



King County

K.C. Date Received _____

CONSERVATION FUTURES (CFT) 2011 ANNUAL COLLECTIONS APPLICATION FOR FUNDS

PROJECT NAME: Huse Property Acquisition

Applicant Jurisdiction(s): City of Kent Parks, Recreation & Community Services

Open Space System: Soos Creek Regional Park

(Name of larger connected system, if any, such as Cedar River Greenway, Mountains to Sound, a Regional Trail, etc.)

Acquisition Project Size: 33.7 acres

(Size in acres and Proposed number of parcel(s) if a multi-parcel proposal)

CFT Application Amount: \$785,500

(Dollar Amount of CFT grant requested)

Type of Acquisition(s): Fee Title Conservation Easement Other:

CONTACT INFORMATION

Contact Name: Brian Levenhagen

Phone: 253-856-5116

Title: Park & Open Space Project Manager

Fax: 253-856-6050

Address: 220 4th Ave. S. Kent, WA 98032

Email: bjlevenhagen@ci.kent.wa.us

Date: 3/17/2010

PROJECT SUMMARY:

(In the space below, provide a brief, but comprehensive description of the project including goals and significance of this project)

The City of Kent is requesting \$785,500 to be applied towards the acquisition of two parcels of land totaling 33.7 acres next to Soos Creek in the newly annexed Panther Lake Area. The Panther Lake Annexation Area will be officially taken over by the City of Kent on July 1st, 2010. The property is owned by the Huse Family who is actively cooperating with the City of Kent to finalize a Purchase and Sales agreement. King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks is also applying for some funds towards the purchase of this parcel.

This property would be used by the City of Kent to satisfy a number of park and environmental needs in the Panther Lake Annexation Area. This property is adjacent to the 7.62 mile Soos Creek Trail and would serve as the main Northern Kent trail head for our residents to use this trail. This would connect the Panther Lake area to the very popular Lake Meridian Park in the South, with the idea that residents could easily jog, bike, or walk between the two parks. Adding this connectivity would have economic, health, and recreational value to the surrounding residents.

The park developed on the site would be mainly passive in nature. This property would provide neighborhood park elements to the citizens in the surrounding neighborhood service area, including a playground, picnic shelter, 1 mile loop trail, parking, a restroom, and a large playfield. There is an existing 9,000 square foot covered arena that is currently being used as a dog agility course by a private group, this may or may not be retained through park development. The site also boasts a tremendous view of Mt. Rainer and the developable area sits above the surrounding valley making the site very scenic.

One of the parcels of land is currently undeveloped and this was identified by King County in the draft management recommendations from their ecological assessment for Soos Creek Park as a high priority for acquisition. Much of the Huse Property has been identified as wetland and its proximity to Soos Creek makes this extremely valuable land for wildlife habitat, salmon, water quality, and flood storage.

Panther Lake Annexation Area covers five square miles and is home to approximately 24,000 residents. This area is currently significantly underserved having just three parks that are in desperate need of renovation. There are currently no passive recreation parks in the annexation area.

1. OPEN SPACE RESOURCES

Please review the attached evaluation criteria. For the **proposed acquisition parcel(s)**, please (1) mark only those criteria that apply, and (2) thoroughly, yet succinctly describe in the space below how the proposed acquisition satisfies each marked criteria.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A. Wildlife habitat or rare plant reserve | <input type="checkbox"/> E. Historic/cultural resources |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B. Salmon habitat and aquatic resources | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> F. Urban passive-use natural area/greenbelt |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C. Scenic resources | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> G. Park/open space or natural corridor addition |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> D. Community separator | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> H. Passive recreation opportunity/unmet needs |

- A. The acquisition of this parcel will enhance the existing passive open space and wildlife habitat, located adjacent to a rapidly developing urban area. Parcel 1022059011 was identified as a high priority for acquisition by King County in their ecological assessment of Soos Creek Park. This parcel is critical to maintaining the function of the habitat system which contributes to the overall ecosystem of Soos Creek. Soos Creek has anadromous fish habitat, and is one of the largest wetlands in the county.

The City of Kent will restore the parts of the property that are currently dominated by invasive plant species by removing the invasives and replanting natives. The areas of the site that we be turned into more developed park elements will be done so in an environmentally sensitive manner and will only cover areas that have already been disturbed by humans. Mammals that reside on or near the property include coyote, black bear, raccoons, river otters, cougars, Townsend chipmunk, Douglas squirrel, and black tailed weasel. Red-tailed hawks, Great Blue Heron, wood ducks, hooded mergansers, and Bald Eagles have also been seen on the site in addition to 120 other bird species present in Soos Creek Park. State candidate species listed in Soos Creek include the pileated wood pecker, merlin, and western toad.

