



King County

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

## CONSERVATION FUTURES (CFT) 2015 ANNUAL COLLECTIONS APPLICATION FOR FUNDS

**PROJECT NAME:** Tolt River Natural Area

**Applicant Jurisdiction(s):** King County

**Open Space System:** Tolt River Natural Area  
*(Name of larger connected system, if any, such as Cedar River Greenway, Mountains to Sound, a Regional Trail, etc.)*

**Acquisition Project Size:** 13 acres (9 parcels)  
*(Size in acres and Proposed number of parcel(s) if a multi-parcel proposal)*

**CFT Application Amount:** \$100,000  
*(Dollar Amount of CFT grant requested)*

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

### CONTACT INFORMATION

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<u>Title: Snoqualmie Steward</u>	<u>Fax: 206.296-0192</u>
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<u>Seattle, WA 98104</u>	<u>Date: March 18, 2015</u>

### PROJECT SUMMARY:

*(In the space below, provide a brief, but comprehensive description of the project including goals and significance of this project)*

This grant will contribute to the purchase of high quality riparian and floodplain habitat between river mile one and six on the Tolt River. The Tolt River basin is one of the highest priority basins within the Snohomish River Basin. The Tolt River hosts Chinook, chum, coho, and pink salmon as well as steelhead and bull trout. Roughly 20% of the Snoqualmie component of the Snohomish Fall Chinook stock spawns in the Tolt River. Most of this spawning takes place in the lower six miles. The Snohomish River Basin Salmon Conservation Plan lists protection of the floodplain, riparian area, off-channel habitat and the river's ability to migrate as top priority actions for recovery of Chinook salmon. These actions enable the river to develop and maintain high quality habitat for spawning and rearing for Chinook and other salmonids. These acquisitions will help protect and/or restore habitat-forming processes.

This grant, along with match funding, will help purchase 13 acres of riverfront property and protect the land from further development in the floodplain. Some of the target parcels are needed to be able to setback levees and revetments which limit floodplain processes. There are only three vacant parcels remaining in the San Souci neighborhood. We anticipate purchasing these within the next two years. We are awaiting the completion of the Tolt Corridor Study before we implement any actions above the San Souci reach.

## 1. OPEN SPACE RESOURCES

Please review the attached evaluation criteria. For the **proposed acquisition parcel(s)**, please (1) mark only those criteria that apply, and (2) thoroughly, yet succinctly describe **in the space below** how the proposed acquisition satisfies each marked criteria.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <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 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 Tolt River corridor provides excellent habitat for a number of native songbirds, amphibians, hawks, ospreys and bald eagles, waterfowl and small to large-sized mammals including coyotes, bobcats, black bears, beavers and other native species that require intact habitat and/or relative isolation from human communities. The Tolt River is part of the King County Wildlife Network.

**Salmon habitat and aquatic resources** – The Tolt River basin is one of the highest priority basins in the Snohomish River Basin Salmon Conservation Plan (2005). The primary emphasis of the salmon recovery strategy is to protect and restore rearing and refuge habitat for salmonids. This project will protect existing side channel features and, in the long term, restore the processes that contribute to higher salmon productivity. The table below captures the species and life histories present in the Tolt River.

Species	Life History Stage Present	Unique Population
Chinook	Adult spawning, sub-yearling rearing & yearling rearing	Snoqualmie River Fall Chinook
Steelhead	Adult spawning, sub-yearling rearing & yearling rearing	Snoqualmie Winter Steelhead
Bull Trout/Dolly Varden	Sub adult/Adult rearing/foraging	
Coho	Adult spawning and juvenile rearing	
Pink	Adult spawning and brief juvenile rearing	
Chum	Adult spawning and brief juvenile rearing	

**Scenic Resources** – The lower Tolt basin forms part of the viewshed from State Highway 203; the primary arterial between I-90 and US-2 (Monroe). A forested corridor along the Tolt River contributes to the forest character which is a defining feature of the viewshed. These parcels provide scenic views of up and down the Tolt River floodplain.

**Historic/cultural resources** – The entire Tolt River corridor was an important focal point of the Snoqualmie culture. Rich archeological sites are known to exist throughout the Tolt indicating that communities have extensively used this area for centuries.

**Park/open space or natural corridor addition** – This project will add roughly 13 acres to a reach with significant King County and City of Seattle ownership. The County and City of Seattle have been actively purchasing land along the Tolt and have made great progress especially over the last three years. Most importantly, these properties along the Tolt corridor are connected to the 90,000 acre Snoqualmie Forest over which the county owns a conservation easement.

**Passive recreation opportunity/unmet need** – Properties will provide opportunities for passive recreation such as fishing, hiking and bird watching and access to the river for the greater Carnation area.

