



King County

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

## CONSERVATION FUTURES (CFT) 2017 ANNUAL COLLECTIONS APPLICATION FOR FUNDS

**PROJECT NAME** Cougar/Squak Corridor Additions

Applicant Jurisdiction(s): King County

Open Space System: Cougar/Squak Corridor, WRIA 8

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

Acquisition Project Size: 51.59 acres (Target parcels 28.06 acres) CFT Application Amount: \$593,475

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

*(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 9, 2016

### 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.)*

This proposed project is to acquire approximately 28 acres adjacent to Cougar/Squak Corridor. Acquisition of these parcels has long been a priority for many stakeholder groups and is supported by Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust, City of Issaquah, Washington State Parks, and Issaquah Alps Trails Club. The larger of the two target parcels was a coal mine in the early 1900s and the former owner mined for clay and other materials. The most recent landowner attempted to mine gravel on the site disturbing a lot of the area. King County Department of Permitting and Environmental Review placed on the property a stop work order and code enforcement. That landowner defaulted on his loan and the property reverted to the financier, Mr. Ritchie. The current landowner is motivated to sell the property to a public agency. King County is currently negotiating with Mr. Ritchie to clean up the property prior to sale to King County or donate the property and King County would then clean up the property. In order to lift the code enforcement violation, the property owner or King County would need to correct drainage problems and clean up scattered debris.

The smaller of the priority parcels is a neighboring property with a willing seller. The property has a house that King County would demolish if able to acquire the property. Both priority parcels contribute to the long-term vision of providing a contiguous corridor of protected public lands and open space between Cougar Mountain Regional Wildland Park and Squak Mountain State Park.

## 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

This project and priority parcels are expected to host species such as deer, black bear, cougar, bobcat, pileated woodpecker, owls, and other small wildlife species. The contiguity of this forest with the adjacent preserved corridors of land adds significant importance to these stands. The King County Wildlife Habitat Network is mapped through Cougar/Squak Corridor. These acquisitions increase the amount of permanently protected open space, broaden the corridor width for wildlife movements, and decrease potential habitat fragmentation. The target parcel contains mixed species forest stands.

### Salmon habitat and aquatic resources

Both of the priority parcels drain into fish streams; one to May Creek and the other to Tibbetts Creek. Coho spawning and rearing is mapped in May Creek through river mile 8 (which includes the stretch of the creek along SR 900 at the site; StreamNet database). The Harris Mine site drains to Tibbetts Creek which is mapped showing rearing and migration habitat for Coho.

### Scenic resources

This project is part of the viewshed along SR 900, and is visible from Cougar Mountain Regional Wildland Park to the west, and visible from Squak Mountain State Park to the east. Removing forest cover from the slopes above SR 900 would have significant visual impact on the view from the road towards Squak Mountain, and on the view from neighboring hiking trails at Cougar and Squak.

### Park/open space or natural corridor addition

The proposed acquisitions build on a large protected corridor of land: 3,200 acres at Cougar Mountain, an adjacent 730 acres at Cougar/Squak Corridor, 1581 acres at Squak Mountain State Park, 266 acres at Squak-Tiger Corridor, leading east to the 14,000 acre Tiger Mountain Forest complex, the Raging River State Forest and the Cedar River Watershed. These parcels offer opportunity to increase passive recreation trails and expand hiking opportunities throughout Cougar-Squak Corridor.

### Passive recreation opportunity/unmet needs

This project provides opportunities for additional public access to Cougar/Squak Corridor. There is not enough parking for recreation in the area and the new parking area at Cougar/Squak Corridor likely will not accommodate public use into the future. There is a need for additional public access 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

### **Threat of loss of open space resources**

The priority and in-scope parcels are adjacent to the Cougar/Squak Corridor parking area and lower area proposed for recreation. If they are developed in a manner that is not congruent with park uses, there could be problems with land use and public use conflicts. The Harris Mine property is already contributing a significant amount of natural resource and aquatic impact. If the site continues to be used for mining, there will continue to be detrimental impacts to Tibbetts Creek.

