



King County

K.C. Date Received _____

CONSERVATION FUTURES (CFT) 2015 ANNUAL COLLECTIONS APPLICATION FOR FUNDS

PROJECT NAME: Judd Creek

Applicant Jurisdiction(s): King County DNRP

Open Space System: Judd Creek Natural Area

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

Acquisition Project Size: 9 parcels, 98.5ac.

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

CFT Application Amount: \$160,000

(Dollar amount of CFT grant requested)

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

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Date: March 7, 2014

PROJECT SUMMARY:

Since 2002, King County and the Vashon Land Trust have protected 430 acres in the Judd Creek Watershed, from the headwaters at Island Center Forest to the estuary that empties into Quartermaster Harbor. This proposal focuses on creating permanent protections for the lower and middle reaches of Judd Creek for the benefit of the following species of concern: coho salmon, steelhead trout, coastal cutthroat trout, western pearlshell mussel, 16 species of neo-tropical migrant song birds, eelgrass, Quartermaster Harbor's run of Pacific herring, western grebes, surf scoters, juvenile chinook salmon, bull trout, steelhead trout, and orca whales.

Vashon Island lies in the heart of central Puget Sound, surrounded by the built environments of Seattle, Tacoma and Bremerton. Located in the heart of Vashon is Quartermaster Harbor, host to central Puget Sound's healthiest run of Pacific herring. Quartermaster harbor has been identified by The Nature Conservancy's Puget Trough Assessment as a portfolio site, declared an Important Bird Area by the National Audubon Society, and is a state Department of Natural Resources Aquatic Reserve. Judd Creek is the largest single source of freshwater to Quartermaster Harbor. This proposal would provide protections to water quality in a harbor that has been challenged by excess nutrients and incidences of low oxygen.

King County and the Vashon Land Trust have an ongoing partnership purchasing properties and easements and leveraging resources to steward the properties. Structures are removed, water withdrawals stopped and septic systems are decommissioned. The sites are replanted with native vegetation and new trail routes are being planned.

Although this proposal includes 9 parcels, there are two primary targets for the requested funding. For these two parcels, we anticipate purchasing conservation easements from the property owners totaling approximately 30 acres. Acquisition of the target parcels will preserve and protect native riparian vegetation and allow for trail and habitat connectivity to the existing Paradise Valley Natural Area. The Vashon Land Trust and King County have protected over 100 acres of habitat along the mainstem of Judd Creek. The two primary target parcels include over 1650 linear feet of Judd Creek.

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.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <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 |

Wildlife habitat or rare plant reserve:

The assemblage of creeks, mixed forests (including mature second growth), forest edges, meadows, wetlands, and ponds make this target section of the Judd Creek Watershed attractive to 16 species of neotropical migrating birds - many of which rely heavily on forested riparian zones. Nine bird species identified on this site have been called out as priority species in the Washington Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy. The target parcels also host pileated woodpeckers, a state candidate for listing. These parcels, combined with adjacent protected lands, create contiguous blocks of habitat capable of supporting larger populations and varieties of wildlife species. Habitat restoration efforts on neighboring parcels will be continued, as necessary, on these priority parcels.

The native freshwater pearlshell mussel (state watch list) is found in Judd Creek and relies on cool water and low impervious surface in the watershed to survive.

Salmon habitat and aquatic resources:

Coho salmon (federal species of concern), chum salmon and searun cutthroat trout spawn in this reach of Judd Creek. The lower reach is listed as critical steelhead habitat. Judd Creek is the largest single source of fresh water supporting the aquatic food web of Quartermaster Harbor. Poor water quality in Quartermaster has created algal blooms that have killed eelgrass and in recent years created incidences of low oxygen - both of which threaten herring habitat and could hamper spawning success. Herring is a state candidate for listing and a federal species of concern.

Protecting the surface waters that flow to Quartermaster Harbor is important and will aid in sustaining the many important aquatic species that spawn, rear or forage in this protected harbor. These include chinook salmon, bull trout, steelhead trout, coastal cutthroat trout, Pacific herring, and surf smelt. Herring and smelt are critical prey species for adult chinook salmon, which in turn are the preferred prey of the endangered resident Puget Sound orca whales.

The priority parcels contain significant surface water, including springs, forested wetlands, tributaries and 1650 feet of mainstem Judd Creek. They are mapped as both critical aquifer recharge areas and much of the area is rated with the highest level of susceptibility to groundwater contamination.

Scenic resources:

The target parcels provide excellent opportunities for the public to view salmon returning to spawn in Judd Creek. The area offers excellent bird-watching with areas to observe the willow flycatcher and other neotropical migrants that do not often visit large, well-forested urban areas.