- B. This parcel is part of the Soos Creek wetland/stream corridor that is a salmon bearing stream. Data on fish presence document several anadromous fish species present in Soos Creek and some of its tributaries, including winter steelhead, Chinook, Coho, and resident cutthroat trout. Acquiring this property would preserve 33.7 acres in the corridor. Soos Creek is a part of the Green River Watershed.
- C. This acquisition will significantly contribute to the scenic resources along Soos Creek. There is a spectacular view of Mt. Rainier from the site and the site, while in the Soos Creek Valley, is slightly raised above the surrounding areas giving a great view of the valley.
- D. This site is in the urban separator on the edge of the City of Kent as identified in the King County Comprehensive Plan.
- F. The acquisition of this parcel will enable the City to preserve property along the Soos Creek Park Corridor. Soos Creek Park is roughly 730 acres, adding another 33.7 acres to this will be highly beneficial by increasing the urban separator, adding to the protected wetlands and natural areas, and creating a passive use park that would also serve as a major trailhead for the regional trail. It is located in the Panther Lake Annexation area in which 24,000 residents live in a five square mile area.
- G. Adding this park space is vital in the Panther Lake Annexation Area. There are only three parks in the five square miles the City of Kent is taking over from King County. The rest of Kent, which has roughly 88,000 residents, has approximately 72 parks. We will be working to add more park space to the Panther Lake Area for the foreseeable future.
- H. The Panther Lake Area does not currently have any passive open space recreation within the future Kent Boundaries. The closest park to Panther Lake is King County's 7.62 mile Soos Creek Trail that provides the Eastern border of the annexation area. The quickest way to expand the passive recreation opportunities for these residents is to give them better access to the Soos Creek Trail. Access to Soos Creek Trail would allow them to jog, bike, run, or walk between this future park and Lake Meridian Park. This gives people access to the lake and swimming areas without having to drive there. Currently to access the Soos Creek Trail people park along the shoulder-less road along the northern border of the property.

The playground, picnic shelters, playfield, and restroom facilities that would be built in this location far exceed anything currently existing in the three inherited parks from King County.

2. ADDITIONAL FACTORS

For the **proposed acquisition parcel(s)**, please (1) mark all criteria that apply, and (2) thoroughly, yet succinctly describe **in the space below** how the proposed acquisition satisfies each marked criteria.

- A. Educational/interpretive opportunity
- B. Threat of loss of open space resources
- C. Ownership complexity/willing seller(s)/ownership interest proposed
- D. Partnerships - Describe any public or private partnerships that will enhance this project:
- E. Is the property identified in an adopted park, open space, comprehensive, or community plan?
- F. Transferable Development Credits (TDC) participation

- A. This acquisition will undoubtedly give the City excellent opportunities to enhance our educational component and create gathering areas to highlight the ecosystem of Soos Creek. These parcels will enable us to expand our continuing educational and interpretive opportunities which are currently being done in City owned parks and open space lands. Other groups such as the Audobon Society, Dark Skies Astronomical Society, and the Boy Scouts are interested in using the site for education. We will also work with Sunrise Elementary School to bring classes down to the park to learn about the ecosystem of Soos Creek.
- B. The property is currently listed for sale and could be sold to a private individual if the City of Kent cannot get funding for its purchase. This site is part of a very large open space/park corridor that surrounds Soos Creek. The larger of the two parcels was identified as a high priority for acquisition by King County's ecological assessment of Soos Creek Park. These parcels are a part of the Soos Creek Wetland system and are extremely valuable habitat in a rapidly growing urban area.
- C. The current owners have the property on the market, though their first preference would be to work out a deal with the City of Kent to turn the property into a park. Negotiations are ongoing on a purchase and sales agreement, and significant progress has been made. Any purchase and sales agreement reached with the owners will be contingent on securing funding.
- D. The City of Kent and King County will partner to ensure that the City Park is developed in a way that enhances the ability of Kent residents to use King County's Soos Creek Trail. The City will also cooperate with King County in restoration efforts of the wetlands on the property to ensure that these efforts are consistent with the management strategy suggested in King County's ecological assessment of Soos Creek Park to ensure the greatest environmental benefit. The Friends of Soos Creek Park, an advocacy group for the park, have also expressed their support for this acquisition.

The City of Kent has also recently started the Green Kent Partnership with the Cascade Land Conservancy. Part of this program will be implementing a 20 year urban forest plan for all of Kent's public natural open space. This will provide a plan, and volunteers to ensure that the natural areas on this site will be cared for using the best management practices available.

- E. The City of Kent Parks & Open Space Plan does not specifically identify any properties. However, it does specifically identify Soos Creek as a corridor to which Kent wants to add parks and open space for the purposes of connectivity, urban separation, natural open space, recreation, and wetland preservation (Goal P&OS-6).

