned from a traditional general-tax funded agency to an organization that is more entrepreneurial, accountable, and performance-driven. At the same time, new challenges are on the horizon; among the most pressing is maintaining a growing system of passive natural area parks and regional trails and fulfilling the commitment to generate business revenues from this asset base. Moreover, both six-year operations and capital expansion levies expire at the end of 2013. Funding the open space system beyond 2013 will require significant effort on the part of the King County Executive, the King County Council, the Department of Natural Resources and Parks, the Parks and Recreation Division, its partners and the public. Maintaining relationships

with civic, corporate and community partners will continue as a central tenet, as the agency remains committed to stewarding and enhancing the parks and trails that make up King County's remarkable open space system.

The Open Space Plan is organized into six chapters that provide an overview of King County, its landscape, and the parks, trails, natural areas, and forests that fall under the jurisdiction of King County. Chapter One provides background and context, including the natural setting of King County as a landscape. Chapter Two provides an overview of the Parks and Recreation Division and its goals as a major open space provider. Chapter Three discusses King County's approach to and classification of open space, including an overview and inventory of the open space assets managed by the Parks and Recreation Division. Finally, Chapters Four, Five and Six relate to the Capital Improvement Program and operations of the Parks and Recreation Division.

Consistent with the *King County Comprehensive Plan*, the term "open space system" is used in this plan in its broadest definition. Multiple King County agencies manage and acquire land for open space purposes, from recreation to habitat conservation to flood hazard reduction. As this Open Space Plan primarily guides the Parks and Recreation Division, the focus of the policies and content of this document is on parks, trails, natural areas, and forest lands, which are those open space lands largely managed by the Parks and Recreation Division. The Parks and Recreation Division works collaboratively with other divisions on open space acquisition and conservation strategies, such as the Water and Land Resources Division, which stewards open space lands for agricultural and flood hazard management purposes.

The Open Space Plan builds on and is informed by the planning efforts and public processes of previous documents, such as *King County's Open Space System: Parks, Trails, Natural Areas and Working Resource Lands (2004),* the *King County Comprehensive Plan (2008)*, the *Parks Futures Task Force Report (2007)*, the *Regional Trails Inventory and Implementation Guidelines (2004)*, the *Parks Business Transition Plan (2002)*, and the 2009 King County Community Survey.

1.1. Overview

1.1.1 Purpose of this document

King County's intention in preparing this plan, the *2010 King County Open Space Plan: Parks, Trails, and Natural Areas* (Open Space Plan) includes establishing both a strategic and functional plan, as well as complying with Growth Management Act (GMA) and Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) requirements.

1.1.1.1 Strategic Plan

The Open Space Plan is a strategic plan guiding the activities and goals of King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks, Parks and Recreation Division (Parks and Recreation Division) for the next six years. The Open Space Plan is a revision of the 2004 plan, *King County's Open Space System: Parks, Trails, Natural Areas and Working Resource Lands*, and will be updated at least every six years. It is consistent with the *King County Comprehensive Plan*, must be adopted by the King County Council, and must undergo State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) review.

1.1.1.2 Functional Plan

The Open Space Plan is a functional plan that implements the *King County Comprehensive Plan*. The *Comprehensive Plan* is a long range plan developed in response to the State Growth Management Act that addresses urban and rural land use, transportation, housing, economic development, recreation and open space, natural environment, facilities and services, cultural resources, resource lands, energy, and telecommunications. The policies established in the *Comprehensive Plan* serve as a blueprint for growth through 2022 and beyond. The *Comprehensive Plan* policies that are most applicable to the Open Space Plan are found in:

- Chapter Four - Environment
- Chapter Six - Parks, Open Space and Cultural Resources

1.1.1.3 Growth Management Act (GMA) Requirements

The Open Space Plan complies with the Washington State Growth Management Act, which requires that jurisdictions include a Park and Recreation Element to the jurisdiction's comprehensive plan consistent with the Capital Facilities Element and provide estimates of park and recreation needs and demand for a ten year period. The Open Space Plan addresses the Growth Management Act's (RCW 36.70A.020) planning requirements that relate to parks and resource lands, including:

- *Open space and recreation.* Retain open space, enhance recreational opportunities, conserve fish and wildlife habitat, increase access to natural resource lands and water, and develop parks and recreation facilities.
- *Environment.* Protect the environment and enhance the state's high quality of life, including air and water quality, and the availability of water.
- *Natural resource industries.* Maintain and enhance natural resource-based industries, including productive timber, agricultural, and fisheries industries. Encourage the conservation of productive forest lands and productive agricultural lands, and discourage incompatible uses.
- *Property rights.* Private property shall not be taken for public use without just compensation having been made.

- *Citizen participation and coordination.* Encourage the involvement of citizens in the planning process and ensure coordination between communities and jurisdictions to reconcile conflicts.
- *Public facilities and services.* Ensure that those public facilities and services necessary to support development shall be adequate to serve the development at the time the development is available for occupancy and use without decreasing current service levels below locally established minimum standards.

1.1.1.4 Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) Requirements

The Open Space Plan ensures that King County remains eligible for funding from the Washington Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO), which administers state and federal grant funds for recreation and conservation projects in Washington State. The RCO requires that plans include the following information (*RCFB Manual 2: Planning Policies*, dated January 29, 2008):

1. Goals and objectives
2. Inventory of facilities, lands, programs, and their condition
3. Demonstrated process for public involvement in plan development and adoption
4. Demand and need analysis to define priorities for acquisition, development, preservation, enhancement and management
5. Capital Improvement Program list for land acquisition, development, and renovation projects
6. Documentation of Council Adoption

1.1.2 Use of this document

As with past versions of the Open Space Plan, this document will be used by the Parks and Recreation Division to guide capital planning, stewardship, and operations in its role as caretaker of a vast, diverse, and evolving open space system that today consists of 200 parks, 175 miles of regional trails, 26,000 acres of open space and 145,000 acres of conservation easements.

The Parks and Recreation Division's objectives for this plan include:

- Serving as a strategic plan guiding the division
- Establishing the policy framework for operating and capital funding priorities
- Improving coordination among King County agencies involved in expanding and stewarding King County's open space system
- Defining the division's role as a leader of regional trails, regional natural area parks, and regional recreation facilities
- Defining the division's role as a provider of local parks in the rural area of King County
- Providing clarification and guidance on maintenance and operations
- Guiding the development of individual park management and master plans

The Open Space Plan builds on and is informed by the planning efforts and public processes of previous documents, such as *King County's Open Space System: Parks, Trails, Natural Areas and Working Resource Lands (2004)*, the *King County Comprehensive Plan (2008)*, the P*arks Futures Task Force Report (2007)*, the *Regional Trails Inventory and Implementation Guidelines (2004)*, the *Parks Business Transition Plan (2002)*, and the 2009 King County Community Survey.

1.1.3 Structure of this document

The Open Space Plan is organized into six chapters that provide an overview of King County, its landscape, and the parks, trails, natural areas, and forests that fall under the jurisdiction of the King County Parks and Recreation Division. Chapter One provides background and context, including the natural setting of King County as a landscape. Chapter Two provides an overview of the Parks and Recreation Division and its goals as a major open space provider. Chapter Three discusses King County's approach to and classification of open space, including an overview and inventory of the open space assets managed by the Parks and Recreation Division. Finally, Chapters Four, Five and Six relate to the Capital Improvement Program and operations of the Parks and Recreation Division.

Within each of the chapters are policy statements, which are numbered and highlighted in bold, a style and format similar to that of the *King County Comprehensive Plan*. The Open Space Plan also uses the same definitions of "should" and "shall" as the *King County Comprehensive Plan*. The use of the terms "shall," "will," "should," and "may" in policies determines the level of discretion exercised in making future and specific land use, budget, development regulation, and other decisions. For clarification, "shall" and "will" in a policy mean that it is mandatory to carry out the policy, even if a timeframe is not included. "Shall" and "will" are imperative and nondiscretionary. Likewise, the use of "should" and "may" in a policy reflects noncompulsory guidance. "May" and "should" in a policy statement mean that there is discretion in implementation.

1.2. Profile and Demographics of King County

King County, with its million inhabitants, is the 14th most populous county in the country, and at more than 2,100 square miles (1,365,760 acres), is approximately the size of the state of Delaware. It is among the fastest growing regions in the country, a trend that is expected to continue well into the future. Compared with other regions of the state, King County gained nearly one fourth of the state's growth in the 1990s and one-fifth in the 2000s. With nearly one-third of Washington State's population, King County is also the state's urban center and economic engine.

As King County government contemplates need and demand for conservation and recreation assets to serve the public now and in the future, changing demographic trends provide a critical roadmap for the open space system's growth and foundation for King County's values as an open space provider.

There are many demographic trends that inform King County's vision for acquisition, development, and management of its open space system, as well as a variety of agencies and efforts that track and report on these changes. The information below provides a cross-section of sources of information, issues and trends that shape King County's open space-related decision-making.

1.2.1 Trends in Population Growth and Distribution

According to the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC), the four-county, central Puget Sound area grew by more than 1.3 million people between 1970 and 2000. The region is expected to continue to experience healthy growth, with estimates projecting an increase of nearly 1.6 million more residents by 2040. According to the 2008 King County Growth Report, the county has gained some 147,000 new residents since 2000, an eight percent increase. This increase is equal to the size of the population of the city of Bellevue. King County is forecasted to grow 14 percent, adding some 260,000 new residents by 2022.

Currently in King County, the population is distributed into three broad classifications: a third in the city of Seattle, half in 38 suburban cities, and the rest in unincorporated King County. South King County has been growing rapidly over the past 20 years, absorbing almost half of the county's population growth. Since 2000, the Eastside has been the fastest growing sub-area.

With a population of approximately 341,000 people, unincorporated King County has and will continue to have a declining share of the population. Most of the people in unincorporated King County reside in Urban Growth Areas (UGAs), which are slated for annexation to cities in the coming years. The rural unincorporated areas of King County account for approximately eight percent of the total population, and less than five percent of countywide new residential construction and population growth occurs in the rural areas.

These trends in population growth and distribution in King County present serious challenges for the future of King County's open space system, in particular concerning revenue sources, recreational use patterns, and protection and conservation of ecological values.

For more information:

King County Growth Report
http://www.kingcounty.gov/exec/strategy/PerformMgmt/KCGrowthReport.aspx

PSRC Vision 2040
http://www.psrc.org/growth/vision2040/

1.2.2 Trends in Population Demographics

The demographic make-up of King County has been changing as the population grows, affecting the make-up of Seattle, the suburban cities, and the unincorporated rural areas. Some 30 percent of the population includes people of color, with the largest population growth rates among Hispanic/Latinos

and Asians. The African-American population grew less rapidly, and the Native American population remained stable. Immigration has been a principle driver of population growth, and the foreign-born population has more than doubled over the past decade. The dispersion of people of color has occurred largely outside of Seattle in recent years, and South King County has seen minority populations double and triple in several communities.

Consistent with national trends, King County's average household size declined significantly during the 1970s and 1980s and has stabilized at about 2.38 persons per household. Single-person households are most common in King County, with married, no children households second, and married with children third. King County also has a maturing population, with the age category of 45-55 growing most rapidly. The average age of a King County resident is 38.

King County residents are highly educated, with more than 90 percent of the adult population having graduated from high school, and about 40 percent having a college education. This compares with 85 percent and 27 percent nationally.

The median household income in 2006 was $63,500 in King County, up 19 percent from the 2000 census. There is a broad income distribution, with more than a quarter of the households reporting income levels of more than $100,000 and almost one-third reporting incomes under $40,000. There is a trend towards a shrinking middle class, with increases occurring among households with incomes of $100,000 or more and increases occurring among households with incomes of $25,000 or less. There is an income disparity by race, with African-American, Native American, and Hispanic households not showing much income growth since 2000.

These trends in population demographics should continue to inform King County, in particular concerning user needs/demand, communications, access issues, and public health issues.

For more information:

King County Growth Report
http://www.kingcounty.gov/exec/strategy/PerformMgmt/KCGrowthReport.aspx

PSRC Vision 2040
http://www.psrc.org/growth/vision2040/

1.2.3 Trends in Recreation

There are many agencies, user groups and other entities tracking trends in recreational activities. The following summaries present an overview of some relevant trends that can help provide insight to King County in understanding and assessing future recreation infrastructure needs and opportunities.

1.2.3.1 General Outdoor Recreation

The Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO), the Washington State agency that administers grant programs for outdoor recreation and open space conservation, found that walking is the most popular form of recreation statewide, with "team-individual sports and physical activity" ranked second. Nature activities ranked third. The RCO also found that most recreation takes place close to where people live and that there is a growing demand for safe places to walk, ride bikes, or play.

In addition, according to a 2006 survey, the RCO reports:

> *"The most frequently occurring recreational activities in 2006 included walking without a pet (3.5 million times), observing or photographing wildlife or nature (3.1 million times), walking with a pet (2.7 million times), jogging or running (2.3 million times), and playground recreation (2.2 million times)."*

"The most frequently mentioned activities that Washingtonians wanted to do more of in the 12 months following the survey interview included sightseeing (46.9%), picnicking or cooking outdoors (39.4%), hiking (33.5%), tent camping with a car or motorcycle (33.4%), and swimming or wading at a beach (28.4%)."

It is important for King County to understand and monitor these trends and demands, as they may play a role in shaping the county's prioritizing of infrastructure and investments in the open space system.

For more information:

Recreation and Conservation Office
http://www.rco.wa.gov/recreation/rec_trends.shtml

1.2.3.2 Cyclists, Pedestrians and Connectivity

Throughout King County and in particular in Seattle and other urban areas, bicycling has become increasingly popular for recreation as well as commuting and other transportation-related activities. Statewide, a 2006 survey by RCO indicated that more than 32 percent of Washingtonians bicycle, with the most common locations being on a road or street, an urban trail, or a rural trail. More locally, Cascade Bicycle Club estimates that more than 35 percent of people bicycle for recreation, and that between 6,000 – 10,000 commute by bike to Seattle each day.

Local and regional transportation strategies call for the development of an interconnected mobility system that supports more travel choices for bicyclists and pedestrians alike. Transportation 2040, the long-range transportation plan for King, Pierce, Snohomish, and Kitsap counties, recognizes the importance of bicycling and walking as healthy mobility options. This plan includes hundreds of miles of additional on-road and off-road bike/pedestrian facilities, including a substantial enlargement of the regional trails system. In addition to enhancing overall mobility, these facilities provide King County residents environmental and health benefits from reduced dependence on automobiles.

These trends in providing transportation alternatives and safe places to walk and ride bikes should continue to inform King County, in particular concerning the long-term development and connectivity of countywide regional trails.

For more information:

PSRC and Vision 2040
http://www.psrc.org/transportation/bikeped
http://www.psrc.org/growth/vision2040/

KingStat
http://your.kingcounty.gov/dnrp/measures/performance/pc-regional-trail-access.aspx

Recreation and Conservation Office
http://www.rco.wa.gov/recreation/rec_trends.shtml

Cascade Bicycle Club
http://www.cascade.org/About/pdf/Seattle_P-I_5-15-09.pdf

1.2.3.3 Pet Ownership

According to the American Pet Product Association, pet ownership is currently at its highest level with 63 percent of US households owning at least one pet. Pet ownership has been on a steady rise, and Americans spend an estimated $40 billion on their pets annually. Moreover, as noted above, the 2006 RCO survey on outdoor recreation showed that walking with a pet was the third most frequent recreational activity in which Washingtonians participated.

This trend, while not directly related to outdoor recreation, demonstrates that there may be a variety of factors influencing how people use or are interested in using the county's open spaces, and King County should continue to monitor a wide range of topics.

For more information:

American Pet Product Association
http://media.americanpetproducts.org/press.php?include=138671

Recreation and Conservation Office
http://www.rco.wa.gov/recreation/rec_trends.shtml

1.2.4 Trends in Public Health

1.2.4.1 Public Health and Obesity

King County's Community Health Indicators Project presents available data for a variety of health indicators, along with showing trends over time, recent data, charts, tables, maps, and comparisons to other metropolitan counties. The indicators related to overweight and obese adults in King County point to a steady increase in both categories over the past ten years and show how the prevalence rates are distributed by ethnicity, income group, and location in the county, among other factors. With respect to youth, 2004 data show that 8.9 percent of the students in grades 8, 10, and 12 were overweight, and an additional 12.3 percent of students were at risk for being overweight.

Another indictor, physical inactivity (did not participate in any leisure time physical activity during the previous 30 days) shows that between 1996 and 2004, the prevalence among King County adults declined slightly but significantly from 15.2 percent to 14.5 percent, and compared to the other regions, adults in the south region consistently had higher rates of physical inactivity.

For more information:

Community Health Indicators Project
http://www.kingcounty.gov/healthservices/health/data/hokc.aspx
http://www.kingcounty.gov/healthservices/health/data/chi2009.aspx

1.2.4.2 "Nature Deficit Disorder"

This term, made famous by Richard Louv's national bestselling book, *The Last Child in the Woods*, refers to the growing disconnect between children and the outdoors. His book, as well as a growing body of research, has begun to document how the lack of nature in children's lives is linked to trends such as obesity, attention-deficit disorders, and depression.

For more information:

Children in Nature Network
http://www.childrenandnature.org/

Last Child in the Woods
http://richardlouv.com/last-child-woods

While there are many factors that influence people's behaviors, these public health trends continue to inform King County, in particular concerning types and distribution of current and future recreational amenities and open space sites, accessibility issues, and educational and interpretive opportunities.

1.2.5 Equity and Social Justice

In 2008, the King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks (DNRP) conducted a GIS-based equity assessment which mapped benefits (for example, proximity to a park or trail) and burdens (for example, proximity to a wastewater regulator facility) related to demographic variables such as race, income and language. This analysis helped to identify and promote action on potential areas of disproportionality in DNRP's facility locations and historic levels of service delivery. This information will continue to guide decisions and partnerships.

For more information:

King County Equity and Social Justice Initiative
http://www.kingcounty.gov/exec/equity.aspx

1.3 Context of Open Space in King County

The open spaces in the county provide environmental benefits and recreational opportunities. They offer places to exercise, participate in competitive sports, socialize with others, and experience the solace of the natural environment. They provide habitat for fish and wildlife, as well as opportunities to retain agriculture and forest activities in the county. Trails link the features of the county's regional open space system and serve recreation, transportation and habitat corridor functions.

Altogether, the lands that make up the county's open space system contribute to residents' physical, mental and emotional health and support the high quality of life for which our area is known. The open space system also contributes to the economic strength of the county by attracting businesses, jobs and tourists. King County residents have repeatedly declared the importance of preserving open spaces and quality of life through their continued support of funding for parks and recreation and to acquire a wide range of open space lands.

Many entities have jurisdiction over open space sites located within the boundaries of King County, such as the county government, cities, school districts, ports, and state and federal agencies. Within King County government, multiple agencies are involved with open space lands, managing them for a variety of purposes and public benefits. The Parks and Recreation Division is a land manager with substantial holdings and management responsibility for several types of open spaces, which today includes 200 parks, 175 miles of regional trails, 26,000 acres of open space, and 145,000 acres of conservation easements. It should be noted, however, that due to the complexity of the open space system and collaboration necessary to manage it, land under the division's stewardship is not a static number and changes to reflect ongoing expansion, transition, and collaboration.

An open space inventory list is included in Section 3.5 of this plan, and although it can be expected to change over time, it provides a useful snapshot of the division's open space assets today.

Lands owned by other King County agencies also provide open space benefits in addition to the lands' primary roles, which may be associated with forest or agricultural conservation, flood hazard management, wastewater treatment plants and mitigation sites for public development projects. The mutual benefits of these types of sites increase and enhance the county's overall open space system.

1.3.1 What is 'open space'?

The *King County Comprehensive Plan* defines an open space system as "a regional system of county-owned parks, trails, natural areas, working agricultural and forest resource lands, and flood hazard management lands. The regional network of open spaces provides benefits to county residents including recreation, conservation of natural and working lands, flood hazard management, wildlife habitat, and connections of critical areas."

Consistent with the *King County Comprehensive Plan*, the term "open space system" is used in this plan in its broadest definition. Multiple King County agencies manage and acquire land for open space purposes, from recreation to habitat conservation to flood hazard reduction. As this Open Space Plan primarily guides the Parks and Recreation Division, the focus of the policies and content of this document is on parks, trails, natural areas, and forest lands, which are those open space lands largely managed by the Parks and Recreation Division. The Parks and Recreation Division works collaboratively with other divisions on open space acquisition and conservation strategies, such as the Water and Land Resources Division, which stewards open space lands for agricultural and flood hazard management purposes.

1.3.2 Types and Functions of Open Space

There are a variety of types and functions of open spaces within and beyond King County's jurisdiction. Open space sites may provide one or more of the following functions:

- *Recreational Function.* Recreational open space includes areas for active and passive recreational activities and opportunities to enjoy the outdoors. There is a wide range of use and development associated with this function. Recreational open space is provided by a combination of public sites and schools, and privately owned recreational facilities such as golf courses, campgrounds and resorts.
- *Environmental Function.* Open space for environmental purposes is usually identified by its physical characteristics, which might include geologic features, plant communities, fish and wildlife habitat, hydrologic and biologic characteristics, as well as cultural, scientific and scenic values. These open space lands contribute to air and water quality, and their protection may help mitigate the effects of climate change.

  These lands can also be important for recreational and educational value, for hiking, picnicking, wildlife viewing and outdoor education. However, there may only be a limited range of use on some sites to ensure ecological values are conserved.

  Both public and private entities provide environmental open space, such as public parks and natural areas, private holdings and areas regulated to preserve their environmentally sensitive resources.
- *Community Shaping Function.* These open spaces provide relief from development in urban and suburban areas, preserve the natural character of an area, strengthen neighborhoods and communities, and separate differing land uses. A green corridor, the urban/rural greenbelt along the urban growth boundary, provides both physical and visual separation.

  Greenways, waterways and large open space sites, as well as topographical features such as river valleys, hills and mountains, contribute to this shaping function. The combinations of these open space lands with their variety of attributes and often overlapping functions make up an extensive system of open space in King County. Together, they preserve the character of the area and provide for recreational enjoyment, environmental quality and the health and well-being of county residents.

1.3.3 Access to Open Space

Open spaces may be characterized by two factors: permanence and public access.

- *Permanent open space with public access:* These open spaces consist of publicly owned lands and easements with dedicated public access.
- *Permanent open space with limited public access:* These open spaces might include public school sites or open spaces within residential developments that have been dedicated for the benefit of homeowners, but not the general public. It may also include portions of publicly owned open space sites with limited access to preserve sensitive natural areas.
- *Permanent open space with no public access:* These open spaces include sites with development rights purchased through the Farmlands Preservation Program or Transfer of Development Rights Program (TDR), conservation easements purchased or dedicated for open space preservation as a condition of land use actions such as sensitive areas and their buffers, and lands preserved for drainage ways. Some natural areas purchased exclusively for habitat protection have no legal public access. These may protect specific open space values, but do not always include public access.
- *Open space that is not permanent and has no public access:* These lands add to our perception of open space and include lands in the Agricultural Production District, Forest Production District, regulated sensitive areas and rural areas. Also included are privately

owned open spaces such as golf courses, private parks and campgrounds; properties enrolled for ten year periods in the Current Use Taxation Program; and growth reserve tracts in subdivisions which may be held for future development.

1.3.4 Park and Open Space Providers

In King County, open space lands are a combination of the efforts of federal, state, and local public agencies and the private sector.

Federal Role

Federal agencies have jurisdiction over open space lands within boundaries of King County and provide recreational opportunities such as trails, camping, picnicking, boat launching and mooring, and skiing. Most of these lands are in large holdings and much of it is roadless and accessible only by trail.

State Role

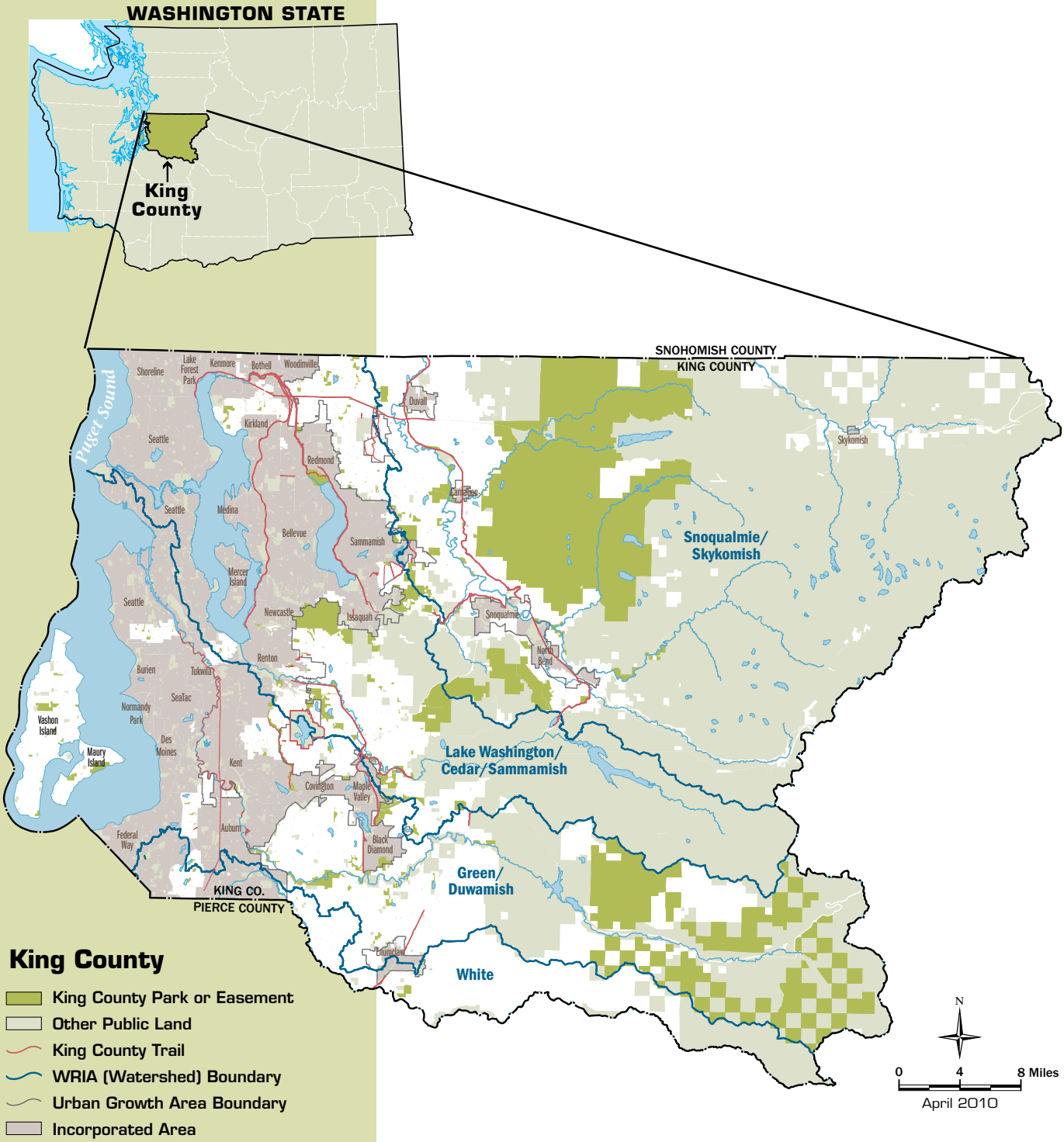
State agencies also provide open space lands within the boundaries of King County. The majority of their lands are undeveloped and in a natural condition with developed areas providing access and support facilities for camping and passive recreation. The state-level agencies most involved in providing open space include Washington State Parks, the Washington State Department of Natural Resources (WDNR), and the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW). State parks are managed for a variety of recreational opportunities; WDNR predominantly manages land for forest production and conservation and its lands support some recreational activities, mostly trail uses. WDFW focuses on protecting fish and wildlife resources and providing commercial and recreational opportunities, such as hunting and fishing.

