



**King County**

K.C. Date Received \_\_\_\_\_

**CONSERVATION FUTURES (CFT) 2016 ANNUAL COLLECTIONS  
APPLICATION FOR FUNDS**

**PROJECT NAME: South Fork Skykomish-Tye-Foss River Confluence Acquisition**

Applicant Jurisdiction(s): King County DNRP

Open Space System: Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest

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

Acquisition Project Size: 75.2 acres (3 parcels)

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

CFT Application Amount: \$ 540,500

*(Dollar amount of CFT grant requested)*

Priority Parcels: 312612-9026, 302612-9031, 302612-9029

*Secondary Parcels: 312612-9004 (24.09 ac), 302612-9032 (10 ac),  
302612-9040 (5.04 ac), 302612-9041 (6.58 ac), 122610-9010 (17.55 ac), 122610-9008 (8.27 ac)*

Parks Levy: \$ 540,500

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

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

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Title: Project Program Manager Fax: 206-296-0192

Address: 201 South Jackson Street, Suite 600 Email: perry.falcone@kingcounty.gov

Seattle, WA 98104 Date: 3-18-15

**PROJECT SUMMARY:**

The goal of this project is to acquire three parcels at the confluence of the South Fork Skykomish, Tye and Foss Rivers to protect salmon habitat and recreational river access. The priority parcels include 75.2 acres of undeveloped high quality salmon habitat at river mile 19.5 of the South Fork Skykomish River. Various second priority parcels will be considered only if King County is unable to secure the target parcels. In 2014, King County was awarded CFT funding for pre-acquisition work on these properties and other second priority parcels. In March 2015, King County completed appraisal work and extended an offer to Weyerhaeuser for the three first priority parcels.

The South Fork Skykomish River supports Chinook, coho, steelhead, and bull trout. Though much of the watershed is protected in federal ownership (over 80% in Forest Service ownership and 43% designated as Wilderness), the river corridors contain a significant number of unprotected parcels. These parcels contain high quality river habitat but are zoned for rural residential development. King County, in partnership with Forterra and the Forest Service, plan to protect key salmon habitat along the South Fork Skykomish and its tributary rivers. King County residents heavily use the corridor's recreational areas so Parks is currently exploring the potential expansion of these recreational opportunities including river access points, trails, and natural areas. This project was identified as a high priority in King County's South Fork Skykomish River Basin Restoration Feasibility Report (2013) and is located in a high priority area for the Snohomish River Basin Salmon Conservation Plan (2005). Conservation of these lands is consistent with the objectives and vision outlined in the "Skykomish Valley Economic Development, Recreation and Natural Resource Conservation Initiative" approved by the King County Council via Motion 2014-0102 on April 28, 2014.

## 1. OPEN SPACE RESOURCES

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A. Wildlife habitat or rare plant reserve | <input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> D. Community separator                               | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> H. Passive recreation opportunity/unmet needs   |

A. Wildlife habitat: The South Fork Skykomish River is surrounded by the Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest. Some of the forest is managed for active forestry and recreation but 43% is designated as Wilderness Areas. The river provides habitat and migration corridors for a variety of mammals including black bear, coyote, cougar, foxes and long-tailed weasels. The confluence of the SF Skykomish, Tye, and Foss Rivers provides excellent habitat for fish eating raptors including osprey and bald eagle. The intact riparian vegetation and natural river processes also provide ideal habitat for songbirds, waterfowl and amphibians.

B. Salmon habitat and aquatic resources: The South Fork Skykomish River is home to Chinook salmon, steelhead and bull trout, listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act. The US Fish and Wildlife Service have designated the South Fork as critical foraging, migration and overwintering habitat for bull trout populations. It is estimated that up to 25% of the entire Skykomish River Chinook population comes from the South Fork. The 2005 Snohomish River Basin (WRIA 7) Salmon Conservation Plan identifies the South Fork Skykomish River as a “mainstem – primary restoration” sub-basin. Protecting the priority parcels is one of the highest priority salmon habitat actions identified in King County’s Restoration Feasibility Report (2013). The priority parcels include 1.3 miles of South Fork Skykomish river shoreline and 300 feet of Tye River shoreline including high quality unarmored river shoreline habitat and intact riparian habitat. The parcels are covered by mature native vegetation and contain no structures.