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

Both landowners of the priority parcels are willing to sell. The previous owner of the Harris Mine property is working to resolve previous code violations and clean up the property prior to a King County acquisition.

### **Partnerships**

King County is supported by many partners on this project and it would be a significant win for them all. Various local, state and federal agencies with public land management responsibilities along the I-90 corridor have formed a partnership known as the "Issaquah Alps" and Upper Snoqualmie River Valley Interagency Committee. The Interagency Committee was created to ensure that a consistent management approach is maintained for these inter-jurisdictional public lands located from Cougar Mountain to Snoqualmie Pass. Also, critical to the Interagency Committee is the partnerships it has forged with various organizations including the Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust, Issaquah Alps Trails Club, Washington Trails Association, Volunteers for Outdoor Washington, Friends of the Trail, etc. The results of these public and private partnerships have provided the support necessary for critical property acquisitions that have improved wildlife habitat values (terrestrial and aquatic); increased open space recreational opportunities; protection of scenic and visual corridors; and, increased historic/cultural interpretive opportunities along the I-90 corridor. This project proposal is a continuation of efforts by the public agencies and private partnerships.

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

Both the Comprehensive Plan and the park Plan contain policies that direct acquisition, planning and stewardship of King County parks. The acquisition of this parcel is consistent with the following policy direction:

- Be a "regional provider of open spaces with a major focus on systems of open space corridors that conserve natural resources and provide recreation, education and interpretive opportunities, fish and wildlife habitat and scenic beauty." (Park Plan Policy G-101)
- Emphasize acquisition and development of sites that provide for multiple benefits (Park Plan Policy CIP-120).

### **Transferable Development Credits (TDC) participation**

This project is within the current Transferable Development Rights Sending Area. The City of Issaquah and King County have an interlocal agreement for the transfer of development rights.

## 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. 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.

Depending on opportunity and site plans, there may be capital or operating work on site which is eligible for specific trail or restoration grants, or for recreational amenity development with local stakeholder groups through Parks' Community Grants Program. King County anticipates partnership with local stakeholder groups such as Issaquah Alps Trails Club, Washington Trails Association, and/or Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust.

#### 4. PROJECT BUDGET

1) TOTAL CFT APPLICATION AMOUNT <sup>a</sup>	CFT: \$593,475
2) TOTAL PEL APPLICATION AMOUNT <sup>b</sup>	PEL: \$593,475

<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).

This estimate is based on a before and after value determined in an appraisal intended to resolve encroachment issue on one of the priority parcels. That encroachment issue was resolved. Estimated value for the other priority parcel was based on assessed value.

PROJECT COSTS	ESTIMATED DOLLAR AMOUNT OR RANGE
Total property interest value	\$1,164,950
Title and appraisal work	\$8,000
Closing, fees, taxes	\$4,000
Relocation	\$0
Hazardous waste reports	\$0
Directly related staff, administration and legal costs	\$10,000
<b>Total Project Costs (CFT and other funds)</b>	<b>\$1,186,950</b>

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		\$593,475
<b>Total CFT Funds Previously Received <i>This Project</i></b>		\$0
<b>Total Matching Funds and Past CFT Funds <i>Currently Identified</i></b>		\$0
<b>Unidentified Remaining Match Need</b>		\$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.

