

WRIA 8: Taylor Mountain Forest Addition (Ingrid Lundin, Parks)

<i>Parks Levy Request</i>	\$500,000
<i>CFT Request</i> <i>(CFT match status)</i>	\$0 <i>(N/A)</i>
<i>Subtotal: CFT + Parks Levy Request</i>	\$500,000

<i>Total Project Cost</i>	\$500,000
<i>Funding Already Secured</i>	None
<i>Additional Funding Sought</i>	None
<i>Will current funding request allow project completion?</i>	Yes

Project Description: Acquire 9.25 acres of inholding parcels (2 parcels) at Taylor Mountain Forest.

The two parcels proposed for acquisition comprise 9.25 acres of inholding properties within the 1900-acre Taylor Mountain Forest. Acquiring these properties would protect the properties from conversion to residential uses, allow the retention of forest cover, eliminate management issues associated with inholding properties, and preserve wildlife habitat and backcountry trail connections between existing county ownership at Taylor Mountain.

1. OPEN SPACE RESOURCES

A. Wildlife habitat or rare plant reserve

The parcels add to the important terrestrial habitat at Taylor Mountain Forest. They contain a segment of the County Comprehensive Plan designated Wildlife Habitat Network, as part of the riparian buffer to Carey Creek where the network runs. Taylor Mountain contains a mosaic of forest stands with varied age and harvest history. Taylor Mountain is known to support black bear, cougar, black-tailed deer and elk, as well as smaller mammals such as weasels and foxes. Bird species include bald eagle, red-tailed hawk, pileated woodpecker, band-tailed pigeon.

B. Salmon habitat or aquatic resources

The properties are located within the 61-square-mile Issaquah Creek Basin, which supports six anadromous salmonid species (steelhead, coho, chinook, sockeye, sea run and resident cutthroat trout, char). The upper and middle basin are identified as a Regionally Significant Resource Area because of its exceptional fisheries habitat and undeveloped character. Carey and Holder Creeks, in the upper basin and located within Taylor Mountain Forest, provide excellent habitat for salmonids. Carey Creek is located just north of these parcels; these are part of the riparian corridor around Carey Creek. A natural fish passage barrier (40-foot-high cascades) is located approximately 1 mile upstream (east) of the site, marking the upstream limit of anadromous fish passage in Carey Creek.

G. Park/open space or natural corridor addition

These parcels add to Taylor Mountain Forest, meeting a key goal for the Parks Division to acquire inholder parcels and secure legal public access on trails. Acquisition would preserve continuous forest cover along the Carey Creek riparian corridor between two existing public lands.

H. Passive recreation opportunity/unmet needs:

These parcels contain an existing backcountry trail that links the existing county ownership. This is primarily used by local residents. Acquiring this property would secure the right for trail users to legally use this 1/2 mile of trail (part of a trail variously called "Carey Creek Trail" or "Trail 11" in plans). Taylor Mountain has 33 trails covering approximately 10 miles, in addition to the approximately 10 miles of roads. Recreational use of Taylor Mountain Forest is by equestrians, hikers, runners, and mountain bikers.

2. ADDITIONAL FACTORS

B. Threat of loss of open space resources

If these properties are sold to another private landowner, they may cut off access to the trail and the connection between these two parts of Taylor Mountain will be lost. This lessens the overall value of this western parcel, which was purchased in 1999 through the Waterways program for habitat protection. The forest stands on the parcels could be impacted by clearing or development, impacting the riparian corridor for Carey Creek.

C. Ownership complexity/willing seller(s)/ownership interest proposed

These properties have been an identified priority for the county for over 10 years for habitat and recreation purposes but until recently the owners were unwilling sellers. Last year the owners contacted Parks staff to determine the County's interest in acquiring the land and expressed a strong desire to see these parcels in conservation status. Although the parcels are not "on the market" they are anxious to sell the property but wanted to provide the County first opportunity to acquire.

D. Partnerships

Our partners at this site include the Friends of Taylor Mountain Forest, Tahoma Chapter of the Backcountry Horsemen, Issaquah Alps Trail Club, and Washington Trails Association. These groups may be available to assist in the stewardship of trails and/or site resources on the property.

