



King County

K.C. Date Received _____

**CONSERVATION FUTURES (CFT) 2014 ANNUAL COLLECTIONS
APPLICATION FOR FUNDS**

PROJECT NAME: Piner Point Natural Area

Applicant Jurisdiction(s): King County Water and Land Resources Division

Open Space System: King County Piner Point and Northhilla Natural Areas

Acquisition Project Size: 2014: 13 parcels 6.9 acres, Total: 14.8 acres, 29 Parcels **CFT Amount:** \$350,000
(Size in acres and proposed number of parcel(s) if a multi-parcel proposal)

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

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Date: March 13, 2013

PROJECT SUMMARY:

The Piner Point Natural Area additions project will permanently protect almost 1000 feet of Puget Sound shoreline and its associated critical nearshore functions, through acquisition of fee title interest or conservation easements on 29 parcels. Fee purchase is preferred and conservation easements are unlikely due to already low property values and development challenges. After purchase, shoreline ecological processes will be restored through the removal of structures and shoreline armoring. This shoreline features some natural shoreline, pacific herring, surf smelt and sand lance spawning areas, eelgrass and kelp beds, and juvenile salmonid habitat. Fifty percent of King County's shoreline on Vashon and Maury Islands has been armored or modified. Not only will this project protect this shoreline from future armoring, it will offer the opportunity to remove existing structures and armoring from the nearshore environment reconnecting the beaches with the sediment supplying feeder bluffs. Once completed, these acquisitions will connect Piner Point and Northhilla into one natural area offering 3000 feet of shoreline in public ownership, thereby improving management, habitat connectivity and public access. In addition to our direct partnership on this project with the Vashon-Maury Island Land Trust, this project has broad support from the WRIA 9 Watershed Forum, Vashon Beach Naturalists, Preserve Our Islands, Vashon Nature Center, and Washington State Department of Natural Resources. This project compliments the numerous nearshore preservation and restoration projects in the aquatic reserve.

1. OPEN SPACE RESOURCES

- | | |
|---|---|
| <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 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 type="checkbox"/> D. Community separator | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> H. Passive recreation opportunity/unmet needs |

A. Wildlife habitat or rare plant reserve

The area hosts mature stands of madrona-dominated forest that are not common in the Puget Sound lowlands. Piner Point is frequented by bald eagles, pileated woodpeckers and osprey. Great blue herons are seen fishing the shoreline. River otter and harbor seals are found feeding along the shorelines. Baby seals haul out on the beaches. Feeder bluffs, overhanging vegetation and large wood are also common along this stretch of shoreline. Some target parcels offer opportunities to restore wildlife habitat. Bulkheads and structures will be removed on acquired properties and native vegetation established to restore valuable wildlife habitat and increasing the acreage of protected land. The purchase of the remaining parcels between Northilla and Piner Point Natural Areas will improve habitat connectivity of this site.

B. Salmon habitat and aquatic resources

The Piner Point shoreline has three known species of forage fish (herring, sand lance and surf smelt) spawning on its beaches or in the eelgrass beds. All species of Puget Sound salmonids (including the federally threatened steelhead and chinook salmon) use nearshore habitat during some part of their life history and are expected to benefit from these acquisitions. Juvenile salmon rely heavily on terrestrial insects, and the overhanging native vegetation helps provide this food source in addition to refuge. Extensive eelgrass beds are found along the shoreline's expansive beaches. Orcas are observed seasonally feeding offshore. The entire project area is found within one of only seven WADNR Aquatic Reserves in Puget Sound due to Maury Island's important ecological features. The WRIA 8 & 9 Beach Feeding Sources and Accretion Areas: Current and Historical Conditions Report list the feeder bluffs in this area as a high restoration priority and a high conservation priority. These parcels contain an active feeder bluff that supplies much-needed beach material northwest along the drift cell that stretches 17,489 feet between Piner Point and into Quartermaster Harbor to the Dockton boat ramp. Part of the project area provides sediment that nourishes the beaches northeast along Maury Island to Pt. Robinson. This sediment supports extensive eelgrass beds which are a critical component of the marine food web. These parcels will provide restoration opportunities for removing structures and bulkheads and restoring nearshore function. Dungeness crab and geoduck are also found in the intertidal.

C. Scenic resources

The Piner Point Natural Area provides impressive views of Mt. Rainier, Puget Sound, Commencement Bay and the Tacoma waterfront.

D. Park/open space or natural corridor addition

Under the present configuration, King County has two separate natural areas (Northilla and Piner Point) separated by numerous small private in-holdings resulting in fragmented property ownership. Combining these two areas will allow for additional recreation, restoration and conservation opportunities and allow for easier management.

E. Passive recreation opportunity/unmet needs

The area is used by kayakers, birdwatchers and beachcombers. Piner Point is an exceptional stop for kayakers paddling the along Maury Island. Purchasing the in-holdings and linking the two existing natural areas will facilitate a more easily defined trail from Northilla to Piner Point. Under current property ownership, visitors have a difficult time determining the boundaries of the public parcels.

2. ADDITIONAL FACTORS

For the proposed acquisition parcel(s), please mark all criteria that apply and 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. Educational/interpretive opportunity

Due to its varied habitats, Piner Point is an excellent site for educational and community stewardship activities. When asked if they support the project, The Vashon Beach Naturalists state they “would be glad to volunteer our support for restoration activities, teaching opportunities, citizen science, and other conservation and interpretation projects.”