**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)
<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.

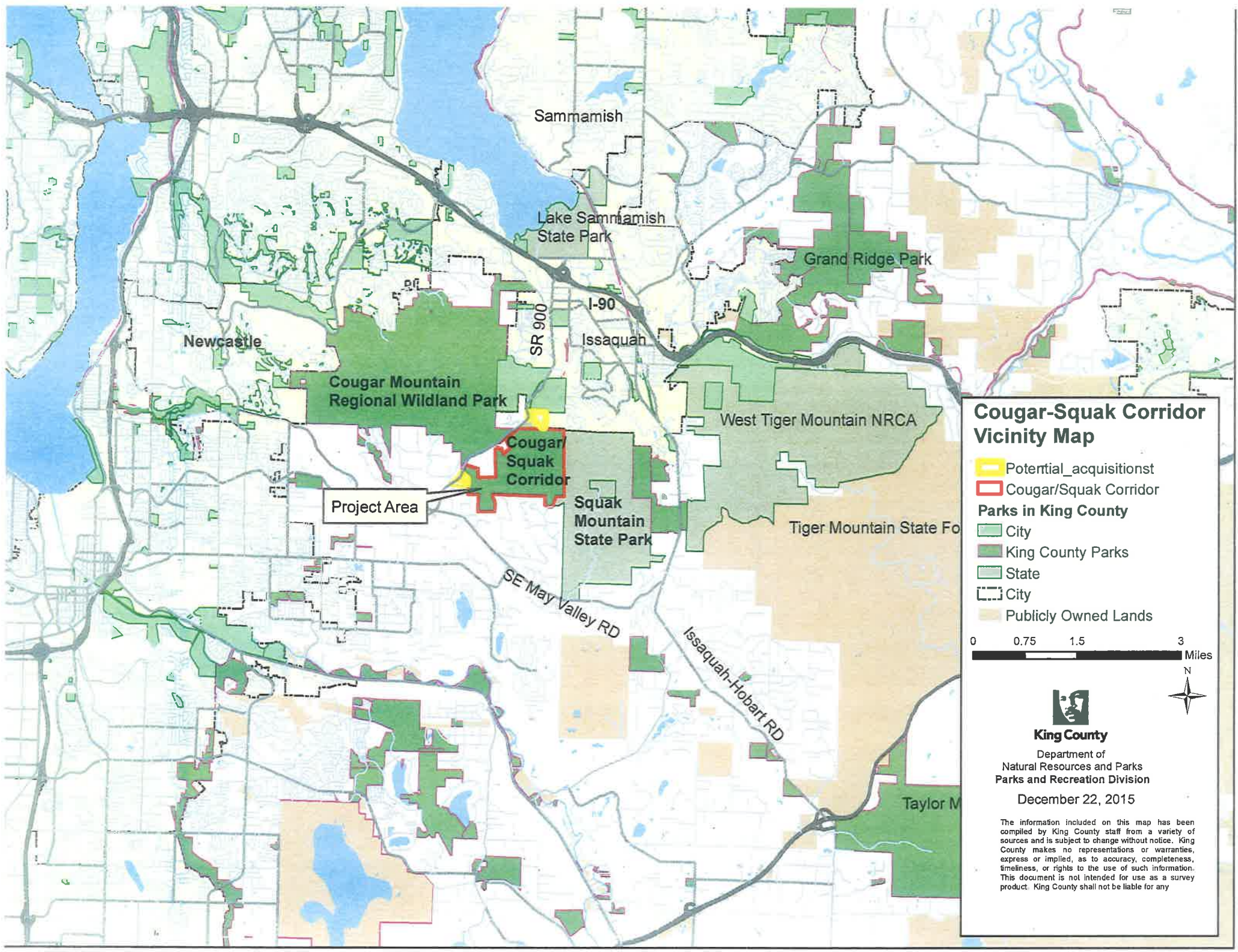
*Site Map that shows the following:*

- 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).*





### Cougar-Squak Corridor Vicinity Map


- Potential acquisitionst
- Cougar/Squak Corridor

**Parks in King County**

- City
- King County Parks
- State
- City
- Publicly Owned Lands

0 0.75 1.5 3 Miles

N

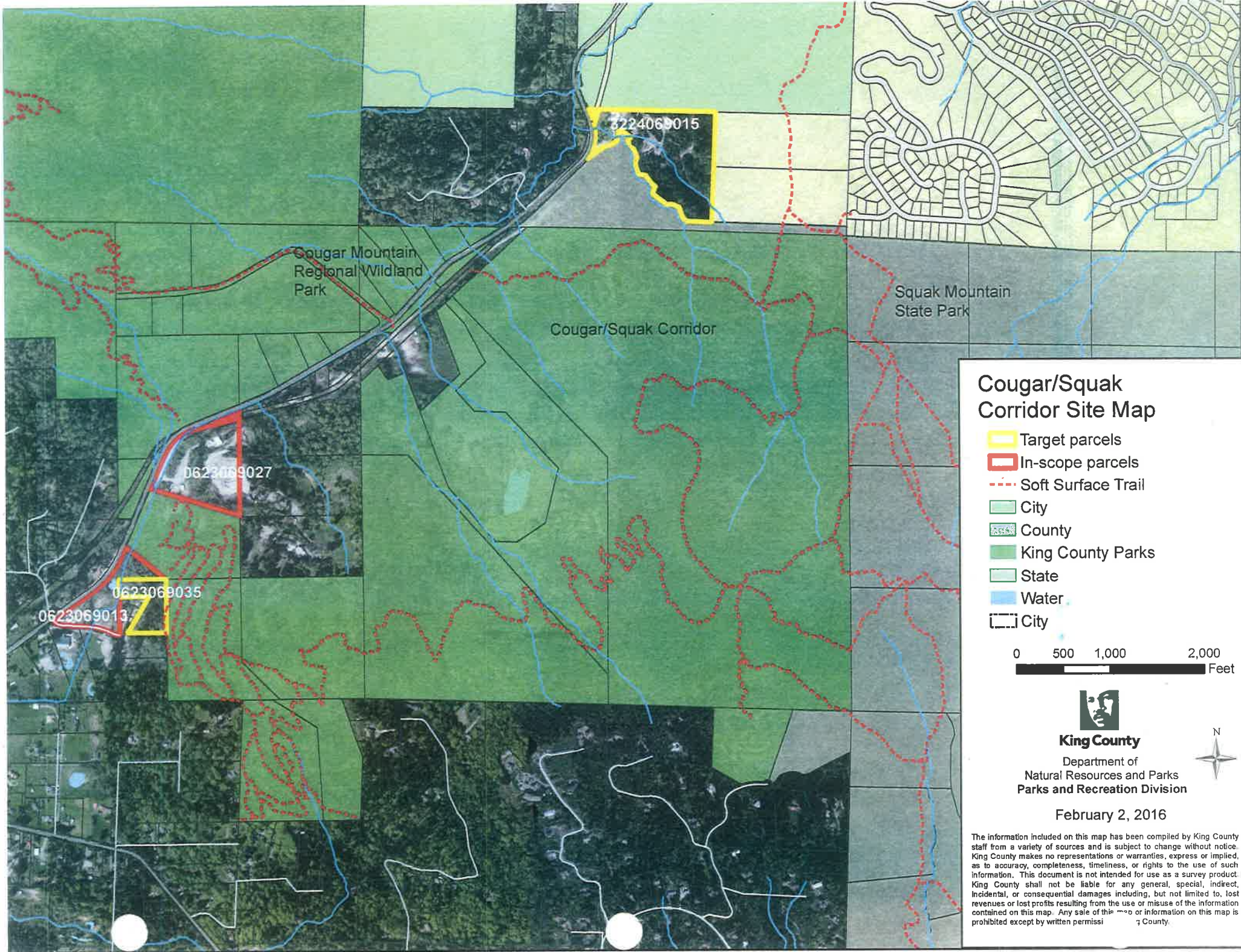


**King County**  
 Department of  
 Natural Resources and Parks  
 Parks and Recreation Division

December 22, 2015

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### Cougar/Squak Corridor Site Map

- Target parcels
- In-scope parcels
- Soft Surface Trail
- City
- County
- King County Parks
- State
- Water
- City

0 500 1,000 2,000 Feet



**King County**  
 Department of  
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 Parks and Recreation Division

February 2, 2016

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