C. Scenic resources: The priority parcels provide scenic views of the South Fork Skykomish, Tye and Foss Rivers and associated floodplains. As King County’s Foss River Road passes close to the river there are opportunities to view a natural floodplain and dynamic river. The project area provides views of Beckler Peak and several other Cascade Mountain peaks. The parcels include natural river frontage of mature forest, healthy riparian zone, steep gradient, and rocky river adjacent to the Foss River Road. State Route 2 is a national Scenic Byway, and the properties are within the Stevens Pass Greenway. Many recreationists pass these properties on the way to hiking, camping and other activities. This river reach is also used by kayakers, and provide a natural scenic appearance for those boaters.

E. Historic/cultural resources: The Skykomish Valley is part of the ancestral and current fishing and hunting grounds of the Tulalip Tribes. The priority parcels are adjacent to the Great Northern Railway, completed across Stevens Pass in 1893. Federal forest conservation management began in the valley in 1907, when President Theodore Roosevelt set aside significant lands in the Skykomish Valley as National Forest. Logging occurred on public and private lands beginning in the early 20th century, originally by rail, and later by road. State Route 2 (adjacent to the priority parcels), completed in 1925, has been an avenue for transporting timber products as well as recreational users. The parcels have a view of the Foss River Bridge, which is a designated King County Landmark.

F. Urban passive-use natural area/greenbelt: The South Fork Skykomish, Tye and Foss River confluence parcels contribute to the surrounding undeveloped natural areas captured in the National Forest. These parcels will continue to be natural areas with passive use. The parcels currently provide river access and open space just two miles from the Town of Skykomish and less than half a mile from the unincorporated Timberlane Village.

G. Park/open space or natural corridor addition: Over 80% of the South Fork Skykomish Watershed is protected in Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest. The first priority and second priority parcels will provide a critical link between currently federally protected upland and unprotected riparian and riverine habitats. These areas will provide contiguity of habitat and floodplain processes that will benefit multiple species while providing connected open space areas for the surrounding community such as the Town of Skykomish, Timberlane Village and residents along Foss River Road.

H. Passive recreation opportunity/unmet needs: Parcels acquired will be designated as natural areas and will allow passive recreation and river access. The property along the Foss River Road currently is an informal river access point for kayaking, boating, wildlife viewing, and fishing. Though King County has not yet developed a formal plan for recreational development along Foss River Road, King County Parks is working with American Whitewater to learn more about the recreational needs of the kayakers and boaters that commonly use the reach. King County will explore other recreational opportunities on the parcels while collaborating with the Forest Service, Forterra, the Town of Skykomish and recreation groups to coordinate any expansion of recreational amenities or access.

## 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 priority parcels are in close proximity to the Town of Skykomish and the community of Timberlane Village. The corridor is along State Route 2 and is a popular tourist byway heading up to Stevens Pass. The parcels provide educational and interpretive opportunities for the surrounding communities to learn about the importance of floodplain processes for the recovery of salmonids, as well as the role of the nearby Great Northern Railway in the development of the valley. King County will work with the newly founded Skykomish Environmental Institute and other educational groups to coordinate Skykomish education efforts and potential interpretive signage on the parcels.

B. Threat of loss of open space resources: The parcel owner, Weyerhaeuser, has informed King County that they need to generate revenue on the parcels in 2015 and they will harvest the parcels in 2015 if a purchase agreement cannot be reached. The most significant urgency to these parcels is losing the site's ecological value to logging activity if King County is unable to secure funding for the parcels in 2015. The Longview Timber company logged another similar riverfront parcel all the way down to the South Fork Skykomish River in the past four years. The salmon plan identifies protection of salmon habitat and forest cover as priorities for threatened salmon populations in this reach of the river.

