

Project Name: DeLeo Wall Conservation	
Applicant Jurisdiction: City of Newcastle	
If applicable, Open Space System Name: Contiguous with Cougar Mountain Regional Park <i>(Only if applicable, the name of a larger connected system, such as Cedar River Greenway, Mountains to Sound, a Regional Trail, etc.)</i>	
Proposed Project Acreage: 37 <i>(Identify the acreage targeted under this year's funding request)</i>	CFT Funding Request: \$600,000 <i>(Dollar amount of CFT award requested)</i>
Total Project Acreage: 37 <i>(Estimate total acreage at project completion for multi-year projects)</i>	KC PL Funding Request: N/A <i>(King County Projects Only: Dollar amount of KC Parks Levy requested)</i>
Type of Acquisition(s): <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fee Title <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation Easement <input type="checkbox"/> Other:	
King County Council District in which project is located ¹ : 9	

CONTACT INFORMATION

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SECTION 1. PROJECT SUMMARY

In the space below, provide a brief description of the project. Please reference how the targeted parcels are significant individually, and (if relevant) as part of a larger open space system, reach, or watershed.

This project is to acquire approximately 37 acres of undeveloped, forested land on the southwest corner of Cougar Mountain Regional Wildland Park, within the City Newcastle. This acquisition would save this parcel from clear-cut logging, which is approved through a DNR permit, despite not meeting City of Newcastle critical area code. The parcel is within the May Creek Basin watershed.

This parcel is significant individually because it is wooded and contains a large portion of the DeLeo Wall, a unique geological feature. At the top of the wall is a viewpoint, which is accessible by well-used existing trails on the property. The viewpoint overlooks May Valley and Mount Rainer. The trails that lead to the viewpoint come from Cougar Mountain Regional Park, as well as from the City of Newcastle's Trail System.

The parcel is significant as part of a larger open space system because it is contiguous with Cougar Mountain Regional Park is part of the May Creek Basin. Cougar Mountain Regional Park preserves important wildlife habitat and ecological function while offering ample opportunities for recreation across its 3,100 acres. Acquisition of this parcel supports the 2001 May Creek Action Plan, by avoiding the detrimental impacts of clear-cut logging and likely eventual development of this parcel.

This parcel is identified for conservation by King County and the City of Newcastle. King County Parks included this parcel as an "in-scope parcel" in their FY2019 Conservation Futures grant application, project name: Cougar Mountain Regional Wildland Park Additions. The conservation of this parcel is supported by many groups and individuals including Save DeLeo Wall, Issaquah Alps Trails Club, King County Councilmember Reagan Dunn, Newcastle Trails, City of Renton, Forterra, Issaquah Environmental Council, Muckleshoot Indian Tribe, Save Cougar Mountain, Save Lake Samammish, and Washington Native Plant Society.

¹ King County Council District information here: https://www.kingcounty.gov/council/councilmembers/find_district.aspx

SECTION 2. OPEN SPACE RESOURCES

Before answering Sections 2 & 3, please review “King County Conservation Futures (CFT) Application Evaluation Criteria.” Please mark the checkbox for each criterion that applies to the parcels that are current funding targets. Then briefly describe in the space below how the proposed acquisition satisfies each marked criterion. Consider, if applicable, both the landscape and individual parcel level.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A. Wildlife habitat or rare plant reserve | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> F. Urban passive-use natural area/greenbelt |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B. Salmon habitat and aquatic resources | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> G. Park/open space or natural corridor addition |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C. Scenic resources | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> H. Passive recreation opportunity/unmet needs |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> D. Community separator | <input type="checkbox"/> I. Equity/opportunity area projects that seek to redress historic disparities in access to open space |
| <input type="checkbox"/> E. Historic/cultural resources | |

(A) Habitat benefit: Cougar Mountain Regional Wildland Park contains more than 3,000 acres of open space lands/wildlife habitat resources in a connected landscape of public open space. The vegetative community located in the park is mixed coniferous - deciduous second- growth forest. Stands of older second-growth trees are found on the slopes of the mountain, which includes the project area. This mature second growth forest provides habitat that is increasingly rare in the suburban fringe located outside of the park boundaries. The park and vegetation type is home to a variety of species ranging from the occasional cougar, black bear, bobcat, deer, raccoon, pileated woodpecker and other smaller wildlife species. The proposed acquisitions would increase habitat values of the park, as the target property contains much of the same habitat and is likely used by the same species that inhabit the park.

