



King County

K.C. Date Received _____

CONSERVATION FUTURES (CFT) 2017 ANNUAL COLLECTIONS APPLICATION FOR FUNDS

PROJECT NAME: Red Barn Ranch

Applicant Jurisdiction(s): King County

Open Space System:

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

In 2014 the King County Executive launched the Local Food Initiative, and set ambitious goals to support farmers in the county and expand the number of acres protected and in production. While Red Barn Ranch, a farm incubator program run by Seattle Tilth, is not part of any connected system of open space it is a critical part of the approximately 41,000 acres of agricultural land in King County.

Acquisition Project Size: 38.69 acres

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

CFT Application Amount: \$161,500

(Dollar amount of CFT grant requested)

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

CONTACT INFORMATION

Contact Name: Ted Sullivan

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Seattle WA 98104

Date: March 7, 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.)

One of the targets for King County's Local Food Initiative is to bring 400 new acres of land into food production each year for the next ten years. A strategy to accomplish this target is to make land available to lease for food production for new and beginning farmers, to train new and beginning farmers, and to preserve farmland through fee acquisition and the purchase of easements.

Red Barn Ranch is a critical element in King County's local food economy. The parcel (#242105-9004), owned by the City of Seattle, and operated by Seattle Tilth will serve as an incubator program for beginning farmers seeking experience and training on farming in King County. The farmers at the site are a mix of Somali-Bantu refugee farmers, American-born beginning farmers, and farmers associated with Clean Greens Farm. Key resources that this program is offering participants include:

- Access to land at subsidized rates.
- A comprehensive educational program covering farming, business planning and operations and marketing.
- On-site mentorship from experienced farmers.
- Access to equipment, water and other necessary inputs.
- Assistance in creating marketing channels for products.

Currently Seattle Tilth serves between 12 and 15 intern farmers a year at their farm incubator and provides small lots for several other entry-level farmers at the site. Seattle Tilth is a key partner in the Local Food Initiative with King County, and the County's intent is to have Tilth continue to provide their farm incubator program on-site, while amplifying it with additional recreational and educational elements.

The current challenge facing Seattle Tilth is that the City of Seattle Parks Department has determined that retaining ownership of a parcel in the Green River Valley does not align well with their core mission of serving residents of Seattle, and they are seeking to dispose of the property. Rather than sell the property outright, they have offered to transfer the property to King County at the appraised value.

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 type="checkbox"/> H. Passive recreation opportunity/unmet needs |

Wildlife habitat or rare plant reserve: Although the project's success would result primarily in continued agricultural activity, the land does contain a five acre forest stand comprised of a diverse mix of native deciduous and conifer trees and understory plants. This vegetation provides for foraging and habitat for small mammals, reptiles, and birds, which includes the pileated woodpecker. Foraging for hawks and other small mammals is also provided across the agricultural area and other open space uses.

Salmon habitat and aquatic resources: The entire property is designated as a Critical Aquifer Recharge Area category 2, which benefits groundwater filtration. The management of this property through the Farmland Preservation Program will require implementation of a conservation plan prepared for the property by the King Conservation District. The purpose of the conservation plan is to ensure farming activities occurring on the property are performed using agricultural Best Management Practices to protect water quality, both on-site as well as in off-site drainage systems. Preserving this property for agricultural use will help to maintain the quality of water leaving the site, thereby protecting ground water recharge and any downstream aquatic resources.

Park/open space or natural corridor addition: In 1970, the City of Seattle purchased the property in for \$235,000 for the Seattle Model Cities Program renovated the existing structures and developed the site as a "country camp for youths," with a focus on outdoor recreational use. From 1972 through 1982, the facility was operated as a Model City Program and staffed by the City. In 1982, the Red Barn Program and staff were eliminated as part of the 1982 budget process.

Throughout the 1980's and 1990's the facility had various uses, ranging from being shuttered to being used by the Auburn School District for a multi-purpose program to support its kindergarten and first grade classes. Over the past fifteen years the City leased has the property to several different entities, most recently Camp Berachah, and equestrian camp, and Seattle Tilth, which runs a farm incubator program on-site. In 2014 the City of Seattle terminated their lease with Camp Berachah.

Under the terms of the transfer being contemplated by the City of Seattle and King County there are several activities/improvements that could be made at the site to enhance the recreational components of activities at Red Barn Ranch.

