

King County

30-YEAR FOREST PLAN SUMMARY



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Department of
Natural Resources and Parks
www.kingcounty.gov/forestry



**Clean Water
Healthy Habitat**

"The 30-Year Forest Plan

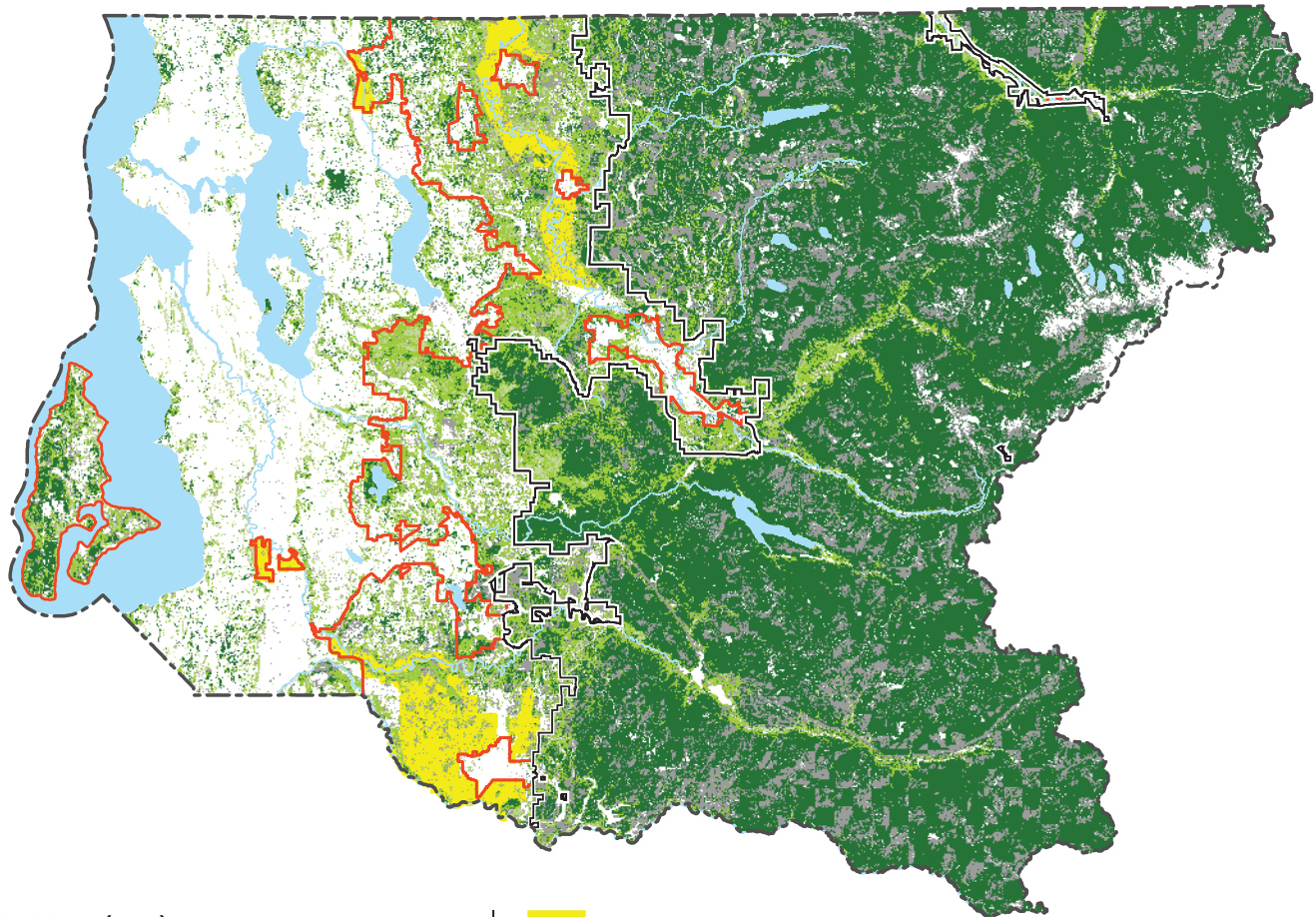
calls on King County and partners, including cities, nonprofits, state and federal governments, Tribes, communities, and forest landowners and managers, to work collaboratively so that our forests provide a broad suite of ecological values, while also supporting human health and cultural values."

- Christie True, Director
King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks

Forest Cover and Distribution in King County

Forest cover has held steady in rural parts of King County over the past 25 years, while it has declined in urban areas. The 30-Year Forest Plan focuses on maintaining and enhancing forest cover in addition to improving the functioning of forests in

areas that have become degraded. Treatments to restore a broader range of tree species, sizes, and ages and more complex canopy structure to these forests can decrease their vulnerability to forest health problems.