E. Is the property identified in an adopted park, open space, comprehensive or community plan?

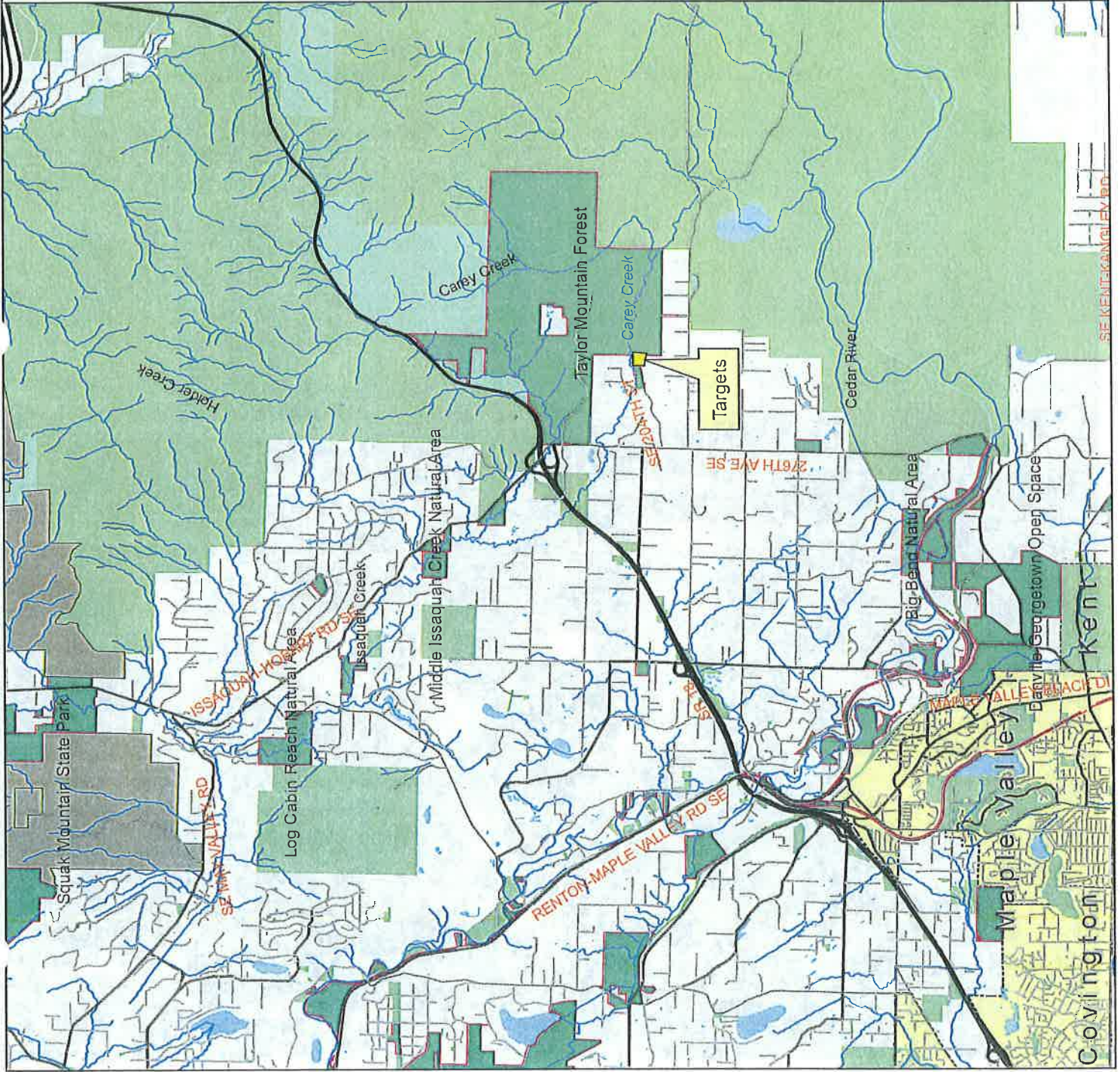
Both the Comp Plan and the Park Plan contain policies that direct acquisition, planning, and stewardship of KC Parks. The acquisition of these parcels is consistent with the following policy direction:

- *"Acquisitions of lands....that provide continuity or appropriate public access where it does not exist should be considered priority acquisitions, as should acquisition of land or easement that are adjacent to, or provide a connection between, existing public open space lands or that are in-holdings."* (Park Plan Policy CIP-123)

The Taylor Mountain Forest Public Use Plan and the Forest Stewardship Plan both call for enhancing connectivity between public ownership and increasing opportunities for non-motorized appropriate low impact recreation through additions to the county's backcountry trail system.