C. Ownership complexity/willing seller/ownership interest: King County has engaged in discussions with Weyerhaeuser regarding selling three of the priority parcels. King County has completed an appraisal on the property and has extended an offer in March 2015. We are waiting for a response from Weyerhaeuser but they have expressed a willingness to sell in in past conversations if the price meets their expectations.

D. Partnerships: In 2013, King County, the Snoqualmie Watershed Forum and the US Forest Service collaborated to complete the Restoration Feasibility Report, which identified several restoration and protection priorities in the watershed. King County is currently working with Forterra, the Forest Service, the Snoqualmie Watershed Forum and the Town of Skykomish to develop a conservation and recreation vision for the watershed. The Forest Service is focusing acquisition efforts on upland parcels and areas with potential trail development while King County is focusing along the South Fork Skykomish river corridor. Protection efforts on the South Fork Skykomish will support Snohomish County's floodplain restoration projects downstream along the Braided Reach of the Skykomish River. King County Noxious Weeds Unit has been controlling invasive knotweed along the river since 2005 which has improved overall riparian habitat.

E. Is the property identified in an adopted park, open space, comprehensive or community plan: The project is listed in the Snohomish Basin (WRIA 7) Three Year Work Plan which is the current capital project list of the Snohomish Basin River Basin Salmon Conservation Plan. The project is listed in the 2014 Three Year Work Plan as project #07-HSR-019 and is also listed in King County's Restoration Feasibility Report.

The priority parcels are consistent with the 2010 King County Open Space Plan's acquisition criteria which call for the acquisition of parcels that: provide multiple functions (such as habitat protection, passive recreation, scenic corridors); help buffer urban/rural areas; provide regional recreation for areas where such opportunities are not currently available or underserved in the existing system; and conservation actions which serve to implement the salmon plan's conservation goals.

### 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?*

Properties acquired will be under King County ownership and most likely become a part of the King County Parks and Recreation Division inventory although that decision has not been finalized. If under Parks custodianship, Parks staff will follow standard protocols to inventory, steward and maintain the properties. As Parks does not currently own property in the watershed, they are currently conducting a maintenance study to explore cost effective partnerships to enhance the long-term maintenance of acquired properties. Parks will collaborate with the Water and Land Resources Division to identify and implement opportunities for habitat restoration such as noxious weed control and riparian restoration. Volunteer and community stewardship opportunities may be appropriate on this property as well.

### 4. PROJECT BUDGET

1) TOTAL CFT APPLICATION AMOUNT <sup>a</sup>	CFT: \$ 540,500
2) TOTAL PEL APPLICATION AMOUNT <sup>b</sup>	PEL: \$ 540,500

<sup>a</sup>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.

<sup>b</sup>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).*

**The property values were derived from an appraisal based on residential value and mature timber on the property.**

PROJECT COSTS	ESTIMATED DOLLAR AMOUNT OR RANGE
Total property interest value	\$ 950,000-\$1,050,000
Title and appraisal work	Already Completed
Closing, fees, taxes	\$5,000
Relocation	N/A
Hazardous waste reports	\$1,000
Directly related staff, administration and legal costs	\$25,000
<b>Total Project Costs (CFT and other funds)</b>	<b>\$ 1,081,000</b>

<b>MATCHING FUNDS: Existing Sources</b> (CFT can only provide a maximum of 50% of anticipated project costs)	<b>DATE</b> (Expended or Committed)	<b>DOLLAR AMOUNT</b> (Expended or Committed)
<b>Total CFT Funds Previously Received</b> <i>This Project</i>		
<b>Total Matching Funds and Past CFT Funds</b> <i>Currently Identified</i>		
<b>Unidentified Remaining Match Need</b>		

