



King County

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

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

**PROJECT NAME:** SPU Property Acquisition and Conservation

Applicant Jurisdiction(s): City of Lake Forest Park

Open Space System: Although they will not be connected, this will be a northern complement to Grace Cole Nature Park, creating the City's second major preservation of urban forest for wildlife habitat.

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

Acquisition Project Size: 5.6 acres

CFT Application Amount: \$500,000

*(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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Lake Forest Park, WA 98155

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.)*

The City of Lake Forest Park proposes to purchase 5.6 acres of undeveloped property on 40th Place NE to preserve as an open space for passive recreation and outdoor environmental education by local schools, general population and environmental groups. It includes restoring the property to its native state, with walking trails and interpretive signage.

The property is an old remnant forest and the largest undeveloped site in the City of Lake Forest Park. The property is composed of mature second growth forest, and includes steep slopes, a stream, riparian wetland, and hillside seep wetlands. Based on current best estimates, over ninety percent of the property is critical areas and their buffers. The stream is a tributary of Lyon Creek, a salmon spawning and rearing stream. The property is habitat for a variety of mammals such as coyotes, deer, raccoons, mountain beavers, and many species of birds and is part of a much needed wildlife corridor.

Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) acquired the land for a reservoir site fifty years ago, but used an alternative site. Having determined the property to be in excess, the City of Seattle must place it on the market. The City proposes to acquire the property to retain it for use as a conservation area and public park. City park policy will guide restoration of the property, trail alignment, site furnishing selection and location, and landscaping plan.

We propose a mixed-use strategy (See Site Map 1 and Location Map 2). The best use of an estimated ¼-acre of the land would be for active recreational use. Accordingly, we will subtract the appraised value of this ¼-acre from the grant request, and seek private funding or recreation grants to fund the purchase of that ¼-acre. The City is also applying to Recreation Conservation Office for a Land and Water Conservation Fund grant to match this Conservation Futures grant. The Lake Forest Park Stewardship Foundation (LFPSF), a local nonprofit organization, will conduct a capital campaign to generate a matching fund as needed.

### 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.*

XA. Wildlife habitat or rare plant reserve

X E. Historic/cultural resources

XB. Salmon habitat and aquatic resources

X F. Urban passive-use natural area/greenbelt

XC. Scenic resources

X G. Park/open space or natural corridor addition

→ D. Community separator

X H. Passive recreation opportunity/unmet needs

**A. Wildlife habitat.** The property contains large second growth trees and dense foliage that serve as a natural habitat to many species of vertebrates and invertebrates. Western Red Cedar, Big-leaf Maple, Douglas Fir, Madrone, Western White Pine, Spruce, and Vine Maple exist on this site. Tree sizes are generally 24-36 inches, and the canopy is nearly closed. Although the ground and tree trunks are heavily infested with English Ivy, there is a well-developed understory of native plants including Indian Plum, Huckleberry, Salmonberry, Salal, Sword Fern and Bracken Fern. The many species of birds that have been seen on site include Anna's Hummingbird, Downy Woodpecker, Pileated Woodpecker, Barred Owl, several Hawk species, Northern Flicker, Black-capped Chickadee, Chestnut-backed Chickadee, Bushtit, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, Bewick's Wren, Pacific Wren, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Ruby-Crowned Kinglet, Swainson's Thrush, Varied Thrush, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Spotted Towhee, Pine Siskin, American Goldfinch, House Finch, Dark Eyed Junco, Song Sparrow, American Robin, Steller's Jay, and crows. Deer, coyotes, mountain beavers, and many other mammals common to urban areas inhabit the property. A community of amphibians is likely, unexplored so far, but probably occupying the many wetlands on site.

**B. Salmon habitat and aquatic resources.** There is a small stream on site flowing toward Lake Washington, originating in springs in the backside of the property. Water wells up within the streambed, providing a year round water source. Substantial hillside seep wetlands also contribute water in this headwater reach. Neighbors report the stream continued flowing on site throughout the severe drought of last summer (2015). Although the stream channel is too small for salmon spawning, this stream and forested watershed provide clean cool water for salmon and trout rearing and spawning downstream in Lyon Creek. It is an important water source to Lyon Creek.

**C. Scenic resources.** The site includes a scenic small creek, wetlands that can be enhanced, and dense forest on rolling hills. It provides a bucolic secluded setting with opportunities for hiking through the type of natural area people are seeking, without driving many miles to the Cascade and Olympic foothills. Such areas are diminishing in urban areas as they become developed. This 5.6-acre space is unique in the City of Lake Forest Park (LFP) because it is large and densely wooded, with a secluded water feature.