Local Role

Local agencies include traditional park and recreation departments found in counties, cities and towns. Other local agencies such as ports, utility districts and schools often provide some recreation and open space as a secondary benefit. These agencies provide the majority of public sites for active and passive recreation close to home. Cities generally provide smaller developed sites serving nearby city residents, while counties provide larger destination sites and less developed sites that serve a countywide or regional population base.

Private Sector

Private sector involvement is diverse, ranging from preservation of open space to provision of specific recreational facilities. It includes owners of private lands and facilities, and private non-profit land trusts that protect areas for their natural features and recreational use. Many of the open space lands in this category cannot be considered to have open public access or permanency.



King County

- King County Park or Easement
- Other Public Land
- King County Trail
- WRIA (Watershed) Boundary
- Urban Growth Area Boundary
- Incorporated Area

1.4 Community Setting: The Landscape of King County

Within the 2,100 square miles (1,355,760 acres) that make up King County are majestic mountain ranges, forests, farmlands, waterways and shorelines that define the natural beauty and character of the region's landscape, which extends from Puget Sound on the west to 8,000-foot Mt. Daniel at the Cascade crest to the east.

This landscape was created by an active geological history of advance and retreat of glacial ice sheets, volcanic activity and constant erosion by wind and water. These natural features provide open spaces that offer scenic beauty and a wide range of outdoor recreational activities, create critical habitat for fish and wildlife, help maintain air and water quality, and provide numerous other benefits that contribute to the high quality of life in the county.

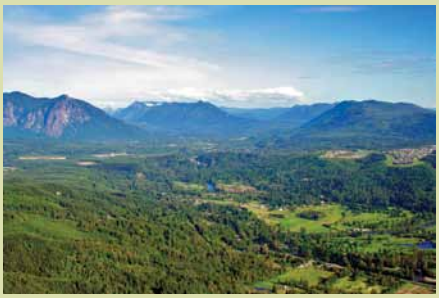
In the following section, the major regions that shape the setting of King County's open space system are presented geographically by watershed, focusing on key corridors within each, as well as providing an overview of the wildlife, scenic, recreation or other features that characterizes each area.

A watershed is defined simply as the land from which rain collects and runs to a single point. It is delineated by the ridges that are its boundaries, shaped by hills, valleys and plains, and tempered by the forests, fields, lakes, and marshes. Approaching open space from this perspective encourages planning at the landscape level, which facilitates more integrated and comprehensive stewardship in the long-term.

More detailed information about King County's watersheds, fish and wildlife, other natural features, and recreational opportunities may be found in other county inventories, plans, reports and studies. These include individual park management and master plans, regional trail planning documents, programmatic plans for King County's natural area parks and forest lands, Salmon Recovery (Water Resource Inventory Area, or WRIA) plans, drainage basin plans and water quality plans. See Appendix II for a list of source documents that contributed to this plan.

Tolt River Bridge at Tolt-MacDonald Park

Yurt at Tolt-MacDonald Park


Snoqualmie River Valley Three Forks Area

Snoqualmie Valley Trail

Chinook Bend Natural Area

1.4.1 Snoqualmie/Skykomish Watershed

The Snoqualmie/Skykomish watershed extends from the crest of the Cascade Mountains to the confluence with the Skykomish River north of Duvall, covering northeast King County. The basin is bisected by the jurisdictional border between King and Snohomish Counties and eventually drains to the Snohomish River and out into Puget Sound near the city of Everett. Within the boundaries of King County, the watershed encompasses more than 680 square miles, making it the county's largest drainage basin. The watershed includes the Tolt River, Raging River, Miller River, Tokul Creek, Griffin Creek, Harris Creek, Patterson Creek, and other tributaries.

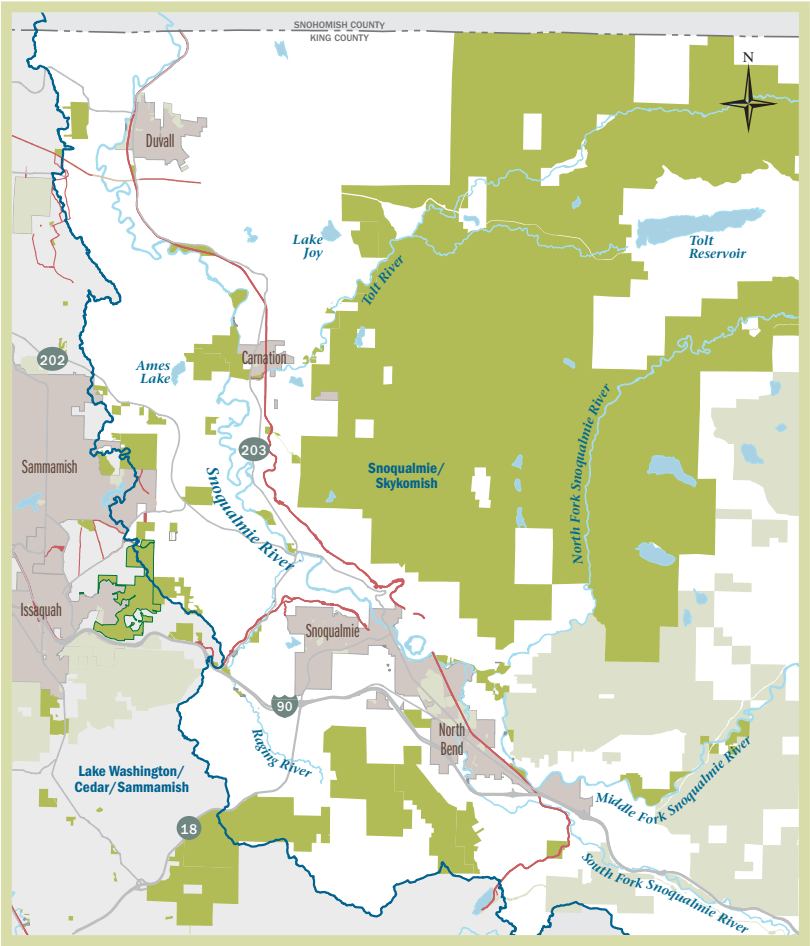
The major rivers in this watershed include the Snoqualmie, Skykomish, and Snohomish Rivers. The Snoqualmie River originates near the city of Snoqualmie. Two miles downstream from the headwaters, the river plunges over a cliff creating the 268-foot high Snoqualmie Falls. The Falls are a natural wonder, an important Native American cultural site, and a source of hydroelectric power. The river runs more than 43 miles through an agricultural valley and the rural cities of Carnation and Duvall to its confluence with the Skykomish River (in Snohomish County), and then forms the Snohomish River that flows through the cities of Snohomish and Everett on its way to Puget Sound.

There are two federally recognized tribes in this watershed: the Tulalip Tribes, and the Snoqualmie Tribe, with the Tulalip Tribes being the legal successor in rights for natural resources in the watershed. Public and private forest lands and wilderness cover nearly 75 percent of the basin, and agriculture land uses cover five percent. Urban land use is currently concentrated near the estuary and is largely outside the boundaries of King County. Trends in land use show that it is shifting from working farm and forest resource lands to more urban coverage. Population growth in the basin is expected to increase 59 percent, from just over 300,000 in 2000 to over 500,000 in 2030, though this will largely occur in the parts of the basin outside of the boundaries of King County.

Approximately 75 percent of the Snoqualmie Watershed located within the boundaries of King County lies within King County's Forest Production District (FPD). Most significantly, King County acquired a 90,000-acre forest conservation easement on the Snoqualmie Tree Farm, which provided an additional level of forest conservation in this region. In addition, a predominate portion of King County's Mitchell Hill Connector Forest, a 430-acre working forest site, is located within this watershed. Most of the Snoqualmie River floodplain downstream of Snoqualmie Falls is zoned

for agriculture and lies within the 14,500 acre Snoqualmie Agriculture Production District (APD). Almost 5,000 acres of farmland within the APD has been protected through King County's Farmland Preservation Program.

Nine salmonid species live in the basin – Chinook, coho, chum, pink and sockeye salmon; steelhead and rainbow, cutthroat, bull trout and mountain white fish. In the 1980s, the Snohomish watershed (of which the Snoqualmie/ Skykomish watershed is a part) supported one third of the wild coho salmon entering Puget Sound on an annual basis.



Snoqualmie/Skykomish Watershed

0 2 4 Miles

King County Park or Easement
Other Public Land
Trail
WRIA (Watershed) Boundary
Incorporated Area

There is growing interest in the recreation opportunities within the watershed on federal, state, county, and local government lands, much of which is focused on and along the Snoqualmie River and its tributaries. King County's Snoqualmie Valley Trail is highly valued as a recreational corridor providing opportunities for pedestrians, cyclists, and equestrians to enjoy the valley and experience its rich natural beauty and agriculture history. The trail links existing county parks, such as the 550-acre Tolt-McDonald Park and Griffin Creek, Tolt River, Patterson and Chinook Bend Natural Areas, offering a variety of active and passive experiences from organized sports to hiking and mountain biking to camping. With the state's popular Mount Si Natural Resources Conservation Area (WDNR) just miles away, the Middle Fork of the Snoqualmie River is quickly developing a reputation for 'destination recreation'.

The Middle Fork is recognized as a top whitewater kayaking destination, drawing river enthusiasts from across the county. A collaborative effort involving federal, state, county and local agencies and community and recreation groups has been working to expand recreational opportunities in this area, as well as expand and formalize public access to the river. King County's 658-acre Middle Fork Snoqualmie Natural Area offers river access at the Dorothy Bridge. Downriver, the 40-acre Tanner Landing Park, which is under development as of 2010, will serve as the key river access site for kayaks, canoes, rafts, and other non-motorized boats.

County-owned upland sites offer hiking, mountain biking and horseback riding and include Soaring Eagle Park (620 acres), Duthie Hill Park (120 acres) and portions of the 1,300-acre Grand Ridge Park (also part of Sammamish watershed). King County provides additional recreational opportunities at Preston Community Park and Athletic Fields, and the historic Preston Community Center. In total, King County manages more than 5,000 acres of parks and natural areas in the Snoqualmie basin.

Cavanaugh Pond

Cedar River Trail

Cedar River

Taylor Mountain

1.4.2 Lake Washington/Cedar/ Sammamish Watershed

The Lake Washington/Cedar/Sammamish Watershed covers 692 square miles and contains two major river systems (Cedar and Sammamish), three large lakes (Washington, Sammamish, and Union), and numerous creeks including Issaquah and Bear Creeks. Other significant tributaries to the Lake Washington drainage are May Creek, Coal Creek, Mercer Slough, Kelsey Creek, Fairweather Creek, Yarrow Creek, Juanita Creek, Forbes Creek, Lyon Creek, McAleer Creek, Thornton Creek, and Ravenna Creek. The basin drains to Lake Washington and out through the Hiram Chittenden Locks into Puget Sound. The watershed is located predominantly in western King County, but about 15 percent extends northward into Snohomish County. It is the most densely populated watershed in Washington, and approximately 55 percent of the land area is inside the Urban Growth Area (UGA). The watershed's projected population for 2022 is 1.6 million. Two areas, following the Cedar River and the Sammamish River, are highlighted below.

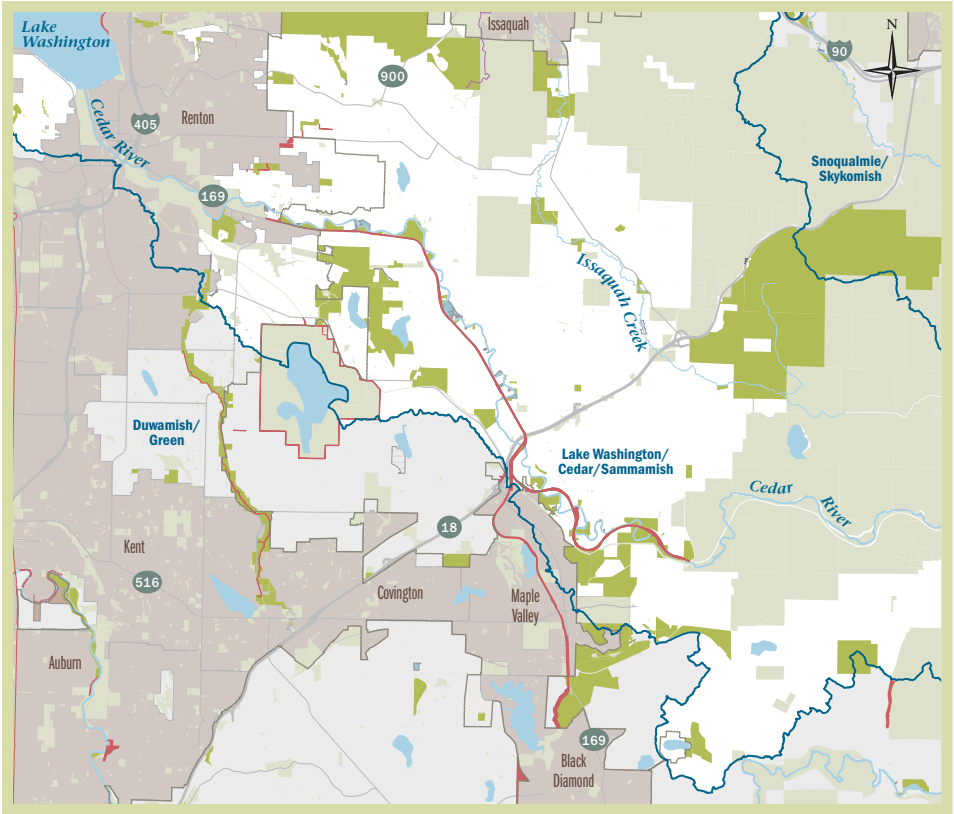
1.4.2.1 Cedar River

The Cedar River is the largest tributary to Lake Washington and drains an elongated basin of 188 square miles that flows approximately 50 miles from its headwaters in the Cascade Mountains to the city of Renton and Lake Washington.

The Cedar River basin can be divided into two reaches: the Upper Cedar River from the Cascade Crest to the Landsburg Diversion Dam and the Lower Cedar River from the Landsburg Dam to the mouth at the city of Renton. The Upper Cedar River watershed is 25 miles in length and contains roughly 79,951 acres. The Cedar River Municipal Watershed, owned by the City of Seattle, encompasses most (79,452 acres) of this part of the basin to provide a major part of the area's water supply. The municipal watershed is almost entirely coniferous forest and is governed by a Habitat Conservation Plan. The upper reach is almost entirely forested with approximately 90 percent (71,588 acres) supporting commercial timber harvest for more than 120 years.

The Lower Cedar River drains 42,240 acres and includes 21.7 miles of mainstem river and 15 tributaries, and drains a 66-square-mile area. The lower basin has an extensive hydrological system that includes 15 named tributaries, and many high-value wetlands, lakes, and aquifers. The aquatic habitat of the Lower Cedar River basin has been altered dramatically since the 1800s by human activity such as water supply dams, agriculture, coal mining, railroad construction, and development. Most of the lower basin remains forested, with less than half low- to medium-density development, and

a smaller percentage high-density. The Lower Cedar River is located primarily within the jurisdictional boundary of King County, with the remaining area in the cities of Renton, Maple Valley and Kent.



Lake Washingon/Cedar/Sammamish Watershed (Southeast)

0 1 2 Miles

King County Park or Easement
Other Public Land
Trail
WRIA (Watershed) Boundary
Incorporated Area

The Cedar River corridor provides a network for fish and wildlife migration. Chinook, coho, and sockeye salmon, kokanee, winter steelhead, bull trout, and coastal cutthroat are known species to inhabit the Cedar River system. The Lower Cedar River main stem and four main fish-bearing tributaries (Lower Rock Creek, Walsh Lake Diversion, Peterson Creek and Taylor Creek) provide spawning habitat for Chinook, sockeye and coho salmon and steelhead and cutthroat trout. The Cedar River's Chinook population is one of the native stocks that comprise the evolutionarily significant unit of Puget Sound Chinook salmon, which is listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA).

The Cedar River offers fishing, swimming, and whitewater recreation. In addition, the river corridor provides recreation opportunities at the local and regional levels. While the municipal watershed is closed to public access, active and passive recreational opportunities can be found along the river at the City of Renton's Maplewood Golf Course, and the following Renton parks: Cedar River Trail (24 acres), Cedar River (23 acres), Riverview (11 acres) and Ron Regis (45 acres).

The 16-mile Cedar River Trail, owned and maintained King County, follows a former railroad right-of-way alongside the river from King County's Landsburg Park to downtown Renton and continues on a city trail to the shores of Lake Washington. The Cedar River Trail links a number of King County-owned park sites, providing a scenic natural setting in addition to recreation and educational/interpretive experiences for those passing along on foot, bicycle or horse. The eastern terminus of the trail currently ends at Seattle's Cedar River Watershed at Landsburg. A branch of the trail, Green to Cedar River Trail, connects with the City of Maple Valley's Lake Wilderness Park and continues to the Four Corners area of Maple Valley. Future interagency agreements may someday establish links between the Cedar River Trail and the county's Snoqualmie Valley Regional Trail and Iron Horse State Park.

King County's open space assets in this corridor provide mostly passive recreation opportunities, conserve fish and wildlife habitat, and protect other environmental benefits, and many are located along the length of the river. In addition to 20 natural area parks, King County also owns McGarvey Open Space (400 acres) and Spring Lake/Lake Desire Park (390 acres).

Sammamish River Trail

Concert at Marymoor Park

Marymoor Connector Trail

Cougar Mountain Park

Grand Ridge Park

1.4.2.2 Sammamish River

The Sammamish Watershed is part of the greater Lake Washington/ Cedar River drainage and is approximately 240 square miles. The basin encompasses the land area which drains to Lake Sammamish, the Sammamish River and out into Lake Washington. The Sammamish River is 13.8 miles from its origin at the north end of Lake Sammamish to its mouth at the northern tip of Lake Washington. The Sammamish Watershed includes Swamp Creek, North Creek, Bear Creek, Little Bear Creek, Cottage Lake Creek, Evans Creek, Issaquah Creek, Tibbetts Creek and a number of smaller creeks draining to the east and west shores of Lake Sammamish.

Over the past century, the Sammamish River has been significantly altered by human activities, including lowering of the water level of Lake Washington. In the 1960s, the river channel was deepened and straightened to increase its flood-flow capacity and to drain the surrounding wetlands for farming and development. Ongoing restoration and enhancement efforts are helping to mitigate these actions and improve water quality and habitat.

The Sammamish River Valley is known for its farming history, and approximately 1,100 acres of the valley have been designated as an Agricultural Production District (APD). Through the Farmlands Preservation Program, King County has acquired development rights on more than 800 acres of the APD, which has been instrumental in retaining agricultural production in the scenic valley.

The Sammamish River is primarily a migratory corridor for Chinook, coho, sockeye and kokanee salmon and steelhead trout that spawn in Issaquah Creek, Bear Creek, Little Bear Creek, North Creek and Swamp Creek.

Bear-Evans Creek Sub Basin

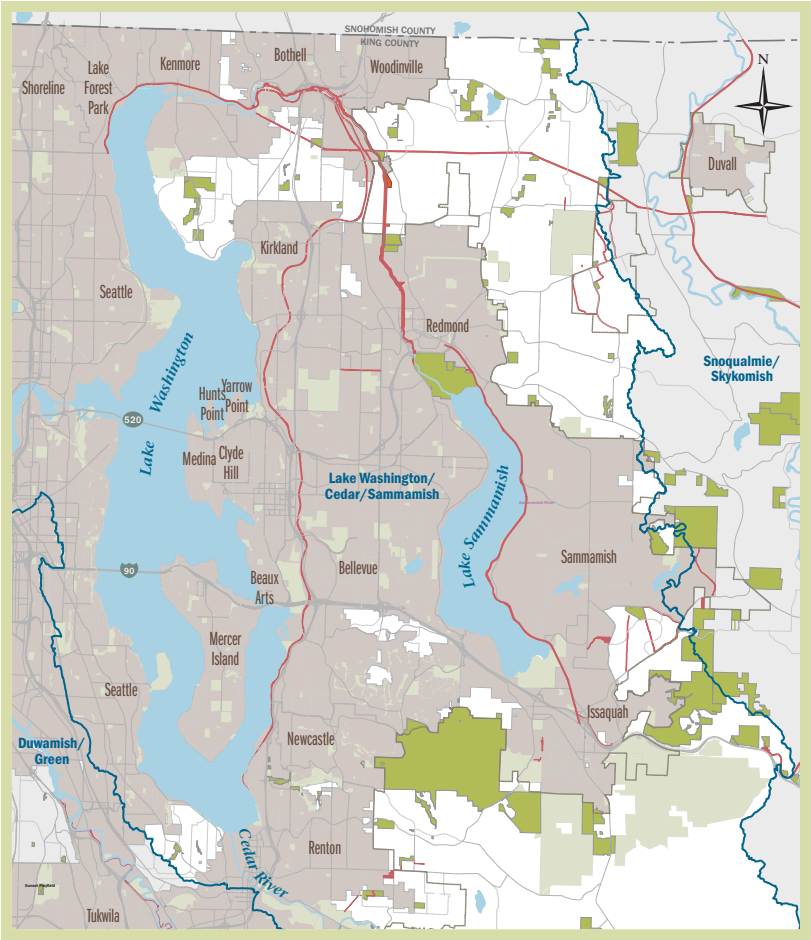
The Bear-Evans Creek basin is comprised of approximately 32,100 acres that includes three sub-basins: Cottage Lake, Bear Creek, and Evans Creek. In total, there are more than 100 miles of streams. There are nine lakes and more than 2,000 acres of wetlands within the basin. Local jurisdictions within the basin include unincorporated King County, unincorporated Snohomish County, the City of Redmond, the City of Sammamish and the City of Woodinville.

The Bear Creek basin provides excellent spawning and rearing habitat for the following salmonids: Chinook, sockeye, coho, kokanee, coastal cutthroat, and steelhead. A unique resource is a cold-water spring that is 5 to 7 degrees centigrade colder than the rest of Bear Creek and is partially responsible for the cooler temperatures of the Sammamish River downstream of its confluence. Also found in the basin are extensive freshwater mussel populations, freshwater sponges, river otters, crayfish and a good representation of aquatic insects.

King County has acquired priority parcels and conservation easements in the basin. Key natural area parks, which protect habitat and also provide opportunities for hiking and wildlife observation, include the 160-acre Cold Creek/Bassett Pond Natural Area complex, three natural areas along Bear Creek totaling about 100 acres and the 150-acre Paradise Lake site. Two additional natural areas help critical areas near Evans Creek.

Issaquah Creek Sub Basin

The Issaquah Creek Basin is one of the three most significant basins in urbanizing King County. Issaquah Creek is the main tributary to Lake Sammamish with headwaters originating from the steep slopes of Cougar, Squak, Tiger and Taylor mountains. The basin encompasses about 61 square miles and includes Holder, Carey, Fifteenmile, and McDonald creeks as tributaries to Issaquah Creek. More than 75 percent of the basin is forested, with the remainder in wetlands and pastures, and with less than 10 percent as urban or cleared areas. More than 40 percent of the land is in public ownership by the Washington Department of Natural Resources, Washington State Parks, King County, and City of Issaquah. However, the population in the basin is projected to increase 18 percent by 2020.



Lake Washingon/ Cedar/Sammamish Watershed (Northwest)

0 1 2 Miles

King County Park or Easement
Other Public Land
Trail
WRIA (Watershed) Boundary
Incorporated Area

The upper and middle Issaquah Creek Basin is identified as a Regionally Significant Resource Area because of its exceptional fisheries habitat and undeveloped character. Eight species of salmonids (six anadromous) are known to utilize the Issaquah Basin. The Issaquah Creek Hatchery currently produces Chinook, coho, and Lake Washington steelhead. An early-run kokanee stock is also present in Issaquah Creek.

The basin includes a significant amount of public open space for conservation and recreation purposes. Squak Mountain State Park is a 1,545-acre, day-use site that features miles of trails in wilderness solitude for both equestrians and hikers. King County manages several sites within the sub-basin: Cougar Mountain Regional Wildland Park (approximately 3,100 acres), the Cougar-Squak and Squak-Tiger Corridors (700 acres), the 190-acre Preston Ridge Park, and the 1,200-acre Grand Ridge Park (portion in the Snoqualmie Watershed). King County's 1,800 acre Taylor Mountain Forest and Washington State Department of Natural Resources' Tiger Mountain Forest are managed as working forest lands, protecting and conserving important salmon habitats, providing sustainable timber production, and providing passive recreation opportunities. The state also manages the 4,500-acre West Tiger Mountain Natural Resource Conservation Area. The county owns almost 6,000 acres of forest easement land in the Upper Raging River area. In addition, King County has acquired 150 acres of land for ecological purposes, which includes Log Cabin Reach and Middle Issaquah Reach Natural Areas.

