



King County

K.C. Date Received _____

CONSERVATION FUTURES (CFT) 2016 ANNUAL COLLECTIONS APPLICATION FOR FUNDS

PROJECT NAME: Taylor Mountain Forest Additions

Applicant Jurisdiction(s): King County

Open Space System: Taylor Mountain Forest

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

Acquisition Project Size: ~36 acres

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

CFT Application Amount: \$62,500

(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 2015

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.)

Since the original Taylor Mountain Forest purchase in 1997, we have targeted the purchase of the major inholdings at Taylor. Five inholdings were purchased in the early 2000s. With recent purchase of the two last inholdings located within the forest (one in 2011, the other in summer 2014) we move our focus to the remaining two inholders at the northwest side of the mountain who could seek access through the forest to their properties. Removing inholdings, reducing potential user conflicts associated with private access on internal forest roads, and extending habitat protection along Holder Creek are key goals of this acquisition.

The initial targeted inholding contains a half mile of Holder Creek, a healthy and highly prioritized salmonid spawning stream under the Issaquah Basin Plan. The parcel also contains steep slopes above Holder Creek which our purchase will ensure are retained in forest cover (though forest stewardship may occur). We would also bring into public ownership about 1,000 feet of the Holder Creek Trail, a popular seasonal trail loop at Taylor which runs on this private land. The grant also includes in its broad scope the other northwestern inholding just to the north of the priority parcel.

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 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 |

1. OPEN SPACE RESOURCES

A. Wildlife habitat or rare plant reserve

The parcels add to the terrestrial habitat at Taylor Mountain Forest. Taylor Mountain contains a mosaic of forest stands with varied age and harvest history. Taylor Mountain is known to support black bear, cougar, black-tailed deer and elk, as well as smaller mammals such as weasels and foxes. Bird species include bald eagle, red-tailed hawk, pileated woodpecker, band-tailed pigeon.

B. Salmon habitat or aquatic resources

The properties are located within the 61-square-mile Issaquah Creek Basin, which supports six anadromous salmonid species (steelhead, coho, chinook, sockeye, sea run and resident cutthroat trout, char). The upper and middle basin are identified as a Regionally Significant Resource Area because of its exceptional fisheries habitat and undeveloped character. Holder Creek, in the upper basin and located within Taylor Mountain Forest, provides excellent habitat for salmonids.

This target property captures about 2,600 feet of Holder Creek. Holder Creek provides both spawning and rearing habitat for salmonids, a Class 2 stream dominated by boulders and cobble with some gravels. Taylor Mountain Forest represents one of the most abundant and relatively undamaged habitats for salmonids in the entire Issaquah Creek Basin according to the basin plan.

G. Park/open space or natural corridor addition

Key goals at Taylor Mountain Forest is to acquire inholder parcels and secure legal public access on trails. Acquisition would eliminate one of the two remaining inholdings in the northwest interior of Taylor Mountain Forest, reducing risk that the parcel could be sold, access claims made, and the site's uses changing.

With this target and the additional northwestern inholder secured, we would have a nearly complete corridor of permanently undeveloped lands east of SR 18 (fee or easement ownership) extending from Taylor Mountain Forest; through county-owned Raging River easements on private forests; 10,441 acres of Raging River Forest (WANDR); 1,836 acres of Rattlesnake Mountain; and the 90,550 acres of the Cedar River Watershed.

The purchase protects forest cover along the Holder Creek corridor (though as with all county sites and in particular this working forest site, forest health will be evaluated and forest stewardship actions may occur).

H. Passive recreation opportunity/unmet needs:

These parcels contain an existing backcountry trail that links to county-owned parcels. The Holder Creek Trail is a popular trail at Taylor Mountain. The Holder Creek Trail runs for more than 1,000 feet on this private parcel. Overall, Taylor Mountain has 33 trails covering approximately 10 miles, in addition to the approximately 10 miles of roads. Recreational use of Taylor Mountain Forest is by equestrians, hikers, runners, and mountain bikers.