**E. Historic/ Cultural Resources.** This land has been preserved mostly as open space since the original logging of the area in the 1920's, and we want to preserve it as a conservation area into the future. In 1975 the Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) purchased this land by "eminent domain" from Mr. and Mrs. Leonard, then in their 70's, for water reservoir development. But another site, bordering Horizon View Park, was instead developed for the reservoir. At the time of acquisition this site had a small house where the Leonards raised their two daughters. The house is now gone; but the old foundation still exists. A neighbor recalls them being evicted by SPU. Their home, like other older homes in the area, was among the original cabins that were built in LFP during the 1940-1960's. The neighborhood surrounding the parcel was a logging camp and seasonal vacation sites providing get away spots for City of Seattle residents. Interviews with elderly neighbors in the area indicate the Leonard family was among the first residents of Lake Forest Park. The site is eligible for historical preservation because the Leonard family that originally lived there were among the first residents of LFP, moving there before the war and just after the logging in the 1920's. The foundation of the old Leonard home could be preserved as a historical heritage site, symbolizing the old cabins that were built in LFP following logging in the 1920's. There is no other park or heritage site in the Mountlake Terrace and Lynnwood area similar in history and environmental structure.

**F. Urban passive-use natural area/greenbelt.** This site consists of 5.6-acres of mature second growth forest and is a substantial wildlife corridor. The surrounding property owners have observed deer and coyotes passing through. The forested wildlife corridor begins at high elevation (Horizon View Park), descends through a steep watershed and continues through several properties to Lyon Creek. The corridor allows wildlife to move from Mountlake Terrace to Lake Washington, through the City of Lake Forest Park. This proposed park would support a major goal of the LFP City "100-year Legacy Plan" for preserving green infrastructure, imparting a broader effect to the surrounding region. It possesses significant importance for wildlife foraging, habitat and migration.

**G. Park/open space or natural corridor addition.** The City of LFP wants to acquire the parcel in order to preserve it as forested wildlife habitat, with ¼-acre (approximate size) dedicated to a recreation use easily accessed from street side parking located on 40<sup>th</sup> place NE easement (See Site Map 1). The recreational use element is necessary to balance recreational opportunities for residents while preserving almost all of this land as wildlife. The intention for this application is to acquire the property so it can be restored by removing invasive plant infestations and replanting with native plants, including a trail into the woods to create a passive use park, where visitors observe the stream and experience the tree canopy.

**H. Passive Recreation opportunity/unmet needs.** The City of Lake Forest Park desires to acquire this property because it would become the second largest conservation area in the City. This project addresses the critical shortage of publicly accessible open space in the City; currently less than 1% of the land in Lake Forest Park consists of publicly owned parks or open space (compared to, for example, approximately 10% in Seattle and Shoreline). The City of Lake Forest Park spent considerable time and resources developing a strategic green infrastructure plan, the Lake Forest Park Legacy 100-Year Vision. Hundreds of residents participated in the three public forums and web surveys conducted during the creation of this plan. Residents indicated that preserving open space is a high priority for them. The acquisition of this property for expansion of our green belt is a strategic action for Lake Forest Park, and funding is needed in this grant round to make this intention happen.

**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.**

Shoreline School district has expressed interest in conducting field trips to the site for educational purposes. They have also indicated they would like to use the site as an opportunity for their senior class to accomplish community service by helping to restore the site. Educational signage will be placed on site explaining the hydrologic and wildlife processes, and history of the area. Hydrogeology signage will include how rain gardens at uphill homes in the watershed will enhance stream functions and cleanse water for salmon habitat downstream in Lyon Creek flowing into Lake Washington. Wildlife signs will be posted to describe the Mountain Beaver (*Aplodontia rufa*) living on site, an ancient rodent that is so different from all others that it is placed in its own family. It is found only in a restricted area along the north Pacific Coast of the United States and Canada.

**B. The threat of loss of open space resources.**

The site is suitable for residential construction of 4-6 homes. While the City's Sensitive Areas Ordinance would preserve the sensitive areas and their buffers, the loss of public access to this open space would be disappointing. This may be the final opportunity to secure the property for use as public open space. We think the opportunities for education and historical preservation will bring valuable opportunities to our City into the distant future.

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

The Seattle City Council has declared this property surplus, and has directed that it be sold. However, they have postponed initiation of the sale process until July 1, 2016, at the request of Lake Forest Park residents, with the support of Seattle Public Utilities.