## 2. ADDITIONAL FACTORS

For the **proposed acquisition parcel(s)**, please (1) mark all criteria that apply, and (2) 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** – The acquisition of land along the Tolt River and subsequent removal or setback of levees and revetments affords a good opportunity for residents of the greater Carnation area and river users to better understand the dynamic nature of the Tolt River and how that translates to fish and wildlife habitat. Some of the properties and proposed levee setbacks are in close proximity to the Snoqualmie Trail providing an excellent interpretive opportunity for trail users to learn more about riverine processes and restoration efforts.

**Threat of loss of open space resources** – Acquisition within this reach will prevent additional development in the area and will help facilitate the elimination of some of the ongoing impediments to natural river processes including river migration. Historically the river experienced frequent channel shifting throughout this reach, preserving a network of channels that provided a variety of habitat conditions. The presence of homes along the river has led to bank armoring (some not sponsored or permitted by public agencies) and a subsequent reduction in the ability of the river to migrate. This results in the gradual decline in channel complexity and habitat diversity. Another factor in the disruption of natural processes has been the loss of riparian vegetation and encroachment of non-native vegetation along the river. Preventing new and removing existing residences from the river's edge will allow us to restore the riparian conditions necessary for properly functioning habitat.

**Ownership complexity/willing seller(s)/ownership interest proposed** – Several landowners have expressed the desire to sell their land to King County. There are now only three vacant parcels in the San Souci neighborhood that will need to be purchased in order to remove a rubble revetment at the north end of the neighborhood. One of these parcels we may get through a tax foreclosure. For the remaining two parcels, we will be sending out a letter this spring updating them on the current situation in the neighborhood; that this neighborhood is a high risk area for an avulsion or landslide.

**Partnerships** – Habitat acquisition by the county is complemented by habitat acquisition being carried out by the Seattle City Light. This project also offers an opportunity to continue our partnership with the Flood Hazard Reduction Program and leverage some of their resources for the protection of open space. Additionally, we work with the Snoqualmie Tribe and non-profit partners on restoration projects post-acquisition.

**Is the property identified in an adopted park, open space, comprehensive, or community plan?** The project is in the Snohomish River Basin Salmon Conservation Plan (2005) that has been adopted as part of the NOAA approved Puget Sound Chinook Recovery Plan. The project is also listed on the Snohomish Basin (WRIA 7) 3-year Work Plan and the Food Hazard Management Plan (2006).

## 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?*

Depending on the location of the parcel, the properties will be placed in either the King County River and Floodplain Management Section or in the Parks' inventory as a Natural Area. Rivers Section general

property stewardship involves removing all buildings on the site, replanting of demolition areas with native vegetation, controlling invasive plants, and enhancing riparian areas on the site. Volunteer stewardship opportunities may be possible where appropriate. The Rivers Section will utilize the King County Flood Control District's annual budget for stewardship and maintenance activities. In addition, King County plans to use Surface Water Management Capital Budget and grants to supplement these funds for stewardship.

Natural Areas are primarily managed to preserve and/or restore ecosystem processes. By working to keep the ecosystem processes intact, we can preserve habitat conditions preferred by native species, thereby protecting our ecological heritage. Site Management Guidelines for a Natural Area are implemented by the Natural Resource Lands staff in the Department of Natural Resources and Parks. Examples of Site Management Guidelines for King County Natural Areas can be found on the web (<http://dnr.metrokc.gov/wlr/lands/natural/ecological.htm>). The Natural Resource Lands staff has an annual budget for land management.

#### 4. PROJECT BUDGET

<b>TOTAL CFT APPLICATION AMOUNT*</b>	\$100,000
<b>TOTAL PARKS LEVY APPLICATION AMOUNT*</b>	\$100,000

#### Estimation of property value:

*Briefly describe how land values have been estimated, i.e. appraisal, property tax assessment, asking price, letter of value or other means.*

Property values are based on recent comparable sales along the Tolt River.

<b>PROJECT COSTS</b>	<b>ESTIMATED DOLLAR AMOUNT OR RANGE</b>
Total property interest value	<b>\$675,000</b>
Title and appraisal work	<b>\$40,000</b>
Closing, fees, taxes	<b>\$18,000</b>
Relocation	NA
Hazardous waste reports	<b>\$15,000</b>
Directly related staff, administration and legal costs	<b>\$22,000</b>
<b>Total Project Costs (CFT and other funds)</b>	<b>\$770,000</b>

<b>MATCHING FUNDS: Existing Sources</b>	(Date)	(Dollar Amount)
	Expended or Committed	Expended or Committed
KC River and Floodplain Management	Secured	\$200,000
Parks Levy 2016	Pending	\$100,000
<b>Total Matching Funds Currently Identified</b>		<b>\$300,000</b>
<i>Unidentified Remaining Match Need:</i>		<b>\$370,000</b>