(B) Salmon habitat and aquatic resources: The forested hillside on the proposed acquisition contains tributary to May Creek. Maintaining the parcels in a forested condition will help to alleviate downstream flooding and improve water quality in May Creek. The 2005 WRIA 8 Chinook Salmon Conservation Plan classified May Creek as a Tier 3 stream, though the 2017 Plan Update stated that May Creek has experienced an increase in use by spawning Chinook salmon, and contain areas with somewhat higher quality habitat compared to some other Tier 2 areas. The WRIA 8 Technical Committee plans to monitor their status and to consider upgrading May Creek to a Tier 2 stream if adult returns continue to increase.

May Creek is important for other species of salmon and resident fish, water quality, flow management and overall watershed health. The WA Department of Fish and Wildlife indicates May Creek has documented coho spawning, documented presence of winter steelhead, and documented presence and spawning of sockeye (SalmonScape).

(C) Scenic resources: The parcel includes the viewpoint from the top of DeLeo Wall. The viewpoint overlooks May Valley and beyond to Mount Rainier. There are well-used existing trails in this parcel that lead to the viewpoint from Cougar Mountain Regional Park as well as from the City of Newcastle’s trail system.

The proposed acquisitions are forested uplands in the viewshed of SR900, SE May Valley Road, and the viewpoint from the top of DeLeo Wall on the property. The Cougar Mountain Regional Wildland Park Master Plan encourages the preservation of open space lands to protect scenic and visual resources. The park provides an important open space area that preserves the natural character of a regional, King County, and City scenic resource. The Master Plan further states “View corridors should be preserved through acquisition, dedications, and/or view shed easements to maintain the integrity of the park...”

(D) Community Separator: This parcel is at the eastern boundary of the City of Newcastle. It is part of a transition between Cougar Mountain Regional Park and typical municipal residential development to the west.

(F) Urban passive-use natural area/greenbelt: This property is within the City of Newcastle. It contributes to the Cougar Mountain Regional Park by containing a viewpoint and trails used by park visitors, and contributes ecological value by being contiguous woodland southwest of the park.

(H) Park/open space or natural corridor addition: The property is adjacent to and is integrally linked with Cougar Mountain Regional Park. It is currently providing a meaningful contribution to the existing open space, providing ecological and habitat functions on its 37 acres, contiguous with Cougar Mountain Regional Park's 3,100 acres. It is linked by existing trails and provides a viewpoint to park visitors. If this property is logged, as is permitted by DNR, these functions and recreational amenities will be lost.

(H) Passive recreation opportunity/unmet need: Acquisition of this property will preserve a passive recreation use area. There are an existing viewpoint and hiking trails on the property that connect to the trail network within Cougar Mountain Regional Wildland Park and the City of Newcastle. This part of the park is most directly accessed from the City of Newcastle. The trails are indicated on the City of Newcastle's Comprehensive Plan Trail Map. Therefore, these trails shall be maintained per NMC18.14.270. The DNR permit allows this property to bypass this and other critical area-related municipal code requirements.

SECTION 3. ADDITIONAL FACTORS

Please mark the checkbox for each criterion that applies to the parcels that are the current funding targets. Then briefly describe in the space below how the proposed acquisition satisfies each marked criterion.

