

**Attachment 2:
Project Descriptions of DNRP's 2017 Parks Levy – Regional Open Space Acquisition Proposals**

WRIA 7: Rattlesnake Mountain Scenic Area Public Access Easement (Kelly Heintz, Parks) – REQUESTING PARKS LEVY ONLY

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| <i>PL Request</i> | \$250,000 |
| <i>CFT Request (CFT match status)</i> | \$0 (N/A) |
| Subtotal: CFT + PL Request | \$250,000 |

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| Total Project Cost | \$250,000 |
| <i>Funding Already Secured</i> | None |
| <i>Additional Funding Sought</i> | The City of North Bend is applying for \$1 million CFT funding and seeking \$1 million in matching funds. This request is King County's portion of the match contribution. |
| <i>Will current funding request allow project completion?</i> | Yes, if the other funding is secured. |

Project Description: King County Parks Division seeks to acquire an easement on a portion to be determined of the approximately 32 acres proposed for acquisition by the City of North Bend in a separate CFT application. The City of North Bend's project reflects a multi-agency partnership between the City of North Bend, Si View Metropolitan Park District, and King County, to provide recreational access from North Bend, a community park in a beautiful, mature forested setting with pedestrian and mountain bike trails, and to help preserve the beauty and integrity of the forested hillsides of the Mountains to Sound Greenway corridor. The proposal consists of three parcels, totaling 31.86 acres within the Snoqualmie-Skykomish Watershed and is adjacent to more than 100,000 acres of public land. The parcels are owned by one willing seller, but are at threat of sale for residential development. The site is currently undeveloped and contains mature second-growth mixed deciduous and conifer forest as well as wetlands and streams. The site is in the viewshed of the Mountains to Sound Greenway National Scenic Byway, and is bordered to the north by Interstate 90, to the southeast by a multifamily development, and to the west by rural single family homes.

The City of North Bend has identified the proposed acquisition for a trailhead serving the North Bend community, as well as the broader region accessing off I-90, Exit 31, as well as a community park. This project is near recently purchased King County lands and would serve as a trailhead and trail connection to Rattlesnake Mountain passive recreation in the Rattlesnake Mountain area and the Raging River State Forest. Acquisition of this parcel fills gaps in public ownership connecting the community of North Bend with Rattlesnake Mountain. It will foster direct bicycle and pedestrian access for North Bend residents to a major recreation area, provide a trailhead for the future connector trail that will connect the City of North Bend to 30,000 acres of public land with extensive trail systems, and preserve a wildlife habitat and corridor.

There is a history of public partnership in this area including the following:

- King County and WADNR co-own the Rattlesnake Mountain Scenic Area, purchased in the 1990's.
- King County, WADNR and Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust partnered to build and maintain the Rattlesnake Mountain Trail. The 11-mile trail traverses the mountain from the old winery site at Exit 27 into the City of Seattle Cedar River Watershed and Rattlesnake Lake Recreation Area.

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- The Rattlesnake Mountain Trailhead was constructed on land owned by the US Forest Service, designed with WADNR funds, constructed by Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust and is maintained by the City of Snoqualmie. The trailhead is adjacent to the City of Snoqualmie's Snoqualmie Point Park.
- King County recently purchased four parcels of land that will be added to the Scenic area and provide an important public access and trail connection from North Bend to Rattlesnake Mountain and the Raging River State Forest where WADNR plans a system of mountain bike and multi-use trails.

1. OPEN SPACE RESOURCES

Wildlife habitat or rare plant reserve

These forested parcels build on the extensive forest already conserved in the Rattlesnake Mountain Scenic Area. Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife identified several priority habitats in the Scenic Area including: old-growth/mature forest, riparian, freshwater wetland and snags and logs. An I-90 wildlife under-crossing (one of only a handful along I-90 in the Snoqualmie/North Bend area) is directly adjacent to the target parcels. The undercrossing provides a direct wildlife connection between Tollgate/Meadowbrook Farms and other protected lands along the Snoqualmie north of I-90, and the tens of thousands of acres in the Rattlesnake/Raging River Forest/Tiger Mountain/Cedar River Watershed corridor south of I-90.

The area is used by a variety of wildlife including owls, pileated woodpecker, peregrine falcon, osprey, black bear, bobcat, cougar, fox, coyote, elk, blacktail deer and a variety of other mammals, birds, insects and amphibians. The WDFW database lists an individual occurrence of northern spotted owl (federal listed), an individual occurrence of osprey (state monitored), breeding peregrine falcon (state sensitive), migrating Columbia black-tailed deer (priority Species), and a regular concentration of migrating Roosevelt elk at the site.

Salmon Habitat and Aquatic Resources

This project contains tributaries that flow to the Snoqualmie River, which supports Chinook, Coho, Chum, and Pink Salmon, and steelhead rainbow, cutthroat and bull trout populations. Preserving forested headwaters and uplands in the stream basin contributes to the health of the downstream watershed.