#### Unidentified remaining match need: What funds are anticipated, and what is the time frame?

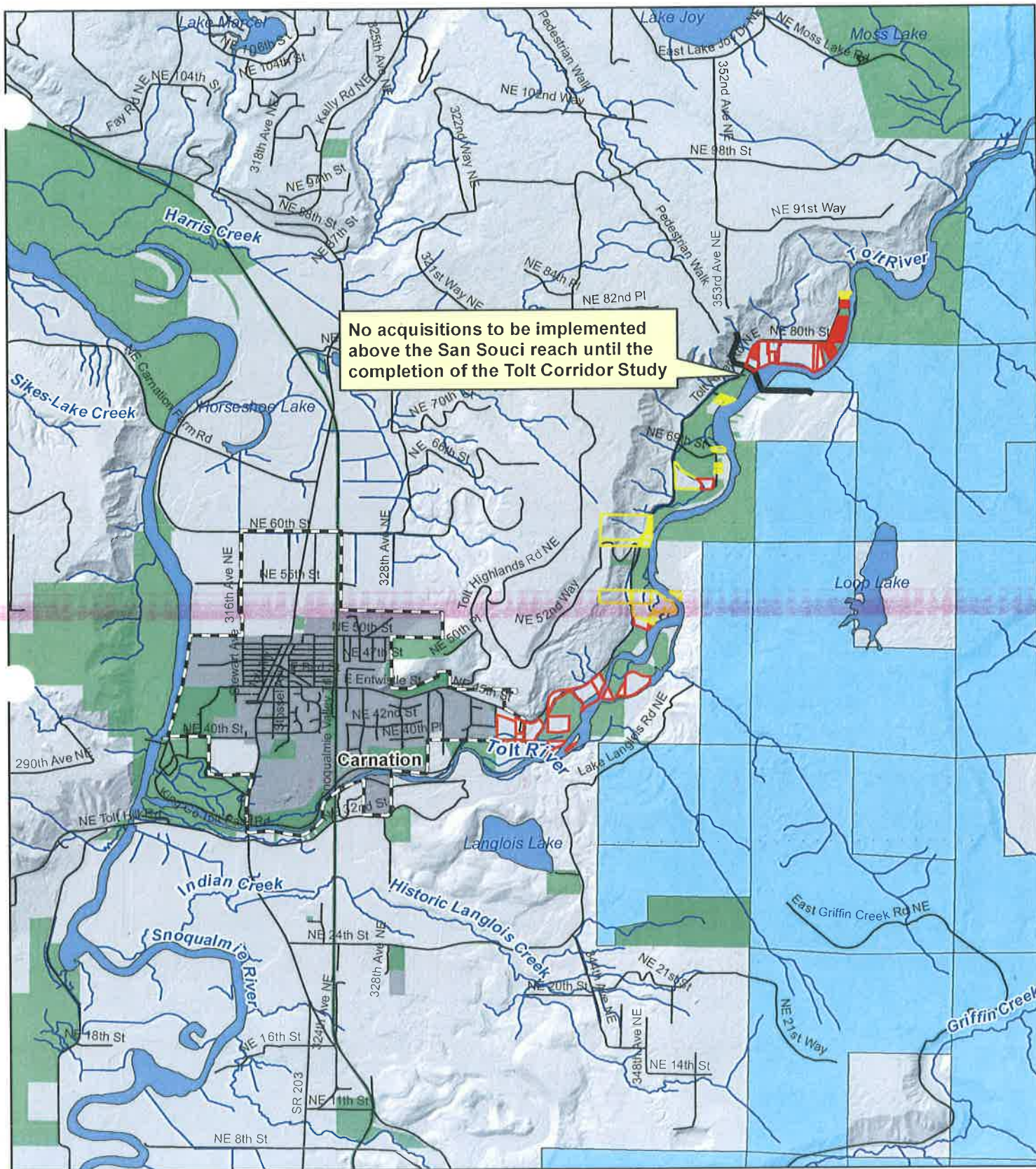
*Please discuss briefly how the unidentified remaining match need above will be met:*

We anticipate that the unidentified remaining match will be met with future requests to CFT, Parks Levy, KC Flood Control District or a Cooperative Watershed Management grant.

#### 5. IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS FROM PARTNERSHIPS

Brief Activity Description	Dollar Value of In-kind Contribution	Status (Completed, or Proposed in future?)	Activity Date Range (When was activity completed? or, date proposed in future)
<b>TOTAL</b> Structure Demolition	\$60,000	Secured	Flood Control District - 2015 budget.