- A. Educational/interpretive opportunity
- B. Threat of loss of open space resources
- C. Feasibility: Ownership complexity/willing seller(s)/community support
- D. 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 Rights (TDR) participation

(B) Threat of Loss of Open Space Resources: This parcel has an approved logging permit by DNR. The logging permit allows the landowner to clear-cut up to 28 of the 37 acres, which is more than 75% of the property. If this parcel is clear-cut for logging, there would be a significant negative impact to the forested foothills of Cougar Mountain Regional Wildland Park and increasing negative water quality impacts from surface water runoff to May Creek. Additionally with likely eventual development of these parcels, scenic and visual resources would be adversely affected.

(C) Feasibility: Ownership Complexity/Willing Seller(s)/Community Support: The owners of this parcel have not yet agreed to sell. The City continues to advance negotiations with the seller. The City and seller's legal representatives have had several meetings and conversations to discuss the potential of selling the parcel to the City.

There is tremendous community support. The DNR received over 220 letters during the comment period for the logging application, which far exceeds standard response.

(D) Partnerships – Public or Private Partnerships: The City of Newcastle is partnering with Forterra, a regional land trust with experience in land acquisition and negotiation, on this project. If the City and Forterra are able to reach an agreement to sell with the landowner, and the City has not yet secured full funding for fee acquisition, Forterra has the ability to secure loans to make an interim purchase of the property, securing it on behalf of the City. Forterra would purchase the property at appraised value. Once the City has successfully secured the necessary funding, the City would purchase the property back from Forterra, at that same appraised value.

In addition, the community group Save DeLeo Wall is partnering with the City and Forterra on this project. Save DeLeo Wall members have committed to assisting with raising grassroots funds for the purchase of the property. Save DeLeo Wall has helped already by covering the cost of an opinion of value, along with paying for half the cost of a timber cruise (for which the City paid the other half).

(E) Is the property identified in an adopted park, open space, comprehensive, or community plan? It is not currently identified in the City of Newcastle's Comprehensive Plan, but it will be evaluated for inclusion in an upcoming update to the plan.

SECTION 4. PARCEL DETAILS

A. Please provide information about the parcels that are current and future funding targets.

i. Parcels that are Current Funding Targets - i.e., those parcels which would be acquired with requested funding, shown in red on your maps. Find this information on Assessor’s Report/Property Details accessed through King County iMAP (<https://gismaps.kingcounty.gov/iMap/>). Add more rows if needed.

Parcel Number (do not use hyphen, e.g., 1234567890)	Acreage	Zoning ²	Assessor’s “Appraised Land Value” ³	Assessor’s “Appraised Improvements Value”	Estimated Cost to Purchase Desired Property Interest	Property Interest Sought (fee, easement, or TBD)
3524059010	37	R-01, R-04	\$4,711	\$0	\$1,200,000	fee

ii. Future Funding Targets - i.e., those parcels shown in yellow on your maps. Please list the parcel numbers here (no additional information needed):

None

B. How did you estimate the cost to purchase parcels? (e.g., appraisal, estimate from assessor’s values, etc).

Preliminary appraisal, timber cruise valuation, and conversations with property owners

C. Are any parcels are enrolled in the Current Use Taxation program (a voluntary conservation program)? ⁴

No

SECTION 5. PROPERTY USE, STEWARDSHIP, AND MAINTENANCE

A. What is the intended future use of the property (e.g., passive recreation, habitat restoration, timber management, agricultural production)? Will this land be available for public use?

Passive Recreation. Currently, there is trail access to the upper, northern portion of the parcel, which would be available for public use. There is not public access to the lower portion of the site currently, and there are no plans to establish access at this time. Critical areas and private property limit access from the south.

B. How will the property be stewarded and maintained, and using what funding? Does the property lend itself to volunteer stewardship opportunities or community participation?

Newcastle Trails is a community non-profit that builds and maintains trails in Newcastle. This area is a high priority for this organization, and their participation in maintaining and improving hiking opportunities in this parcel is anticipated.

The City has had preliminary discussions with King County, whereby if the City is successful acquiring the parcel, the City would look to dedicate the property to expand the boundaries of Cougar Mountain Regional Park.

² Please explain what the zoning designation means if you don’t think it would be evident to the committee.