**D. Partnerships - Describe any public or private partnerships that will enhance this project.**

LFPSF has volunteered to organize work parties to remove invasive vegetation and to plant trees and shrubs to enhance forest, wetland, and stream functions in accordance with an adopted park master plan. LFPSF has offered to continue to help maintain this new conservation area in the long term. The City will establish a park taskforce, composed of interested residents, to develop a park master plan and to officially name the park. Other supportive partners will include, among others: Lake Forest Park Stream Keepers, Adopt a Stream and the Audubon Society, Plant Amnesty, Seattle Coalition for Green Spaces, Bastyr University, the elementary schools of Lake Forest Park and Shorecrest High School.

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

The City of Lake Forest Park's 100-Year Legacy Plan emphasizes green infrastructure that encompasses four components: 1) Healthy Connections 2) People/Places; 3) Natural Drainage; and 4) Habitat. This proposal provides for expanding all of these components in our city. Providing a park for residents and children to experience Pacific NW fauna and flora will enhance healthy connections. People will visit and gain an understanding of a logging camp (1920's), and a post-war heritage site.

**F. Transferable Development Credits (TDC) participation. Not applicable.**

**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?*

LFPSF has volunteered to help the City restore the property by removing invasive plants and replanting native plants according to a park master plan. Volunteers are eager to save the existing trees from heavy infestations of ivy, to clear the forest floor of ivy, and to rid the site of several other types of invasive plants. Volunteer work parties will be an ongoing part of restoration and maintenance of this site because of its size and maintenance needs.

Tree planting parties, coordinated by the City's Tree Board, typically draw substantial numbers of volunteers, and will be used to restore parts of the forest deemed in need according to the park master plan. The City's arborist has already begun working with LFPSF in surveying the needs of the property.

Work parties have been organized by LFPSF to remove ivy on private sites, and we expect weed removal from this site will lead to weed removal parties working on neighboring land to enhance the wider watershed and to make maintenance of this conservation area easier. The restoration and maintenance aspects will provide future education opportunities and programs developed in collaboration with groups interested in the life cycle of salmon and hydrology, use of native plants and trees, and wildlife habitat.

**4. PROJECT BUDGET**

1) TOTAL CFT APPLICATION AMOUNT <sup>a</sup>	CFT: \$500,000
2) TOTAL PEL APPLICATION AMOUNT <sup>b</sup>	PEL:

*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).

The City has been working with SPU to negotiate a purchase and sale agreement. Part of this process will involve completing a formal appraisal.

Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) must follow specific guidelines for establishing the fair-market value of liquidated assets. Undeveloped land, compromised by significant sensitive areas, is a complex assessment, and a formal appraisal is expensive. It would need to be repeated if completed at this point. SPU has indicated that they anticipate the property to cost between \$500,000 and \$1,000,000.

This property is comprised of two tax parcels, zoned single family residential (RS9,600). If the full impact of the applicable Sensitive Areas Ordinances were applied to the properties, (and current best assessments of the stream, wetland and steep slopes are essentially confirmed), there would be three buildable lots. However, it is possible that the two lots may have been originally plotted as four lots. If a developer chose to pursue buffer reduction, there is the possibility of six buildable sites, but this would require much more extensive permitting process, including SEPA, and would involve public comment, require approved mitigation, Sensitive Area Tract designation, and six smaller, closely clustered building sites. It seems most reasonable to assume that there are 3-4 buildable lots on the property.

A current survey of sold buildable vacant land shows properties from \$225, 000 to \$280,000. Assessed values range from \$165,000 to \$185,000. By the time this sale has been negotiated, we anticipate that the appraised price will be approximately \$1,000,000, or 4 x \$250,000.

<b>PROJECT COSTS</b>	<b>ESTIMATED DOLLAR AMOUNT OR RANGE</b>
Total property interest value	<b>\$1,000,000</b>
Title and appraisal work	<b>\$8000</b>
Closing, fees, taxes	<b>\$30,000</b>
Relocation	<b>0</b>
Hazardous waste reports	<b>\$5000</b>
Directly related staff, administration and legal costs	<b>\$7,000</b>
<b>Total Project Costs (CFT and other funds)</b>	<b>\$1,050,000</b>

<b>MATCHING FUNDS: Existing Sources</b> (CFT can only provide a maximum of 50% of anticipated project costs)	<b>DATE</b> (Expended or Committed)	<b>DOLLAR AMOUNT</b> (Expended or Committed)
<b>Total CFT Funds Previously Received</b> <i>This Project</i>		
<b>Total Matching Funds and Past CFT Funds</b> <i>Currently Identified</i>		
<b>Unidentified Remaining Match Need</b>		\$550,000

**Unidentified remaining matches need: What funds are anticipated and what is the time frame?**

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

The City will submit an RCO Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grant application in May 2016.