Several regional trails link the various parts of the Sammamish Watershed. The Sammamish River Trail runs along both sides of the river with a hard surface trail on one side and a soft surface trail along the other. The trail links numerous county park sites and parks in the cities of Bothell, Woodinville and Redmond. The trail links with the Burke-Gilman Trail to the west and offers more than 20 miles of paved trail for bicyclists and walkers along waterways in urban and suburban King County. The Marymoor Connector Trail links the Sammamish River Trail to the East Lake Sammamish Trail, extending the trail connection into the city of Issaquah.

While most county-owned open space sites in this area provide passive recreation opportunities, such as hiking, mountain biking, and horseback riding, there are several important active recreation facilities including Marymoor Park, Sixty Acres Park and Northshore Athletic Fields.

Green River Natural Area

Soos Creek Trail

Soos Creek Trail

Auburn Narrows Natural Area

Green River Trail

1.4.3 Green/Duwamish Watershed

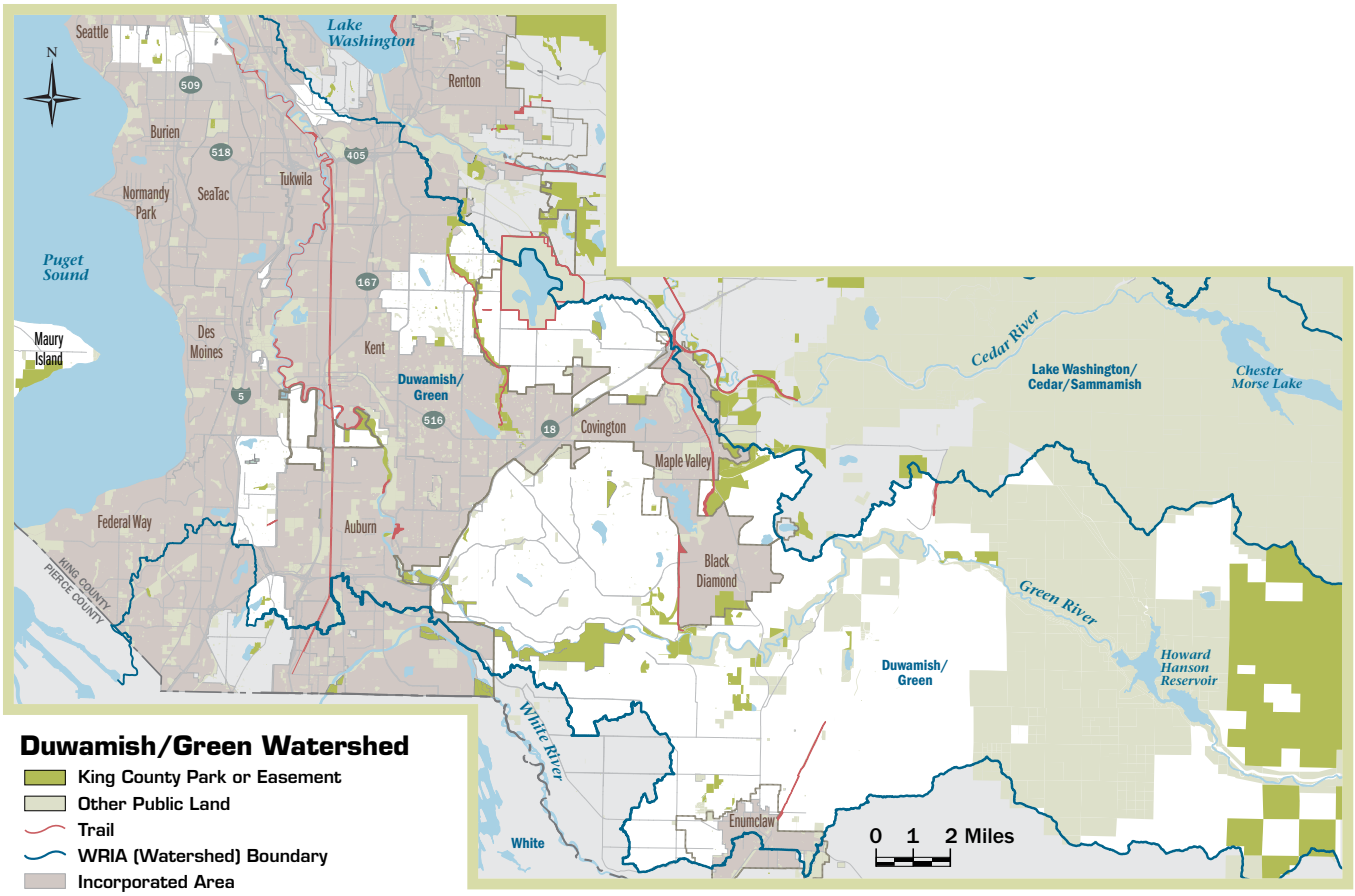
The Green-Duwamish River Watershed is located in southern King County and covers 482 square miles. The river is the longest river in the county, flowing for more than 93 miles beginning high in the Cascade Range and winding to its mouth at Elliott Bay in Seattle. The mountainous headwaters of the Green River are within the forested Tacoma Municipal Watershed, which supplies most of the drinking water for the Tacoma area. The river leaves the watershed as a high-volume, fast-moving river and exits through the scenic 300-foot-deep Green River Gorge. The Green River becomes the Duwamish at its confluence with the remains of the historical Black River at Tukwila.

The Green-Duwamish River Watershed is divided into four sub watersheds: the Green-Duwamish Estuary/Elliot Bay/Harbor Island to Tukwila; the Lower Green River from Tukwila to Auburn Narrows; the Middle Green River from Auburn Narrows to Howard Hanson Dam; and the Upper Green River from the dam to the headwaters. The watershed includes the Black River, Springbrook Creek, Mill Creek, Soos Creek, Jenkins Creek, Covington Creek, Newaukum Creek, Crisp Creek, and other tributaries.

Land in the Upper Green River sub-watershed is almost entirely used for forest production. The Middle Green sub-watershed is a mix of residential, commercial forestry, and agricultural land uses. The Lower Green River sub-watershed is characterized as residential, industrial, and commercial land uses. The Green-Duwamish Estuary sub-watershed is split between residential and industrial uses. The population of the watershed is approximately 400,000.

Due in part to the river's braided, meandering characteristics and its pools, riffles and glides in some locations, the Green River provides high quality habitat to eight species of anadromous salmon: Chinook, coho, chum, sockeye, and pink salmon, coastal cutthroat trout, steelhead, and bull trout/ Dolly Varden.

There are three regional trails in this watershed, including the southern segment of the nearly straight, 15-mile Interurban Trail and the 7.5-mile Soos Creek Trail. The Green River Trail winds more than 19 miles from Cecil Moses Park near Seattle's south boundary to North Green River Park in south Kent, near the city of Auburn. The trail follows the Green River through industrial lands near the Duwamish Waterway in Tukwila out to the broad Green River Valley. It provides excellent views and access to the Green River and surrounding river valley.



The Green/Duwamish River Watershed also contains a significant amount of public lands, which are managed for conservation and recreation, among other purposes. Active recreation opportunities are predominantly provided by city jurisdictions, such as Seattle, Tukwila, and Kent. Washington State manages three very popular state parks: the 480-acre Flaming Geyser Park, the 120-acre Nolte State Park and the 320-acre Kanaskat-Palmer State Park, which includes camping facilities. These parks provide river and lake access for whitewater rafting, kayaking and boating, and for shoreline activities like wildlife watching, fishing, picnicking and hiking. Flaming Geyser Park has unique methane seeps or "geysers" and includes a model airplane flying field.

King County owns many open space sites in this watershed, which range from five to 1,700 acres and offer mostly passive recreation and water access, such as the 105-acre Auburn Narrows Natural Area, a popular fishing site, the 922-acre Green River Natural Area, and Whitney Bridge Park (30 acres), which offers picnicking and boat access. The 136-acre North Green River Park offers additional recreation amenities, including soccer fields and a community garden.

1.4.4 White River Watershed

Pinnacle Peak and Mt. Rainier from Foothills Trail

View of Enumclaw from Pinnacle Peak

Pinnacle Peak

Foothills Trail

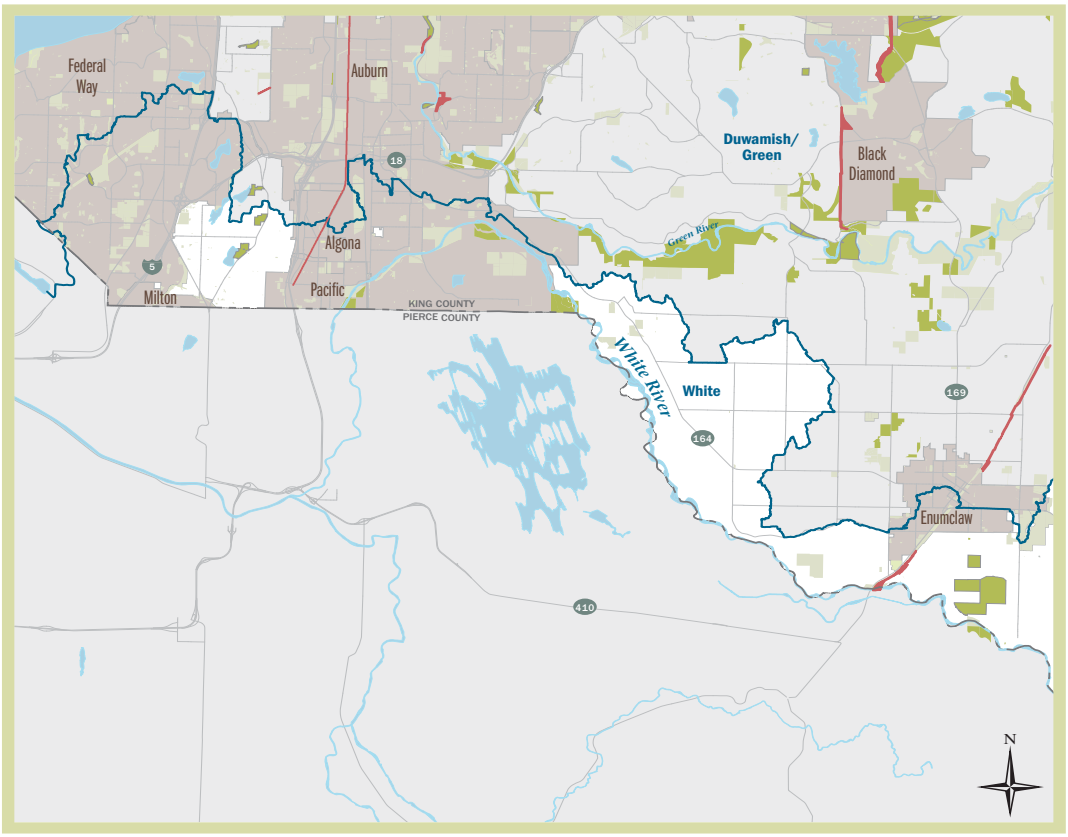
Part of the larger Puyallup - White Watershed, the White River, which is located along the southern border of King County, originates from glaciers on Mount Rainier, travels 68 miles, and drains 494 square miles before ultimately meeting the Puyallup River near the city of Sumner and heading out to Puget Sound at Commencement Bay in Tacoma. As the vast majority of the Puyallup – White Watershed lies within the boundaries of Pierce County, the description below focuses on the White River and the specific areas and resources within the boundaries of King County.

On its way downstream, the White River is joined by many smaller tributaries, including Silver Creek, Huckleberry Creek and Camp Creek. The White River joins with West Fork of the White River just before reaching the Greenwater River at the town of Greenwater, where they merge to form the boundary between Pierce and King Counties. The White River is dammed at the Mud Mountain Dam, and downstream of this dam, between Enumclaw and Buckley, Puget Sound Energy (PSE) operates a diversion dam. This dam, found upstream of the mouth of Boise Creek, redirects water through a canal into Lake Tapps and eventually back into the White River about 20 miles downstream from the dam. The water remaining in the White River flows through the Muckleshoot Indian Reservation and the cities of Auburn and Pacific before joining with the Puyallup River in Sumner. The Puyallup River flows into Puget Sound at Commencement Bay in the city of Tacoma.

The White River's headwaters and a majority of the river are protected by the Seattle and Tacoma Municipal Watersheds, Mount Rainier National Park and the Mount Baker Snoqualmie National Forest. Downstream of Mud Mountain Dam and upstream of the PSE diversion dam, the river flows through various land uses including farm pastures, residential properties and undeveloped forest riparian zones and private forestlands. Within this reach, the river flows between large blocks of public land, including King County's 260-acre Pinnacle Peak Park, the City of Enumclaw's Anderson Riverview Park, as well as land managed by King County for flood management purposes.

Between the PSE diversion dam and the Muckleshoot Reservation, farms dominate the plateau above the river, and a majority of the steep, forested bluffs are owned by PSE. Most of the PSE lands are managed under a Wildlife Management Plan, which covers 2,079 acres of this reach of the river in both King and Pierce Counties.

The White River and its tributaries serve as spawning, rearing and transportation areas for Chinook, pink, chum, and coho



White River Watershed

0 4 8 Miles

- King County Park or Easement
- Other Public Land
- Trail
- WRIA (Watershed) Boundary
- Incorporated Area

salmon, as well as rainbow, steelhead and cutthroat trout. The largest runs are pink and chum, which are natural, and coho, which is mixed hatchery and natural run. The native spring run Chinook salmon is listed under the Endangered Species Act as threatened. The White River system is also home to native char (bull trout and/or Dolly Varden).

With much of the open space land either in the ownership of PSE, within the reservation, or privately held as agricultural properties, public access is limited in this area. With its sweeping vista of Mount Rainier and the Enumclaw valley, King County's 256-acre Pinnacle Peak Park offers passive recreation, such as hiking and horseback riding, and the state's 619-acre Federation Forest has 12 miles of hiking trails and an interpretive center. Other recreational opportunities are provided by city jurisdictions such as Enumclaw, Auburn, and Pacific. The US Army Corps of Engineers has the Mud Mountain Dam Recreation Area, which offers excellent vistas of the White River Valley and hiking, picnicking and other recreational opportunities.

1.4.5 Vashon - Maury Island

View from Maury Island Marine Park

Maury Island Marine Park Beach

Dockton Park

Raab's Lagoon

Island Center Forest

Vashon-Maury Island is located in central Puget Sound, midway between the cities of Seattle and Tacoma. It contains a total land area of 37 square miles (24,000 acres), with about 30 square miles on Vashon Island and seven on Maury Island. Vashon Island is about 13 miles long and four miles across; Maury Island is five miles long and about one mile across. The topography of Vashon-Maury Island varies from sea level to elevations in excess of 460 feet. At these upper elevations the topography levels off into gently rolling plateaus.

The island has a population of about 10,000 and features a rural character. Low-density residential development covers much of the area, with higher density residential areas concentrated in small towns and along parts of the shoreline. The islands of Vashon and Maury are much less developed than mainland King County and feature such natural resources as forests, wetlands, streams and a sole source aquifer, all of which support the biologically productive saltwater shoreline. Vashon-Maury Island is about 73 percent forested land; non-forest covers about 16 percent and developed land 11 percent.

Vashon-Maury Island has been altered significantly in the last 100 years. Virtually all of the original pre-settlement wetland forests and upland forests were logged and removed by the late 1800s. Second growth timber was heavily logged in the mid 1900s. Although forest lands have regenerated on the island, natural land cover has been altered from the earlier large spans of mature coniferous forests to younger mixed forests with a significant hardwood presence.

Vashon's freshwater environment includes more than 70 mapped streams and creeks, which originate from upland seeps and wetlands and drop through the steep channels through the bluff line that surrounds the island. Vashon-Maury Island also has a number of significant, high quality freshwater wetland systems. The two primary stream basins representing a substantial portion of the island's freshwater environment are the Shinglemill Creek and Judd Creek basins.

The Vashon-Maury Island nearshore accounts for 51 miles of the 92 miles of marine shoreline found within the boundaries of King County. It supports a variety of life and ecosystem functions and is characterized by a combination of beaches, bluffs, lagoons, spits, pocket estuaries, and fringing eelgrass and kelp beds. Much of the surrounding nearshore waters are under some sort of marine protected status.

Salmonid species inhabiting streams on Vashon-Maury Island include coastal cutthroat trout, rainbow/steelhead trout, coho salmon, chum salmon, and Chinook salmon. Fifteen island streams are known to support salmonids. Juvenile and adult coho, Chinook and coastal trout have been observed at numerous points along the marine shorelines, as well.

Approximately seven percent of Vashon-Maury Island is in public ownership, and the Vashon Maury Island Land Trust holds conservation easements on several private properties and owns a few nature reserve parcels. King County and the Vashon Park District offer recreational opportunities, with the park district managing land and facilities such as wildlife habitat, resource activities, trails, athletic fields, indoor community centers, and interpretive centers.

Vashon – Maury Island

0 1 2 Miles

King County Park or Easement
Other Public Land
Incorporated Area

King County's 320-acre Maury Island Marine Park offers close to 1.5 miles of Puget Sound shoreline and provides habitat for a diversity of marine species. Dockton Park (20 acres) lies along the eastern shoreline of Quartermaster Harbor and is primarily used as a marina, picnic and boat launch area, and summer swim beach. The county has acquired more than 200 acres of natural area sites, such as Neil Point, Piner Point, and Raab's Lagoon, which are largely undeveloped and provide public access to the shoreline as well as significant ecological value. In addition, Island Center Forest (369 acres) and Dockton Forest (86 acres), which are managed as working forests, provide passive recreation, such as hiking, mountain biking, and horseback riding.

2.1. Organization Mission / Vision / Values

Mission

To enhance the quality of life for communities by providing environmentally sound stewardship of regional and rural parks, trails, natural areas, forest lands, and recreational facilities, supported by partnerships and entrepreneurial initiatives

Vision

The King County Parks and Recreation Division envisions a diverse, equitable, and accessible system consisting of regional and rural parks, an interconnected network of regional trails, healthy natural areas and forests, and world-class recreation facilities. The system's assets contribute to the health, well-being, and enjoyment of the regional population and rural, unincorporated communities. Through sustainable operations, strategic investments, and citizen participation, the division preserves, protects, maintains, and enhances public lands and recreation facilities. King County residents value the system for conserving environmental quality and scenic beauty; offering social, educational and recreational opportunities; and for its contribution to the economic health of the region. King County residents are actively involved in the stewardship of their public open space and recreation heritage.

Values

- *Regional and Rural Service:* Provide park and recreation assets that serve the county-wide population, as well as communities in rural unincorporated King County
- *Safety:* Ensure that parks, trails and recreation facilities are safe for all users
- *Partnerships:* Pursue partnerships with public, private, and non-profit entities that leverage public dollars, enhance public recreation opportunities, and involve King County residents in the stewardship of King County's open space and recreation assets
- *Entrepreneurial:* Generate revenue and contribute to the financial sustainability of agency operations
- *Conservation:* Protect and enhance the ecological values of open space assets, including fish and wildlife habitat, native biodiversity, critical areas, and air and water quality
- *Equity:* Strive to provide public open spaces and recreation opportunities that maximize accessibility and are equitably distributed
- *Efficiency:* Maximize the value of public dollars through sensible cost reduction strategies while respecting best environmental management practices

2.2. History and Accomplishments

King County's Evolving Role
Since the early 1900s, the role of the Parks and Recreation Division in providing recreation and open space opportunities has evolved and expanded through several distinct periods, largely driven by the major funding efforts that directed them.

1900 to 1950: Establishment of King County's Parks System
During this era, the need for a parks and recreational system for unincorporated areas of the county became apparent, and the first steps were taken to acquire land and provide recreation programs. Many of the original park lands were donated to the county, and the first park properties were acquired. Facilities added or built during this period include the Works Progress Administration (WPA) buildings, which are some of the largest and most well-preserved log structures that remain in the nation today.

1951 to 1965: Focus on Recreation
The focus during this period shifted to providing innovative recreational programs and acquiring additional park lands. Acquisition became important as growth shifted to suburban areas on the Eastside and to the north and south of Seattle. Of particular interest for the government was lakefront access, as well as areas for playgrounds, games, sports and parkways. The first county-wide park bond issue was passed in 1956 for $1 million. The county acquired its first regional park, Marymoor Park, in 1962 for $1.1 million.

1966 to 1980: The Forward Thrust Era
During a period of unprecedented park expansion funded by the Forward Thrust bond issue, what was then called the King County Department of Parks and Recreation acquired and developed recreation facilities and programs distributed widely throughout the county. Forward Thrust was a model interjurisdictional and interdisciplinary effort at the regional planning level. With $49.2 million from the bond, the county government was able to leverage millions more in grants and matching funds from other state and national programs. King County's park system doubled in size, adding more than 4,000 acres, 53 miles of waterfront, and miles of trail rights of way. One of the most notable Forward Thrust park initiatives was the creation of the aquatics system of sixteen indoor pools and one outdoor pool. The *King County Comprehensive Plan*, the *Ten Year Program for Open Space Acquisition (1965)*, the *Urban Trails Plan* and *the General Bicycle Plan (1976)* all contributed to shaping the future of the system at this time.

1980 to 2000: The Open Space Era
By 1980, the focus shifted to regional parks, natural resources and the preservation of open space. County residents, responding to dwindling open spaces and loss of habitat and public access, passed a $50 million Farmlands Preservation Bond issue in 1979 to preserve agricultural open space, followed by a $117 million Open Space Bond in 1989 to acquire other open space lands. In 1993, King County established a $60 million Conservation Futures Bond Acquisition Program to purchase open space, parks and trails and initiated the $14.8 million Waterways 2000 Program to conserve streams and rivers to protect salmon and provide open space for recreation and education. During this period, regional facilities, such as the Weyerhaeuser King County Aquatic Center, were developed and significant passive recreation and natural area parks, such as Cougar Mountain Regional Wildland Park, Moss Lake Natural Area, Spring Lake/Lake Desire Park, and Middle Fork Snoqualmie Natural Area, were acquired to protect ecological resources and provide passive recreation opportunities.

Another significant development during this period was the 1999 listing of Puget Sound Chinook salmon and bull trout as threatened under the federal Endangered Species Act. As a result, the State of Washington passed several laws directing planning efforts to address habitat degradation in fresh and salt water on a watershed-scale. This led to the beginning of the Watershed Resource Inventory Area (WRIA) planning process that continues to shape open space planning and management today.

King County also led the way in building a regional trails network during this period. The development and expansion of active recreation parks characterized this era, in particular delivering sports programs outside the incorporated areas of the county. Innovative programs such as the Youth Sports Facilities Grant program and the 101 Ballfields Initiative provided funds for construction and rehabilitation of many recreation facilities located on school sites throughout the county.

2000 to 2004: A Time of Transition

The Washington State Growth Management Act encourages the annexation or incorporation of urban unincorporated areas. Between 1990 and 2000, ten new cities formed in King County, shifting the responsibility for local parks and recreation services from King County to the cities. The cumulative impact of annexations and incorporations coupled with a fiscal crisis in 2002 prompted King County to reevaluate the provision of all non-mandated services supported by its general fund, including the parks and recreation system. Committed to ensuring that the public be able to enjoy the trails, parks and recreation facilities in the county, King County investigated a broad variety of funding options to preserve its open space system.

In spring 2002, the Metropolitan Parks Task Force (MPTF) was established to identify ways to keep the county's parks and recreation system open in 2003 and beyond and to restore stability to the parks system by removing it from dependence on the general fund. The MPTF issued its recommendations in June 2002 and called for the county to:

- Refocus its parks and recreation mission to provide for regional trails, regional passive parks, regional resource and ecological lands, regional active recreation facilities and rural parks
- Transfer all local facilities within cities and work to transfer local facilities in potential annexation areas
- Implement a broad variety of new entrepreneurial strategies to help raise revenues to support park operations
- Facilitate the acquisition and development of active recreation facilities by convening potential partners and providing capital funding when appropriate rather than assuming ongoing operation and maintenance obligations
- Seek voter approval for a property tax lid lift to support county regional and rural parks

These recommendations evolved into the *Parks Business Transition Plan*, becoming the blueprint for the transformation of the county's parks system. Another key element to the transition was a companion ordinance, referred to as the Parks Omnibus Ordinance (14509), which was approved by the King County Council and gave the Parks and Recreation Division the authority to implement its newly refocused mission and vision. In spring 2003, voters approved a four-year levy to support regional trails, parks, and recreation facilities maintained by King County.

It was also during this period that the parks agency was merged with the Department of Natural Resources, forming the Department of Natural Resources and Parks, Parks and Recreation Division.

2004 to Present: A Refocused Mission

After the tumultuous start to the decade, the Parks and Recreation Division came away with a refocused mission and role, providing regional active and passive parks and recreation amenities, natural area parks, regional trails, working forest lands, and local rural parks. As a result, it has become a more nimble agency that has successfully transitioned to a "new way of doing business", including having diversified its revenue base. In addition to property tax levy support, nearly a quarter of the agency's operations funding is now derived from a combination of entrepreneurial initiatives, competitively priced user fees, and gifts and grants. Public-private partnerships have further contributed to the agency's ability to leverage resources, creating new public recreation amenities and offering programs, events and other ways for the public to enjoy and benefit from King County's open space system.

The Parks and Recreation Division has also continued to transfer local urban parks and pools to cities and other entities, such as school districts and non-profit organizations. Since 2002, more than 60 local parks and pools comprising nearly 1,600 acres of local park sites have transferred to cities.

In 2007, King County voters renewed the original operations and maintenance levy for an additional six years and approved a companion, six-year capital expansion levy dedicated to support the acquisition of natural area parks and expansion of the regional trails system. In 2009, King County voters passed the "Open Space Protection Act", an amendment to the County Charter to strengthen the protections against the sale or transfer of 96 open space properties totaling 156,000 acres. The properties identified are of high ecological value and are managed differently from other types of sites, such as those classified as active recreation sites. This amendment ensures that these properties are protected in perpetuity.