No acquisitions to be implemented above the San Souci reach until the completion of the Tolt Corridor Study

### Tolt River Natural Area

#### Tolt Priority Parcels

- First Priority
- Second Priority
- Public Lands

- CE Snoqualmie Forest
- Urban Growth Boundary
- Incorporated Areas
- ~ Streams and Rivers
- ~ Roads



### King County

Department of Natural Resources and Parks  
Water and Land Resources Division

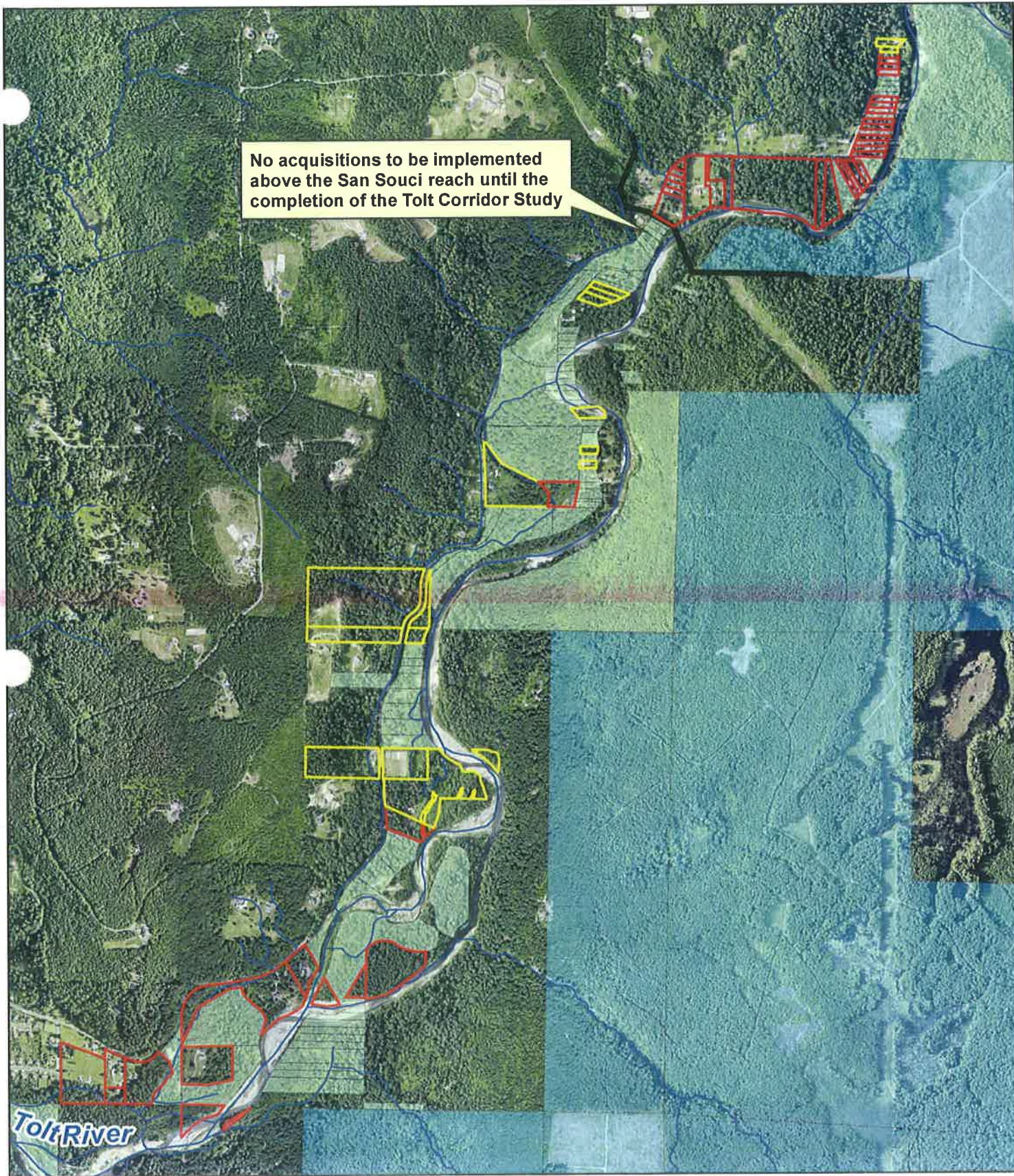
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# Tolt River Natural Area

- First Priority
- Second Priority
- Publicly Owned Lands
- CE Snoqualmie Forest
- ~ Streams and Rivers

**King County**  
 Department of Natural Resources and Parks  
 Water and Land Resources Division

March 17, 2015



Photography Year: 2013

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