Scenic Resources

These lands are a priority acquisition in the Mountains to Sound Greenway. The Greenway is a 100-mile landscape of forests, wildlife habitat and open spaces along Interstate 90, a National Scenic Byway. These parcels are highly visible from and adjacent to I-90. Acquisition of priority parcels will halt development on properties with high scenic value in the heart of the Mountains-to-Sound Greenway.

Community Separator

The undeveloped site is situated on the edge of North Bend's city limits, and serves as a separator between incorporated North Bend and unincorporated King County. To the east of the site is a multifamily home development, and to the west are single family homes and public land. The site serves as a distinct buffer between the adjacent uses. In addition the property is part of a greenbelt along I-90 and connects to over 100,000 acres of public land (Rattlesnake Mountain Scenic Area, Raging River, Tiger Mountain State Forest, West Tiger Mountain NRCA, Echo Glen and Mitchell Hill Blocks, and Cedar River Watershed).

Urban Passive-Use Natural Area/Greenbelt

The property is located in incorporated North Bend and provides a connection to existing and proposed passive recreation in Rattlesnake Mountain Scenic Area and Raging River (totaling 11,203 acres) and beyond to the passive recreation lands Tiger Mountain State Forest, West Tiger Mountain NRCA, Echo Glen Blocks and Mitchell Hill Blocks (an additional 15,963 acres bringing the total to 27,166 acres).

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Park/open space or natural corridor addition

In addition to the amenities the park will offer onsite, the proposed park will also provide a trailhead and amenities for a proposed trail on recently acquired King County Parks land. The proposed trail will connect North Bend to the Rattlesnake Mountain Scenic Area and Snoqualmie Point Park. The trail and trailhead will serve a variety of users including mountain bikers, hikers, and walkers.

Passive recreation opportunity/unmet needs

This park would provide a new trailhead and connection for the community of North Bend for hiking and biking to adjacent existing and proposed public trails, as well as on-site hiking and mountain biking trails. The other access points to Rattlesnake Mountain are several miles away. The City of North Bend's Comprehensive Plan, Parks Element, calls out the need for additional parks and open spaces, and hiking and biking trails. Citizens repeatedly call out these types of park facilities as a number one priority (City of North Bend Comprehensive Plan, Adopted December 8, 2016). Any development for mountain bike use will be limited to that appropriate to the natural conditions and environmental features of the site, and within the context of Conservation Futures Funding site use restrictions.

These parcels are identified in the draft Snoqualmie Corridor Recreation Plan prepared by WADNR as a new local access trailhead serving the North Bend community, and serving others accessing off I-90 at Exit 31. Publicly maintained W Ribary Way/415th Way SE leads to the site. The site would provide a new trail connection up to Rattlesnake for hiking use, and possibly also providing a mountain biking link over to the Raging River Forest where biking activities will be focused. Parking lot and/or trailhead may be developed on site. This acquisition and trailhead proposal is a Phase 1 priority under the draft corridor plan. The other main Rattlesnake access points are Exit 27 and Cedar River Watershed/Rattlesnake Ledge, several miles driving distance away.

The broader scope also includes potential future work at several exits on I-90 targeted as priorities under the Snoqualmie Corridor Recreation Plan, where WADNR/King County partnership may target acquisitions to address and improve recreational opportunity to our joint lands in this important recreational corridor.

2. ADDITIONAL FACTORS

Educational/interpretive opportunity

The site has ample opportunities to educate users about the ecosystem. The onsite wetlands, streams, and mature forest host a variety of wildlife and organisms. Educational signs along low impact trails could guide users through the site in an educational manner.

Threat of loss of open space resources

Two of the parcels are zoned Low Density Residential (LDR) (4 DU/acre) and the third parcel, closest to I-90 is zoned High Density Residential (HDR). The parcels had a development application submitted in - 2012 for up to 55 single family homes on the LDR parcels and up to 45 townhomes on the HDR parcel. The plat was not finalized and the owners have decided to sell. The three parcels are currently being marketed and have received offers above the asking prices and it is highly likely that if the property is not purchased for public use it will be cleared and developed in the near future.

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

The park, to be purchased, in fee simple, would be jointly owned by Si View MPD and North Bend, and managed by Si View MPD. King County would own an easement over the parking lot and trailhead used to access the adjacent trails connecting to Rattlesnake, Raging River and further beyond. The Trust for Public Land is working with the landowners to secure options, and the offer will be based on appraisals completed after the project has additional grant funds dedicated to the project.

Partnerships

The Trust for Public Land, a lead partner, is negotiation the transaction activities, including landowner negotiations, appraisals, and other due diligence. The acquisition, development and maintenance of the

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proposed park will happen through a number of solid partnerships. The City of North Bend, King County Parks, and Si View Metropolitan Park District have all committed to funds in hand or to acquiring funds through grants. The Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust and the Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance are strong advocates for this project. The development and maintenance of the park will happen through a partnership with the later three agencies, as well as the non-profit Evergreen MBA (Mountain Bike Alliance), and other non-profit or professionals as necessary. Evergreen MBA has committed to engaging volunteers to provide the annual maintenance needed and reduce the long term cost to the city.