Parcels included in scope: 062207-9120 (5 ac), 062207-9121 (4.26 ac)

Taylor Mountain Forest Additions Vicinity Map



Legend

- Streams and Rivers
- Water
- Forest Production Districts
- Publicly Owned Lands
- City

Parks in King County MAINTYPE

- King County Parks
- State



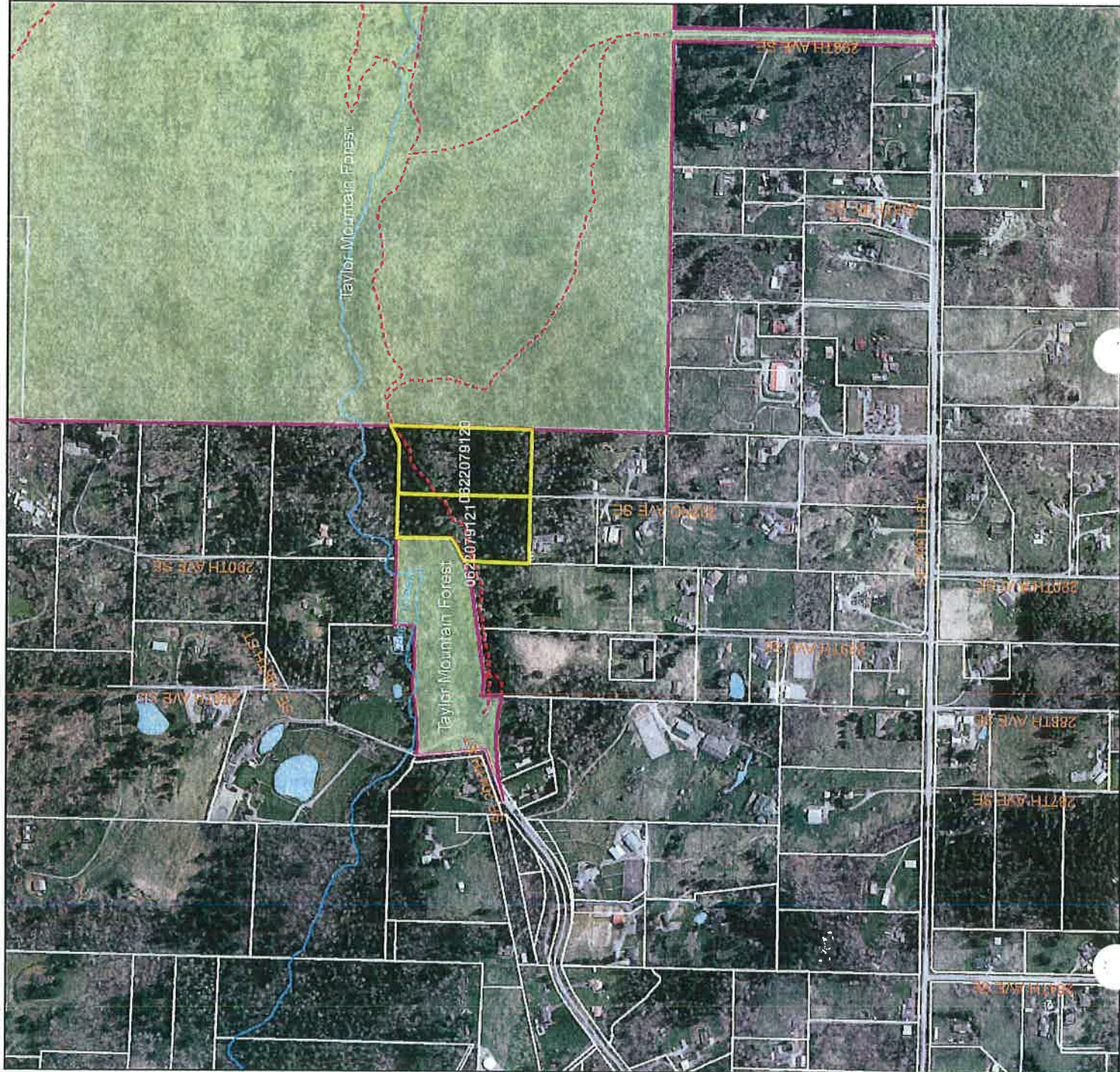
King County

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Natural Resources and Parks
Parks and Recreation Division

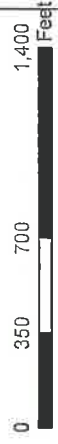
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Taylor Mountain Forest Site Map



- Target parcels
- Publicly Owned Lands
- King County Parks
- Streams and Rivers
- Trails in King County
- Soft Surface Trail



King County
 Department of
 Natural Resources and Parks
 Parks and Recreation Division

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