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

B. Threat of loss of open space resources

If these properties are sold to another private landowner, they may cut off access to the trail, which due to topography would be challenging to re-create on our existing property. The forest stands on the parcels could be impacted by clearing or development, degrading the riparian corridor for Holder Creek and potentially affecting water and sediment delivery to the creek.

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

The immediate threat is fairly low on this parcel as it was purchased by Scarcella brothers for SR 18 construction. They do plan to sell it at some point in time, therefore purchasing it in the near future is ideal to avoid a sale to a party who might develop it. They are willing to sell the parcel to us in the next year or two as we can secure funding.

It does not appear to have legal access through Taylor Mountain Forest at this time, though with the history of litigation by other inholders with the county over access this might not be guaranteed into the future. The parcel is 35 acres zoned F, therefore presumably could be legally developed for one residential unit.

D. Partnerships

Our partners at this site include the Friends of Taylor Mountain Forest, Tahoma Chapter of the Backcountry Horsemen, Issaquah Alps Trail Club, and Washington Trails Association. These groups may be available to assist in the stewardship of trails and/or site resources on the property.

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:

- *“Acquisitions of lands....that provide continuity or appropriate public access where it does not exist should be considered priority acquisitions, as should acquisition of land or easement that are adjacent to, or provide a connection between, existing public open space lands or that are in-holdings.”* (Park Plan Policy CIP-123)

The Taylor Mountain Forest Public Use Plan and the Forest Stewardship Plan both call for enhancing connectivity between public ownership and increasing opportunities for non-motorized appropriate low impact recreation through additions to the county's backcountry trail system.

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?

King County Parks' maintenance work would be funded with Parks Levy operating funds (funded 2014-2019 due to recent vote in August 2013).

Typical King County maintenance includes regular site inspections to identify and address any issues arising on site in regard to public health and safety, property encroachments, natural resource damage, infrastructure damage, trail condition, etc.

We assess forest health at all King County Parks sites. It is possible that this is a site on which forest stewardship activities may occur if recommended by such an assessment.

We have active partners with the Backcountry Horsemen and other community members at Taylor that may contribute to site stewardship.

4. PROJECT BUDGET

| | |
|--|----------------------|
| 1) TOTAL CFT APPLICATION AMOUNT^a | CFT: \$62,500 |
| 2) TOTAL PEL APPLICATION AMOUNT^b | PEL: \$62,500 |

^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).

The request is based on the assessed value of \$126,000. We have an appraisal underway due in late March and I will provide updated cost information at the field trip.

| PROJECT COSTS | ESTIMATED DOLLAR AMOUNT OR RANGE |
|--|--|
| Total property interest value | ~\$130,000 |
| Title and appraisal work | TBD |
| Closing, fees, taxes | TBD |
| Relocation | |
| Hazardous waste reports | |
| Directly related staff, administration and legal costs | TBD |
| Total Project Costs (CFT and other funds) | \$150,000 (less \$25K received in 2015 funds) |

| 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) |
|---|--|---|
| 2015 Parks Levy – Pks M: Taylor Mtn Frst Add #1122160 | Jan 2015 | \$25,000 awarded; ~\$18,000 currently available after expenditures towards title, appraisal, etc. |
| Total CFT Funds Previously Received <i>This Project</i> | | \$0 |
| Total Matching Funds and Past CFT Funds <i>Currently Identified</i> | | |
| Unidentified Remaining Match Need | | |

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.

Requested Parks Levy funds represent the match for CFT funding.