**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.*

N/A

### 5. IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS FROM PARTNERSHIPS

<b>Brief Activity Description</b>	<b>Dollar Value of In-kind Contribution</b>	<b>Status</b> (Completed or Proposed)	<b>Activity Date Range</b> (Completion Date or Proposed Completion Date)
<b>TOTAL</b>			

### 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.

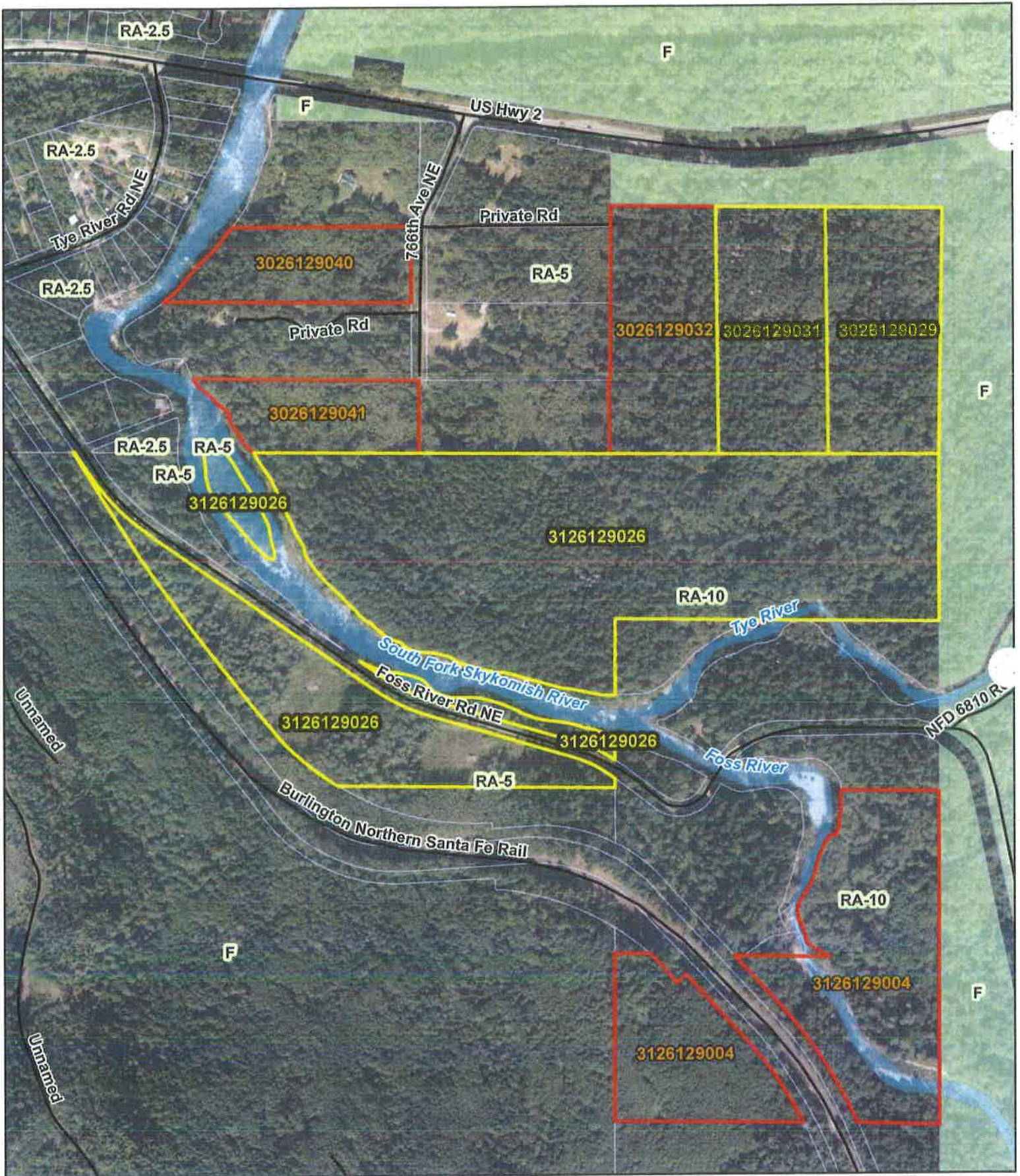
**Site Map that shows the following:**

- 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).*





### South Fork Sky-Tye-Foss River Confluence

- First Priority
- Second Priority
- Publicly Owned Lands
- Parcels
- Roads
- Photo Year: 2012