A list of recent accomplishments is included in Appendix VI.

2.3. Open Space System Goals

The King County Parks and Recreation Division strives to achieve its mission in the context of the policies outlined below. The policies reflect the evolution of King County government in the region and reinforce the vision set forth by key guiding documents, such as the *King County Comprehensive Plan (2008)*, *Metropolitan Parks Task Force Report (2002)*, and *the Parks Business Transition Plan (2002)*.

G-101 **King County will be a regional provider of open space with a major focus on systems of open space corridors that conserve natural resources and provide recreation, education and interpretative opportunities, ecological value, and scenic beauty.**

G-102 **Regional active, passive and multi-purpose parks will be available to all citizens of the county.**

G-103 **King County will be the provider of local parks for unincorporated rural areas the county.**

G-104 **King County will have a countywide regional trail network of non-motorized, shared use (multi-purpose) paths that link cities and communities and offers recreation, alternative commuting options, and migration corridors for wildlife.**

G-105 **King County will conserve and manage valuable forest lands for the health of the forest ecosystem, and where appropriate, as viable working resource lands.**

G-106 **King County will acquire lands for their ecological value and steward them in a manner that protects and enhances their environmental benefits while ensuring appropriate public use, appreciation, and enjoyment.**

G-107 **King County will develop a system of backcountry trails that provide passive recreation experiences in a more natural, rustic setting.**

G-108 **Local open space sites in urban growth areas will become the responsibility of cities.**

The following sections present the Parks and Recreation Division's site classification system and standards, as well as the functional roles that the assets play in the larger system, providing context to understand how King County's open space sites each individually contribute to the county's open space goals. It also demonstrates how, as a whole, the system provides additional benefits for all King County residents, such as stormwater detention, water quality protection, conservation of fish and wildlife habitat corridors, and protection of scenic, cultural and historical features.

3.1. A 'Systems' Approach to Open Space

Prior generations invested wisely in preserving open space in King County. Over the past six decades, a vast system of recreation and natural areas, trails, and working resource lands has been created through the acquisition of sites and conservation easements and the development of recreation facilities.

King County takes a 'systems' approach to open space, which views open space assets from a landscape level and strategically focuses King County's open space acquisitions and capital improvements. Through such an approach, contiguous and complementary corridors within geographies, such as watersheds and sub-watersheds, increase the environmental and recreational value of open space lands, so that when taken together, all the elements of the system provide multiple benefits and mutual goals. While specific open space sites are managed according to individual site management plan, this Open Space Plan, as well as other source documents mentioned in Appendix II, helps ensure continuity across sites along larger geographic corridors, watersheds, and at the landscape level.

OS-101 **King County will focus its regional open space efforts on key corridors within the following: Snoqualmie/Skykomish Watershed; Lake Washington/Cedar/Sammamish Watershed; Green/Duwamish Watershed; White River Watershed; and Vashon-Maury Island.**

OS-102 **King County will focus its regional open space efforts on the following functional roles: recreation (active and passive), trails (regional and backcountry), natural area parks, forest lands, and multi-use sites.**

OS-103 **Future research, planning efforts and priorities for the regional open space system should focus on the protection and enhancement of the areas and categories identified in OS-101 and OS-102. This work should result in planning, acquisition, development and management plans and strategies for each system that coordinates recreation and public use with resource conservation.**

OS-104 **King County should consider adding significant natural areas not directly associated with the areas identified in OS-101 and OS-102 only if they include regionally significant features and improve the distribution of open space within the county.**

OS-105 **King County's efforts in aquatics will focus on the operation of the Weyerhaeuser King County Aquatic Center as a venue for regional, national and international competitive events and recreation programs.**

OS-106 **King County will work with a variety of public and private groups to identify and protect significant open space lands.**

3.2. Classification of King County's Open Space System

The King County's open space system includes lands and facilities with a variety of resources and functions. This classification system forms the framework for stewardship and management of open space sites, while balancing elements such as recreational opportunities, public access, and ecological values.

OS-107 Open spaces in the King County system will be classified using a three level system; first, identifying the site as regional or local (rural or urban (UGA)); second, identifying its primary role within the system; and third, identifying use areas within a site.

OS-108 New open spaces will be classified at the time of acquisition and through development of site management, site development or master plans.

3.2.1 Level One Classification: Regional/Local Open Space

Level one classifies a site as regional or local based on size, features, significance of ecological value, and who it serves. This classification guides future use, development, and preservation and is appropriately scaled to serve site's purposes and identified users. Local sites are further identified by location within a rural area or UGA.

Regional Open Space

OS-109 Regional sites and facilities are generally large in size, have unique features or character, and/or are important as part of a larger system. These sites are destinations whose users come from distances and from multiple jurisdictions drawn by the type of site or facility (such as a regional trail), and/or that provide a unique or high level of activity, contain significant facilities, and/or have high ecological value.

Designating a site as regional establishes a presumption of county ownership and management responsibility. For those regional sites that lie within multiple jurisdictions, single custodianship is more appropriate, thus ensuring consistent management and cost efficiencies.

Some sites with both regional and local characteristics may attract a significant number of users from a city, and these sites may best be owned and managed by a city or cities. Cities and other agencies may negotiate with King County to own or develop partnerships for these regional sites. King County may also pursue cost sharing arrangements with cities, where appropriate.

OS-110 King County should retain ownership of regional open space system assets, including sites that lie within both urban and rural areas and those that serve as "urban separators" providing a buffer along the Urban Growth Area boundary. However, partnerships and cost-sharing are encouraged to maximize opportunities and enhance levels of service.

Local Open Space

Local parks are often the informal meeting place for the surrounding neighborhood or community, providing a social function and a sense of community identity. Traditional local parks have active and passive recreation facilities including play areas, open grassy fields, developed ballfields, tennis or sport courts, small picnic areas and trails. Less developed local parks provide for conservation of local community character and natural resources and offer opportunities for passive recreation.

OS-111 Local sites and facilities are smaller in size and serve the close-to-home park and recreation needs of a community. These sites are predominantly used by nearby residents.

OS-112 King County will provide local sites in the rural area predominantly serving rural residents.

The designation of local facilities within unincorporated King County is used to guide future ownership responsibility. Consistent with the State Growth Management Act (GMA) and the Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs), King County's role in the urban unincorporated area is the temporary stewardship of remaining local facilities in these areas until they annex to cities. Annexations were contemplated by the CPPs to be completed by 2012.

OS-113 King County will transfer local parks and other open space sites to the cities in which they are located. Transfer of local open space sites should be included as part of annexation or incorporation interlocal agreements which cover other services and facilities.

OS-114 King County will encourage and promote the transfer of local parks in the UGA to the cities in whose potential annexation area (PAA) they are located.

3.2.2 Level Two Classification: Role in the System

Level two classifies each site based on its primary intended purpose, while acknowledging that many sites may have multiple benefits and/or functions. This designation guides the site's use, development, restoration, management and conservation. These classifications are introduced here and will be discussed as they directly relate to the open space inventory in Section 3.4.

Level 2

- Recreation
- Trail
- Natural area park
- Working forest
- Multi-use

OS-115 All King County open space sites will be classified within the following categories: 1) recreation site, 2) trail, 3) natural area park, 4) working forest land, and 5) multi-use site.

1) Recreation Site

Active recreation sites support independent, group and team activities that require a significant level of development and operations. This includes scheduled sports activities and large scale special events and tournaments. They support high impact forms of recreation. Site development, maintenance and programming will reflect this level of developed facilities and intensive use.

OS-116 Recreation sites are dominated by recreation facilities. They receive a higher level of public use and are intended to accommodate developed areas for informal, organized or intense recreation. This may include either or both active and passive recreation activities.

Passive recreation sites require a lower level of development and provide areas for informal, self-directed activities for individuals and groups. Uses may also include less formal levels of sports fields (open playfields) or sport courts. These activities require some level of improvement or development to support them.

2) Trail

This category refers to regional trails, which comprise a countywide network of greenways that provide multi-use recreational opportunities and non-motorized transportation/mobility options. Regional trails

accommodate such uses as walking, jogging, cycling, horseback riding, and roller skating. Safety and enjoyment for trail users is important to the trail experience.

OS-117 Trails provide non-motorized recreational and transportation opportunities and may serve a variety of user types or may be designed for a more limited user group.

OS-118 Regional trail corridors serve multiple users and where possible should be designed to include separate surface areas to serve different modes of use. This includes a hard surface with shoulders along with a parallel or nearby soft surface path with adequate separation between them.

Regional trails are designated into two broad categories in order to ensure consistent development and mapping. Regional trails may be designated as "primary" regional trails or "secondary" regional trails based on the development characteristics of the trails and whether they are suitable for multiple uses. These designations help identify trail characteristics important to users.

OS-119 Regional trails may be designated as primary or secondary for mapping or other purposes based on the trail's development condition and its ability to be used for multiple purposes such as bicycling, walking, skating, jogging, horseback riding and other uses.

A "primary" regional trail is defined as a shared-use (multi-purpose) regionally-significant off-road facility that provides recreational opportunities and enhances regional mobility. Primary trails are facilities that meet regional trail development guidelines for size, grade, and other characteristics and are suitable for multi-purpose use (e.g., bicycling, hiking, jogging, skating, etc.). Some trails may also be appropriate for equestrian use.

A "secondary" regional trail is a regionally significant off-road facility that provides connections essential to the Regional Trails System, but which may not meet all of the criteria for shared-use, size, grade, surfacing, and other characteristics. While not being appropriate for all uses, secondary trails may provide important connections within the regional trails system. Some of these trails may be appropriate for equestrian use.

King County has a growing system of backcountry trails, which are natural surface trails located primarily within natural area parks, forest lands, and multi-use sites. Backcountry trails will be discussed further in Section 3.4.2.2 and are not part of the open space classification system.

3) Natural Area Park

In addition to their ecological value, natural area parks are characterized by low-impact recreation opportunities in a natural setting that require minimal levels of development.

OS-120 Natural area parks, also known as ecological lands, recognize areas valued for their important natural resource functions and character, including but not limited to benefiting and protecting ecosystems, air and water quality, fish and wildlife habitat, native biodiversity, trees and other natural or scenic resource purposes. They also contribute to climate change adaptation and should be managed to promote resiliency in the face of a changing climate. Improvements and enhancements will focus on keeping the site as a fully functioning natural ecosystem. There may be low impact public access and use of these sites and development of related supporting infrastructure.

OS-121 **Appropriate uses of natural area parks may include interpretive and educational programs, nature programs, and activities that emphasize the enjoyment and appreciation of the natural resources of the site and the outdoors.**

OS-122 **Appropriate public access, use and management activities should be allowed on natural area parks as compatible with the natural resource values of these sites and consistent with the long-term quality of the site or its resources. Development will be limited to making the site available for public enjoyment in a manner consistent with site resources.**

OS-123 **Natural area parks require individual management plans to determine how best to support public uses and to determine the enhancement and restoration efforts needed. A site management plan should be developed for natural area parks as outlined by the *Site Management Guidelines*.**

4) Working Forest Land

King County's working forest lands were acquired for and are managed to balance sustainable timber production with conservation and restoration of resources and public use. Some forestry-related policies may also be appropriate to guide stewardship of forest lands on other open space sites.

OS-124 **Forest lands should be acquired to provide a buffer between commercial forestland and adjacent residential development, to protect forested lands from development, and to retain lands in active forestry.**

OS-125 **Management goals for forest lands should include enhancing ecological benefits and services, demonstrating progressive forest management, providing passive recreation opportunities and generating revenue to facilitate sustainable management of those sites.**

OS-126 **Forest lands shall be managed consistent with the Executive Order for Implementation of Forestry Policies (PUT 8-18) and the *Programmatic Plan for Management of King County-owned Working Forest Properties (2003)*.**

OS-127 **Forest Stewardship Plans shall be completed for each working forest site consistent with Public Rule 8-19-1, which outlines format and content requirements for such plans.**

OS-128 **Balancing multiple management goals will be most effective taking into context the surrounding regional situation; therefore, sites should be managed through a cooperative approach with other public agencies, conservation organizations and private owners to retain a viable forested landscape.**

5) Multi-Use Site

OS-129 **Multi-use sites include lands that may have areas of environmental value, but also may accommodate extensive public access and active and/or passive recreation opportunities.**

Each portion of a multi-use site will be developed and managed to support the level of use or conservation appropriate to that portion of the site.

3.2.3 Level Three Classification: Use Areas Within Open Space Sites

King County at times applies an addition classification to specific open space sites, further describing use areas within the site.

Level 3

- Natural area
- Active recreation area
- Passive recreation area
- Staging area
- Special management area

OS-130 **Site use area designations establish areas of development, use, restoration or enhancement, and direct maintenance and stewardship. Their purpose is to organize and identify uses within a site.**

OS-131 **The following categories may be used to identify the individual use areas within a site: 1) natural area, 2) active recreation area, 3) passive recreation area, 4) staging area, and 5) special management area.**

OS-132 **"Natural area" designates areas of a site with natural character and natural resources. These areas may support little development and limited public access. Development may include basic improvements necessary for appropriate public access, restoration projects, trails, nature study and related outdoor activities.**

OS-133 **"Active recreation area" designates areas with the highest level of development, use and programming. These areas include facilities to support organized athletics, such as athletic fields or sports courts, and areas for large scale group picnics, gatherings and special events.**

OS-134 **"Passive recreation area" designates areas for informal, self-directed activities such as informal play, hiking, bicycling, jogging, and picnicking. These areas may include open fields, trails, children's play equipment, and picnic sites.**

OS-135 **"Staging area" designates a place for support facilities needed for public access and recreational use of a site. Facilities will generally be located in the least sensitive portions of a site, at the edge of a site or at previously disturbed locations within a site.**

OS-136 **"Special management area" designates areas within a site identified for special management or recreational use. These areas may include wetland or forest management areas, habitat corridor enhancement areas, resource restoration areas, scenic corridors, cultural sites, and historical districts.**

3.3 Open Space Standards

Park standards are traditionally used by jurisdictions as guidelines to evaluate park, recreation and other open space levels of service and needs. In the past, King County applied standards or guidelines; however, King County has transitioned to a provider of regional parks for passive and active recreation, regional trails, and forest lands, with limited local parks in the rural area. As such, King County's current and future open space systems do not lend themselves to measurement by traditional urban park standards.

Instead, King County serves a broader role that is best implemented by acquiring, developing and restoring large sites with features and facilities of regional importance. These sites are not distributed in terms of acres per thousand in discreet geographic areas, but by the geographic distribution of sites within the landscape characteristics that define the county. These sites are located based on the opportunities provided by the natural and physical processes that shaped the formation of the Puget Sound Basin. Location of open space sites is also influenced by past development patterns in the region. Growth of the system will be influenced by population growth trends and the expressed needs of county residents. Future acquisitions will be influenced by the historical acquisition and development of county open spaces in order to build upon the current inventory and address the county's landscape-level approach and emphasis on connectivity.

Local park standards in rural areas differ from urban standards. In rural areas, individual lots tend to be larger and provide more outdoor recreation space than in urban areas. The character of the rural area with large-sized lots and low residential densities result in the need for fewer individual sites in the rural area.

OS-137 **Park standards are guidelines to evaluate park, recreation and other open space needs, direct the planning, acquisition, development and management of the system and evaluate the impact of growth and development.**

OS-138 **King County's goal for the regional open space system is to preserve the county's valuable open space and natural resources and provide a wide range of recreational opportunities to county residents. This goal is implemented based on the opportunity presented by the physical landscape and can be evaluated by degree of protection of a system and its resources, features and processes.**

OS-139 **King County's goal for the Regional Trails System will be based on opportunities to expand the overall network for recreation and mobility and to increase connectivity to local trails and other open space sites.**

OS-140 **King County's goal for location, size and distribution of regional active and multipurpose parks and facilities will be based on geographic distribution of sites, consideration of need, and public support and partnership opportunities.**

OS-141 **King County shall consider equity in the development and acquisition of its open space system to help in the reduction of health disparities and in the promotion of environmental justice.**

OS-142 **Local parks in the rural areas should be equitably distributed throughout the rural area. However, due to lower population densities, there will be fewer individual facilities, and users can expect to travel greater distances in the rural areas. Ideally, rural park facilities should be located near schools, rural communities or activity centers.**

3.4 Functional Roles of King County's Open Space Assets

In the following section, the major functional groupings of the assets found in King County's open space system are presented. These categories identify sites by their purpose or relationship, similar characteristics, type of facilities, and/or program use, such as athletic field complexes, regional trails, or forestry. These sites are distributed throughout the county and linkages among them have a multiplier effect on the benefits provided by King County's open space system.

As noted in Section 3.2, King County first classifies its open space sites as either regional or local, which reflects the types of recreational opportunities and users that a site accommodates. King County's regional role is focused on the provision of large facilities that have a broad geographic usage and benefit. King County's local role is focused on serving the unincorporated rural areas of the county and providing smaller facilities that have a more narrow geographic usage or benefit.

More detailed information about King County's open space assets may be found in other county inventories, plans, reports and studies. These include individual park management and master plans, regional trail planning documents, and programmatic plans for King County's natural area parks and forest lands. See Appendix II for a list of source documents that contributed to this plan.

A full inventory of King County's open space assets is included in Section 3.5.

3.4.1 Recreation

King County provides both active and passive recreation opportunities.

For both regional and local sites, active recreation can be characterized by the prevalence of organized, scheduled activities and/or a variety of recreational uses, such as a highly developed athletic field complex with lights and extensive support facilities or large picnic shelters and areas for organized group picnics. This type of recreation accommodates intensive use that requires a significant amount of development to support the sites. Undeveloped or low development areas may exist on predominantly active recreation sites, providing additional benefits such as habitat value, environmental protection, and scenic value.

For both regional and local sites, passive recreation can be characterized by the prevalence of unscheduled, individually-oriented activities, such as informal play, hiking, walking, jogging, picnicking, and mountain biking. This type of recreation is less intensive and may require some improvement or development, which helps ensure appropriate public access. Examples of such improvements or development include picnic tables and park furniture, children's play equipment, signage, grass fields or open meadows, and backcountry trails.

Some examples of recreation sites in King County's inventory include:

Marymoor Park (regional)

From its beginning as a dairy farm and country estate to its current use as a regional hub for recreation, Marymoor Park has been recognized for its rich natural setting and outstanding location at the north end of Lake Sammamish. King County first acquired Marymoor Park in 1962 in an effort to save the land from development and establish a public park.

Today, the 640 acres that make up Marymoor Park offer a myriad of year-round recreational opportunities, which include natural and artificial athletic fields (soccer, baseball, tennis, cricket, lacrosse, and rugby), a velodrome, walking/biking trails, nature trails, a community garden, a rowing launch, an off-leash dog park, a climbing rock, a foot reflexology path, and a model airplane flying field. Marymoor is also home to outdoor summer concerts and movies and the historic Clise Mansion, which is often used for weddings and other events.

Weyerhaeuser King County Aquatic Center (regional)
The Weyerhaeuser King County Aquatic Center (WKCAC), a legacy venue of the 1990 Seattle Goodwill Games, is a 2,500-seat facility that maintains an active competition schedule, hosting more than 50 events annually. Recognized as one of the fastest pools in the country, it has been the site of Olympic Trials, top national and international competitions, and the Pacific Northwest's premiere swimming and diving events. In addition to the competitive events, WKCAC also offers open lap swims, swimming and diving training, and swimming lessons, and the recreational pool is an ideal space for family swims or to rent for private events. WKCAC also has a banquet hall available for weddings, parties, and company events.

Cougar Mountain Regional Wildland Park (regional)
With 36 miles of backcountry trails, forested hills, open meadows, and sweeping vistas, Cougar Mountain Regional Wildland Park covers more than 3,000 acres and is the largest park in the King County Park system. It is an integral part of a publicly-owned greenway of natural lands that extends from Lake Washington to Snoqualmie Pass that was created in part through a partnership with state and local agencies and non-profit conservation organizations. Cougar Mountain provides an excellent example of King County's unique historical and cultural heritage while preserving important wildlife habitat and offering ample recreational opportunities.

The park features many diverse habitats, such as mature second growth forests, streams and wetlands, and cliffs, talus, and caves. There are sweeping views of the region, including vistas of Lake Sammamish, the Cascades, and Bellevue, Seattle and beyond. Hosts of birds are regularly seen at Cougar, along with wildlife such as black bear and bobcats. Over the years, Cougar Mountain has been home to Native Americans, miners, loggers, and even the US Army. Many of the remnants of the park's past uses can be observed throughout the park today.

Ravensdale Park (local)
Ravensdale Park is located in Rock Creek Valley, a few miles east of Maple Valley between Kent-Kangley Road and Ravensdale Way. The historic mining town of Ravensdale sits adjacent to the park's southeast corner, and the small community of Georgetown borders the north side of the park, across the road. The facilities in the park, consisting of four athletic fields, the Gracie Hansen Community Center, parking, and a picnic area and restrooms, serve many of the rural residents of Rock Creek Valley, as well as the city of Maple Valley. Aside from the Tahoma School District's fields, there are no public athletic fields in the valley other than those at Ravensdale Park.

See Section 3.5 for a full inventory of King County's recreation sites.

3.4.2 Trails

King County's open space inventory offers a variety of trail-based recreational opportunities which occur largely occur on a countywide network of shared-use paths or within passive recreation sites, natural area parks, forest lands, and multi-use sites.

Regional Trails in King County

- Burke-Gilman Trail
- Cedar River Trail
- East Lake Sammamish Trail
- Foothills Trail
- Green River Trail
- Green-to-Cedar Rivers Trail
- Interurban Trail
- Issaquah-Preston Trail
- Lake Youngs Trail
- Marymoor Connector Trail
- Preston-Snoqualmie Trail
- Redmond Ridge Trails
- Sammamish River Trail
- Snoqualmie Valley Trail
- Soos Creek Trail
- Tolt Pipeline Trail

3.4.2.1 Regional Trails System

Through the Regional Trails System, King County is home to one of the largest non-motorized trail systems in the country. King County and numerous city jurisdictions collectively offer approximately 300 miles of shared-use (multi-purpose) paved and unpaved trails connecting urban areas of the county with rural valleys and mountains, linking communities along the way. The King County government stewards some 175 miles of the overall network, and several cities and other jurisdictions are responsible for the remaining portions of the current network.

Regional trails are non-motorized facilities and may be paved or soft-surface (gravel) or a combination of both. Regional trails provide both recreational opportunities and mobility options, connecting users with dedicated non-motorized routes to parks, work, school and other destinations. Trails can be used for walking, jogging, cycling, skating, and horseback riding, where appropriate.

Local trails, which may include safe routes to schools, local municipal paths, or official neighborhood connectors, are locally important facilities but are not part of the Regional Trails System. Connections from the local trails that feed into the Regional Trails System are coordinated between King County and the relevant local jurisdictions.

Regional trails run through residential neighborhoods, commercial and business districts, and industrial areas, as well as farmlands, river valleys, lake shores, foothills, and dense forests. Routes use abandoned railroad grades, water pipeline and power line corridors, linear parks, river levees and other special features. Wooded trail corridors also provide routes for wildlife migration throughout the county. Soos Creek Trail, for example, parallels one of the largest wetland corridors in King County; this stream and wetland system provide habitat for hundreds of species of animals.

Several regional trails cross county boundaries to the north and south and connect with similar trails in Snohomish and Pierce counties and to the east with the cross-state John Wayne Pioneer Trail and Iron Horse State Park.

For more than 30 years, King County has played a leadership role in developing the overall vision of a countywide Regional Trails System, as well as in maintaining the regional trails that fall under its direct jurisdiction. King County works with other county agencies, local jurisdictions and the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) to develop the overall trails network and ensure connectivity throughout the county. King County also collaborates with community groups and trail users, such as Cascade Bicycle Club and Friends of Soos Creek Park, who help maintain trails and advocate for the vision of the Regional Trails System.

See Section 3.5 for a full inventory of King County's regional trails.

3.4.2.2 Backcountry Trails

Many local, state, federal, and private open space sites in the county offer hundreds of miles of natural surface "backcountry" trails that allow users to directly experience the county's vast and varying natural beauty found in its forests, meadows, and marine and fresh water shorelines. These trails are intended for passive recreation and users of backcountry trails are generally looking for a natural experience with forests and trees, streams and wetlands, and birds and wildlife.

King County's Parks and Recreation Division stewards a growing network of more than 200 miles of backcountry trails distributed among 26 sites, and other landowners allowing backcountry trails include USDA Forest Service, various state agencies, private landholders, and some cities.

Backcountry trails are designed to take advantage of the natural terrain. These trails are generally narrow paths, but may also include existing maintenance roads and old logging roads. Backcountry trails are characterized by natural surface trails that cross a variety of landscapes and terrain and at varying lengths and distances. These trails feature loops, single track trails and trail connections between parks and other natural areas. In many cases, backcountry trails have evolved from 'social trails', or networks informally created by local hikers, equestrians, and mountain bikers.

The different backcountry trail uses include hiking, horseback riding, mountain biking, running and nature observation. Designated allowable uses may differ by trail and site, though at present, most backcountry trails in King County's jurisdiction are shared by all users. Backcountry trails are managed in a manner that protects natural resources, ensures public safety, and requires minimal maintenance.

Many of the natural area parks, multi-use sites, and forest lands acquired by King County over the past 25 years contain existing networks of 'social trails', which were originally created by local hikers, equestrians, and mountain bikers. King County formalized and improved some of these trails, which now serve as the backbone of its backcountry trail network.

Backcountry Trails Sites

- Big Bend Natural Area
- Big Finn Hill Park
- Black Diamond Natural Area
- Cougar Mountain Regional Wildland Park
- Cougar Mt. - Squak Mt. - Tiger Mt. Corridor
- Dockton Forest
- Duthie Hill Park
- Grand Ridge Park
- Green River Natural Area
- Island Center Forest
- Landsburg Reach Natural Area
- Maple Ridge Highlands Open Space
- Maury Island Marine Park
- McGarvey Park Open Space
- Mitchell Hill Forest
- Moss Lake Natural Area
- Pinnacle Peak Park
- Rattlesnake Mountain Scenic Area
- Ravensdale Retreat Natural Area
- Ring Hill Forest
- Rock Creek Natural Area
- Shinglemill Creek
- Soaring Eagle Regional Park
- Spring Lake - Lake Desire Park
- Taylor Mountain Forest
- Tolt MacDonald Park

Cougar Mountain Regional Wildland Park, purchased in the mid 1980s, was the first backcountry trail network developed and managed by King County in partnership with hiking and equestrian trail users. Other major backcountry trail sites in King County's inventory were once private timber holdings (Taylor Mountain Forest, Grand Ridge Park) or Washington State Department of Natural Resources Trust Lands (Soaring Eagle, Island Center Forest).