Both the King County Comprehensive Plan (KCCP) and the 2004 King County Parks, Trails, Natural Areas and Open Space (Park Plan) contain policies that support the acquisition of this property (Park Plan Policy F-101, Policy PAD 117, Comp Plan Policy P-107, Comp Plan Policy P-119).

The 2004 Regional Trail Inventory and Implementation Guidelines and the Regional Trail Plan call for acquiring land that enhances and builds upon the regional trail corridor and provides opportunities for additional trailheads. The 2010 Soos Creek Draft Site Management Guidelines identifies these parcels as conservation priorities.

3. STEWARDSHIP AND MAINTENANCE

How will the property be stewarded and maintained? Does the property lend itself to volunteer stewardship opportunities? How will ongoing stewardship and maintenance efforts be funded?

This property lends itself to many years of volunteer stewardship. As with many of these open spaces, invasive plants have taken over much of the area. The City will continue to utilize volunteers through the Green Kent Partnership and the Adopt-A-Park Program for a large portion of the removal of invasive plants and the replanting of native shrubs and trees. Throughout the year, we received approximately 20 requests for Eagle Scout projects including building kiosks, interpretive signs, boardwalks, fencing, wetland restoration and trail construction. The site lends itself to be a great opportunity for other volunteer groups to help in the City's effort to remove invasive plants and re-vegetate the site. Funding for any expenditure associated with the volunteer efforts will come from the CIP and/or general fund.

Through our Green Kent Partnership we will train forest stewards to do much of the environmental restoration work on this site. Each forest steward will eventually be able to run their own volunteer events and take charge of restoration efforts. It is located along a popular regional trail and the existence of the Friends of Soos Creek Park are good indicators that there will be interest among the public to adopt this park.

The City also has a Parks Maintenance Department consisting of 33 FTE and 30 seasonal staff and is regularly used in the day to day operation of parks and open spaces as well as any special projects that arise, funded out of the City's annual general fund budget.

4. PROJECT BUDGET

TOTAL CFT APPLICATION AMOUNT*	\$785,500
--------------------------------------	------------------

**Allowable acquisition costs (Ordinance 14714): The disbursement of funds shall be made only for capital project expenditures that include costs of acquiring real property, including interests in real property, and the following costs: the cost of related relocation of eligible occupants, cost of appraisal, cost of appraisal review, costs of title insurance, closing costs, pro rata real estate taxes, recording fees, compensating tax, hazardous waste substances reports, directly related staff costs and related legal and administrative costs, but shall not include the cost of preparing applications for conservation futures funds.*

Estimation of property value:

Briefly describe how land values have been estimated, i.e. appraisal, property tax assessment, asking price, letter of value or other means.

Property values are based on an appraisal obtained by the City of Kent and dated December 3, 2009.

ESTIMATED PROJECT COSTS (dollars)	(a range may be included)
Total property interest value	\$1,500,000
Title and appraisal work	\$6,000
Closing, fees, taxes	\$40,000
Relocation	
Hazardous waste reports	\$5,000
Directly related staff, administration and legal costs	\$20,000
Total Project Costs (CFT and other funds)	\$1,571,000

MATCHING FUNDS: Existing Sources	(Date) Expended or Committed	(Dollar Amount) Expended or Committed
RCO WWRP Local Parks	2011	\$785,500
Total Matching Funds Currently Identified		\$785,500
<i>Unidentified Remaining Match Need:</i>		0

Unidentified remaining match need: What funds are anticipated, and what is the time frame?

Please discuss briefly how the unidentified remaining match need above will be met:

We will be submitting an application to the 2011 RCO WWRP Local Parks Grant Program for the match required. In addition to this King County is also submitting an application to Conservation Futures for \$50,000 that will be matched with \$50,000 from their parks expansion levy. If King County is successful in obtaining these funds our Conservation Futures ask will be decreased by \$50,000.

5. IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS FROM PARTNERSHIPS

Brief Activity Description	Dollar Value of In-kind Contribution	Status (Completed, or Proposed in future?)	Activity Date Range (When was activity completed? or, date proposed in future)
King County (CFT/PEL funds)	\$100,000	proposed	2010-2011
TOTAL	\$100,000		

6. ATTACHED MAPS (*Note: Two maps are now required; 1) site map and 2) general location*
8 ½ x 11” maps are preferred, but 11x 17” is acceptable if folded and hole-punched for insertion into a three ring binder.