B. Threat of loss of open space resources

Although most of the parcels are challenging to build on, the presence of existing structures on these parcels represents a risk to upgrading. Some parcels already have Dockton water shares. While the properties remain in private ownership, they are at increased risk for habitat destroying activities such as logging, view clearing, inadequate (or non-existing) septic, introduction of invasive species and water withdrawals.

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

Willingness inquiries conducted to the 14 landowners in the area resulted in 13 responses. Eight responded “yes”, two owners responded “no”, and three “I don’t know”. This project has broad support from the Vashon Land Trust, Vashon Beach Naturalists, Preserve Our Islands, Vashon Nature Center, and Washington State Department of Natural Resources. The highest priority parcels are parcels with structures that have landowners who are willing to sell.

D. Partnerships - Describe any public or private partnerships that will enhance this project

In addition to our partnership on this project with the Vashon-Maury Island Land Trust, this project has broad support from the Vashon Beach Naturalists, Preserve Our Islands, Vashon Nature Center, and Washington State Department of Natural Resources. Vashon Land Trust is providing some landowner outreach as well as pursuing additional funding.

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

- 2008 WRIA 9 Salmon Habitat Plan action NS 17.
- WRIA 8 &9 Beach Feeding Sources and Accretion Areas: Current and Historical Conditions Report.
- Vashon GreenPrint (focus area 7, ten year focus priority).
- VMI Rapid Rural Reconnaissance action VMI
- Prioritization of Marine Shorelines of WRIA 9 for Juvenile Salmonid Habitat Protection and Restoration

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?

As parcels are acquired, they will be added to the existing Northilla or Piner Point Natural Areas. The neighboring community may be willing to take on some stewardship responsibilities, but little stewardship is needed on the majority of parcels, other than weed control. In the event of a purchase with a structure, the structure would be removed and habitat restored. The King County Basin Steward manages budgets that include funding for the removal of structures and habitat restoration. If additional funding is needed, bulkhead removal is a likely candidate for restoration grant sources.

King County is already working on habitat restoration projects at Northilla (ivy removal) and Piner Point (bulkhead cabin removal and native revegetation). King County Parks is responsible for the day to day management while King County Water and Land will fund and complete the restoration work. Groups and agencies supporting the project (WRIA 9, Vashon-Maury Island Land Trust, Vashon Beach Naturalists, Preserve Our Islands, Vashon Nature Center, and Washington State Department of Natural Resources) may be asked for assistance as well.

4. PROJECT BUDGET

1) TOTAL CFT APPLICATION AMOUNT^a	CFT: \$350,000
2) TOTAL PEL APPLICATION AMOUNT^b	PEL: \$350,000

Estimation of property value:

Property tax assessment and consultation with King County acquisition staff.

PROJECT COSTS	ESTIMATED DOLLAR AMOUNT OR RANGE
Total property interest value	\$525,000
Title and appraisal work	\$70,000
Closing, fees, taxes	\$30,000
Relocation	
Hazardous waste reports	\$3,500
Directly related staff, administration and legal costs	\$71,500
Total Project Costs (CFT and other funds)	\$700,000

MATCHING FUNDS: Existing Sources (CFT can only provide a maximum of 50% of anticipated project costs)	DATE (Expended or Committed)	DOLLAR AMOUNT (Expended or Committed)
2014 Parks Levy – Regional Open Space Acquisition funds.	Request pending	\$350,000
Total CFT Funds Previously Received This Project		\$0
Total Matching Funds and Past CFT Funds Currently Identified		All matching funds are currently identified
Unidentified Remaining Match Need		\$0

Unidentified remaining match need: What funds are anticipated and what is the time frame?
For this phase all matching funds will be supplied by 2014 Parks Levy – Regional Open Space Acquisition funds.

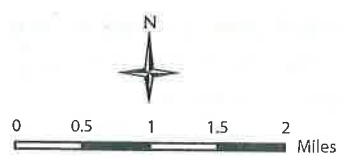
5. IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS FROM PARTNERSHIPS

Brief Activity Description	Dollar Value of In-kind Contribution	Status (Completed or Proposed)	Activity Date Range (Completion Date or Proposed Completion Date)
Vashon Land Trust Landowner outreach and funding search assistance	~\$10,000	Proposed	Ongoing for life of project
TOTAL	\$10,000		

6. MAPS

Piner Point Natural Area Vashon/Maury Island, WA Location Map

-  Focus Area
-  Priority Parcel
-  Streams and Rivers
-  Vashon-Maury Island Land Trust
-  Water Bodies
-  Publicly Owned Land



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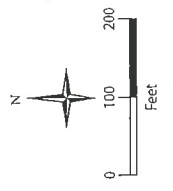
Photo Year: 2010

Piner Point Natural Area Parcels

Site Map



- Piner Point Target Parcel
- Piner Point Priority Parcel
- King County Parks
- Publicly Owned Lands



Map produced by
King County DNRP, GIS and
Visual Communications & Web Unit
File name:
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Aerial of target shoreline 2006 Dept. of Ecology Coastal Atlas



Creosote bulkhead sticking out into the intertidal