King County collaborates with other major public and private land holders of adjacent sites with backcountry trails to ensure connections and improve access to these trails. King County also relies upon trail users and community groups to help preserve lands for trails and open space, maintain and improve existing trails, and construct new trails to meet the growing demand for hiking, horseback riding and mountain biking. King County partners with many trail user and advocacy groups including the Washington Trails Association, Evergreen Mountain Biking Alliance, Issaquah Alps Trails Club, Backcountry Horsemen – Tahoma Chapter, Enumclaw Forested Foothills Recreation Association, Friends of Rock Creek Valley, King County Executive Horse Council, Vashon-Maury Island Horse Association and the Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust.

3.4.3 Natural Area Parks

A natural area park is characterized by a site's uniqueness or diversity of native vegetation, which provides fish and wildlife habitat and embodies the beauty and character of the region's landscape. These lands often support wetlands, streams and rivers, riparian areas, small lakes and ponds, and other vulnerable or rare habitats and are managed to conserve and enhance ecological value including native biodiversity. Appropriate public access and use may be allowed, and some improvement and development may be needed to support such recreational uses.

Some examples of natural area parks in King County's inventory include:

Middle Fork Snoqualmie Natural Area (regional)

The Middle Fork Snoqualmie Natural Area is located along the Middle Fork of the Snoqualmie River, about nine miles east of the city of North Bend. At nearly 658 acres, it contains primarily forested lands and wetlands, and its tributary streams provide important habitat for terrestrial and aquatic wildlife. River access for hand-boat launching and fishing is also possible from the Middle Fork Snoqualmie Natural Area. Adjacent state lands provide thousands of acres of additional passive recreational opportunities.

Cold Creek Natural Area (regional)

Located near Woodinville and Redmond, Coal Creek Natural Area and the adjacent Bassett Pond Natural Area create a contiguous open space site of 250 acres. This area contains extensive wetland systems, numerous springs, and one of the highest quality salmon-bearing streams in the Big Bear Creek drainage basin. It also provides high quality habitat for birds and other terrestrial and aquatic wildlife and features a peat deposit of state significance.

Cavanaugh Pond Natural Area (regional)

The 57-acre Cavanaugh Pond Natural Area is located just east of Renton on the Cedar River. Cavanaugh Pond is the only Class 1 wetland in the Cedar River Valley, meaning that it is of the highest quality of wetland ecosystems. There are stands of alder and cottonwoods on site, and current restoration projects are working to control invasive vegetation and establish native forest. Cavanaugh Pond supports spawning sockeye salmon in the fall and provides year-round habitat for other fish and wildlife species. Recreation at Cavanaugh Pond is primarily walking and nature observation.

See Section 3.5 for a full inventory of King County's Natural Area Parks.

3.4.4 Forest Lands

Forests are an important part of the character, environment, and economy that make King County a unique place to work, live, and play. Yet, development pressure in King County has resulted in a rapid decline in forested acreage. Since the values forests provide are best achieved at the landscape level, forest viability quickly erodes when fragmentation by conversion to residential development or other land uses occurs.

Forest lands contribute significant benefits to any open space system. They have important ecological value for the retention and infiltration of stormwater, the elimination of runoff and replenishment of groundwater, as a source of water for rivers and streams that support fish populations, and for providing fish and wildlife habitat, improving air quality, and sequestering and storing carbon dioxide. Forests provide economic value, both as a source of revenue generated from harvesting timber and other forest products and as a recreation destination.

As the regional government, King County has undertaken a multi-faceted approach to forestry that encourages the conservation of forest land and economically viable forestry, and as such, is working cooperatively across agency and landowner boundaries to retain a viable forested landscape.

King County has acquired some properties in its open space inventory that should be managed as working forest lands. The lands were acquired to preserve contiguous tracts of forested property in the Rural Forest Focus Areas and the Forest Production District to retain lands in active forestry, protect areas from development, and/or provide a buffer between commercial forestland and adjacent residential development.

King County manages its working forest properties to sustain and enhance environmental benefits, demonstrate progressive forest management and research, and provide revenue for a self-supported management program. When managing working forests, King County balances sustainable timber production with conservation and restoration of resources, and with public use. Managing this balance will be most effective over time if done in the context of the surrounding regional landscape of each working forestland. Success of this forestland conservation vision will depend on a cooperative approach with other public agencies, conservation organizations and private owners to retain a viable forested landscape.

King County also stewards almost 17,000 acres of forest lands that are part of other open space sites, such as those classified as multi-use or natural area parks. A majority of this acreage is located near the urban/rural boundary and experiences heavy public use. These forest lands are managed to conserve public open space, serve as a buffer along the urban growth boundary, enhance wildlife habitat, and provide recreational opportunities such as hiking and trail running, mountain biking, and horseback riding.

Prior to county ownership, neither the working forest lands nor the forest lands on other open space sites were managed for conservation purposes. They tend to be low-elevation, second- or third-growth forests altered by previous human activity and impacted by adjacent development. The forests conditions are dominated by monoculture and/or overstocked stands and contain minimal understory vegetation. These site conditions make them susceptible to insects, diseases, fire and storm damage and negatively affect the forests' ecological values, scenic qualities, and recreational enjoyment.

Complementing the working forests owned by the Parks and Recreation Division, King County holds forest conservation easements on more than 141,000 acres of land, including those secured as part of the transfer of development rights program.

Key policies and goals for managing working forests in the King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks inventory are outlined in the *King County Comprehensive Plan*, Executive Order for

the Implementation of Forest Policies (PUT 8-18), the *Programmatic Plan for Management of King County-owned Forest Properties (2003)*, and the *Farm and Forest Report (1996)*.

Examples of sites that include forest lands are included throughout this chapter.

Some examples of working forests in King County's inventory include:

Taylor Mountain Forest (regional)
Acquired by King County in 1997, Taylor Mountain Forest sits on the southwest side of Taylor Mountain, near the community of Hobart in eastern King County. It is a critical habitat link between large tracts of public land that include the City of Seattle's Cedar River Watershed and the state's Tiger Mountain State Forest. From red alder and black cottonwood to salmonberry and lady fern, Taylor Mountain features a mosaic of forest stands and wetland areas. The park's 75 wetlands provide high quality habitat for fish and wildlife and important flood storage capacity. Taylor Mountain Forest is also home to two major tributaries of Issaquah Creek, Holder Creek and Carey Creek, which provide more than five miles of spawning and rearing habitat for salmon. This 1,822-acre site also features a 30-mile backcountry trail network for hiking, mountain biking, and horseback riding.

Island Center Forest (regional)
Located in the center of Vashon Island, Island Center Forest is a 369-acre working forest and nature preserve that is managed to demonstrate sustainable forest management while protecting and restoring the health of the site's habitat. Island Center Forest features various forest stands, Mukai Pond, and Meadowlake wetlands, and forms the headwaters of Judd Creek. Island Center Forest provides habitat for a variety of wildlife, including more than 70 bird species. There are more than nine miles of backcountry trails used by hikers, equestrians and mountain bikers, and its wetlands are popular for bird watching and wildlife photography. A diverse site with a unique history, Island Center Forest is also used for scientific research.

Some examples of forest conservation easements held by King County include:

Snoqualmie Tree Farm
In 2004, King County executed one of the nation's largest forest conservation agreements to protect almost 90,000 acres in east King County from development and ensure the area will always remain green to the crest of the Cascade Mountains. This historic agreement more than tripled the amount of open space preserved by the county over the past 35 years.

Upper Green River Watershed Forest
In 2008, Plum Creek and King County finalized a conservation agreement to transfer development rights for 45,500 acres of timberland in the Upper Green River Watershed in southeast King County. King County received a conservation easement that precludes conversion to housing development. Plum Creek will continue to manage the land as a working forest and received 514 development credits that allow for increased density of development in urban areas.

Ames Lake Forest
In 2002, King County acquired this 435-acre forest conservation easement using a number of different acquisition tools. Ames Lake Forest is adjacent to King County's 550-acre Tolt-MacDonald Park and contains forested upland above the Snoqualmie River, as well as backcountry trails used for mountain biking and hiking. The easement restricts development and outlines terms for forest practices on site.

See Section 3.5 for a full inventory of King County's working forest lands and conservation easements.

3.4.5 Multi-Use Sites

Generally regional in scope, a multi-use site is characterized by a site's ability to accommodate extensive use while also preserving a site's ecological value by managing for appropriate public access. Recreation on these sites can be either passive or active, but more frequently feature low-impact recreation, including walking, hiking, jogging, mountain biking, and horseback riding.

Grand Ridge Park (regional)

Grand Ridge Park is 1,200 acres of forested lands rising 1,100 feet in elevation above Issaquah and Lake Sammamish. Established to provide natural resource protection and passive recreation along the edge of urban and rural living, the park is located between Mitchell Hill Forest to the east and the Issaquah Highlands residential development to the west. The steep slope above the North Fork of Issaquah Creek is covered by stands of large second growth Douglas fir trees.

A special feature of Grand Ridge is the groves of western redcedar trees and sword ferns in the central part of the ridge. Some of the redcedars are over five feet in diameter. The red alder forests and wetlands in the north end of the park act as the headwaters for salmon-bearing Canyon Creek, which flows into the Snoqualmie Watershed, and the North Fork of Issaquah Creek, which flows west into Lake Sammamish.

Grand Ridge has a seven-mile backcountry trail network that supports hiking, mountain biking, and horseback riding.

Soaring Eagle Park (regional)

Named in 2001 by a second grader at Samantha Smith Elementary School, Soaring Eagle Regional Park is 600 acres of mature forests, wetlands, and wildlife habitat. Formerly Washington State school trust land known as Section 36, Soaring Eagle sits above Patterson Creek on the edge of the Sammamish Plateau along the western flank of the Snoqualmie River Valley. This naturally beautiful area provides sanctuary for black bear, bobcat, black tail deer and more than 40 species of birds. There are 12 miles of backcountry trails that are regularly used by hikers, mountain bikers, and equestrians. Thirty acres of this site is slated for transfer to the City of Sammamish in the future.

Maple Ridge Highlands Open Space (regional)

Maple Ridge Highlands is a 587-acre forested park located in southern King County near the communities of Ravensdale and Black Diamond. The park is made up of two sections, which are divided by the city of Kent's municipal watershed. Locally the northern portion is referred to as Danville-Georgetown and the southern portion is known as Henry's Ridge. This site provides passive recreation opportunities including hiking, mountain biking and horseback riding and is an important corridor providing a buffer between urban and rural areas.

See Section 3.5 for a full inventory of King County's multi-use sites.

3.5 Current Open Space Inventory

Today, the King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks, Parks and Recreation Division stewards of more than 26,000 acres of open space, which is comprised of 200 parks, 175 miles of regional trails, and more than 200 miles of backcountry trails. In addition, King County holds nearly 145,000 acres of conservation easements.

King County's open space system is an ever-evolving inventory of public land that has experienced considerable change since its beginnings in the early twentieth century. Many of the first parks in the system were donated to the county, and early park facility development was spurred on by the construction of community centers by the Works Progress Administration (WPA). Many of the initial county park sites and facilities are now owned and operated by cities that have expanded or incorporated in the ensuing years.

Over the years, King County has expanded, shifted and refined its role in the provision of park and recreation services to become an open space system that is focused on regional active and passive parks and recreation amenities, natural area parks, regional trails, forest lands, and local parks in rural unincorporated areas of the county. In response to the State Growth Management Act, this shift called for local parks located in the urban area to be transferred to cities. Since 2002, more than 60 parks and pools comprising nearly 1,600 acres of local park sites have been transferred to cities, among them, the transfer of the King County Fairgrounds to the City of Enumclaw.

Moreover, thousands of acres of open space have been added to the inventory, mainly in the form of new sites, additions to existing sites, and through conservation easements. These acquisitions reflect the shift toward regional natural area parks, regional trails and forest lands.

In addition, King County has looked beyond fee acquisition for the preservation of open space and has utilized a number of tools to obtain conservation easements that provide conservation values and benefits without the need for county ownership. Since 2004, King County has added nearly 140,000 acres of conservation easements, which today total nearly 145,000 acres.

The chart on the following pages shows the inventory of King County's open space system, identifying each site by its primary role and classification as described in Section 3.2 Classification of the Open Space Plan. The classification system provides a method to describe the role of each site in the system and provides direction for its use, management, development or restoration and enhancement.

This inventory list can be expected to change, but provides a snapshot of today's system of open space lands.

Open Space Inventory

NATURAL AREA PARKS BY REGIONAL SYSTEM

Snoqualmie/Skykomish Watershed

Park Name	Acres Owned + (E=Acres of Easement)
Carnation Marsh Natural Area	68 + (12 E)
Chinook Bend Natural Area	71 + (3 E)
Fall City Natural Area	49 + (29 E)
Griffin Creek Natural Area	63
Little Si Natural Area	29
Middle Fork Snoqualmie Natural Area	658
Moss Lake Natural Area	372
Nowak Natural Area	8
Patterson Creek Natural Area	205
Raging River Natural Area	51
Stillwater Natural Area	45 + (101 E)
Tollgate Farm	161
Tolt River Natural Area	270

Lake Washington/Cedar/Sammamish Watershed

Park Name	Acres Owned + (E=Acres of Easement)
Bassett Pond Natural Area	32
Belmondo Reach Natural Area	16
Big Bend Natural Area	101
BN Peninsula Natural Area	27
Carey Creek Natural Area	(10 E)
Cavanaugh Pond Natural Area	57
Cedar Grove Natural Area	75
Cedar Grove Road Natural Area	3
Cold Creek Natural Area	130
Crow Marsh Natural Area	21+ (100 E)
Dorre Don Reach Natural Area	94+ (1 E)
Evans Creek Natural Area	38
Evans Crest Natural Area	30
Hazel Wolf Wetland Natural Area	(116 E)
Issaquah Creek Natural Area	49
Jones Reach Natural Area	3
Kathryn C. Lewis Natural Area	10
Landsburg Reach Natural Area	50
Log Cabin Reach Natural Area	118
Lower Bear Creek Natural Area	11
Lower Lions Reach Natural Area	3
Lower Peterson Creek Corridor Natural Area	67
May Valley 164th Natural Area	4
Middle Bear Creek Natural Area	66 + (25 E)
Middle Evans Creek Natural Area	(38 E)
Middle Issaquah Creek Natural Area	49
Mouth Of Taylor Reach Natural Area	12
Paradise Lake Natural Area	123 + (31 E)
Peterson Lake Natural Area	145
Ravensdale Retreat Natural Area	138
Ricardi Reach Natural Area	10
Rock Creek Natural Area	144
Upper Bear Creek Natural Area	22 + (16 E)
Wetland 14 Natural Area	41
Wetland 79 Natural Area	7

Green/Duwamish Watershed

Park Name	Acres Owned + (E=Acres of Easement)
Auburn Narrows Natural Area	105
Bass Lake Complex Natural Area	235
Big Spring/Newaukum Creek Natural Area	77 +(21 E)
Black Diamond Natural Area	637 + (511 E)
Cemetery Reach Natural Area	46
Covington Natural Area	56
Flaming Geyser Natural Area	73
Green River Natural Area	998
Hatchery Natural Area	24
Horsehead Bend Natural Area	35
Jenkins Creek Natural Area	7
Kanaskat Natural Area	179
Lower Newaukum Creek Natural Area	34
Neely Bridge Natural Area	28

Open Space Inventory *continued*

Green/Duwamish Watershed Natural Area Parks *continued*

Porter Levee Natural Area	56
Shadow Lake Natural Area	(59 E)

White River Watershed

Sites designated in other classifications

Vashon-Maury Island

Park Name	Acres Owned + (E=Acres of Easement)
Christiansen Pond Natural Area	(19 E)
Dockton Natural Area	44
Ellis Creek Natural Area	3
Inspiration Point Natural Area	6 + (7 E)
Island Center Forest Natural Area	81
Manzanita Natural Area	2
Marjorie R. Stanley Natural Area	18
Neill Point Natural Area	53
Northilla Beach Natural Area	6
Paradise Valley Natural Area	5 + (39 E)
Piner Point Natural Area	8
Point Heyer Natural Area	19
Raabs Lagoon Natural Area	12
Shinglemill Creek Natural Area	(46 E)

REGIONAL TRAILS & TRAIL SITES

Trail Name	Acres Owned + (E=Acres of Easement)
BNSF Trail Corridor	(264 E)
Burke Gilman Trail	34
Cedar River Trail	145
Landsburg Kanaskat Trail Site	21
Cedar River to Lake Sammamish Trail Site	22 + (2 E)
Fred V. Habenicht Rotary Park	4
Landsburg Trailhead	38
East Lake Sammamish Trail	124
Foothills Trail [2]	65 + (1.87)
Green River Trail	22
Cecil Moses Memorial Park	3
Green to Cedar Trail	130
Interurban Trail [3]	
Issaquah Preston Trail [3]	
Lake Youngs Trail [2]	35
Lake Youngs Park	5
Lake Youngs Trailhead [2]	7
Preston Snoqualmie Trail	96
Redmond Ridge Trail [3]	
Redmond Watershed Addition Park	2
Redmond Watershed Trail Site	1
Sammamish River Trail	130
Snoqualmie Valley Trail	437
Soos Creek Trail and Park	730
Soos Creek To Lake Youngs Trail Site	0.46
Tolt Pipeline Trail	(142 E)
West Sammamish River Trail	56 + (7 E)

OTHER TRAIL CORRIDORS & SITES

Trail Name	Acres Owned + (E=Acres of Easement)
Klahanie Trail Site	(8 E)
Boxley Creek Site	147
East Plateau Trail Site	27 + (3 E)
Green River Trail Site - Kent [3]	
Green River Trail Site - Tukwila [3]	
Pipeline Number 5 Trail Site	(1 E)
PSE Trail Site [3]	

REGIONAL RECREATION & MULTI-USE PARKS

Park Name	Acres Owned + (E=Acres of Easement)
Big Finn Hill Park	219
Canyon Creek Site	(27 E)
Cougar Mountain Regional Wildland Park	3101 + (5 E)
Cougar/Squak Corridor	431
Duthie Hill Park	120
Grand Ridge Park	1285 + (1 E)

Juanita Woodlands Park (including Juanita Triangle)	36
Maple Ridge Highlands Open Space	588
Marymoor Bellevue Ballfield Complex [2]	20
Marymoor Park	613
Maury Island Marine Park	321
McGarvey Park Open Space	401 + (2 E)
Petrovitsky Park	88
Pinnacle Peak Park	256
Preston Athletic Fields	13
Preston Mill	23
Rattlesnake Mountain Scenic Area	1859
Soaring Eagle Regional Park	627
Spring Lake/Lake Desire Park	386
Squak Mt/Tiger Mt Corridor	266
Steve Cox Memorial Park	10
Three Forks Park	267 + (1 E)
Tolt River - John MacDonald Park	528

WORKING FOREST SITES

Forest Name	Acres Owned + (E=Acres of Easement)
Ames Lake Forest	(425 E)
Dockton Forest	19
Dockton Forest Lease Site [2]	(43.42 E)
Island Center Forest	288
Mitchell Hill Connector Forest	426
Patterson Creek Preserve Forest	(243 E)
Preston Ridge Forest	190
Ring Hill Forest	321
Snoqualmie Forest	(89,596 E)
Sugarloaf Mountain Forest	284
Taylor Mountain Forest	1845
Uplands Forest	(506 E)
Upper Green River Watershed Forest	(45,051 E)
Upper Raging River Forest	(5733 E)

LOCAL RURAL PARKS

Park Name	Acres Owned + (E=Acres of Easement)
Cedar Downs Site	78
Coalfield Park	20
Cottage Lake Park	21
Dockton Park	21
Duvall Park	25
Fall City Park	28
Fall City Park West	33
Flaming Geyser Park [1]	104.34
Gold Creek Park	35 + (3 E)
Hollywood Hills Equestrian Park	7
Hyde Lake Park	25
Instebo Park	1
Kathryn Taylor Equestrian Park	26
Kentlake Athletic Fields [2]	12
Lake Francis Park	10
Lake Joy Park	1
Levdansky Park	17
Maple Valley Heights Park	3 + (10 E)
May Valley Park	54
Mirrormont Park	11
Northshore Athletic Fields	19
Novelty Hill Little League Fields	7
Preston Park	1
Quigley Park	1
Ravenhill Open Space	26
Ravensdale Park	42
Sixty Acres Park	90
Tanner Landing Park	41
Whitney Bridge Park	30

Open Space Inventory *continued*

LOCAL PARKS IN URBAN GROWTH AREA

Park Name	Acres Owned + (E=Acres of Easement)
Bingaman Pond Natural Area	17 + (1 E)
Boulevard Lane Park	30
Bryn Mawr Park	5
Camelot Park	18
Five Mile Lake Park	25
Hamm Creek Natural Area	4
Klahanie Park	64
Lake Desire 2 Natural Area	1
Lake Geneva Park	19
Lakewood Park	29
Maplewood Park	45
Maplewood Heights Park	19
North Green River Park	101
North Shorewood Park	6
Redmond Ridge Park	10
Renton Park	19
Sierra Heights Park (including Honeydew)	8
Skyway Park	23
South County Ballfields	21
Southern Heights Park (40 year agreement)	3
White Center Heights Park	6
White Center Pond Natural Area [2]	9

LOCAL PARKS IN RECENTLY ANNEXED AREAS

Park Name	Acres Owned + (E=Acres of Easement)
132nd Square Park	10
Arbor Lake Park	9
East Norway Hill Park	26
Edith Moulton Park	27
Green Tree Park	1
Hazel Valley Park	3
Hilltop Park	7
Juanita Heights Park	3
Kingsgate Park	7
North Meridian Park	35
Park Orchard Park	6
Puget Sound Park	5
Salmon Creek Park	5
Windsor Vista Park	5

LOCAL PARKS IN CITIES

Park Name	Acres Owned + (E=Acres of Easement)
Bridle Crest Trail Site	2
May Creek Parcels - County	47
Sunset Playfield [1]	14

POOLS

Park Name	Acres Owned + (E=Acres of Easement)
Weyerhaeuser King County Aquatic Center Site	11
Vashon Pool	(0.62 E)
Cottage Lake Pool (within Cottage Lake Park)	

SHOP AND UTILITY SITES

Park Name	Acres Owned + (E=Acres of Easement)
Cougar Mountain Wellsite 2	1
Renton Shop Site [2]	
Soos Creek Shop Complex	6
Sunset Shop Site	3
Vashon Shop Site [2]	

[1] Site is owned by King County and managed by others

[2] Site is managed by King County by Agreement

[3] King County has oversight agreement/responsibility

4.1 Partnerships

In addition to collaboration with other King County agencies such as the Water and Land Resources Division, the Parks and Recreation Division works to establish strategic community and corporate partnerships, which enhance its ability to acquire sites, develop recreational opportunities and amenities, and maintain and operate facilities. As the Parks and Recreation Division is not fully funded by tax revenue, development of strategic revenue-generating partnerships are a core component to ensuring that the open space system remains available to the public, even in difficult economic times.

Moreover, partnerships maximize the value of public funds and are often a catalyst for substantial levels of additional community-based investments and resources. Partnerships can ultimately result in a greater scope and number of recreational and conservation opportunities than any one entity can achieve alone. Partnerships can also nurture a sense of ownership and stewardship, which contributes to the open space system's long-term health and vitality.

Presently, and for the foreseeable future, entrepreneurial, community based, and inter-jurisdictional partnerships are important tools by which King County's open space and recreation facilities are acquired, developed, operated and maintained.

4.1.1 Values and Benefits of Partnerships

The value and benefits of partnerships are recognized throughout the Open Space Plan. There are many benefits to King County, its partners and county residents in establishing these partnerships.

- Partnerships enable King County and its partners to leverage their fiscal and human resources to provide facilities and services greater than any one partner could achieve.
- Partnerships, such as those with schools, athletic organizations, user groups, and community-based organizations, encourage optimal use of public facilities.
- Partnerships enable King County and its partners to draw on the expertise of each other to steward and maintain the region's open space resources and recreation facilities.
- Partnerships provide opportunities to bring together agencies, individuals, and interests to work toward achieving common goals.
- Partnerships empower community groups to invest in their open space system.
- Partnerships can generate non-tax revenue designed to support maintenance and operations of the system.

As a regional government, King County is committed to providing leadership and actively pursuing and facilitating partnerships to provide regional open space sites, recreation facilities, programs and services throughout the county. The following policies provide a solid foundation on which to build these partnerships.

PIO-101 King County will encourage and pursue partnerships with public agencies and jurisdictions, private organizations and businesses for support and funding of the open space system and its resources to increase the range of sites, facilities and programs available to the public.

PIO-102 King County will encourage and promote mutually beneficial agreements with school districts, other agencies and private groups for the joint use, stewardship and management of sites and facilities for public recreation and natural resource protection consistent with the planned purposes for each site and facility.

PIO-103 King County will encourage and pursue partnerships with public agencies, organizations and individuals to increase the range and scope of recreational, interpretive and educational opportunities of the open space system.

4.1.2 Types of Partnerships

Agreements and partnerships are varied and site specific, depending upon the parties involved and the type of acquisition, development, use, and stewardship being considered. However, partnerships may generally be categorized within the following areas:

4.1.2.1 Fund Development

Through the *Partnerships for Parks* initiative, the Parks and Recreation Division cultivates and establishes corporate partnerships that increase recreational opportunities for King County residents and generate new non-tax revenue to support the operations and maintenance of the open space system. The division strives to ensure that corporate partnerships and agreements reflect the aesthetics and values of the division in supporting vibrant communities and healthy lifestyles.