March 6, 2014

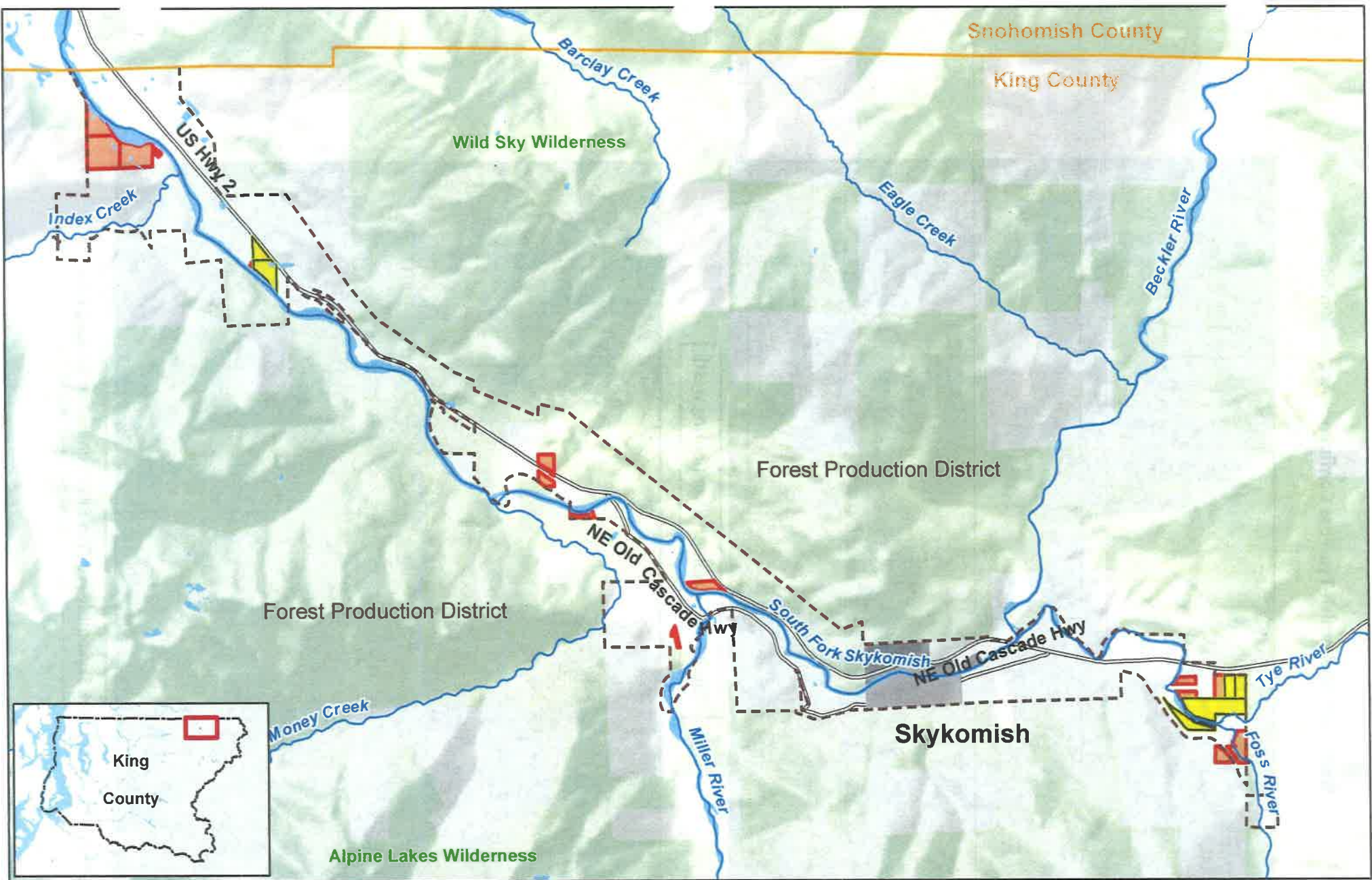


**King County**

Department of Natural Resources and Parks  
Water and Land Resources Division







# South Fork Skykomish River Corridor Conservation

- Priority Acquisition
  - Second Priority Acquisition
  - County Boundary
  - Forest Production District
  - Incorporated Area
  - Major Road
  - Publicly Owned Land