FOREST COVER (2016):

 Deciduous forest	 Mixed forest
 Evergreen forest	 Scrub/shrub forest

Land cover data: NOAA C-Cap FTP tool

 Agricultural Production District
 Forest Production District
 Urban growth area
 King County boundary



Note:
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Seven Priority Areas

The 30-Year Forest Plan was developed with input from King County staff, Tribes, nonprofits, municipalities, forestland owners and managers, and community members in order to provide a shared county-wide vision for rural and urban forest cover and forest health. It includes priorities, goals, and strategies for achieving that vision over the next 30 years.

Through our outreach process, we identified seven priority areas relating to the value and benefits of forests. Within

each priority area, we identified goals that relate to forests and tree cover, including specific goals related to cultural resources and equity.

DNRP has identified specific actions to pursue under these strategies, which will guide our own work and our collaborations with other King County departments, partners, landowners, and communities. We are beginning implementation with a set of pilot projects and with actions that align with the 2020 Strategic Climate Action Plan.



Climate

Contribute to climate change mitigation by increasing carbon sequestration and storage in King County forests and increase resilience and preparedness for climate change effects on forests.

- 1 Increase the amount of carbon stored in forests in King County to the greatest extent practicable while protecting biodiversity and improving forest health.
- 2 Increase the resilience of existing forests and newly planted trees to the effects of climate change.
- 3 Improve the preparedness of communities near forests for potential increase in fire risk caused by climate change.
- 4 Equity and cultural resources: Maintain western red cedar, which may be susceptible to drought stress associated with climate change, and other species of cultural significance that provide cultural resources and values to area Tribes.



Forest Health

Improve and restore forest health, including increasing resilience to disease, invasive species, drought, and climate change; sustaining biodiversity, improving wildlife habitat, and restoring connectivity; and maintaining or improving ecological functions.

- 1 Increase the area of healthy and resilient forestland.
- 2 Increase connectivity of protected forestland to improve wildlife habitat.
- 3 Equity and cultural resources: Create a broader public understanding of pre-settlement forest stewardship by the Coast Salish peoples and the resulting forest conditions as a baseline for healthy, complex, and biodiverse forests; improve forest conditions that support the ability of Tribes to exercise treaty rights and cultural practices; improve forest health in forests close to under-served communities.



Urban Forest Canopy

Increase tree canopy in urban areas, with a focus on areas with the lowest canopy cover, and maintain and improve the health of existing urban forests.

- 1 Maintain and increase existing tree canopy in urban areas, prioritizing areas with low canopy cover.
- 2 Maintain urban trees and improve urban forest health.
- 3 Equity and cultural resources: Increase tree canopy above current baseline in urban unincorporated areas with low canopy cover and support urban forest projects as a foundation for youth training to develop tomorrow's forestry leaders.



Human Health

Prioritize tree canopy improvements and increased access to forested spaces to improve human health outcomes and advance health equity.

- 1 Increase tree canopy with improvements focused in geographies and communities with residential areas subject to high levels of summer heat and/or pollution or other human health disparities.
- 2 Improve access to forested spaces, prioritizing communities where the needs are greatest, and support outdoor recreation opportunities that can provide physical and mental health benefits.
- 3 Equity and cultural resources: Increase use, engagement, and sense of belonging in forested parks where access to or use of parks and green space is below the regional average.



Salmon Habitat

Increase and improve forest cover and condition in areas where it can enhance salmon habitat.

- 1 Protect, increase, and improve the extent and health of riparian forests.
- 2 Protect, increase, and improve the extent and forest health in the headwaters of salmon streams to improve ecological function and protect water quality and quantity.
- 3 Equity and cultural resources: Align salmon habitat restoration with Tribal priorities and use culturally important plant species in salmon habitat restoration.



Water Quality and Quantity

Maintain and expand forest canopy where it provides the most benefit for improving water quality and quantity, reducing stormwater runoff, and reducing flooding.

- 1 Maintain and expand forest cover in areas identified as having poor water quality or high pollutant loads to streams and rivers, where forest cover improvement can provide benefits.
- 2 Maintain and expand forest cover to improve water quantity conditions in areas identified as having high potential to mitigate flooding or where protecting groundwater is a priority.
- 3 Equity and cultural resources: Integrate equity considerations into prioritization of stormwater projects involving forest cover.



Sustainable Timber

Support an ecologically sustainable and economically viable timber industry that promotes maintenance of ecological functions in working forests and local economic development.

- 1 Maintain healthy working forests and prevent forest fragmentation and the conversion of working forests to non-forested uses.
- 2 Increase the use of forestry practices that improve ecological functions (such as carbon sequestration, fish and wildlife habitat, and hydrologic cycling) in working forests.
- 3 Improve access to and condition of infrastructure and markets that support sustainable forestry practices.
- 4 Equity and cultural resources: Increase equity in the timber industry and diversity of forestry professionals, in particular those trained in ecological forest management practices and the cultural importance of forests.