The Parks Omnibus Ordinance 14509 provides the statutory framework for the Parks and Recreation Division's financial structure, offering flexibility in negotiating partnerships for fund development. These partnerships generally generate business revenues for the division and can take a variety of forms, including concessions, naming rights, event sponsorships, legacy gifts and grants, marketing and advertising, parking, facility rentals, utilities and lease agreements, and public/private real estate development, among others.

In 2009, business revenues represented approximately 21 percent of the Parks and Recreation Division's operating expenditures, and the division's financial plan considers that this amount should increase five percent each year, holding constant for transferred facilities. Future revenues necessary for maintaining a status quo system are dependent on the successful cultivation of fund development partnerships and strategic use of capital investments that balance recreation, stewardship and revenue objectives.

To date, some examples of this type of partnership have included:

- $610,000 5 year naming right for Group Health Velodrome
- $100,000 1 year naming right for MSN Wi-Fi Hotspots
- $300,000 3 year title sponsorship of US Bank Concerts at Marymoor
- $250,000 1 year trails project with Starbucks
- $550,000 Starbucks Ultimate Park Makeover of White Center Heights Park
- $1.3 Million Cirque de Soleil at Marymoor Park (Bi-annual lease agreement and related parking revenue - 2006, 2008)
- $5,000 monthly average for Subway concession
- $12,000 annually from small concessions
- $105,000 annually from gravel agreement
- $400,000 annually from parking at Marymoor
- $90,000 annually from cell towers and other utility agreements

4.1.2.2 Community Partnerships and Grants Program (CPG)

The Community Partnerships and Grants Program (CPG) is a public/private partnership initiative that empowers user groups, sports associations, recreation clubs, and other types of non-profit organizations to construct, develop, program, and/or maintain new or enhanced public recreation facilities on King County land in a manner that does not result in new publicly funded operations and maintenance costs.

King County contributes use of land and capital improvement seed grants, while community partners

contribute the necessary additional capital and in-kind resources to develop the new or enhanced facility. Community partners also sign a long-term agreement with the Parks and Recreation Division to manage operations, maintenance, and programming, which is typically carried out by volunteers and/or through revenue-based programs or other resources.

As of 2009, more than 40 projects were in a stage of development or implementation or had been completed, representing $13 million in King County commitments and an estimated $64 million in new or enhanced recreation facilities for citizens of King County.

Some examples of completed projects resulting from this type of partnership include:

- *Audubon Birdloop at Marymoor Park* – A 2.1 mile birdloop and interpretive kiosks/signage constructed with the Eastside Audubon
- *Hollywood Hills Equestrian Arena* – Redevelopment of a seven-acre youth equestrian arena with the Hollywood Hills Saddle Club
- *Mel Olson Stadium Renovation* – Synthetic conversion and stadium upgrade developed and installed with Seattle Preparatory School and White Center Community Development Association at Steve Cox Memorial Park
- *Mirrormont Park* – A new twelve-acre park planned and constructed with the Mirrormont Community
- *Preston Athletic Fields and Community Park* – Ballfield complex and community park designed and constructed with Eastside Football Club, Preston Community Club, and Issaquah Little League

A complete list of CPG projects is included in Appendix IV.

4.1.2.3 Youth Sports Facilities Grant Program (YSFG)

The Youth Sports Facilities Grant (YSFG) program provides matching grant funds to rehabilitate or develop sports fields and facilities serving youth in King County. Initiated in 1993, the program strives to facilitate new athletic opportunities for as many youth in King County as possible. Eligible public sector entities include: school districts, park districts, utility districts, cities, or King County. Non-profit organizations, such as youth sports leagues or community organizations, are also eligible, but must partner with the public entity on whose land the field or facility is or will be located. Only projects located in King County are eligible for funding. Past projects include athletic fields, sports courts, skateboard parks, climbing walls, running tracks, and gymnasiums, among others.

The YSFG program is funded and sustained through a one-quarter of one percent car rental tax and interest on the program's $2.6 million endowment. Program funds can only be used for developing and constructing facilities and not for maintaining or operating them. During the program's first fifteen years, nearly $10 million in grants has been awarded, funding more than 250 projects in jurisdictions throughout the county.

Some recent examples of this type of partnership include:

- *Central Park Turf Fields,* Issaquah Parks and Recreation and Issaquah Youth Football
- *Duthie Hill Mountain Bike Park,* King County Parks and Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance
- *Evergreen High School Track,* Highline School District and Evergreen High School Track Club
- *Gymnasium Renovation,* Boys & Girls Clubs of King County
- *Les Gove Park Barrier-Free Playground,* Auburn Parks & Recreation and Rotary Club of Auburn
- *Magnuson Park Ultimate Frisbee Field,* Seattle Parks and Recreation and Disc NW

A list of recent YSFG awards is included in Appendix V.

4.1.2.4 Inter-agency and Inter-jurisdictional Coordination

The Parks and Recreation Division has formed several partnerships with other public entities, such as school districts and cities, to coordinate planning, acquisition, and/or development of open space sites and recreational amenities.

PIO-104 King County will provide regional leadership in open space efforts and encourage public understanding, involvement and commitment to regional open space preservation and recreation goals.

PIO-105 King County will work to bring together a diversity of agencies, groups and individuals to advocate for and support the region's open space goals.

Some examples of these types of partnerships include:

- *Bellevue ballfields at Marymoor Park* – Jointly funded the development of and share responsibilities for maintenance and operations
- *Middle Green River* – Participating in the Mid-Green River Coalition, with local and state entities, recreationists, landowners, and citizens to protect and enhance open space along the Middle Green River and its tributaries
- *Mountains to Sound Greenway* – Collaboratively planning and implementing the Greenway vision with local and state entities, non-profit organizations, the private sector, and citizens
- *Rattlesnake Ridge* – Purchased and managed jointly by King County and the Washington State Department of Natural Resources

4.1.2.5 Recreation Partnerships

The Parks and Recreation Division has a variety of partnerships with other organizations that increase the range and scope of recreational activities taking place on properties throughout the system. Often growing out of CPG projects, these partnerships involve cooperative arrangements with other public agencies, user groups, community-based organizations, or other entities to provide and schedule a variety of recreational program activities.

Some examples of this type of partnership include:

- *S.O.D.A* – stewards, advocates for, and manages the off-leash dog area at Marymoor Park
- *Northshore YMCA* – offers summer youth day camps at Cottage Lake Park
- Lake Washington Youth Soccer Association - maintains and schedules Sixty Acres Park
- *Sammamish Rowing Club* – offers rowing lessons and programming based out of Marymoor Park
- *Rock Creek Sports* – developed indoor baseball training facilities at Gracie Hansen Community Center in Ravensdale Park and schedules and maintains the community center facility

4.1.2.6 Community-based Partnerships

In planning, developing and stewarding King County's large and complex open space system, the Parks and Recreation Division often develops relationships with community-based organizations that represent constituencies concerned with a particular community, recreational asset, wildlife species, or ecosystem. These partnerships vary in nature and complexity, depending upon the issue, and often involve some level of volunteer commitment on behalf of the group.

Some current partners include:

- *Cascade Land Conservancy* works collaboratively with government agencies and other

partners in achieving the vision of the Cascade Agenda, a long-term initiative for conservation and community in the Central Puget Sound region.

- *Enumclaw Forested Foothills Recreation Association* works cooperatively with public agencies and other groups to conserve and protect the multi-purpose use of forested foothills, aquifers, wetlands and wildlife habitat of southeast King County.
- *Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance* advocates and volunteers to build and maintain trails for mountain biking in Washington State, as well as educating people about the sport.
- *Friends of Island Center Forest* is a community-based coalition of stakeholders that actively stewards and advocates for the protection of Island Center Forest.
- *Friends of Marymoor Park* is made up of park users groups, park neighbors and others who want to share information and help enhance and better utilize the facilities and programs within the park.
- *Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust* is a coalition-based organization that collaborates with public agencies, non-profits, communities and individuals to promote conservation and preservation of the area along the I-90 corridor known as the Mountains to Sound Greenway.
- *Vashon-Maury Island Land Trust* works with King County to conserve lands to protect the natural ecosystems and rural character of Vashon-Maury Island.
- *Washington Trails Association,* which works to preserve and promote hiking opportunities across the state, constructs and maintains backcountry trails at multiple sites on King County's open space lands.
- *Water Tenders* is a group of citizens who work to protect, preserve and restore the wetlands and streams in the Bear Creek watershed.

4.1.3 Future Partnerships

The Parks and Recreation Division will continue to establish partnerships for planning, acquisition, development, preservation, maintenance, and stewardship of the open space system by actively identifying and cultivating potential opportunities for the formation of partnerships. These relationships will be pursued through a variety of activities including community outreach, requests for proposals, and direct cultivation of other agencies and groups to identify opportunities for collaboration.

4.1.3.1 Evaluating Partnership Opportunities

Several considerations must be addressed in the evaluation and prioritization of potential partnerships. These include public benefits and costs (human resources, financial resources, opportunity costs, direct and indirect costs), as well as the legal framework which defines King County's ability to enter into partnership agreements and the conditions of those agreements. This framework includes federal laws, Washington State laws, and the King County Code and ordinances, such as land use zoning codes and development regulations, deed restrictions, and funding source restrictions.

PIO-106 King County will evaluate partnerships to ensure the success for each of the partners and provision of the greatest public benefit.

The Parks Omnibus Ordinance (14509), which was approved by the King County Council in 2003, gave the Parks and Recreation Division the authority and flexibility to evaluate, pursue and enter into strategic partnerships that contribute to and enhance the public benefits of the open space system.

4.2 Public Involvement

King County views public involvement and coordination in open space planning, acquisition, restoration, development and management as an on-going practice, not limited to one specific planning or outreach process. The following policies encourage public participation in the planning and delivery of services and programs to balance the diverse and competing needs and priorities of King County residents:

PIO-107 King County will seek and encourage public input, advice and participation in open space system issues.

PIO-108 King County will design and conduct a public participation process appropriate to the site when preparing master plans, park project program plans, site development or management plans.

PIO-109 New funding initiatives for open space should be based on a county-wide planning and public involvement process that identifies community needs and regional opportunities.

PIO-110 King County will use a variety of methods to encourage public involvement, including public meetings, focus groups, surveys, email and other electronic tools, and advisory committees, and when appropriate, will establish park advisory committees appropriate to the size and complexity of the site or issue.

4.2.1 Advisory Committees

King County establishes advisory committees to provide input and recommendations on a variety of issues affecting King County residents and the services they receive from their county government agencies. Over the years, there have been a variety of advisory committees that have helped shape the open space system in King County.

Examples of current advisory committees include:

- *Cedar River Council (CR)* is a group of citizens and local, state, federal and tribal government representatives and elected officials working to preserve and restore the health and public benefit of the Cedar River.
- *The Conservation Futures Citizens Committee (CFT Committee)* makes annual recommendations for allocation of CFT levy funds to King County jurisdictions. The Conservation Futures Tax collected from property taxes levied throughout King County is dedicated to the acquisition of open space in cities and rural areas.
- *The King County Rural Forest Commission* represents a variety of rural forest interests and advises King County on policies and programs affecting rural forestry. It also works to identify strategies to conserve forestlands and promotes the practice of forestry in rural areas of the county.
- *The Parks Levy Citizen Oversight Board,* which was created as part of the 2003-2007 Parks Levy and renewed with the second Parks Levy (2008-2013), plays an integral role in ensuring citizen input and oversight of the expenditure of levy proceeds per guidance provided in the levy ordinances.
- *Unincorporated Area Councils (UACs)* are independent entities formed to improve communication between county government and the residents of the unincorporated areas. The volunteer members of the six county-recognized councils are elected by local area residents.

4.2.2 Volunteers

From one-day events to years of stewardship, the individuals who volunteer their time, energy, and passion in King County's parks and on its trails play an important role in protecting and preserving the county's natural heritage and recreational assets. While providing invaluable assistance with tasks such as weeding flower beds, removing invasive species, constructing interpretive signage, and maintaining hiking trails, volunteers become involved with and invested in King County's open space system, in turn contributing to and ensuring resources for the long-term stewardship of the system.

PIO-111 King County will encourage and support volunteer efforts to maintain and enhance programs and facilities.

There are multiple ways volunteers are involved with King County's open space, such as:

- *Parks and Trails Ambassadors* – these volunteers commit to providing 100 hours annually of their time to carry out tasks such as educating and assisting visitors, reporting on trail conditions, monitoring restoration efforts, assisting with volunteer work parties, and clearing litter on park properties.
- *Adopt-a-Park or Trail* – these volunteers often form formal or informal "Friends of…" types of associations and provide volunteer service at least four times annually in a specific park or trail.
- *Service Volunteers* – these volunteers, which come from local businesses, schools, scout troops, religious institutions, community-based organizations, and other groups and individuals, are interested in participating in community service projects, with commitments extending from one day to many years' involvement over multiple sites. They are matched with volunteer opportunities throughout the system, appropriate to their availability, geographic preference, age levels, and other factors.

4.3 Public Outreach

The Parks and Recreation Division continually seeks ways to encourage the public to explore and enjoy King County's open space system and the recreational assets and amenities provided by the division and its partners.

PIO-112 King County will encourage appropriate public use of the open space system, provide awareness of the opportunities it offers and increase public knowledge of the system.

PIO-113 King County will utilize clear, concise and timely communication with the public.

In addition to public meetings and other public events, the division utilizes a variety of communication channels that employ best practices and the latest technology and through which the public can engage with King County. Some examples of these efforts include:

- *Parksfeedback.com* – a survey tool that allows park users to respond to questions and write comments about their experiences – both positive and negative - in King County's open space system, which is then "red flagged" in the email inboxes of key agency staff.
- *King County Parks electronic media presence* – through its website, blog, and other multi-media tools, the agency frequently disseminates information to the public about its services and operations using channels that encourage interaction with and the involvement of readers.
- *Outreach Events* – throughout the year, agency staff attend fairs, festivals, and other gatherings, which provide opportunities to interact directly with the public, answer questions, and distribute information about King County's parks, trails, and open space system.

Chapter 5: Capital Improvement Program (CIP)

King County Parks and Recreation Division's Capital Improvement Program (CIP) supports the acquisition, construction and rehabilitation of regional and rural parks, regional trails and recreational facilities. The CIP emphasizes projects that are consistent with the *Parks and Recreation Division Business Transition Plan*, which contains a number of key policy directions for the division, such as specifically calling for King County to pursue strategic acquisitions.

The capital budget development process is guided by six priority criteria and consistent with available funding sources:

- Projects which address safety related issues
- Projects which preserve the county's role as the steward of regional parks, recreation facilities and trails
- Projects which generate additional funds to support agency operations
- Projects which provide partnerships that enhance recreation opportunities
- Projects which allow for implementation of new programs/activities without new maintenance costs
- Projects which provide incentives for the transfer of parks in the UGA

Appendix VII presents additional acquisitions considerations for King County when evaluating potential open space acquisitions.

5.1 Funding

Funding for park and trail development, recreation facilities and acquisition projects comes from a variety of revenue sources described in this section. The budget process for the operating budget and projected six-year CIP occurs annually and involves the public, the King County Executive, the King County Council, staff, and occasionally, consultant expertise.

The primary sources of funding for Parks' CIP include:

- *Parks Expansion Levy:* A property tax levy of 5 cents per $1,000 of assessed value was approved by King County voters in 2007, to be collected for six years, beginning in January 2008. Sixty percent of the revenue generated by this levy is allocated to King County for the purpose of acquiring open space and natural lands, acquiring critical links and developing the regional trails system, and providing capital funding through the Community Partnerships and Grants (CPG) program. The levy expires at the end of 2013.
- *Real Estate Excise Tax #1:* Under state law, REET funds may be spent on specified types of capital projects. REET 1 funds may be spent on capital projects for "planning, acquisition, construction, reconstruction, repair, replacement, rehabilitation, or improvement of parks; recreational facilities; [and] trails." A real estate sales tax of .25 percent is collected in unincorporated King County.
- *Real Estate Excise Tax #2:* Under state law, REET 2 funds may be spent on capital projects for "planning, construction, reconstruction, repair, rehabilitation, or improvement of parks". The King County Code further defines the use of REET 2 allowing their use only for "planning, construction, reconstruction, repair, rehabilitation or improvement of parks located in or providing a benefit and open to residents of the unincorporated area of King County."
- *Conservation Futures Tax (CFT):* A countywide property tax of 6.25 cents per $1,000 of assessed value. Revenues may be used solely for acquisition of open space, agriculture, and timber lands. This source cannot be used to acquire park sites for active recreation.

- *Partnerships:* The Community Partnerships and Grants (CPG) Program leverages county funds typically through a use agreement in which a community-based partner or sports organization contributes funding or in-kind donations toward the construction of a CIP project.
- *Grants:* Most frequently, grant funding comes in the form of matching funds from federal or state agencies and has included Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) transportation grants for nonmotorized mobility and the Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office's various grant programs. Other federal and state programs may also offer grant opportunities.

CIP-101 **King County will encourage and pursue partnerships with other agencies, jurisdictions and the private sector to maximize funding of the park, trail and open space system and its resources.**

CIP-102 **King County will leverage its funding through outside resources, including the aggressive pursuit of grants, outside funding sources, and partnerships.**

5.2 Planning, Acquisition and Development

King County will use this Open Space Plan as a guide for planning, acquisition and design decisions for the development and enhancement of the open space system.

CIP-103 **King County will plan, acquire, develop, restore and enhance open space sites and recreation facilities as appropriate, including recreation and multi-use sites, regional trails, natural area parks and forest lands, to further the vision and goals of this plan.**

CIP-104 **King County will plan and develop facilities that encourage multiple public uses and benefits and will work to reduce user conflicts while minimizing impacts to natural resources.**

CIP-105 **King County will systematically apply the open space classification system to sites in its inventory, along with use area designations of county open space lands to clearly facilitate appropriate use, programming, development, maintenance, and stewardship.**

CIP-106 **King County will coordinate open space planning, acquisition and development with other county projects and programs and with other agencies and organizations that may provide mutual benefits.**

5.2.1 Planning

King County pursues a variety of planning activities that are coordinated with and build upon each other to further the goals of the open space system.

CIP-107 **King County will evaluate and update the King County Open Space Plan when necessary to address changing conditions such as system growth, respond to new initiatives, and remain eligible for grant opportunities.**

CIP-108 **King County will evaluate and update the Regional Trails Needs Report (RTNR) and engage in other regional trail planning efforts to respond to changing conditions and needs, provide a viable capital development program, and remain eligible for grant opportunities.**

CIP-109 **As soon as possible after acquisition and prior to significant development, use or large scale restoration of a site, King County will prepare a site management plan, site master plan, or development plan for each open space site. These individual plans should identify appropriate types and levels of public access, necessary rules of use, and required stewardship, including maintenance, restoration, monitoring and enforcement needed for public enjoyment, resource conservation, safety and liability. King County will prepare interim maintenance plans for all new acquisitions to address basic resource protection, public access and safety.**

CIP-110 **Site Management Guidelines for natural area parks and Forest Stewardship Plans for forest lands will be guided by the *King County Ecological Lands Handbook for Natural Areas* and the *Programmatic Plans for Management of King County-owned Ecological Lands*. They will also be informed by the various regional and backcountry trails planning documents and best available science.**

CIP-111 Future management actions for open space sites shall be consistent with their individual plans. Changes in conditions, such as increased public use or acquisition of new land, will require evaluation and periodic updating of these plans.

Planning should also consider the potential for redevelopment, restoration and enhancement of existing sites and facilities as an especially important strategy to maximize the recreation and resource values and revenue generating potential of existing sites. Recognition of an adaptive strategy for use and management of open space lands provides for appropriate long-term public benefit and health of the system.

CIP-112 King County should monitor open space use patterns as background for future planning efforts, including how open space sites serve the public benefit and what are subsequent recommendations to enhance or restore individual sites to increase their benefit to King County's open space system and its goals and vision.

5.2.1.1 Active Recreation Planning

King County, as well as many other local jurisdictions, have created or converted new athletic fields at sites throughout the county in recent years. Considering population growth and other demographics trends, it is important to understand and monitor the need for these types of facilities and ways in which the facilities can be built and maintained that maximize resources and serve the greatest public benefit. King County currently achieves this in part through partnership-based programs such as the Community Partnerships and Grants Program and Youth Sports Facilities Grants.

CIP-113 King County should work with athletic organizations, school districts and the public to identify active recreation facility needs and coordinate funding strategies.

5.2.1.2 Regional Trails Planning

King County's long-term capital program for expansion and enhancement of its regional trails system is found in the *King County Regional Trails Needs Report (RTNR)*, which serves as King County's official long-term plan for the Regional Trails System. The RTNR provides guidance for development of King County's components of the overall regional trails network. This plan is based upon previous regional trails plans including the *Regional Trail Inventory and Implementation Guidelines (2004)*, the *King County Regional Trails Plan (1992)*, and the *King County Urban Trails Plan (1971)*. These plans recognize the regional trails system as a major element of King County's open space system. They are the result of regional planning processes that identified trail routes, trail types, development policies and cost estimates.

Coordination and/or partnerships with local cities in planning for the regional trails system are important to King County, as regional trails that pass through city jurisdictions play an important and growing role in the overall trails system.

CIP-114 King County should provide regional leadership and coordination for the planning, design, implementation and maintenance of the countywide Regional Trails System to ensure regional trail connections between jurisdictions and linkages with other local trails.

5.2.1.3 Habitat Planning

Planning for the protection and conservation of fish and wildlife habitat and native biodiversity provides valuable information that contributes to the planning and management of open space sites, especially for natural area parks and forest lands. This type of planning also informs decisions regarding how best to provide appropriate public access and appropriate recreational activities at an open space site.

CIP-115 King County will continue fish and wildlife planning efforts through individual site management plans and maintenance plans to ensure biodiversity values are an integral part of open space decisions.

5.2.1.4 Backcountry Trails Planning

Planning for backcountry trails helps to ensure that such trails are properly located and constructed to accommodate and balance appropriate uses. Planning can also help identify the need for and location of backcountry trail support infrastructure such as trailheads, parking lots, kiosks, signage, and restrooms. Public involvement with trail user groups and other agencies providing similar nearby recreational opportunities should be a critical part of the planning process.

CIP-116 King County should develop a backcountry trails plan that establishes protocols for and guides planning, design, construction, and maintenance of backcountry trails on King County's open space sites.

5.2.1.5 Planning Tools

Having a variety of information about park sites and the overall open space system landscape is critical for planning and stewardship of the system, lending importance to maintaining a site specific database and employing tools such as Geographic Information System.

An inventory should include information such as purchase information, funding records, historic site development and survey information, master plans, site management guidelines, site plans and specifications, site conditions including site improvements and maintenance requirements. Such an inventory will facilitate King County's property acquisition, planning, property management, development review, project development, stewardship, restoration and scheduling responsibilities.

CIP-117 King County will maintain a comprehensive site inventory, in coordination with other county inventories, databases and information provided by Geographic Information System (GIS) tools.

5.2.1.5 External Influences

Outside activities can affect the open space system. This may be a result of new local, state or federal legislation or regulations, planning proposals from other agencies or from private sector development proposals. Participation in the development and review of these proposed actions is important to ensure the future enhancement, protection and sustainability of the open space system.

CIP-118 King County will review legislation, codes, regulations and land use and development proposals, to ensure the full range of open space issues and impacts are addressed.

CIP-119 King County will pursue opportunities for participation with the private sector in the development process to further open space goals.

5.2.2 Acquisition

The lands that are added to the open space system enrich the quality of life in the county and contribute to a public lands legacy for future generations. Anticipated growth in King County will bring additional pressures to preserve all types of open spaces for their multiple benefits and recreational opportunities. Limited public funds make every acquisition decision important. Acquisition decisions must consider the implications of future development, use and management, the need for protecting and restoring natural resources, and the importance of conserving ecologically important areas.

Open space acquisitions for conservation or recreation goals that are informed by a systems-based, landscape level strategy maximize ecological and public benefits, as resources such as rivers, wetlands, or habitat corridors seldom reflect human-made jurisdictional boundaries. The need for habitat connectivity and continuity of the regional trails network are both examples of where land uses cross jurisdictional boundaries.

CIP-120 **King County will emphasize acquisition of sites that provide for multiple benefits and functions.**

CIP-121 **King County's open space acquisitions should be consistent with the goals of this plan.**

CIP-122 **King County should work with adjacent jurisdictions, local, state and federal governments, tribes, and landowners during the formation of acquisition strategies to identify acquisition priorities to protect systemic goals not bound by jurisdictional and property boundaries.**

CIP-123 **Acquisitions of lands that are of adequate size to achieve the acquisition purpose and/or those that provide continuity or appropriate public access where it does not exist should be considered priority acquisitions, as should acquisition of land or easements that are adjacent to, or provide a connection between, existing public open space lands or that are "in-holdings".**

CIP-124 **King County should acquire open space properties that provide public benefit and recreational opportunities or resource protection in proportion to the cost of acquisition, ownership, development and management.**

CIP-125 **King County will acquire, protect and conserve high priority sites through a variety of means, including fee simple purchase, donations and purchase of conservation easements and covenants, as well as through the use of the Transfer of Development Rights Program.**

CIP-126 **King County will prepare a site acquisition evaluation of potential open space lands before they are acquired to evaluate short and long-term stewardship funding needs and availability and ensure the lands are appropriate for the intended use and contribute to larger open space goals.**

CIP-127 **King County will strive to protect through fee acquisition or easements lands that have high ecological value with unique or otherwise significant habitat features where development would negatively impact important ecological functions.**

CIP-128 **Distribution, spatial structure, and diversity of native wildlife and plant populations and communities should be taken into account when acquiring conservation easements or land.**

Examples of lands with high ecological value that warrant enhanced protection include, but are not limited to: aquatic areas, wetlands and buffers, bogs and fens, marine beaches, intertidal and subtidal habitat and riparian zones, lands that protect and conserve headwater and upland forest cover, high priority habitats identified in WRIA Plans, Regionally Significant Resource Areas and Locally Significant Resource Areas, designated Wildlife Habitat Networks, Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas, priority habitats listed by the Washington State DFW, Critical Aquifer Recharge Areas, 100-year floodplains, and channel migration hazard areas. In addition, distribution, spatial structure, and diversity of native wildlife and plant populations will be taken into account when acquiring conservation easements or land.