Park/open space or natural corridor addition:

The acquisition of the target parcels would add protections to 1650 feet of mainstem Judd Creek and add up to 30 acres to this growing preserve along Vashon's largest stream corridor. The priority parcels are located between existing Land Trust parcels. Purchasing easements on these two parcels would allow for a continuous trail connection.

Passive recreation opportunities:

Vashon residents have limited hiking opportunities without leaving the island. These parcels are part of a vision to create a cross-island trail from Burton School site near the mouth of Judd Creek, up the watershed to Island Center Forest, and down Shinglemill Creek to Colvos Passage at Fern Cove. The target parcels and previous acquisitions are critical puzzle pieces in the effort to create a permanent protected route along this corridor. These parcels provide excellent bird-watching and nature viewing opportunities.

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

Educational/interpretive opportunity:

All the properties are accessible from the public right of way and are adjacent to an easily accessible salmon viewing location. As the trail network is expanded, these opportunities will grow. Judd Creek offers King County residents a rare opportunity to watch wild salmon spawn in their natal stream - as opposed to merely returning to their hatchery of origin.

Threat of loss of open space resources:

One of the priority parcels could be subdivided under current zoning regulations. Both parcels could experience future impacts due to more active land use. Because of the nutrient loading problem in Quartermaster Harbor, removing potential development along the immediate stream corridor - where septic systems and lawn fertilizers are most likely to impact water quality - will have a direct positive change on water quality and quantity. In order to save the coho run in the long term, the entire watershed will have to be conserved to a level of impervious surface less than 5%. The Judd Creek watershed is currently estimated at 2.2% impervious (Vashon Rapid Rural Reconnaissance).

Ownership Complexity:

The majority of the parcels targeted in this application have homes far away from the creek. These properties are excellent candidates for conservation easements with the current owners retaining fee ownership. King County would own and monitor the easement. Parcels ending with 9167, 9026 and 9057 are willing sellers and appraisals are under way. Parcel -9017 is also interested, currently gathering information and speaking with family members.

Partnerships:

Throughout this reach, King County has focused on purchasing easements, with the Land Trust holding fee ownership. This partnership between King County and the Land Trust along Judd Creek provides several benefits to the partners and to the community. Land managed jointly by two conservation organizations is doubly protected into the future. The Land Trust primarily shoulders the maintenance responsibility for the properties. The Land Trust is the first to get calls from community members who spot a problem, can respond quickly to those calls, and can more easily tap into local volunteer energy to maintain the properties. These properties provide excellent opportunities for King County to voluntarily engage in habitat restoration projects that meet the goals of the Department of Natural Resources and Parks and dovetail with King Conservation District efforts.

Identification in an adopted plan: Conservation of Judd Creek is identified in:

- King County Vashon Island Greenprint Analysis
- 2002 Vashon Park District's Park, Recreation & Open Space Plan
- 1996 Vashon-Maury Island Groundwater Management Plan
- 1986 Vashon Community Plan and Area Zoning
- Vashon Land Trust 2010 Judd Creek Conservation Plan

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?

The Land Trust, will shoulder the responsibility of stewardship and maintenance. King County will be responsible for monitoring the conservation easements, and will have the opportunity on a voluntary basis to participate in stewardship and restoration activities. The Land Trust regularly organizes volunteer stewardship work parties, and hires a four-person work crew each summer.

King County and The Land Trust have established an excellent track record of habitat restoration and project maintenance over the past seven years. Restoration projects have included landslide stabilization, large woody debris installation, and derelict house removals. The Land Trust has initiated 26 acres of weed removal and re-vegetation at more than 10 locations, and has monitored and maintained those areas diligently. The Land Trust has partnered with the Vashon Basin Steward and with the King Conservation District on a series of projects that will improve habitat on these properties. To date, all of the Land Trust parcels with King County easements have undergone habitat restoration efforts. For example, after completing the Anderson purchase with previous CFT funding, King County removed the structure, septic and leaking underground oil tank from the stream buffer. The in-stream habitat was enhanced with large wood in the creek and the site was revegetated.

The King County Vashon Basin Steward and Land Trust will continue to partner on funding stewardship activities on existing and new acquisitions.

4. PROJECT BUDGET

1) TOTAL CFT APPLICATION AMOUNT^a	CFT: \$160,000
2) TOTAL PEL APPLICATION AMOUNT^b	PEL: \$160,000

^aAllowable 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.

^bKing 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).

Property tax assessment and real estate staff estimate.