- Development of social trail around the perimeter of the property into a formal recreational trail. King County could work with Seattle Tilth to develop interpretive signage to explain the role of Red Barn Ranch in the local food economy.
- Brand the site as a King County Parks/DNRP facility, with signage, public parking, and clear access signage to trail and other public facilities.
- Potential public access/programs with Seattle Tilth:
 - Currently Seattle Tilth is offering a various classes to participants in the Farm Incubator program (e.g. Cultivating Success WSU Extension) these could be offered to the public for a fee.
 - Seattle Tilth in Seattle offers a number of youth based farming/gardening classes/programs. They are willing to consider expanding these types of programs to Red Barn Ranch.
 - Possibility of a small Pea Patch for rural residents – Tilth could manage this as part of their use agreement.
 - Facility could be available for rent as an event space – Tilth could help manage/coordinate this function as part of their use agreement.

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

Educational/interpretive opportunity: Under the terms of the transfer being contemplated by the City of Seattle and King County the facility would continue to be run by Seattle Tilth as an incubator farm, with all of the attendant educational benefits described earlier in this proposal. Additionally, there are several activities/improvements that could be made at the site to enhance educational and interpretive activities at Red Barn Ranch.

- Development of social trail around the perimeter of the property into a formal recreational trail. King County could work with Seattle Tilth to develop interpretive signage to explain the role of Red Barn Ranch in the local food economy.
- Brand the site as a King County Parks/DNRP facility, with signage, public parking, and clear access/interpretive signage and other public facilities.
- Potential public access/programs with Seattle Tilth:
 - Currently Seattle Tilth is offering a various classes to participants in the Farm Incubator program (e.g. Cultivating Success WSU Extension) these could be offered to the public for a fee.
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Threat of loss of farmland resources: In 1959, there were approximately 100,000 acres of prime farmland in King County; however, by the late 1970's approximately half of these acres had been permanently converted to other uses. The inception of the Farmland Preservation Program (FPP) in 1979 and the implementation of a variety of County policies and initiatives since then have helped to greatly reduce the loss of farmland. However, by current estimates, the original 100,000 acres of prime farmland that existed in 1959 are now reduced to approximately 41,000 acres. Most of these prime farmlands are within the designated Agricultural Production Districts (APDs) and, although this designation offers some protection, it is frequently challenged and may not be sufficient to provide protection on a permanent basis. Fee

acquisition and removal of development rights allows the County to place covenants on the property which limit it to agriculture and open space uses.

While this parcel is relatively small, loss of any farmland to development is contrary to the County's farmland preservation goals. Moreover, the loss of Tilth's incubator program, if the City of Seattle elected to sell the parcel for development, would be a major setback for the County's Local Food Initiative.

Ownership complexity/willing seller(s)/ownership interest proposed: This property is owned by the City of Seattle and farmed/operated by Seattle Tilth. The City of Seattle is willing to sell the property to King County and the two have begun conversations to transfer ownership.

Partnerships: If fee purchase is successful, the outcome of this project could result in a partnership with Seattle Tilth and/or another third party who would manage and lease the land as an incubator farm for students and potentially for socially disadvantage farmers. This project would further the County's policy goal to protect active farmland that contribute to the local food supply, which is an objective of the Executive's Food Initiative.

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?

The success of this project will result in the implementation of best management practices, which would minimally protect water quality issues. FPP staff regularly monitors participating farms to ensure the owners are aware of the restrictive covenants on their property, and that they are complying with them. Similar stewardship would occur if managed as leased farmland. For this project, monitoring activities would include site visit and meeting with the farmers and those responsible for farm management. Additionally, FPP staff routinely drives by properties and check aerial photographs of preserved properties. Site visits and meetings with property owners are generally done once every one to three years unless a situation warrants more frequent visits. If a covenant violation is noted, staff informs the owner of the violation and work with them to resolve it. If such means of resolving a violation are unsuccessful, the County has the option of resolving it through litigation.

Funding for staff to monitor FPP properties and perform other program management activities is included as an expense item in the County's annual budget.

4. PROJECT BUDGET

1) TOTAL CFT APPLICATION AMOUNT ^a	CFT: \$161,500
2) TOTAL PEL APPLICATION AMOUNT ^b	PEL: \$0

^aAllowable 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.

^bKing 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 City of Seattle has had the property appraised and the highest value provided was \$300,000. This value may be further scrutinized to determine its accuracy based on other factors.