Appendix VII presents additional acquisition considerations for King County when evaluating potential open space acquisitions.

5.2.3 Design and Development

Early participation in review of development proposals can result in mutual benefits to the community and neighborhood by ensuring appropriate levels of recreation development and protection of natural resources while providing predictability in the early stages of the review process. Safe, environmentally-sensitive and cost effective design of site development, restoration or enhancement projects is a major responsibility in public projects. The following policies demonstrate King County's commitment in the development and approval of capital projects.

CIP-129 King County will prepare site designs and specifications for the development, enhancement or restoration of an open space site to ensure consistency with the goals and policies of this plan and individual site plans. This includes accordance with project program plans, site management plans and guidelines, forest stewardship plans or master plans.

CIP-130 King County will design, develop, restore and maintain sites to encourage the safe use and public enjoyment of the county's open space sites, while protecting and enhancing their natural resources.

CIP-131 King County is committed to the design and development of accessible sites and recreation facilities.

CIP-132 King County will demonstrate fiscal responsibility in its review and approval of design and development to balance development costs with long term operational costs and public benefits.

Regulatory compliance is a required element of any project, resulting in increased public safety and resource protection. For example, King County's backcountry trail programmatic permit has reduced permitting costs and staff labor hours and helped facilitate consistent trail design and construction standards while ensuring compliance with critical areas ordinances. This has resulted in enhanced stewardship of natural resources and increased appropriate recreation use of open space sites.

CIP-133 King County will maintain, develop and restore open space sites consistent with all local, state and federal regulatory permit requirements. Programmatic permits, where allowed and appropriate, will be pursued when such permits increase cost effectiveness and increase project success.

5.2.3.1 Unified Design

A unified design program is cost effective in terms of minimizing future design and maintenance costs. Standardization minimizes replacement and repair costs, reduces part and supply inventories and simplifies maintenance. It also promotes an identifiable image for the system.

CIP-134 King County will develop and implement design standards and details which promote a unified, identifiable image of the county's open space system.

CIP-135 High priority will be given to aesthetic considerations in the design and development of open space sites. Designs will be evaluated based on color, scale, style, and materials appropriate for their proposed use. Development should be consistent with the site's role and purpose in the system and blend with surroundings and the natural environment.

CIP-136 When appropriate and feasible, open spaces should include educational and interpretive signage or other features which enhance a user's understanding and enjoyment of a site and its features and resources.

5.2.3.2 Regional Trails

Development of the King County Regional Trails System is based on guidance from the *King County Regional Trails System Development Guidelines*, the *American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities* and other professionally-recognized guidelines such as the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) local roadway standards. These guidelines provide technical guidance for on-going development of regional trails and are updated periodically to incorporate best available trail development engineering and design/development practices.

CIP-137 Regional trails should be developed in accordance with the most recent edition of the *King County Regional Trails System Development Guidelines*, the *American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities*, or other appropriate state or national professional guidelines.

CIP-138 Site-specific plans should be prepared for regional trail corridors in King County based on the priority guidance provided by the *Regional Trails Needs Report*. These plans may include feasibility studies, trail designs, construction materials, and environmental mitigation. To the degree possible new trail planning activities should include public outreach to ensure important community involvement in the development of the Regional Trails System.

5.2.3.4 Backcountry Trails

CIP-139 King County should develop and design backcountry trails in a manner that protects natural resources, ensures public safety, and requires minimal maintenance. The latest versions of the *USDA Forest Service Trails Management Handbook* and *USDA Forest Service Specifications for the Construction of Trails* should inform construction and management of King County's backcountry trails.

As of 2010, the King County Parks and Recreation Division is the caretaker of 200 parks, 175 miles of regional trails, more than 200 miles of backcountry trails, 26,000 acres of open space, and 145,000 of conservation easements. These open space lands make King County one of the region's important providers and managers of public lands. As such, the principles and policies that guide the stewardship and management of these lands and resources are critical to ensure that these assets continue to contribute to the region's quality of life now and for future generations.

6.1 Operations

6.1.1 Funding

Operational funding supports a wide range of activities associated with the stewardship and operation of the open space system. Historically, operational funding for King County's open space system came from the county's general fund. Following a fiscal crisis in 2002, the county drastically reduced general fund support for the parks and recreation system. In 2004, this lost funding was largely replaced by the proceeds from a voter-approved four-year property tax levy (2004-2007). A subsequent six-year levy (2008-2013) currently provides the majority of the division's funding.

The division aggressively pursues efforts to diversify sources of revenue to supplement the levy, which does not provide full funding for operations. Other significant revenue sources include user fee revenues, which include fees for ballfield use, facility rentals, camping, swimming, and permits for use of park lands, and concessions, as well as entrepreneurial revenues, which include corporate sponsorships, major events such as the summer concert series and Cirque du Soleil, parking fees, grants, and Legacy Fund donations.

A modest and declining level of support comes from the King County general fund for the maintenance of local parks in the UGA, pending annexation by cities.

SO-101 **King County will continue to work with agencies, jurisdictions and the public to develop new and creative funding sources and other strategies to support the system.**

SO-102 **King County will maximize and leverage operational funds through public-private partnerships, pursuit of grant funds, use of volunteers, joint acquisition, development, use and management agreements, and will continue to seek other opportunities.**

SO-103 **King County will continue to pursue workforce efficiencies to help offset the growth in operation and maintenance costs.**

SO-104 **King County will continue to pursue use of a portion of open space capital revenue sources, such as REET or CFT, for ongoing maintenance and stewardship of sites acquired or developed with these funds.**

SO-105 **A fiscal analysis should be prepared to evaluate all capital project proposals to address stewardship needs of new projects. It should identify the long term operation and maintenance cost and the source of funds to support the project.**

SO-106 **King County will work to ensure that future funding efforts to acquire and develop land for open space purposes include a funding source to cover stewardship and maintenance costs.**

6.1.2 Maintenance

6.1.2.1 Maintenance Practices

Maintenance actions include enhancement, restoration, and the day-to-day care of the open space assets under the responsibility of the Parks and Recreation Division. Rooted in the vision, values, and stewardship principles outlined in the Open Space Plan, the maintenance practices implemented by the division will reflect the following policies:

SO-107 **King County should strive to use locally-adapted native species for natural area landscaping, restoration, rehabilitation, and erosion control. Habitat restoration projects should include provisions for adequate maintenance of plantings to prevent invasion of weeds and ensure survival of native plantings.**

SO-108 **Use of drought tolerant plants and native vegetation in new site development projects will be emphasized to minimize the need for irrigation and reduce damage caused by non-native species.**

SO-109 **Water conservation is an important consideration in management of the system. New construction and the rehabilitation of older facilities will incorporate low water use principles and equipment. Use of recycled water will be considered, when practical and effective.**

SO-110 **Recycling efforts in parks will be promoted along with use of recycled materials available and appropriate for park uses.**

SO-111 **The environment and the health and safety of staff and park users will be protected from the inappropriate use of hazardous or toxic materials.**

SO-112 **Use of pesticides and fungicides will be based on integrated pest management principles.**

SO-113 **Landscaping along King County's regional trails should be consistent with the most recent version of the *Regional Trails System Development Guidelines* and the *Regional Trails System Landscape Characterization Study*.**

6.1.2.2 Assessing Maintenance Needs

King County will strive to understand and plan for current and future maintenance needs through the following policies:

SO-114 **King County will develop measurable site maintenance plans and management goals to provide direction for the stewardship of open space sites and utilize these measures to evaluate effectiveness and provide guidance and historical data for future maintenance decisions.**

SO-115 **King County will monitor, review and evaluate how site maintenance is conducted to account for the changing needs of the system and identify and incorporate new procedures and tasks to address the conservation of ecological values and recreational assets.**

SO-116 **King County will develop and maintain a plan for major maintenance needs and rehabilitation of open space sites and facilities to ensure safe and sustainable public use and to reduce lifecycle costs.**

6.1.3 Property Management

Good property management reinforces King County's commitment to sound stewardship of its open space system. As property manager, the Parks and Recreation Division is responsible for guiding the use of its 26,000 acres of open space and 145,000 acres of conservation easements and ensuring the value of this legacy for future generations.

SO-117 **King County will encourage and allow the use of open space land that is compatible with the site, consistent with its open space purposes, uses and funding sources, and can be demonstrated to serve the public and protect the site's natural resources.**

SO-118 **King County will encourage and promote mutually beneficial agreements with school districts, other agencies and private groups for the use and management of sites and facilities for recreation and revenue generating activities.**

SO-119 **King County will evaluate requests for alterations to open space sites to ensure that they are consistent with park purposes, park plans and natural area site management guidelines and will not diminish open space values, use, aesthetics and stewardship.**

SO-120 **King County will issue use permits or agreements for events sponsored by others when the use is consistent with park purposes, funding and site conditions, will not deter from open space stewardship and aesthetics, and is compatible with designated open space uses and users.**

SO-121 **King County will not allow alterations or enter into agreements or permit uses that incur future obligations to the county for maintenance, replacement, rehabilitation or removal until a thorough analysis of the long-term cost has been prepared, risks and liabilities to the county clearly identified, and supportive funding is identified or provided.**

SO-122 **King County will evaluate all agreements, easements and use permits to ensure they continue to be in compliance with their terms and conditions, current county policies and codes, and remain in the best interests of the site and the public.**

SO-123 **King County will consider concessions and business endeavors that are compatible with site management goals and enhance the park experience by providing an opportunity for increased public use, enjoyment, education, and enhanced stewardship of the site.**

SO-124 **King County will consider concession and business operations for effectiveness and efficiency in delivery of services, as well as for revenue generation. The county will grant concession and business agreements that do not result in uncompensated cost to the county.**

SO-125 **King County will clearly post signage with applicable rules and restrictions for open space sites in language that is easily understood by the public.**

SO-126 **King County will address unauthorized uses of open space land by working to abate and restore encroachments.**

SO-127 **King County will maintain a policy and procedure for the naming of park, recreation and other open space sites and features.**

SO-128 King County will accept gifts or donations of equipment, materials, land, labor or improvements for a site that are consistent with site purposes and conditions, enhance aesthetics and stewardship values, are consistent with site management guidelines, maintenance, development or master plans, reduce stewardship costs, provide additional resource protection and/or improve efficiencies.

SO-129 King County will work with nearby property owners, park users, volunteers, agencies and the public to enhance and protect the character, function and natural resources of the open space system.

6.2 Stewardship

For King County, the term 'stewardship' represents responsible management of the open space system to ensure public safety, provide appropriate public access and use, and protect a site's ecological and recreational value through maintenance, monitoring, enhancement, and restoration. Stewardship also implies the use of new techniques, skills, training and equipment, the development and implementation of best management practices, and the pursuit of revenue and partnership opportunities that sustain sound stewardship and operations.

In light of population growth and development, diminishing open space resources, and a challenging revenue environment for county government, sound stewardship of the open space system only grows in importance. Even as public use of and demand for parks and trails continues to rise, the Parks and Recreation Division will continue to face challenges in securing appropriate levels of funding to maintain and manage the open space system for the foreseeable future.

SO-130 King County will steward its open space system and keep these lands in perpetuity for open space purposes. Other uses will be considered only if they can be demonstrated through a public process and adopted criteria that they are surplus to the county's public recreation or open space needs. Surplus of open space sites must also be consistent with requirements associated with their funding sources and King County Charter Amendment Section 897.

SO-131 King County will manage open space sites to ensure that the land, facilities and natural resources are protected and that appropriate public use is safe and enjoyable. The public is expected to have access to the open space system for recreational, scientific, and traditional cultural use, but access may be restricted when necessary to protect or restore natural resource values and processes, when deed restrictions limit or restrict public access and use, and/or when safety issues warrant limitations on public use. Access strategies for each site will be identified and monitored.

6.2.1 Stewardship and the Public

The public plays a key role in the long-term stewardship of the open space system, as park and trails users, advocates, volunteers, and taxpayers. King County residents continue to demonstrate that they value the benefits of King County's open space system and the role that it plays in enhancing regional quality of life and communities. Most recently this was demonstrated through public votes, including:

- 2003 approval of a four-year property tax levy to support operations and maintenance
- 2007 approval of a six-year property tax levy to support operation and maintenance
- 2007 approval of a six-year property tax levy to support open space expansion
- 2009 approval of a charter amendment strengthening protection and conservation of certain ecologically valuable open space properties

SO-132 King County will promote awareness of the role of the county's open space system in the quality of life in the region, in the recreation industry and its economic benefit to the region.

6.2.2 Preservation and Conservation

SO-133 King County will integrate habitat management and enhancement as a major component of its stewardship. Natural area parks will be managed to protect and restore ecological processes, conserve wildlife habitat, and foster native biodiversity. This focus may include management, enhancement and restoration of degraded natural areas to increase their ecological, wildlife habitat, climate change adaptation and resiliency, and educational values.

SO-134 King County commits itself to preservation, protection and conservation of native biodiversity and will demonstrate this in daily activities. Environmentally sensitive maintenance techniques and best management practices will be followed to the greatest extent possible at all open space sites.

SO-135 King County will work with other agencies to maintain the necessary quality and quantity of water in its streams and lakes to provide for plant communities, suitable fish and wildlife habitat and recreational use.

SO-136 King County will promote forest management and restoration in order to conserve and enhance its vital natural areas with healthy forest canopies that contribute to improved water and air quality, surface water management, fish and wildlife habitat, aesthetics, climate change adaptation, and energy conservation.

SO-137 King County should be a leader in natural resource management by demonstrating environmentally sound and sustainable forest practices on county-owned open space sites that result in retention of forest cover and improved forest health. This may include adopting forest management practices that promote carbon sequestration.

SO-138 Priorities for restoration projects on open space sites should be based on priority recommendations in the WRIA plans (Salmon Recovery Plans), the Flood Hazard Management Plan, individual *Site Management Guidelines*, and other King County-endorsed planning documents and processes.

SO-139 King County will monitor and document the ecological and forest conservation easements in its inventory to ensure conservation values are protected and that lands are being managed consistent with the terms and conditions of the individual recorded easement.

6.2.3 Biodiversity

Biodiversity includes plant and animal species, the habitats they use, the ways that species and habitats interact with each other, and the physical environment and the processes necessary for those interactions. Some major benefits of biodiversity include purification of air and water, soil fertility, and moderation of floods, droughts, temperature extremes, and forces of wind, as well as control of pests and disease, resiliency and adaptation to a changing climate, and pollination of plants.

SO-140 **King County supports the integration of conservation principles into its management actions in order to conserve native biodiversity through policies for land and water resource management, climate change planning, and fish and wildlife habitat conservation.**

SO-141 **King County will strive to identify and conserve components of native biodiversity within its open space system that are especially sensitive to climate change and work to conserve biodiversity through the protection and restoration of ecological processes that create and sustain habitats and species diversity.**

SO-142 **The conservation principles presented in the King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks Ecological Lands Handbook and in the King County Comprehensive Plan provide broad guidance to focus and direct restoration activities to enhance natural resources and ecological value on open space sites.**

SO-143 **King County will promote wildlife habitat enhancement projects by community groups, park users, stakeholders, non-profits, and businesses through education, active stewardship, and volunteer events.**

SO-144 **On all open space sites, King County will develop a coordinated strategy for preventing, monitoring and controlling infestations of state-listed noxious weeds, and where feasible, other non-native invasive weeds of concern.**

Looking to the Future

King County, similar to most local governments today, is experiencing the dual challenges of increasing public expectations while the cost of services outpaces revenues. Over the past decade, the Parks and Recreation Division has responded to these challenges by transitioning from a traditional general-tax funded agency to an organization that is more entrepreneurial, accountable, and performance-driven.

The Parks and Recreation Division has a refocused mission of stewarding regional passive and active parks, regional trails, natural area parks, rural local parks, and working forest lands that provide multiple benefits to the residents of King County, but that mission also raises a new challenge of balancing conservation and recreation needs with a shrinking base of direct revenue-generating assets. Although the division remains committed to its innovative partnership and business-oriented approach, this model presents increasing challenges. Moreover, both six-year operations and capital expansion levies expire at the end of 2013. Funding the open space system beyond 2013 will require significant effort on the part of the King County Executive, the King County Council, the Department of Natural Resources and Parks, the Parks and Recreation Division, its partners and the public. Maintaining relationships with civic, corporate and community partners will continue as a central tenet, as the agency remains committed to stewarding and enhancing the parks and trails that make up King County's remarkable open space system.

Appendices

Appendix I Maps

Appendix II Source Documents

Appendix III 6-Year CIP

Appendix IV Community Partnership Grants Projects

Appendix V Youth Sports Facilities Grant Program

Appendix VI Examples of Recent Accomplishments

Appendix VII Acquisition Guidance

Maps

Figure 1 King County Open Space

Figure 2 Snoqualmie/Skykomish Watershed Open Space

Figure 3 Lake Washingon/Cedar/Sammamish Open Space (Southeast)

Figure 4 Lake Washingon/Cedar/Sammamish Open Space (Northwest)

Figure 5 Green/Duwamish Watershed Open Space (Northwest)

Figure 6 Green/Duwamish Watershed Open Space (Southeast)

Figure 7 White River Watershed Open Space

Figure 8 Vashon-Maury Island Open Space

Figure 9 Regional Trail System

Figure 10 Backcountry Trail Sites

Figure 11 Wildlife Habitat Network

Figure 1 King County Open Space

Figure 2 Snoqualmie/Skykomish Watershed Open Space

Figure 3 Lake Washingon/Cedar/Sammamish Open Space (South)

Figure 4 Lake Washingon/Cedar/Sammamish Open Space (North)

Figure 5 Green/Duwamish Watershed Open Space 1 of 2

Figure 6 Green/Duwamish Watershed Open Space 2 of 2

Figure 7 White River Watershed Open Space

Figure 8 Vashon-Maury Island Open Space

Source Documents

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King County Parks and Recreation Division Proposed 6-Year CIP (2010-2015) [1]

Project	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Total
Community Partnership Grant (CPG) Program	800,000	800,000	800,000	800,000	300,000	300,000	3,800,000
Regional Trails Initiative		5,288,718	5,713,902	6,196,206	2,252,318	6,527,318	25,978,462
Regional Open Space Initiative	3,000,000	4,376,376	4,376,377	4,376,377			16,129,130
East Lake Sammamish Trail	5,255,184						5,255,184
South County Regional Trail Linkages	-	750,000	750,000	750,000			2,250,000
Foothills Regional Trail	699,694						699,694
Regional Trails System Corridor Acquisitions	910,342						910,342
Parks Expansion Implementation	393,088	412,742	433,380	455,048			1,694,258
Mountains to Sound Greenway	352,520						352,520
Soos Creek Trail				3,726,727			3,726,727
Bridge & Trestle Rehab Program	152,350		2,200,766	533,178	3,167,157		6,053,451
Parks Facility Rehab	201,019		490,548	209,842	368,375		1,269,784
Small Contracts	1,075,253	755,875	1,208,154	1,280,643	1,357,482	1,438,931	7,116,338
Evergreen Pool and Roof	(298,904)						(298,904)
Regional Trails Planning	302,170	320,300	339,518	359,889	381,483	404,372	2,107,732
Greenbridge Payment	129,905	129,905	129,905	129,905	129,905	129,905	779,430
TOTAL EXPENDITURE:	**12,972,621**	**12,833,917**	**16,442,550**	**18,817,816**	**7,956,719**	**8,800,525**	**77,824,148**
Notes:							
[1] The 6-year Parks Expansion Levy expires on December 31, 2013.							

Community Partnership Grants Program

www.kingcounty.gov/parks

King County Parks Your Big Backyard King County

The Community Partnership and Grant (CPG) Program, formerly known as ADOP, is a public private partnership initiative whereby community-based organizations are empowered to design, develop, construct, operate, program, and maintain new and enhanced public recreation facilities on King County Parks land in a manner that does not result in new publicly funded operations and maintenance costs. King County Parks contributes long-term use of land and awards capital improvement grants up to $100,000 to successful proposals. Several projects also received traditional Parks capital (CIP) contributions up to $2 million. The community-based partner contributes additional capital resources, in-kind, sweat equity, as well as, covers programming and maintenance at their expense.

The 6 year program is the catalyst for 40+ projects representing over $64 million worth of new, enhanced, or preserved public recreation facilities in King County Parks with only $13 million in King County Parks capital investment. Here are some highlighted projects (Updated January 2010):

New Boathouse at Marymoor Park

CPG Partner: Sammamish Rowing Association

King County Contribution: $100,000 (2005 CPG Grant), land
$75,000 (YSFG Grant)
$500,000 (2009/2010 CPG Grant)

SRA Contribution: $3,000,000+ in capital, all programming, operations, and maintenance for 30 years

Public Programs: Youth, adult, masters and junior rowing, sculling, "Learn to Row" Programs, etc.

Status: Final permitting.

Groundbreaking: Spring 2010; **Scheduled Completion:** Fall 2010

New Community Center at Lakewood Park

CPG Partner: Technology Access Foundation (TAF)

King County Contribution: $2,000,000 (CIP Grant), land

TAF Contribution: $10,000,000+ in capital, all programming, operations, and maintenance for 30 years

New Public Recreation: Community center for public programs and events, as well as, TAF education programs including TechStart, Technical Teens Internship Program (TTIP) & Higher Ed Bound (HEB).

Status: Schematic design completed, design/permitting underway

Groundbreaking: Fall 2010; **Scheduled Completion:** Fall 2011

New Synthetic Fields & Community Park in Preston

CPG Partners: Eastside F.C., Issaquah Little League, and Preston Community Club

King County Contribution: $1.5 million (CIP 316601) *2006*
$800,000 (CPG Grants, 2005-2007)
$225,000 (YSFG Grants, 2006 - 2007)
$400,000 (CIP - 316601) 2008
$300,000 (CIP-CPG) 2008

Community Contribution: $2,000,000+ in-kind, capital, land acquisition, etc.; $1.5 million in guaranteed revenue payments to King County over 10 years, and supplemental maintenance

New Public Recreation: Youth soccer, youth baseball, community events and programs

Status: Phase 1 complete. Phase 2 strategy with Talking Rain underway.

Groundbreaking: July 2007; **Completion:** Spring 2008 (Phase 1)

New Community Park at White Center Heights

CPG Partner: White Center CDA / Starbucks

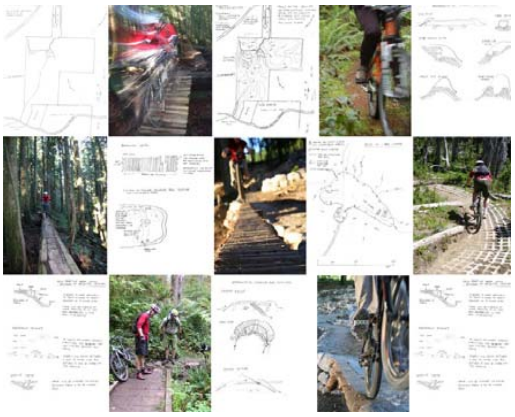
King County Contribution: Labor, project management, park land

Community Contribution: $550,000 cash (Starbucks), design (UW Landscape Architecture School, 1000 volunteers, inkind, materials, donations.

New Public Recreation: Playfield, picnic areas, plaza, community gardens, trails, community park

Status: Completed, operations underway. Phase 2 permitting underway (pedestrian bridge over pond)

Groundbreaking: Summer 2007; **Phase 1 Completed:** Summer 2007



New 100 Acre Backcountry Mountainbike Facility

CPG Partner: Backcountry Bicycle Trails Club (BBTC)

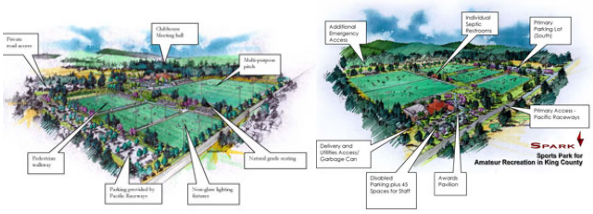
King County Contribution: $100,000 (CPG Grant), land
$75,000 (YSFG Grant)

BBTC Contribution: $500,000+ capital, in-kind, volunteer for construction; plus all maintenance and programming

New Public Recreation: Public backcountry riding area and skills park, training clinics, competitions, etc.

Status: Under construction

Groundbreaking: Fall 2008; **Completion:** Phase 1- Summer 2009



New Sportsfield Complex outside Auburn

CPG Partner: NW Parks Foundation

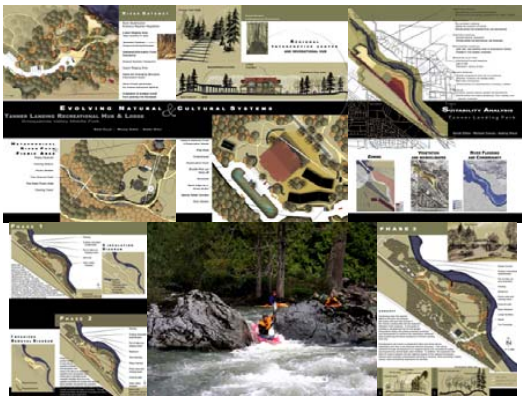
King County Contribution: $300,000 (CPG Grants)
$75,000 (YSFG Grant)

Community Contribution: $13,000,000+ in capital, plus all operations, maintenance, and programming. Received $200,000 NFL Grant.

New Public Recreation: Rugby, lacrosse, soccer practices, games, regional and national Rugby and other field sports tournaments.

Status: Under construction

Groundbreaking: TBD;



New Whitewater Access on Middle Fork

CPG Partners: American Whitewater, KC Roads

King County Contribution: $100,000 (CPG Grant), land

Partner(s) Contribution: Roads - $1.5 million as part of Mt Si Bridge onsite mitigation project, AW will develop improvements from staging are to riverside put-in and provide operations and maintenance of completed facility.

New Public Recreation: Whitewater recreation access on Middle Fork Snoqualmie

Status: Road mitigation project completed, access road and parking lot constructed. Planning and coordination underway for Phase 1 whitewater facilities construction this Summer.

Groundbreaking: Spring 2010 **Completion:** Summer 2010

Sportsfield Improvements at Ravensdale

CPG Partners: Ravensdale Park Fund, LLC, Washington Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Liga Hispana, Maple Valley Soccer, Little League, sports groups, businesses, Maple Valley, Black Diamond, Friends of Rock Creek, etc.