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) |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|---|
| | | | |
| TOTAL | | | |

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).*

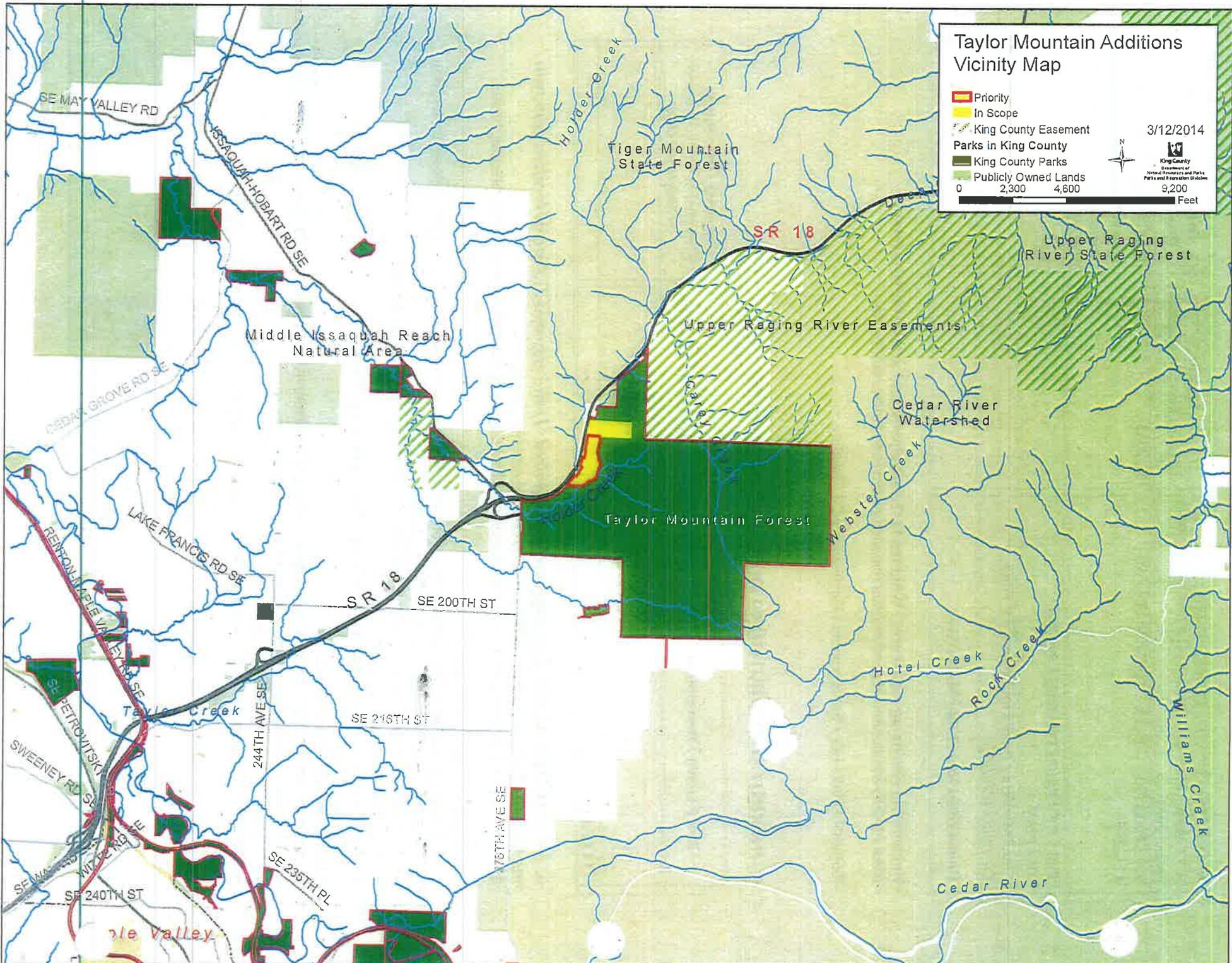
Taylor Mountain Additions Vicinity Map

- Priority
- In Scope
- King County Easement
- Parks in King County
- King County Parks
- Publicly Owned Lands

0 2,300 4,600 9,200 Feet

3/12/2014

King County
Department of Natural Resources and Parks
Parks and Recreation Division



Taylor Mountain Additions Vicinity Map

-  Priority
-  In Scope
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3/12/2014



King County
Department of
Natural Resources and Parks
Parks and Recreation Division

0 412.5 825 1,650
Feet