PROJECT COSTS	ESTIMATED DOLLAR AMOUNT OR RANGE
Total property interest value	\$300,000
Title and appraisal work	\$10,000
Closing, fees, taxes	\$3,000
Relocation	NA
Hazardous waste reports	Unknown, but expected
Directly related staff, administration and legal costs	\$10,000
Total Project Costs (CFT and other funds)	\$323,000

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)
79' Bond or other revenue and/or grant source	Existing	\$161,500
Total CFT Funds Previously Received <i>This Project</i>	NA	
Total Matching Funds and Past CFT Funds <i>Currently Identified</i>	NA	
Unidentified Remaining Match Need	NA	

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.

Not needed or anticipated

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)
NA			
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)

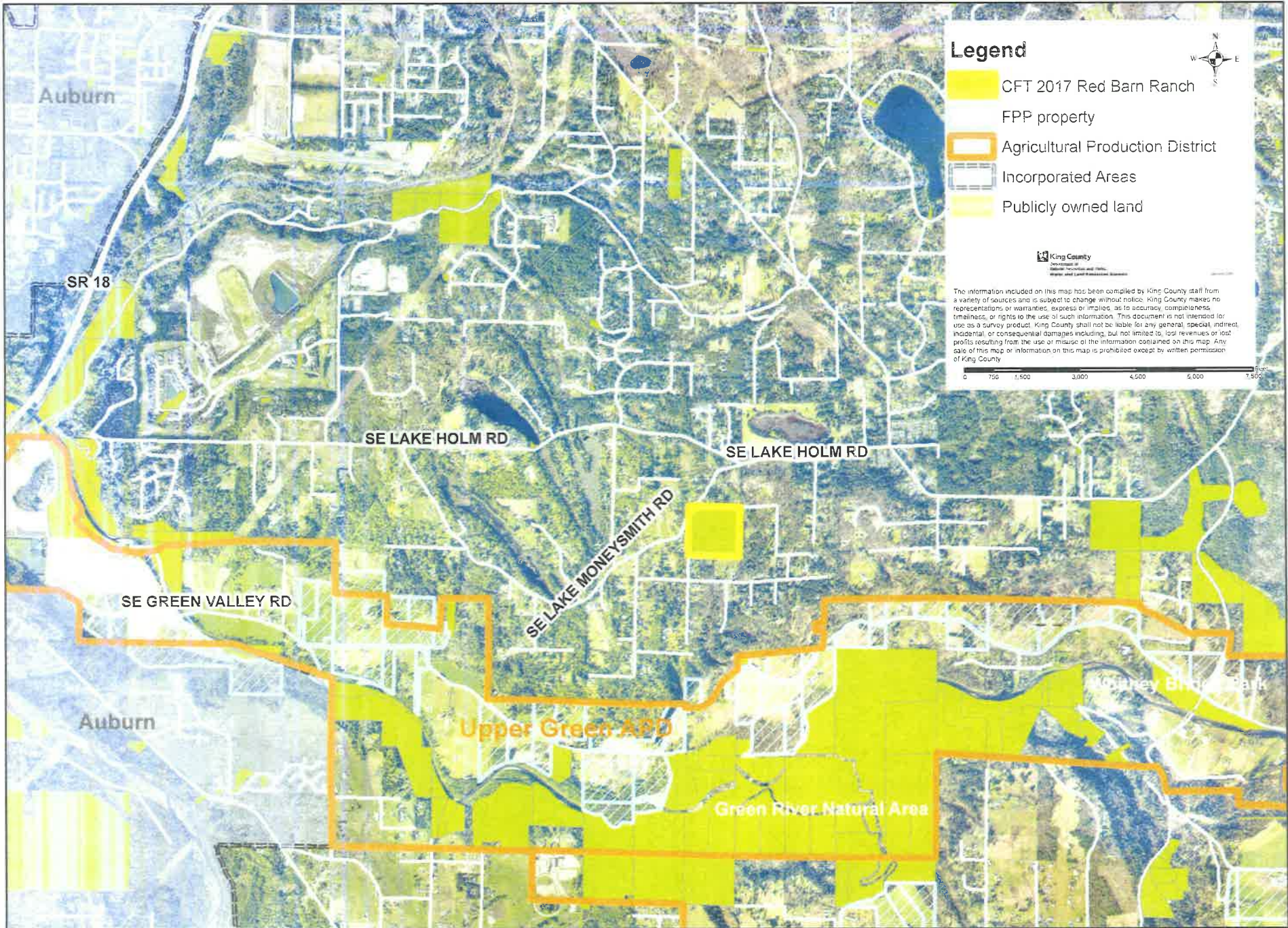
8 ½ x 11" maps are preferred, but 11 x 17" is acceptable if folded and hole-punched for insertion into a three-ring binder.