Project Scope: Phase 1; 1 synthetic soccer field, 1 syntehtic baseball field, new community meadow, community park improvements, etc.

King County Contribution: $1,300,000+ (CIP and CPG grants), park land
Partners Contribution: $TBD (planning, design, capital, fundraising, etc.), supplemental operations and maintenance

New Public Recreation: Local soccer and baseball fields, etc.

Status: Design development and permitting

Master Plan Complete: Summer 2008; **Design Development:** Summer 2009 **Groundbreaking:** Spring 2010; **Completion:** Fall 2010 (Phase 1)

40 Acre RC Plane Facility at Closed Hobart Landfill

CPG Partner: Lake Sawyer Hawks (LSH) Flying Club

King County Contribution: $1,200 (CPG Grant), park land
$2,000 (new flight benches)

LSH Contribution: All programming, maintenance, operations, etc.

New Public Recreation: Public RC flying (gas, electric, and gliders) on Mondays, Wednesday, Fridays, and Saturdays, youth education programs on model airplanes and airplane/flight science

Status: Completed, ongoing CPG operation since pilot program in 2003

Astronomy Site at Closed Hobart Landfill

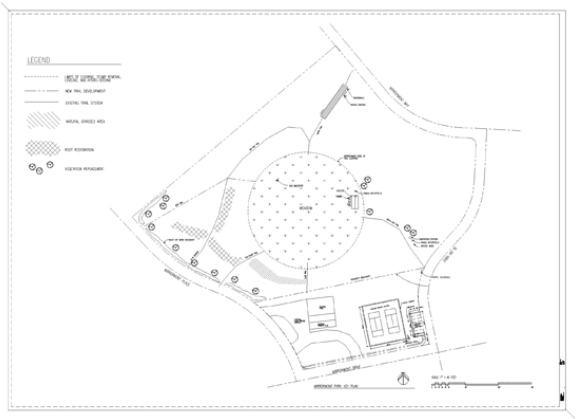
CPG Partner: Maple Valley Astronomy Society (MVAS)

King County Contribution: Park land

MVAS Contribution: Event-related improvements, programming, online registration, operations and maintenance

New Public Recreation: Astronomy programs, star gazing, telescope building, rare viewings of astronomy phenomena

Status: Completed, operations underway. Agreement renewal in 2010.



New 12 acre Community Park in Mirrormont

CPG Partners: Mirrormont Community Association (MCA)

Project Scope: New community park, trails, meadow, signage, etc.

King County Contribution: $100,000 (CPG Grant), park land

MCA Contribution: Design, construction, supplemental maintenance (KC will provide mowing)

New Public Recreation: Public park, picnic area, small nature trail system

Status: Completed, ongoing operations. Phase 2 planning underway (Community Gardens next door to Park)

Groundbreaking: Summer 2007; **Completion:** Winter 2007/Spring 2008

New Baseball Fields at Closed Houghton Landfill

CPG Partner: Kirkland American Little League (KALL)

Project Scope: 2 new baseball fields on landfill cap

King County Contribution: SWD engineering services during design, use of landfill site

KALL Contribution: $250,000 (design and construction costs) and all operations and maintenance

Status: Major improvements completed in 2006; additional surface improvements and peripheral erosion controls in 2007

Completion: Spring 2006, final surface improvements in 2007

Audubon Interpretive Center at Seward Park

CPG Partner: Washington Audubon

Project Scope: Renovation of historic house into Aububon Education Center

King County Contribution: $100,000 (CPG Grant)

Audubon Contribution: $2 million (Grants, fundraising)

New Public Recreation: Environmental and Audubon education programs, bird watching, interpretive programs, etc.

Groundbreaking: Summer 2007 **Completion:** Spring 2008

Short Ear Owl hunting above East Meadow at Marymoor Park
Photo by John Tubbs www.tubbsphotography.com

Birdloop Trail System, Interpretive Kiosks and Signage, and East Meadow Conservation Status at Marymoor

CPG Partner: East Lake Washington Audubon Society (ELWAS)

Project Scope: 2 miles of Audubon trails, interpretive signage, interpretive shelters, 150 ft. boardwalk extension, etc.

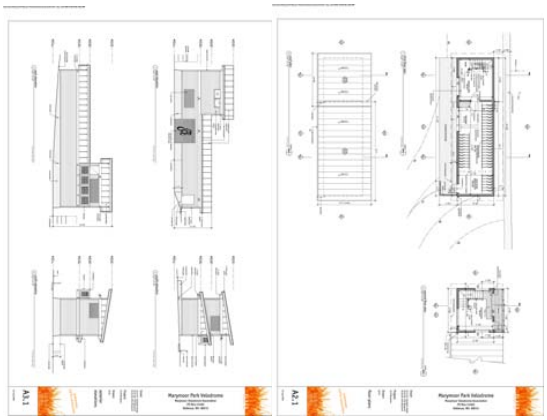
King County Contribution: $100,000, conservation land

ELWAS Contribution: Project management, volunteer labor, all programming, and ongoing supplemental maintenance

New Public Recreation: Birdwatching tours, interpretive programs, conservation projects, etc.

Status: Phase 1 completed, Phase 2 under construction (boardwalk extension along slough)

Groundbreaking: Spring 2007; **Completion:** Summer 2009 (Phase 2)



New Velodrome Building at Marymoor Park

CPG Partner: Marymoor Velodrome Association (MVA)

Project Scope: New velodrome racing support building

King County Contribution: $150,000 (CPG Grant), park land

MVA Contribution: Design, construction, most maintenance and operations, and all programming.

New Public Recreation: Velodrome racning, bike storage, race program support

Status: Completed

Groundbreaking: Summer 2007; **Completion:** Spring 2008

Baseball Complex Improvements

CPG Partner: Kirkland National Little League (KNLL)

Project Scope: batting cages, utilities, new fencing, etc.

King County Contribution: $60,000 (CPG Grant), park land

KNLL: Design, construction, volunteers, supplemental maintenance and operations, etc.

New Public Recreation: Youth baseball, community

Status: Completed

Groundbreaking: Spring 2008 **Completion:** Fall 2008

Youth Equestrian Facility

CPG Partner: Hollywood Hills Saddle Club

Project Scope: complete arena overhaul, new parking, bleechers, etc.

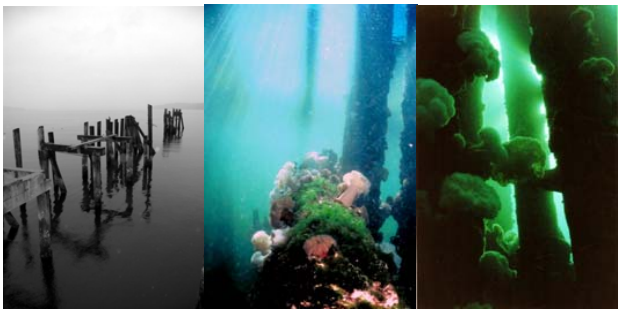
King County Contribution: $100,000 CPG Grant, park land

HHSC Contribution: All improvements, operations, maintenance, programming, etc.

Public Recreation: Youth equestrian events, competitions, training

Status: Completed

Groundbreaking: Summer 2008 **Completion:** Spring 2009



Regional Dive Park Program

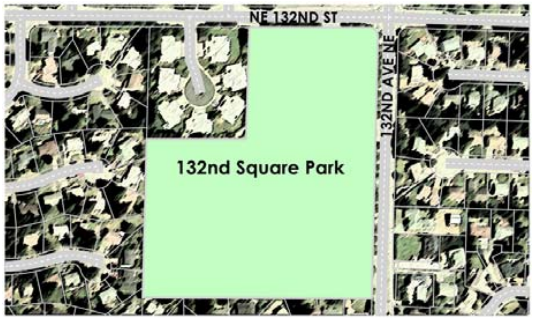
Potential CPG Partner: Washington Scuba Alliance (WSSA)

Potential King County Contribution: Maury Island beachfront possible 2009 grant commitment to regional dive site program.

WSSA Potential Contributions: State legislation, project design, permitting, marine science, etc. Artificial reef construction and programming.

Public Recreation: Shorediving (Washington State is the #1 shorediving destination in North America according to)

Status: Preliminary planning, state legislation



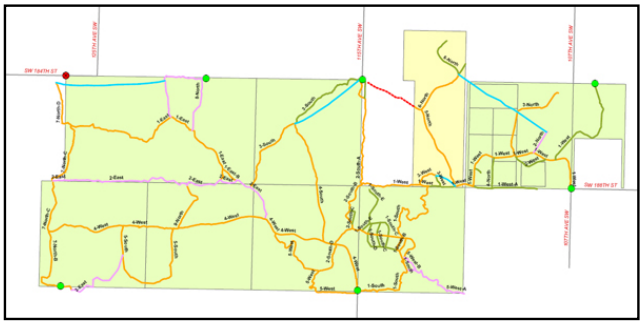
Improvements at 132nd Square Park

CPG Partner: Totem Lake Neighborhood Association

Project Scope: New playground completed, adding swing sets

King County Contribution: $18,000 CPG Grant, park land

Status: Agreement Execution



Island Center Forest Improvements

CPG Partner: Friends of Island Center Forest and Vashon Forest Stewards

Project Scope: Interpretive trails, signage, trailheads, parking lots

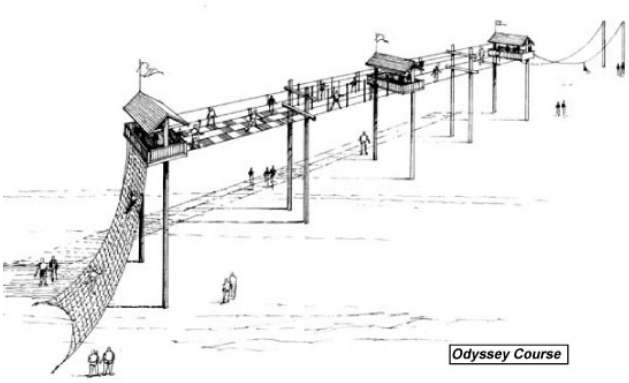
King County Contribution: $100,000 (CPG Grant), park land +$40,000 for picnic shelter

Community Contribution: Design, construction, volunteers, supplemental maintenance, etc.

Public Recreation: Equestrian, hiking, mountainbiking, hunting

Status: Phase 1 completed, Phase 2 permitting underway.

Groundbreaking: Summer 2008 **Completion:** Fall 2009



New Challenge Course at Cottage Lake Park

CPG Partner: YMCA of Greater Seattle

King County Contribution: $92,500 (CPG Grant), park land

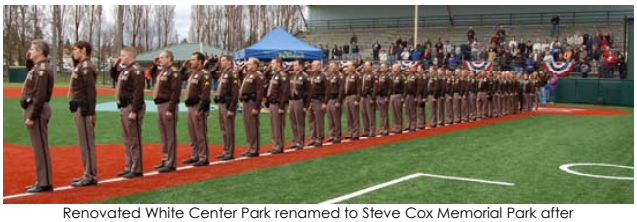
YMCA Contribution: $60,000 in capital and in-kind, all programming and maintenance costs.

Project Scope: New challenge course

New Public Recreation: Teambuilding and problem solving programs and related curriculums for day camp participants, community groups, corporations, and public at large.

Status: Completed, Operations underway

Groundbreaking: Fall 2006; **Completed:** Fall 2006



Renovated White Center Park renamed to Steve Cox Memorial Park after popular White Center community sheriff's deputy killed in the line of duty.

New Synthetic Outfeld, New Infield, and Stadium Improvements at White Center Stadium

CPG Partner: White Center CDA

Project Scope: New synthetic infield baseball field and new grass outfield, stadium renovation, new batting cages, park renaming

King County Contribution: $630,000 (CPG Grant and CIP), park land

CDA Contribution: project management, volunteers, donated materials, fundraising, etc.

Status: Completed

Groundbreaking: Fall 2007; **Completed:** Spring 2008

May Valley Park Community Planning

Community Partner: May Valley Community (via 5-Star Community Center)

Project Scope: TBD

King County Contribution: $135,000 (Council Grant and Levy Grant)

Community Contribution: TBD

Status: Community planning, feasibility study. Potential CPG to be determined in 2010.

Maury Island Park Improvements

CPG Partner: Friends of Maury Island Park

Project Scope: Trails, lookout point, signage, etc.

King County Contribution: $20,000 (CPG Grant), park land

Community Contribution: Design, construction, volunteers, supplemental maintenance, etc.

Status: New viewpoint completed. Community planning underway for shelter.

Dockton Park Interpretive Building and Trail

CPG Partner: Friends of Dockton Park, Vashon-Maury Historical Preservation Society

Project Scope: Interpretive trail, signage, and interpretive building depicting the dry dock and the glory days of shipbuilding from 1890's to 1910.

King County Contribution: $45,000 (CPG Grant), park land

Community Contribution: Fundraising, design, construction, volunteers, supplemental maintenance, etc.

Status: Permitting

CPG Projects in preliminary discussions, feasibility determinations, or otherwise under consideration:

- Petrovitsky Park – Synthetic conversion of 2 soccer fields
- Habernicht Park – Sitewide rehab and river access
- Skyway Park – synthetic conversion project
- 132nd Park play area additions
- Steve Cox Park tennis court rehab project
- Maple Valley Heights Park – community planning, potential improvements
- New Mirrormont Park Pea Patch
- Coalfield Park – Community planning, potential ballfield improvements
- Cemetery Pond – Interpretive Signage (beavers, bog, etc.)
- Grandview Dogpark (SODA South) improvements
- Marymoor Tennis court improvements
- Parking lot improvements at paragliding site

Youth Sports Facilities Grant Fund Projects (2007-2010)

AWARDEE	PROJECT NAME	AWARD	DISTRICT
2009-2010			
Auburn Parks & Recreation	Les Gove Park Barrier-Free Playground	70,000	7
Auburn School District	Alpac Elementary Playground	10,000	7
Auburn School District	Hazelwood Elementary Playground	23,000	7
El Centro de la Raza	El Centro de la Raza Playground	64,000	2
Highline School District	Evergreen High School Track	75,000	8
Northshore School District	Kenmore Elementary Playground	13,000	1
Seattle Parks and Recreation	Delridge Skate Park	75,000	8
Seattle Parks and Recreation	Garfield Baseball / Softball Field	45,000	2
Seattle Parks and Recreation	Rainier Basketball Courts	30,000	2
Seattle Public Schools	Concord Elementary Playground	70,000	8
Seattle Public Schools	McDonald School Playground	13,000	2
2008-2009			
Auburn Parks and Recreation	Brannan Park Field Improvements	50,000	7
Auburn School District	Gymnasium Restriping	11,150	7
B&G Club Federal Way Branch	Gymnasium Renovation	60,000	7
Federal Way Public Schools	Enterprise Elementary Playground	30,000	7
Highline School District	Marvista Turf Field	44,050	8
Issaquah Parks and Recreation	Central Park Turf Fields	50,000	3
King County Parks	Ravensdale Synthetic Baseball Field	75,000	9
North Bend Public Works	Climbing Wall	60,000	3
Renton Parks and Recreation	Ron Regis Turf Soccer Fields	65,000	9
Seattle Parks and Recreation	Seward Park Playground	50,000	1
Seattle Parks and Recreation	Magnuson Park Ultimate Field	12,000	2
Seattle Parks and Recreation	Garfield Baseball Field	30,000	2
Shoreline Parks and Recreation	Hamlin Park	75,000	1
Vashon Island School District	McMurray Field Scoreboard	10,000	8
Vashon Park District	Vashon Athletic Fields	75,000	8

continued on next page

Youth Sports Facilities Grant Fund Projects (2007-2010) *continued*

AWARDEE	PROJECT NAME	AWARD	DISTRICT
2007-2008			
Auburn School District	Alpac Elementary Playground	20,000	7
Burien Parks and Recreation	Mathison Park Playground	53,317	8
Des Moines Parks and Recreation	Field House Park Ballfield	75,000	5
Federal Way National Little League	Ballfield Complex Lighting	75,000	7
Highline School District	Mount Rainier Track	75,000	5
Issaquah Parks and Recreation	Squak Valley Park South Soccer Fields	50,000	3
Kenmore Parks and Recreation	Saint Edwards Park Soccer Fields	50,000	1
Kent Parks & Recreation	Wilson Ballfields batting cages	30,000	5
Mercer Island Parks and Recreation	Lakeridge Elementary Ballfield	28,000	6
Mt. Rainier Sports and Fitness Club	Mt. Rainier Sports Indoor Soccer Complex	5,460	9
Northwest Center	Redmond Pool	50,000	3
Seattle Parks and Recreation	Amy Yee Tennis Center Courts	75,000	2
Seattle Parks and Recreation	Brighton Playfield	47,250	2
Seattle Parks and Recreation	Soundview Playfields	75,000	4
Seattle Public Schools	Gatewood Elementary Playground	30,000	8
Shoreline Parks and Recreation	Cromwell Park Athletic Fields	50,000	1
Vashon Park District	Burton Acres BMX Course and Disk Golf	10,000	8

Examples of Recent Accomplishments

Acquisitions

- Bass Lake Complex Natural Area (additions)
- Belmondo Reach Natural Area (additions)
- Black Diamond Natural Area (additions)
- Chinook Bend Natural Area (additions)
- Cougar Mountain Regional Wildland Park (additions)
- Dockton Natural Area (new)
- Evans Crest Natural Area (new)
- Grand Ridge Park (additions)
- Griffin Creek Natural Area (additions)
- Hollywood Hills Equestrian Site (new)
- Island Center Forest (additions)
- Kanaskat Natural Area (additions)
- Lower Newaukum Creek Natural Area (additions)
- Middle Fork Snoqualmie Natural Area (additions)
- Middle Issaquah Creek Natural Area (additions)
- Neill Point Natural Area (new)
- Pinnacle Peak Park (additions)
- Raab's Lagoon (new)
- Tolt River Natural Area (additions)
- Upper Green River Watershed Forest (easement)
- Upper Raging River Forest (easement)

Facility Development and Improvement Projects

- Cottage Lake Picnic Shelter, Restroom, Dock and Boardwalk
- Dockton Park Picnic Shelter
- Foot reflexology paths in 3 parks (sponsor: ÁegisLiving)
- Kathryn Taylor Equestrian Park (partners: King County Equestrian Horse Council, Northwest Parks Foundation)
- King County Aquatic Center Videoboard, Scoreboard, Lighting and HVAC Improvements
- Marymoor Concert Venue
- Marymoor Park Event and Recreation Area
- Marymoor Park Synthetic Turf Ballfield Complex
- Marymoor Regional Maintenance Facility (LEED certified)
- Petrovitsky Park and Big Finn Hill Park Play Areas
- Preston Community Center Renovation and Preservation
- Three Forks Natural Area Trailhead
- Tolt McDonald Park Picnic Shelter and Yurt Camping Facilities
- White Center Heights Park Makeover, Phases I and II (partners: Starbucks Coffee Company, White Center CDA, Cascade Land Conservancy)
- Wifi access in multiple parks (sponsor: MSN)

Habitat Restoration and Backcountry Trails Projects

- Auburn Narrows Floodplain/Wetland Enhancement
- Backcountry trail bridges at O'Grady Natural Area and Cougar Mountain
- Chinook Bend Wetland Enhancement Project
- Grand Ridge Park – Canyon Creek Bridge (partner: Washington Trails Association)
- Island Center Forest – repairing logging-damaged trails
- Lower Tolt River Floodplain Restoration at Tolt-MacDonald Park
- Moss Lake backcountry trail upgrades
- Pinnacle Peak backcountry trail improvements
- Ring Hill Forest – repairing logging-damaged trails
- Taylor Mountain backcountry trail installation

Regional Trails

- BNSF trail easement right of way acquired
- Burke Gilman Trail Redevelopment Design
- Cedar River Trail Redevelopment from Renton to Maple Valley
- East Lake Sammamish Interim Use Trail
- East Lake Sammamish Master Plan Trail Design
- Foothills Interim Use Trail
- Lake-to-Sound Trail Master Plan
- Marymoor Connector Trail linking the Sammamish River Trail and East Lake Sammamish Trail
- Regional Trail System Gateway Plan
- Regional Trail Wayfinding Kiosks (sponsor: Starbucks Coffee Company)
- Soos Creek Trail Development and Trailhead
- Sammamish River Trail Redevelopment

Community Partnerships and Grants (CPG) Projects

- Cottage Lake – High-Ropes Challenge Course (YMCA)
- Mirrormont Park - New 12-acre park (Mirrormont Community)
- Preston Athletic Fields and Community Park – New ballfield complex and community park (Eastside Football Club, Preston Community Club, Issaquah Little League)
- Mel Olson Stadium Renovation at Steve Cox Memorial Park - Synthetic conversion and stadium upgrade (Seattle Prep and White Center CDA)
- Audubon Birdloop at Marymoor Park – A 2.1-mile path and interpretive kiosks/signage (Eastside Audubon)
- Community Learning Space at Lakewood Park - Design for future construction of a 22,000 sf community and technology education center (Technology Access Foundation)
- Island Center Forest Public Access - Trailheads, interpretive signage, parking, and shelter (Friends of Island Center Forest and the Vashon Forest Stewards)
- Hollywood Hills Equestrian Arena Redevelopment – A 7-acre youth equestrian facility (Hollywood Hills Saddle Club)
- Duthie Hill Mountain Bike Trails and Skills Park – A 100-acre mountain bike park (Evergreen Mountain Biking Association)
- Dockton Historical Trail and Shelter - An interpretive trail and shelter with belltower featuring of the history of the 1900s Dockton shipbuilding industry (Friends of Dockton Park and Vashon-Maury Historical Association)
- Maury Island Marine Park Improvements - Shoreline restoration, overlooks, shelter, trails, interpretive signage (Friends of Maury Island Marine Park and Park and People for Puget Sound)

- Ravensdale Park Redevelopment Phase 1 - New synthetic soccer field, synthetic baseball field, and 8 acres of new community park (Citizens for Rural Ravensdale, Maple Valley Soccer, Cedar River Baseball Council)
- Boathouse at Marymoor Park – A new 3-bay boathouse (Sammamish Rowing Association)
- Tanner Landing Park Whitewater Access – A 40-acre public river park with whitewater river access (American Whitewater)

Fund Development

- Cirque du Soleil at Marymoor Park (2006, 2008, 2010)
- First Tech Credit Union sponsors Movies@Marymoor (2004-2007)
- Group Health naming of velodrome (2004-2008)
- US Bank sponsors Concerts at Marymoor (2006)
- The Wash Spot at Marymoor (2007-present)
- Subway at WKCAC (2004-2009) and Marymoor (2005-present)
- King County Parks Legacy Fund

Awards

- National Association of Counties 'Award for Innovation' for Business Transition Plan
- Performance Institute of the National Council for Excellence in Government 'Public-Private Partnerships Award'
- WRPA 'Spotlight Award – Best Park or Trail Map' for the Regional Trails System Map
- WRPA 'Spotlight Award – Best Sports Complex' for Marymoor Park Synthetic Turf Field Conversion

Acquisition Guidance
This information provides further clarification to the information contained in Section 5.2.

The King County Parks and Recreation Division further considers the following elements when evaluating and selecting sites for acquisition:

- Consistent with applicable open space policies and goals
- Identified as a Regional Trail Corridor in the *Regional Trails Needs Report (RTNR), the Regional Trails Inventory and Implementation Guidelines*, or other relevant regional trails plans.
- Provides connectivity, such as an in-holding in an existing King County-owned site, adjacent to an existing King County-owned site, adjacent to another publicly-owned recreation/conservation land, adjacent to a privately-owned recreation/conservation land
- Provides multiple benefits/functions, such as active recreation, passive recreation, habitat protection, revenue generation, greenbelt/greenspace, view corridor
- Buffers/protects the urban growth line
- Provides for increased recreation opportunities that are regional in scope, such as allowing for a recreation use that is not available elsewhere in the system and/or allowing for a recreation use that is underserved elsewhere in the system
- Able to become financially sustainable through direct and indirect revenue generation, partnerships, efficiencies, or other means
- Provides an opportunity for a public/private partnership in development, management and maintenance of the site
- Accommodates a backcountry trail that adds to/enhances a backcountry trail network on an existing King County-owned site, would allow for a trailhead and/or parking facility, provides trail connection to a Regional Trail, is located within a designated community trail network corridor, is located within a designated Equestrian Community, and/or provides trail linkages between public lands
- Resolves a land/resource management issue, such as providing maintenance access, providing public access and/or allowing for a higher impact recreation use, thus conserving other more sensitive sites
- Addresses needs for cost efficiency/savings including leveraging of other acquisition, stewardship and/or development funds, providing public benefit in proportion to cost of acquisition/ownership, and not providing significant out-of-the-ordinary long term maintenance or capital expense

The Water and Land Resources Division further considers elements when evaluating and selecting acquisitions. Some examples include:

- Provides priority salmon habitat as identified by a WRIA Salmon Recovery Plan
- Provides large contiguous tracts of forest land within Forest Production Districts and Rural Forest Focus Areas identified the *King County Comprehensive Plan*
- Consistent with King County's goals for habitat and natural area protection and restoration

When assessing individual open space sites for acquisition, King County should include the following types of information as part its analysis:

- Identify proposed site's role and classification (i.e. active park, trail, natural area)
- Inventory and analyze proposed site's conditions for assessing suitability for the proposed project (topography, soils, hydrology, vegetation, sensitive areas, wildlife, access, visibility, zoning, adjacent land uses, etc.)
- Identify proposed site's boundaries and any adjustments that may be needed to provide for access, use, management, and sustainability of the site resources
- Estimate future costs of ownership (site clean-up, removal of structures, securing of site, signage, maintenance, etc.)
- Identify relationship and/or linkage of proposed site to larger open space system context
- Assess how the proposed site addresses one or more of the following:
  - Provides ecologically important attributes
  - Adjacent and on-site land uses do not significantly impact the sustainability of the resources of the natural area
  - Adjacent to existing protected land (i.e. public ownership or conservation easement)
  - Of adequate size to sustain ecological function over time and provide diverse and complex habitat for fish and wildlife species
  - Provide multiple benefits including recreation, habitat, aquifer protection and recharge and/or flood-hazard reduction