PROJECT COSTS	ESTIMATED DOLLAR AMOUNT OR RANGE
Total property interest value	\$288,000
Title and appraisal work	\$10,000
Closing, fees, taxes	\$6500
Relocation	NA
Hazardous waste reports	\$500
Directly related staff, administration and legal costs	\$15,000
Total Project Costs (CFT and other funds)	\$320,000

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)
Parks Levy	Request Pending	\$160,000
Total CFT Funds Previously Received <i>This Project</i>		\$1,186,000
Total Matching Funds and Past CFT Funds <i>Currently Identified</i>		Additional match not needed beyond Parks Levy
Unidentified Remaining Match Need		\$0

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.

No additional match needed.

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 purchase of fee values of parcels.	~\$10,000	Partially Completed	Budget approved
Value of easements to be donated by the Land Trust to King County..	\$700,000	Future	December, 2015
TOTAL	\$710,000		

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

Location Map

Priority parcels potential easement areas

Judd Creek Area Vashon/Maury Island, WA Location Map

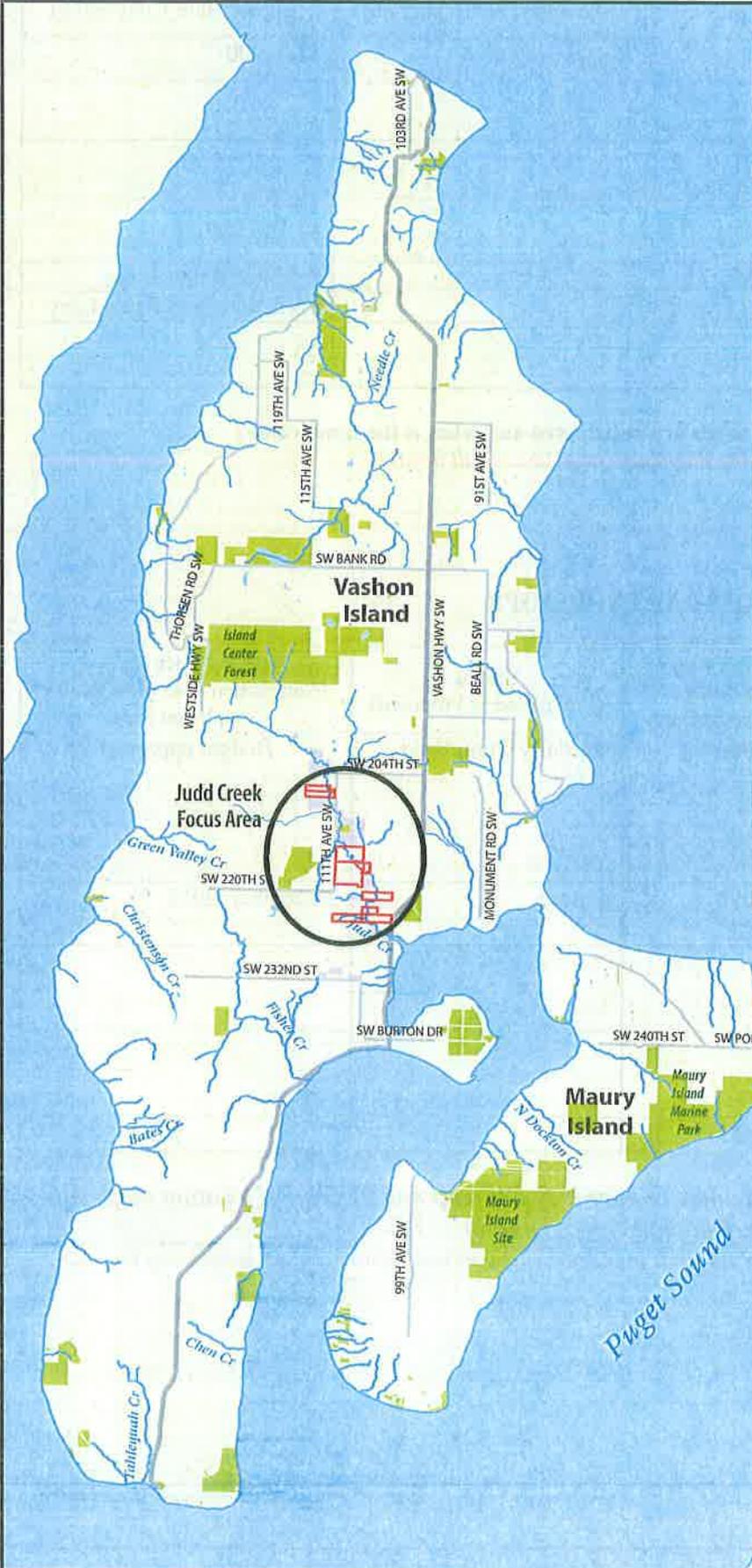
-  Focus Area
-  Priority Parcel
-  Streams and Rivers
-  Vashon-Maury Island Land Trust
-  Water Bodies
-  Publicly Owned Land