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**King County**  
 Department of Natural Resources and Parks  
 Water and Land Resources Division

March 12, 2014

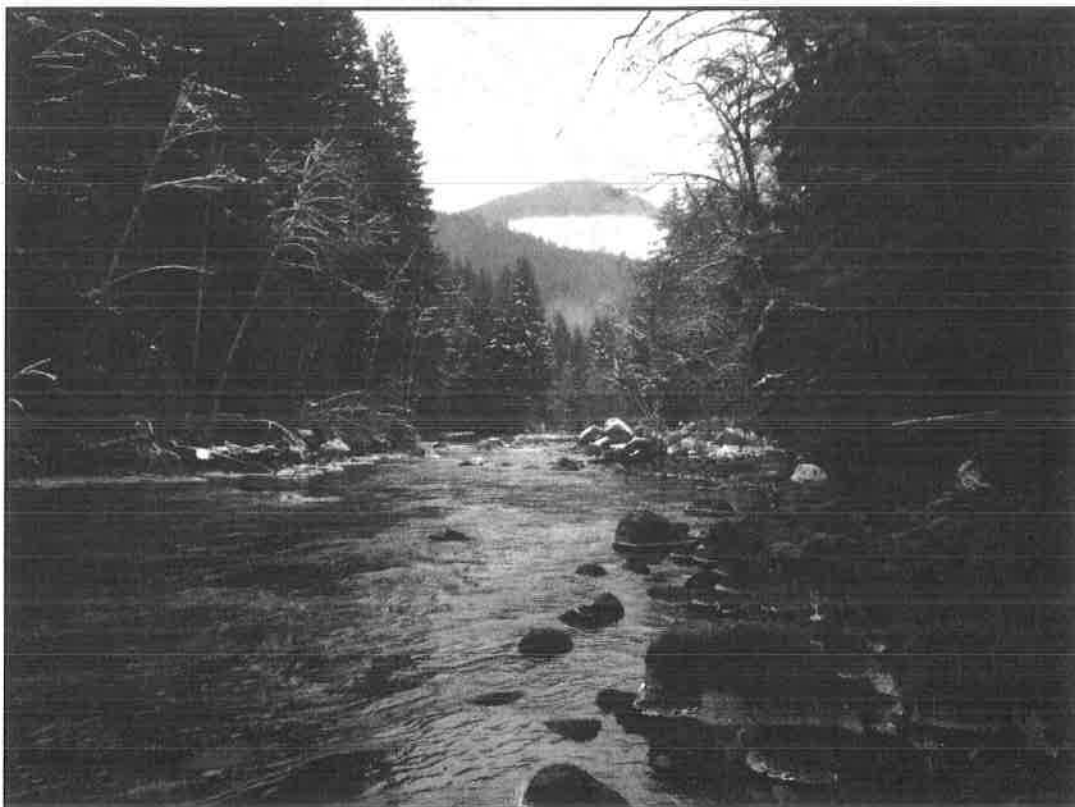


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**South Fork Skykomish-Tye-Foss Confluence Acquisition Site**



South Fork Skykomish River (looking west)



South Fork Skykomish-Tye-Foss River confluence (looking east)