\$500,000 is anticipated.

LFPSF capital campaign \$50,000 anticipated

The LFPSF has committed to ongoing fundraising efforts for any subsequent unmet needs.

**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>Invasive Plant Removal</b>	\$24,048	Proposed	3 years after acquisition
<b>Trail Construction</b>	\$21,643	Proposed	3 years after acquisition
<b>Tool and Equipment -The Bender Family</b>	\$5,800	Proposed	3 years after acquisition
<b>Native Plantings Donation of native plants</b>	\$20,000 \$ 4,000	Proposed	3 years after acquisition
<b>Stream Corridor Restoration Stream Monitoring</b>	To be determined with Stream Keepers	Proposed	3 years after acquisition
<b>TOTAL</b>	\$75, 491		

**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:*

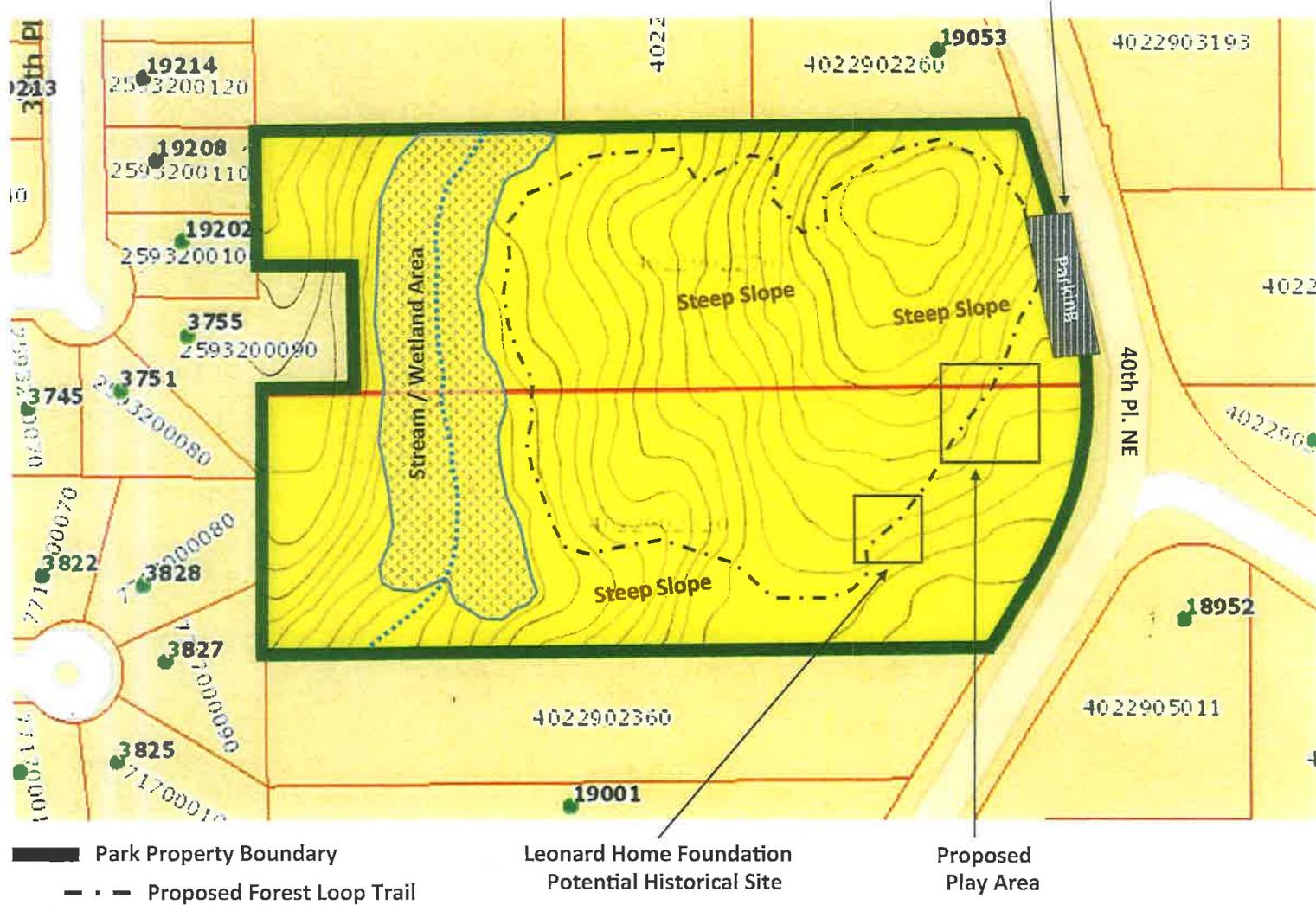
- Each parcel proposed for acquisition in yellow or distinct shading and an indication of any parcel proposed for less than fee simple acquisition, such as a conservation easement;
- Location of any proposed development to the site such as parking, trails or other facilities;
- Location of any proposed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