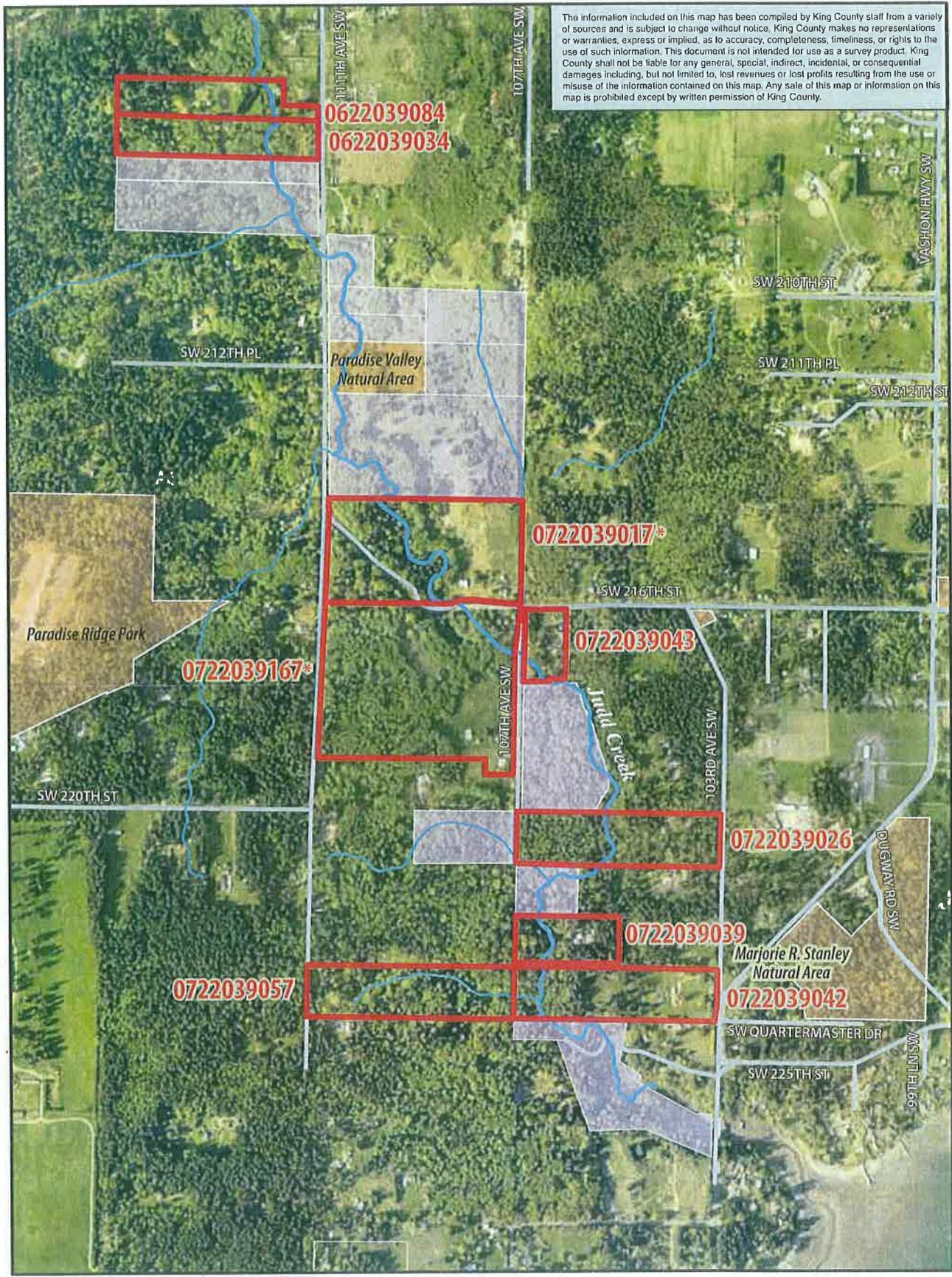
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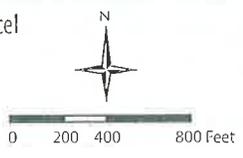


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**Judd Creek Parcels,
Vashon Island**
Site Map

-  Target Fee or Conservation Easement Parcel
-  Vashon Land Trust Parcel
-  Publicly Owned Lands
-  2015 Priority Parcel



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VC File: 1202_2436juddSiteEal Ipce, wgab

Priority Conservation Easement Parcels



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Date: 3/11/2014

Source: King County iMAP - Property Information (<http://www.metrokc.gov/GIS/iMAP>)



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