CONSERVATION FUTURES (CFT) 2013 ANNUAL COLLECTIONS
APPLICATION FOR FUNDS

PROJECT NAME: Soos Creek Park & Trail Addition

Applicant Jurisdiction(s): King County (located within City of Covington)

Open Space System: Soos Creek Park & Trail
(Name of larger connected system, if any, such as Cedar River Greenway, Mountains to Sound, a Regional Trail, etc.)

Acquisition Project Size: 22 acres
(Site in acres and proposed number of parcel(s) if a multi-parcel proposal)

CFT Application Amount: $99,000
(Dollar amount of CFT grant requested)

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

CONTACT INFORMATION
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Seattle, WA 98104
Date: March 2013

PROJECT SUMMARY:
(In the space below, provide a brief but comprehensive description of the project. This should include the overall watershed, reach, trail or open space system if appropriate and specific targeted parcels and how they are significant individually and as part of an overall system.)

This grant request targets the Calhoun Pit, a forested parcel located near the southernmost extent of King County Soos Creek Park & Trail ownership. The property is a likely route for southward Soos Creek Trail extension, and provides opportunities for additional park amenities such as natural areas and local trails. Located in Covington at its boundary with Kent, the site is a unique forested property within a densely developing urban area. The 750-acre Soos Creek Park and Trail lies within a stream, wetland, and floodplain corridor nearly 10 miles long. The park contains a ~7.5 mile-long paved multiuse regional trail that extends from Renton to Kent/Covington.

King County Roads has declared this parcel surplus. Parks has submitted a letter of interest, and they await funding to transfer the site to Parks. The parcel is 23 acres, though Roads is surpending one acre at the SW corner of the parcel to the Soos Creek Water & Sewer District. Funding request is only for Calhoun Pit, though two other parcels are included in the scope of the grant: a parcel adjacent to an existing restoration site on Parks land, and a parcel which may be in a future Tri-City Trail route at the north boundary of Covington.

This proposal is being submitted in partnership with two stakeholder groups: Friends of Soos Creek Park & South County Chapter of the Sierra Club.
1. OPEN SPACE RESOURCES

Please review the attached evaluation criteria. For the proposed acquisition parcel(s), please mark those criteria that apply and thoroughly, yet succinctly, describe in the space below how the proposed acquisition satisfies each marked criteria. Please clearly describe how these criteria might be met at a landscape level, and how they apply to individual parcels. If restoration is part of the plan, please briefly describe the current condition and the hoped for restored condition that is the goal of the acquisition.

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

A. Wildlife habitat or rare plant reserve
This acquisition builds on the habitat lands already protected at Soos Creek Park. Despite being surrounded by a high degree of development, Soos Creek Park is a wetland corridor provides valuable wildlife habitat. The park is located within the Comp Plan Wildlife Habitat Network Corridor. Larger mammals known to use this area include black bear, cougar, bobcat, red foxes and coyotes. Approximately 120 bird species have been reported in Soos Creek Park. Even though they are not all seen annually, it is significant that about half of King County’s entire bird assemblage may be found in the park. The park is known to support a number of Species of Local Importance designated in the Comp Plan (Policy E-487), State candidate species, and two sensitive species for which the King County CAO requires protection of breeding sites (the red-tailed hawk and the great blue heron). Ecological survey work indicated that Soos Creek Regional Park contains 113 taxa of vascular plants, though the survey and revealed no endangered or plants considered rare.

B. Salmon habitat and aquatic resources:
Coho and chum were historically present in Soos Creek all the way to the headwaters. 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. The western pearlshell mussel, a Species of Local Importance and fresh water eels are also known to be present. Calhoun Pit is located between Big Soos Creek and Little Soos Creek, which buffers both streams and provides a potential wildlife connection between the two systems. The site contains a wetland complex at the bottom of the old gravel pit; community members report hearing of salmon passing through a culvert from Big Soos Creek and attempting to spawn in the wetland complex. Other parcels in the scope contribute to the stream corridor and wetlands associated with Soos Creek.

D. Community separator
The parcel itself is zoned urban separator, and provides a separator function between Kent and Covington. The 750-acre Soos Creek Regional Park provides a visual and functional separation between rural King County and urban areas of unincorporated King County and the cities of Renton, Kent, and Covington. This acquisition work would support future acquisitions to add to that separator in Kent/Covington area. The Comp Plan specifically supports establishment of permanent urban separators and links with city greenbelts, and King County Park Plan supports protection of lands that buffer the urban growth line as a high priority acquisition criterion (App. VII).

F. Urban passive-use natural area/greenbelt
Acquisition of Calhoun Pit would contribute to passive-use urban separator/greenbelt functions, provide a buffer from nearby urban development, facilitate additional protection of this forested site and prevent conversion to residential development.

G. Park/open space or natural corridor addition
This acquisition would contribute to the regional functions of the Soos Creek Park and Trail. The King County Comp Plan (Park Chapter) calls for King County to focus on linking natural areas to create regional open space corridors of greenways. The county’s 2010 Park Plan directs a focus on regional trails and passive parks. Calhoun Pit acquisition will further the regional trail development toward the south and linking to Covington.