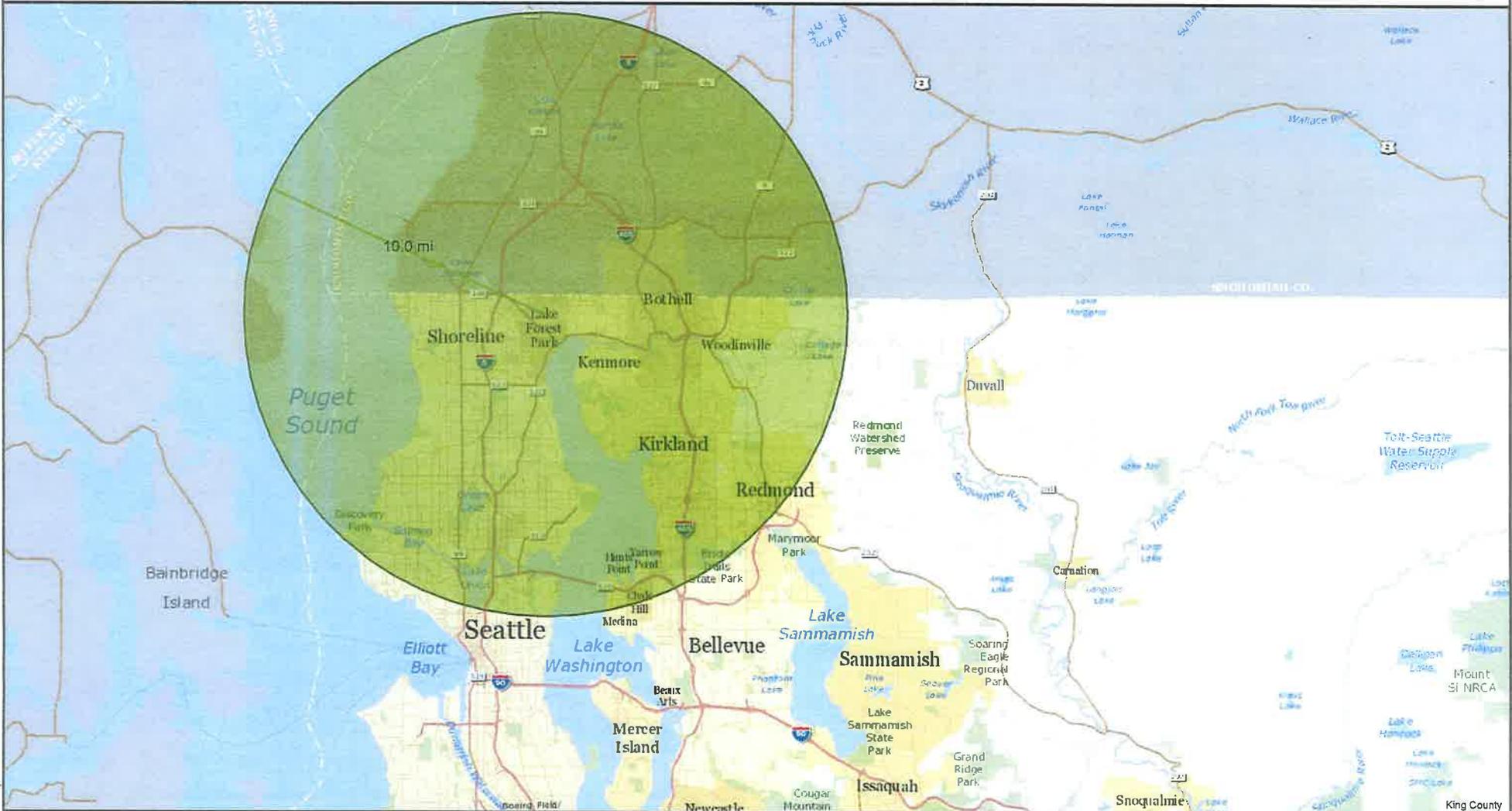
### Map 1. Five-Acre Woods Park Plan

Proposed park plan for conceptual purposes; not drawn to scale.



Map 2. Location Map of 5 Acre Woods Park

King County iMap



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Date: 2/25/2016



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Notes:



Map 3. Aerial View of 5 Acre Woods Park, Tree Canopy