Site Map that shows the following:

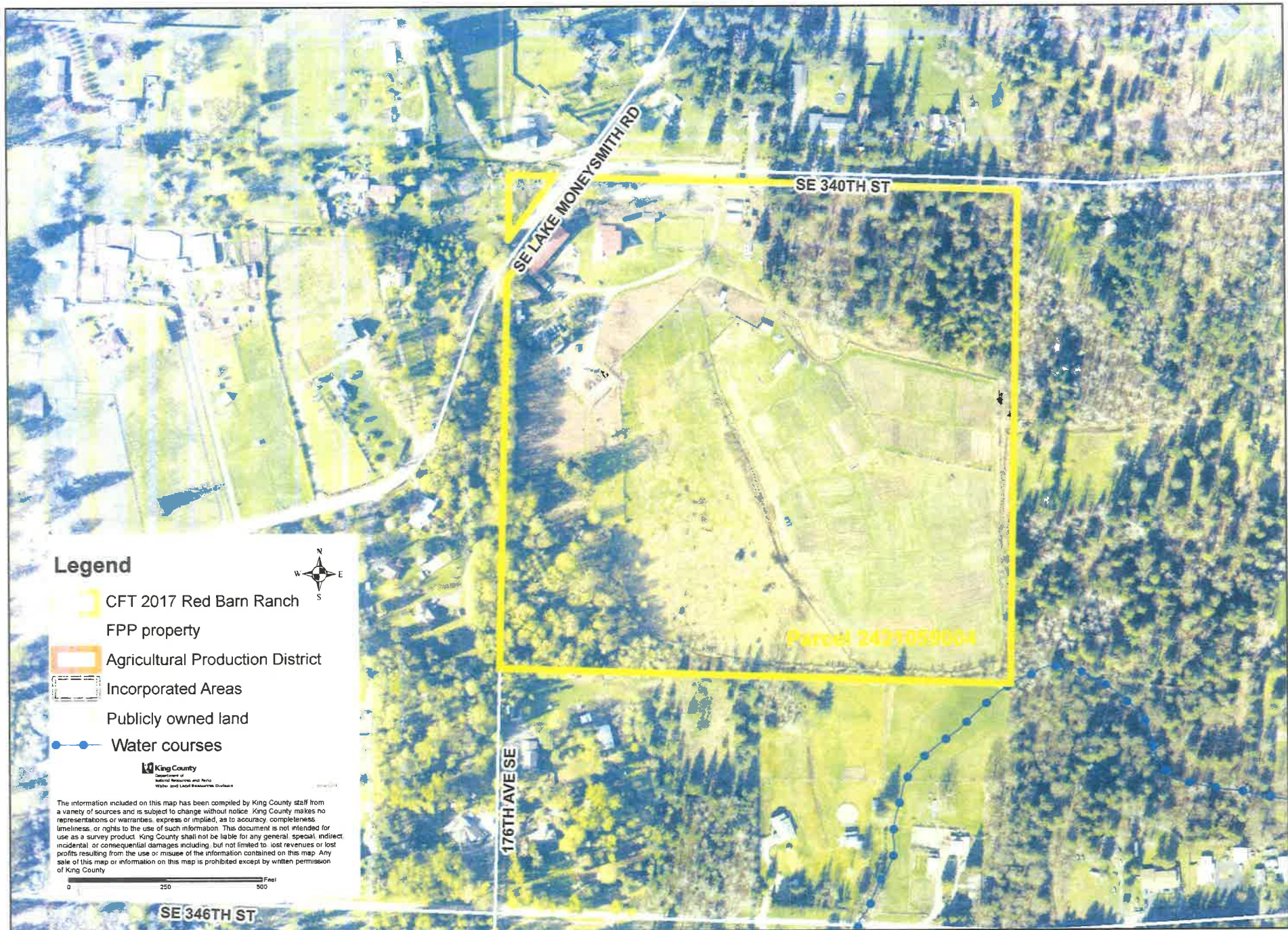
- Each parcel proposed for acquisition in yellow or distinct shading and an indication of any parcel proposed for less than fee simple acquisition, such as a conservation easement;
- Location of any proposed development to the site such as parking, trails or other facilities;
- Location of any proposed 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).*



CFT 2017 - Red Barn Ranch



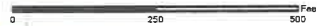
Legend

-  CFT 2017 Red Barn Ranch
-  FPP property
-  Agricultural Production District
-  Incorporated Areas
-  Publicly owned land
-  Water courses



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

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