H. Passive recreation opportunity/unmet needs
This acquisition work would support future extension of the regional trail, popular with many user groups. Even before trail development, acquired land would provide opportunity for informal passive recreation such as walking and nature observation.
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
The Friends of Soos Creek Park, in coordination with King County and the City of Kent, lead numerous educational and interpretive programs in the Soos Creek Park. These include bird, plant, butterfly, and bat walks. Many students from the Kent School District participate in these educational and interpretive programs.

B. Threat of loss of open space resources
The Soos Creek Corridor through Kent & Covington will only continue to become more developed over time. This proposal seeks to protect a large forested parcel which is becoming more scarce in this rapidly developing area. As growth in this area continues and as other patches of habitat in the region are lost, protecting the overall Soos Creek Park & Trail corridor will become increasingly important for fish and wildlife.

C. Ownership complexity/willing seller(s)/ownership interest proposed
As noted on page 1, the site is King County Roads property declared as surplus. Parks has submitted a letter of interest to Roads, and they await funding to transfer the site to Parks (they are also surplusing 1 acre at the SW corner of the site to the Soos Creek Water & Sewer District). Roads has performed an internal estimate of value, which will allow us to submit this request with confidence that the request will allow us to purchase the property. Two other parcels are included in the scope of the grant.

D. Partnerships - Describe any public or private partnerships that will enhance this project
The Friends of Soos Creek Park (FOSCP) and the South County Chapter of the Sierra Club are both park support and advocacy groups which have advocated for ongoing acquisitions in this area. Both groups have assisted King County with park planning, stewardship and environmental educational activities through ongoing participation and sponsorship of volunteer activities. FOSCP has over 10 years of history serving as an official Adopt A Park group for Soos Creek Park; several of its members are active Park Ambassadors; and they seek monetary donations, all of which are used to steward the regional park and area resources.

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:
- Be a “regional provider of open spaces with a major focus on systems of open space corridors that conserve natural resources and provide recreation, education and interpretive opportunities, fish and wildlife habitat and scenic beauty.” (Park Plan Policy G-101)
- Emphasize acquisition and development of sites that provide for multiple benefits (Park Plan Policy CIP-120)
- Preserve lands that serve as an urban separator (Comp Plan Policy U-182); lie within a designated Wildlife Habitat Network and contain wetlands and aquatic areas and their buffers, and Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas (Comp Plan Policy E-107) and/or provide habitat for species of local importance (Comp Plan Policy E-487)

The 2004 Regional Trail Inventory and Implementation Guidelines and the 1992 Regional Trail Plan call for acquiring land that enhances and builds upon the regional trail corridor.
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?

Once land is acquired, ongoing maintenance and monitoring under the responsibility of King County Parks would be funded via the Parks Levy which funds the Parks Resource Program Section (field operations staff and natural resource volunteer coordinator) and the Regional Trail Crew. (A new proposed Parks Levy is expected to be on the ballot in fall 2013 for a public vote in King County, which would provide our new source of maintenance funds). Support would also be provided by King County Parks planning, and property managers who issue special use permits and resolve property encroachments. King County is finalizing detailed management guidelines for the long term stewardship and maintenance of the Soos Creek Park/Trail. Volunteer projects (as described in 2 D, Partnerships above) would also contribute greatly to site stewardship. In addition, grant funding available to the city/county as well as to non-profit groups could be used to both restore and develop site recreation amenities and access.

4. PROJECT BUDGET

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1) TOTAL CFT APPLICATION AMOUNT(^a)</th>
<th>CFT: $99,000</th>
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<tr>
<td>2) TOTAL PEL APPLICATION AMOUNT(^b)</td>
<td>Parks Levy: $99,000</td>
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\(^a\) Allowable CFT 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.

\(^b\) King County projects only, if applicable.

Estimation of property value:
Briefly note how land values have been estimated (i.e., appraisal, property tax assessment, asking price, letter of value or other means).

Roads has estimated the value of this property at $165,000. We have added a 20% inflator for potential variation in their estimate, closing costs, etc.

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<tr>
<th>PROJECT COSTS</th>
<th>ESTIMATED DOLLAR AMOUNT OR RANGE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total property interest value</td>
<td>$165,000-175,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Title and appraisal work</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Closing, fees, taxes</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relocation</td>
<td>$0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hazardous waste reports</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Directly related staff, administration and legal costs</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Project Costs (CFT and other funds)</td>
<td>$198,000</td>
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MATCHING FUNDS: Existing Sources
(CFT can only provide a maximum of 50% of anticipated project costs)

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<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>DOLLAR AMOUNT</th>
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<td>(Expended or Committed)</td>
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<th>Total CFT Funds Previously Received This Project</th>
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<th>Total Matching Funds and Past CFT Funds Currently Identified</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$0</td>
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<tr>
<th>Unidentified Remaining Match Need</th>
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Unidentified remaining match need: What funds are anticipated and what is the time frame?
Please briefly discuss how the unidentified remaining match need above will be met.

Match is requested Parks Levy – Regional Open Space Acquisition funds.

5. IN–KIND CONTRIBUTIONS FROM PARTNERSHIPS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Brief Activity Description</th>
<th>Dollar Value of In-kind Contribution</th>
<th>Status (Completed or Proposed)</th>
<th>Activity Date Range (Completion Date or Proposed Completion Date)</th>
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<td>TOTAL</td>
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6. ATTACHED MAPS (Two maps are now required: 1) site map and 2) general location map; you may also include one additional map, aerial photo or site photo)
8 ½ x 11” maps are preferred, but 11 x 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) parks 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).