³ Parcels enrolled in Current Use Taxation for “Forestry” may not have a valid “appraised land value” or acreage.

⁴ Visit www.kingcounty.gov/incentives, and use the “Interactive Map” to check enrollment for your target parcel(s).

C. What are the biggest challenges you anticipate in managing this site?

Access to the lower, southern portions of the site is a challenge, if it were needed. There is no vehicular access into the site currently. Critical areas and private property limit access from the south. However, the landowners to the south are supportive of the City's acquisition and conservation of this property, and may be willing to grant the City occasional access for property management.

D. Will you be purchasing and demolishing any structures on the target parcel(s)? Explain why this is necessary.

No, there are no structures on the parcel.

E. Do you intend to reserve any part of the site for non-CFT-eligible activities, such as more intensive recreation or retaining a structure on a fee purchase? (Funds used for that purchase can't count as CFT match.)

No.

SECTION 6. PROJECT BUDGET

Please provide budget information for the parcels that are the current funding targets.

FUNDING REQUEST

	REQUESTED AMOUNT
CFT Funding Request	\$ 600,000
KC Parks Levy (PL) Request <i>(for county projects only)</i>	\$
Total Funding Request	\$ 600,000

TOTAL CFT PROJECT COSTS

PROJECT COSTS	ESTIMATED DOLLAR AMOUNT OR RANGE
Total property interest value	\$1,155,500
Title and appraisal work	\$17,000
Closing, fees, taxes	\$4,000
Relocation costs	\$0
Hazardous waste reports	\$3,500
Directly related staff, administration and legal costs	\$20,000
<i>Only if applicable: Value of land used as match⁵</i>	
Total Estimated Project Costs	\$1,200,000

FUNDING/MATCH TABLE

Please document the sources of match that you have secured, or intend to seek, towards the parcels that are the current funding targets. If you don't yet have match secured, please note how you plan to obtain it.

If you seek a match waiver (based on equity/opportunity area determination), please write "Match Waiver Requested" in table below and complete Supplemental Form #1: Equity/Opportunity Area Determination.

CFT FUNDING	Date Funding Secured	Dollar Amount
CFT Funding Request	N/A	\$600,000
Past CFT Funding Available <i>(i.e., funds remaining from past awards, to be spent on current target parcels)</i>		
MATCH FUNDING SECURED	Date Funding Secured	Dollar Amount
Sources/Status:		
MATCH FUNDING STILL SOUGHT	Date Funding Anticipated	Dollar Amount
Sources/ Plan to obtain match?:		
City, other agency, community donations, other private, other grants including WWRP grants	2019, 2020	\$600,000

⁵ If you are providing cash match, ignore this instruction. If your match consists of a land trade or the cash value of recent open space purchases, please reflect the match property's estimated value in the "Value of land used as match" row. Your "Total Estimated Project Costs" will include this match property's estimated value.

SECTION 7. BOND FUNDING POTENTIAL (SPECIAL SECTION FOR 2019)

Projects applying in 2019 may be able to qualify for bond-backed Conservation Futures funds, in addition to annual awards. Criteria A through D below are factors that may make projects most competitive for bond funding. Mark the checkbox for each criterion that applies to the parcels that are the current funding targets, and briefly describe in the space below how the proposed acquisition satisfies each marked criterion. Please note, if necessary, whether certain parcels in your scope meet the criteria, but other parcels in your scope do not.

- A. Acquisition can occur in late 2019 or soon thereafter
- B. Transaction is highly likely to be successful
- C. Match is secured
- D. Property acquired in fee will not be leased or sold for private benefit (i.e., leased to a private party or surplus. Note that acquisition of conservation easements, TDR easements, farm covenants where underlying fee remains in private ownership is generally acceptable.)

(D) Property acquired in fee will not be lease or sold for private benefit: The property will be retained as public open space. The City has had preliminary discussions with King County, whereby if the City is successful acquiring the parcel, the City would look to dedicate the property to expand the boundaries of Cougar Mountain Regional Park.