Site Map that shows the following:

- Each parcel proposed for acquisition in yellow or distinct shading and an indication of any parcel proposed for less than fee simple acquisition, such as a conservation easement;
- Location of any proposed development to the site such as parking, trails or other facilities;
- Location of any proposed site restoration;
- Existing adjacent public (local, state or federal) park or open spaces, labeled and shown in dark green or distinct shading;

Location Map that shows the following:

- Other permanently protected open spaces (private, non profit, institutional, etc.) shown in light green or distinct shading;
- Major water courses such as creeks, rivers, lakes or wetlands;
- Major roads, arterial roads or regional trails.
- *Map scale: This map should show approximately a ten-mile radius around the proposed acquisition(s).*

SE 216 S

Soos Creek

Soos Creek Trail

Existing Gravel Parking

Existing Arena

Parking Area

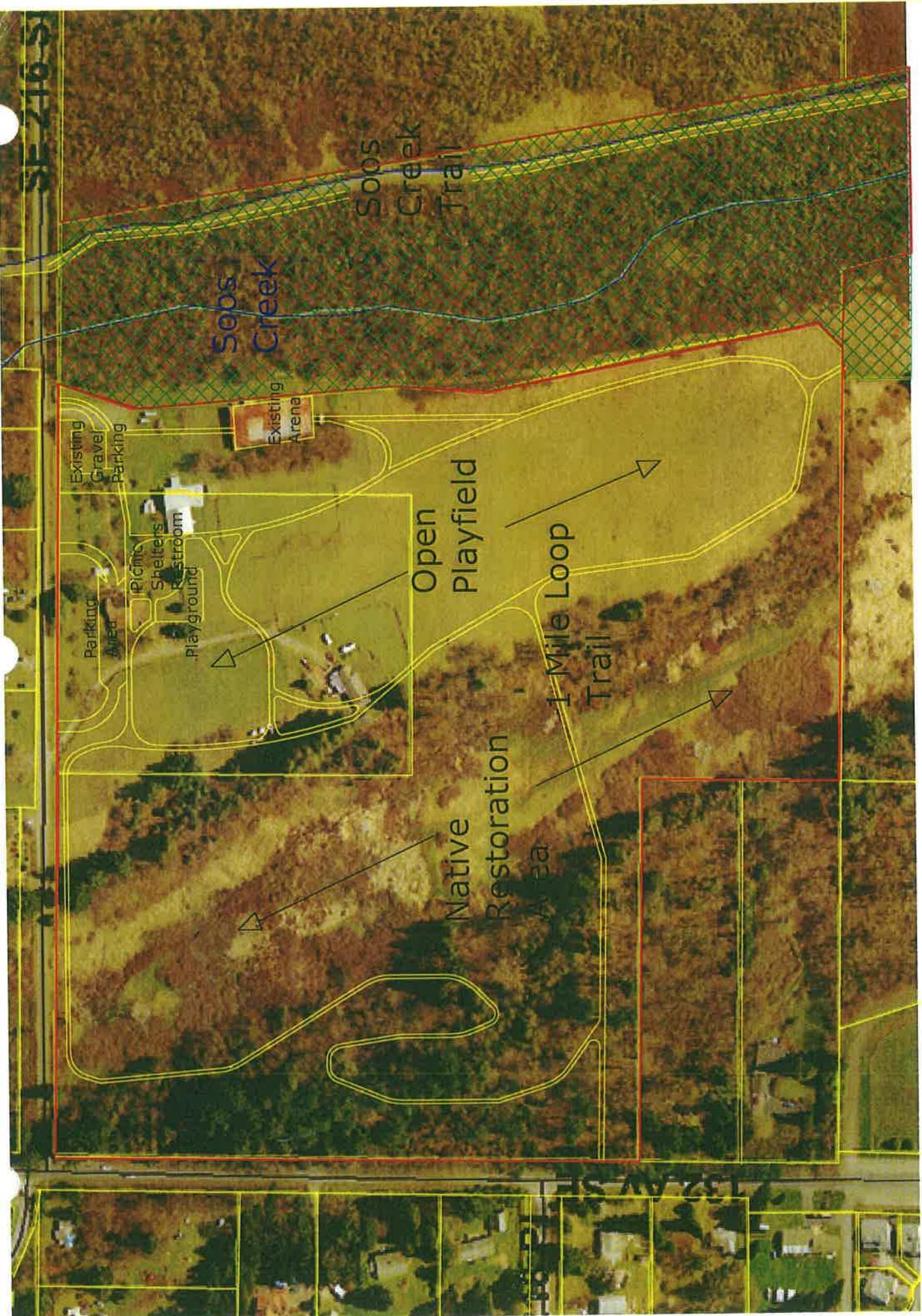
Picnic Shelters
Restroom

Playground

Open
Playfield

1 Mile Loop
Trail

Native
Restoration
Area



Huse Property Acquisition



— Trails

▣ facis_park

PANTHER LAKE

Huse Property

SOOS CREEK

SR167

SE 240th St