Is the property identified in an adopted park, open space, comprehensive, or community plan?

In 2012, Si View MPD hired a consultant to conduct a Community Interest and Opinion Survey to help establish priorities for future development of parks and recreation facilities, programs and services within the community. Results indicated a strong preference of respondents for additional open space and trails, and passive recreation. The top 5 outdoor park and recreational facilities identified as a need by respondents were walking and biking trails (77%), followed by natural areas and wildlife habitat (North Bend Comp. Plan, Parks Element, P 11, adopted December 8, 2016). This message was delivered again in 2015 when the City of North Bend conducted a community survey which asked respondents to prioritize addition facilities they would like to see in North Bend. The largest number of common responses called out addition biking and walking trails (North Bend Comp. Plan, Parks Element, P 12, adopted December 8, 2016). North Bend has exceptional recreation opportunities surrounding the community, but few trail connections tie these surrounding opportunities into town. Public input consistently request additional trail opportunities, particularly for walking, biking, and open space / passive recreation. The proposed park will provide trail opportunities to link North Bend directly to an extensive passive recreation trail system.

This project and the community of North Bend are in the heart of the Mountains to Sound Greenway, the 1.5 million-acre landscape of forests, wildlife habitat, open spaces, and thriving communities surrounding Interstate 90 between Puget Sound and Central Washington. This project aligns with the Greenway vision of thoughtfully connecting public forest and park lands, maintaining healthy watersheds, protecting wildlife habitat, and creating a comprehensive recreation infrastructure, all key elements of the high quality of life we enjoy in the region.

3. STEWARDSHIP AND MAINTENANCE

The proposed park will be developed in collaboration with Si View Metropolitan Park District, the City of North Bend, King County, Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance, and other local community stakeholders or professionals as necessary. Providing park space maintenance at a level of service consistent with industry best practices will be Si View Metropolitan Park District's responsibility. It is anticipated that any development that requires maintenance expertise outside the knowledge of Si View will be maintained in collaboration with skilled and knowledgeable professionals. The maintenance requirements would be funded by the Si View Metropolitan Park District's General Fund.

The proposed park lends itself to volunteer stewardship opportunities. Stewardship and long term park maintenance will be secured via partnerships with local outdoor recreation organizations, including the Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance (Evergreen MBA). Evergreen MBA can provide both sustainable park design and construction services, as well as annual maintenance assistance, using a mix of volunteer labor and grant funds.

Evergreen MBA has expressed strong interest in the Partnering for a Park project as a potential site for mountain bike trails due to its proximity to the City of North Bend and the potential to link to other nearby mountain bike parks. The park's location and Evergreen MBA's strong membership numbers in and near North Bend offers opportunity to engage Evergreen's existing volunteer network and local riders in both stewardship and maintenance needs.

In 2015, Evergreen delivered more than 15,000 hours of volunteer labor to the Washington State communities. Parks of this size often require at least 2,000 hours of volunteer labor per year. Evergreen is

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confident that it can engage its member and rider community to deliver the volunteer hours needed to assist the City of North Bend with its annual maintenance needs and reduce the cost of long term maintenance to the City. In addition, Evergreen MBA is available to help maintain the park through maintenance agreements with the City and/or other local jurisdictions and partners, and offers attractive non-profit rates in its long term maintenance contracts for bike parks in across Washington State.

Evergreen will augment its volunteer contributions and low-cost maintenance agreements with grant writing effort to deliver matching grants to the City of North Bend, using a mix of Federal, State, and local family foundation resources to assist the City of North Bend, and reduce long term park maintenance expenses. Evergreen MBA has a successful track record in collaborating with other local communities on other similar bike parks to deliver low-cost maintenance agreement to local cities and counties. Matching grants will come from local outdoor recreation company grants such as REI, family foundations, as well as State and County recreational grants such as the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Fund, NOVA, and/or King County's Capital Projects or Youth Sports Facilities Grants. Evergreen is committed to assisting the City of North Bend in pursuing these grants to support both construction and future maintenance cost, upon property acquisition, and is confident that it can build on its successful track record in delivering matching grants and volunteer contributions.

Lastly, Evergreen MBA utilizes sustainable trail building techniques to ensure long term site environmental integrity and stewardship. Best management practices are used to locate trail, including creating the least impact to wildlife habitat and using sufficient wetland buffers and structures to reduce impact, and are designed with a line of sight perspective to reduce visual impact to other site user groups in order to facilitate a unique experience for each individual outdoor activity.

Evergreen's trails are known worldwide for their quality, fun-factor, and long term environmental integrity. Site and trail drainage will be considered for four-season riding, and a rider ethic and signage plan would be designed to instill park stewardship for years to come.